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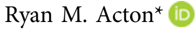
ARTICLE

The Search for Social Harmony at Harvard Business School, 1919–1942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Abstract

In the mid-1920s, Wallace Donham, the dean of Harvard Business School, recruited two intellectuals, Elton Mayo and Lawrence Henderson, to find solutions to the nation's ills. Like many intellectuals since the late 1800s, Donham, Mayo, and Henderson believed that laissez-faire modernization and competitive individualism had shattered the social bonds that had once harmonized the nation. Corporations, they believed, thus should use a new science of administration to tie workers into close-knit workgroups. These bonds would fulfill workers' needs for stability and community, discipline workers' wayward emotions and thoughts, and diminish workers' susceptibility to labor activism and radical politics. Historians have shown that a vein of intellectuals turned the common "progressive" faith in social bonds into an argument for the strong state. This article shows, however, that this faith also contributed to conservative thought and tools of control.

On 4 June 1927, Harvard Business School (HBS) dedicated its new campus, a gift of the financier George F. Baker. University business programs were largely a recent development, and Harvard's program, founded in 1908, was the first focused exclusively on graduate education. Speaking before the crowd, the school's dean, Wallace Donham, declared that business was entering a new era in which professionalized businessmen would dedicate corporations to the commonweal. Professionalization, however, could hardly come soon enough. Likening business leaders to *ancien régime* elites on the eve of revolution, Donham warned that they "must accept and discharge the responsibilities" of power "if the present economic order is to persist."[1]

Donham's worries reflected the many challenges that corporations were facing. The rise of corporate capitalism in the late 1800s had triggered labor strife, state regulation, and movements such as populism. Although corporations enjoyed relatively quiet labor relations after their victory in the bitter labor struggles of 1919, Donham believed that a deep social crisis lurked. Influenced by Harvard president Abbott Lawrence Lowell and Harvard philosopher Alfred North Whitehead, Donham recruited two intellectuals to think through the crisis: Elton

[1]Wallace B. Donham, "The Emerging Profession of Business," *Harvard Business Review* 5/4 (1927), 401–5, at 404.

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Mayo, an Australian academic versed in political theory and psychoanalysis, and Lawrence Henderson, a celebrated Harvard biochemist. Building on the worldview they shared with the dean, Mayo and Henderson subsequently developed a capacious social theory and tools for actualizing it.

Central to the trio's theory was a belief about the vital importance of social and cultural bonds. The nation's health, in their view, depended on Americans once again belonging to close-knit communities with shared customs, habits, and values. Industrialization, urbanization, and laissez-faire competition had shattered, they believed, the small, cohesive communities of the past. These developments, they held, had joined with contemporary business practices and factory working conditions to deprive workers of stability, community, and purpose. Living in anonymous cities and laboring in impersonal factories, workers lacked both connection to others and a sense of purpose greater than themselves. As a result, workers were often miserable, inefficient, and mentally ill. Unaware of the true causes of their suffering and lacking the guidance of the morality and customs of the past, workers projected their frustration and anger onto management and the present economic and political order. Workers fell prey to the panaceas of labor activism and radical politics.

The trio outlined several approaches to healing labor relations and the nation. Firms, in their view, needed to use therapeutic methods on workers. Undirected interviews and sympathetic listening would help workers overcome their irrational beliefs and anger. Management also needed to cultivate community on the factory floor to substitute for the sociocultural bonds that modernization had shattered. Firms would tie workers into small, close-knit workgroups whose customs and routines would govern the workers' minds and fulfill their needs for stability, community, and purpose. Preserving these new bonds, in turn, required corporations to pursue stability and not just profit. To guide firms in these tasks, the trio outlined a holistic science of administration. This science would aid business leaders in integrating myriad forms of expertise, including those focused on workers' neglected psychosocial needs. Using the science of administration, large corporations would spawn intimate human bonds; restore workers' sense of purpose and meaning; diminish labor strife and political radicalism; and make the United States stable, harmonious, and dedicated to the commonweal.

Given their importance to the history of business schools, management theory, and Harvard's 1930s intellectual life, the trio have received considerable attention from scholars. Much of that literature, however, focuses on one or two of the figures and isolates aspects of their theorizing such as their use of psychoanalysis. This article, in contrast, synthesizes the overarching patterns that linked the trio's thought (as well as Lowell's and Whitehead's) and situates them within the dominant currents of American social and political theory. The trio's theory, as well as their influential strategies for shaping workers, this article shows, reflected a key vein of "progressive" social theory that emphasized the role of "society" in general, and social bonds between people more specifically, in curing the ills of rapid modernization.[2]

[2]Recent work on Donham, Mayo, or Henderson includes Kyle Bruce and Chris Nyland, "Elton Mayo and the Deification of Human Relations," *Organization Studies* 32/3 (2011), 383–405; Rakesh Khurana,

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This article also links two broader historiographies: one on the legacy of "progressive" social thought of the late 1800s and early 1900s and another on the conservative movement that coalesced after World War II. As historians such as Dorothy Ross and Howard Brick have shown, a growing number of intellectuals in the early and mid-1900s built on progressive thought to champion the growing state. The state, for many of these intellectuals, both actualized social bonds and served as a tool for society to curb rapid change and the market. Historians have not, however, recognized the flip side of the story: that an opposing vein of social thought drew on these same tropes about society and social bonds to argue that the state should remain small. For Donham, Mayo, and Henderson, the state's disruptive reforms imperiled social bonds. Corporations instead would foster stable communities that functioned like those that had been lost to rapid modernization. The trio thus anticipated what historians have argued defined much mid-century conservative thought: the fusion of antistatism with the valorization of social structures and cultural values deriving from the past. Both champions of the growing state and their conservative opponents, this article argues, had roots in "progressive" social thought.[3]

Progressive theories of social disintegration and its cures

The high hopes that many intellectuals of the late 1800s and early 1900s had for social and cultural bonds reflected their alarm at the nation's social strife and rapid transformation. Industrialization, urbanization, and immigration were remaking American life; the pace of everyday life was accelerating; and corporations had grown to dominate the economy. The nation experienced intense social strife culminating in strike waves and movements like the Populists and Wobblies. Many "progressive" intellectuals responded by tracing the nation's problems to the erosion of the social and cultural bonds (henceforth "social bonds") of the past. Rapid industrialization, they believed, had replaced intimate communities with urban anonymity and impersonal bureaucracies, its hunger for workers had flooded the nation with unassimilated immigrants, and its cutthroat competition and relentless technological change had undermined American culture and morality. Laissez-faire economics, for many of these thinkers, was less a source of spontaneous harmony between people, as earlier intellectuals had often hoped, than of disorder and conflict. Likewise, many intellectuals criticized nineteenth-century

From Higher Aims to Hired Hands: The Social Transformation of American Business Schools and the Unfulfilled Promise of Management as a Profession (Princeton, 2007); Eugene McCarraher, *The Enchantments of Mammon: How Capitalism Became the Religion of Modernity* (Cambridge, MA, 2019), 393–8; Jason Oakes, "Alliances in Human Biology: The Harvard Committee on Industrial Physiology, 1929–1939," *Journal of the History of Biology* 48/3 (2015), 365–90; Joel Isaac, *Working Knowledge: Making the Human Sciences from Parsons to Kuhn* (Cambridge, MA, 2012); Gerard Hanlon, "The First Neo-liberal Science: Management and Neo-Liberalism," *Sociology* 52/2 (2018), 1–18.

[3]Dorothy Ross, "Whatever Happened to the Social in American Social Thought? Part 1," *Modern Intellectual History* 18/4 (2021), 1155–77; Howard Brick, *Transcending Capitalism: Visions of a New Society in Modern American Thought* (Ithaca, 2015); Jennifer Burns, "In Retrospect: George Nash's The Conservative Intellectual Movement in America since 1945," *Reviews in American History* 32/3 (2004), 447–62; Kim Phillips-Fein, "Conservatism: A State of the Field," *Journal of American History* 98/3 (2011), 723–43.

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political and social theorists like John Stuart Mill for purportedly valorizing a competitive individualism that denigrated interdependence and cooperation. Deprived of the social bonds of the past, Americans, many intellectuals thus believed, had become rootless, isolated, alienated, egoistic, and materialistic. Atomized, they were prone to finding community and meaning where they should not: in irrational crowds, virulent nationalism, materialistic consumerism, and working-class consciousness. Theorists often referred to this malady of shattered communities, atomized individuals, debased culture, and social conflict as "social disintegration."[4]

Many of the intellectuals who worried about social disintegration embraced an expansion of "society" as the cure. They often counterpoised society to economic life, calling for society to bend what today would be called "the market" to the commonweal. They also hoped that harmonizing bonds would emerge amidst industrial, urban life, reintegrating and strengthening society. They spied these bonds in schools, churches, children's playgroups, community centers, women's associations, mass media, and even consumerism. These bonds, they hoped, would make Americans more moral, collaborative, educated, and/or democratic. These bonds, they also hoped, would not only heal present ills but also prevent industrial, technological, and economic developments from causing future disintegration. Strong bonds would enable Americans to resist, for instance, consumerism's inducements to selfishness, materialism, and conflict; they would fortify workers against the nostrums of radicalism; and they would help the nation adapt to modern life and its quickened pace of change.

Donham, Mayo, and Henderson would not only develop their own analysis of "social disintegration" (a phrase they used), but also use that analysis to argue that the state should remain small. Earlier theorists of social disintegration had a variety of views about the strong state. Some, like Herbert Croly, championed the state as an answer to social disintegration. The strong state, in this view, was a tool for citizens to realize their obligations to each other and to take collective control of technological developments and the market. (In the 1930s, many intellectuals would champion the New Deal state in similar terms.) Other disintegration theorists of the early 1900s, however, distrusted the strong state's concentrated power and believed that it unduly diminished individual liberty. The trio built on this skeptical vein. A strong state, in their view, would further social disintegration. Its far-reaching and rapid reforms would erode social bonds. Corporations—not the state—would need to stabilize the nation. Indeed, by tying workers into intimate workgroups, the trio believed, corporations would not only harmonize workplace relations, but also diminish workers' attraction to statism.

The trio's mature social theory also would reflect the widespread hope of many theorists of social disintegration that expertise would help strengthen social bonds. Two impulses vied in disintegration theorists' hopes for expertise and social bonds.

[4]This portrait of progressivism draws on Howard Brick, "Society," in Stanley Kutler, Robert Lallek, David Hollinger, Thomas McCrae, and Judith Kirkwood, eds., *Encyclopedia of the United States in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1996), 917–25; Dorothy Ross, *The Origins of American Social Science* (Cambridge, 1991); Jeffrey Sklansky, *The Soul's Economy: Market Society and Selfhood in American Thought, 1820–1920* (Chapel Hill, 2002); Andrew Jewett, *Science, Democracy, and the American University: From the Civil War to the Cold War* (Cambridge, 2012); and especially Ross, "Whatever Happened to the Social in American Social Thought?".

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One impulse saw expertise and social bonds as tools for empowering the demos and actualizing a higher form of individual liberty. John Dewey, for instance, held that education and expertise would help Americans realize their deep dependence on others, develop their capacity for deliberative reason, and equip them with tools for bringing about reform. A contrasting impulse treated expertise and social bonds as tools of top-down control. Intellectuals, many of whom had been born into affluent families, often thought the public irrational and uneducable. The xenophobia, class strife, political radicalism, and virulent nationalism of the 1910s further popularized this view. Some intellectuals hoped to shift power from voters and politicians to experts like themselves who rose above the political. Some likewise hoped that experts could use social bonds, as well as people's emotions, to mold the public. William Graham Sumner and Edward Ross, for instance, hoped, respectively, that elites could use the "old methods of suggestion" and "social religion." Such techniques preserved individual liberty and democratic governance, according to many of their proponents, because they avoided the use of law and force.[5]

Donham, Mayo, and Henderson would echo Sumner and Ross in using expertise and social bonds for top-down control. They would come to believe that workers' emotions and need for close ties to others almost entirely drove workers' politics, productivity, and compliance with management. The trio likewise would believe that workers had an innately limited capacity for reason, and they would posit that workers' attempts to use reason to guide their own lives furthered social disintegration. Using new forms of research focused on peoples' psychosocial needs, corporations therefore needed to act on workers' emotions and social bonds rather than appealing to their reason. Indeed, the trio would formulate a particularly expansive view of the role that top-down expertise and social bonds should play in shaping workers' innermost selves. Bonds like those management would forge on the factory floor, the trio would believe, should continually dictate workers' beliefs, values, habits, and customs.

Corporations as agents of social healing

Corporate ideology also deeply influenced the trio. Partly because corporate domination of the economy was relatively recent, corporations faced a variety of threats to their power and profitability. They were accused of being "soulless," impersonal, profit-driven bureaucracies whose concentrated power hurt small businesses and consumers. They were likewise resented for reducing white men to lifelong employees, depriving them of the economic independence crucial to ideals of manliness and democratic citizenship. Corporations also struggled against high labor turnover, "soldiering" (workers collectively working at a reduced rate), unions, strikes, and muckraking journalists. Debates about corporate regulation were a prominent fixture of national politics. The Populists, the Wobblies, the Socialist Party, the

[5]Khurana, *From Higher Aims to Hired Hands*, 23–136; Jewett, *Science, Democracy, and the American University*, 120–37.

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Russian Revolution, and the bitter strikes of 1919 suggested the possibility of deep, even revolutionary, discontent.[6]

Donham, Mayo, and Henderson's elevation of the corporation over the state echoed corporate ideology. Where intellectuals like Croly called for the state to act as society's tool for subordinating the market, corporate apologists assigned corporations that role. Laissez-faire's cutthroat competition, according to a ubiquitous trope, had driven oversupply and thus the boom–bust cycle. Corporations, its defenders argued, would therefore coordinate production. Laissez-faire had forced businessmen to exploit to survive; corporations instead would provide for workers through company unions and worker benefit programs. Public-relations firms ran advertising campaigns personifying corporations as caring and moral persons. Together with sympathetic journalists and writers, these firms portrayed corporations as enacting a utopian togetherness. *Contra* critics of monopoly, bigness was a blessing.[7]

The trio's idealization of businessmen likewise echoed corporate ideology. Corporate apologists cast businessmen as key agents of society's mastery over markets by invoking the era's faith in expertise. Corporate leaders were skilled and public-minded. They therefore merited autonomy from the state, from workers, and even from owners. Since managers had minimal ownership of their companies, a related trope ran, they would instead act as "trustees," balancing the interests of workers, consumers, community, and owners. Similarly, many hailed business as an emerging profession. The era's faith that expertise would ameliorate social problems had helped renew the luster of professionalization after a long period of popular skepticism. Professionalization implied that practitioners deserved autonomy because they were bound by a code of ethics and skilled in an expertise that served the commonweal.[8]

Corporate ideology also traced corporate leaders' sense of duty to social bonds. In bringing businessmen together, the proliferating chambers of commerce, trade associations, and rotary clubs were allegedly helping businessmen recognize their duty to each other and to society. Rather than continuing the rapacious and ruinous competition of Gilded Age entrepreneurs, corporate managers would therefore coordinate the economy to avoid economic downturns while also caring for consumers, workers, and the commonweal. Professionalization, so its advocates likewise argued, tied businessmen into a community that instilled morality and duty. "The laissez faire of the 18th Century," Herbert Hoover wrote in a typical formulation, was turning into a society animated by the "sense of service and responsibility to others." "Individualism run riot" was becoming "progressive individualism."[9]

[6]Ellen S. O'Connor, "The Politics of Management Thought," *Academy of Management Review* 24/1 (1999), 117–31; Khurana, *From Higher Aims to Hired Hands*, 32–9; Richard Hoffman, "Corporate Social Responsibility in the 1920s: An Institutional Perspective," *Journal of Management History* 13/1 (2007), 55–73; Howard Brick, *Transcending Capitalism*, 54–85.

[7]Martin J. Sklar, *The Corporate Reconstruction of American Capitalism, 1890–1916* (Cambridge, 1988); Roland Marchand, *Creating the Corporate Soul: The Rise of Public Relations and Corporate Imagery in American Big Business* (Berkeley, 2001); Hoffman, "Corporate Social Responsibility"; Christian Olaf Christiansen, *Progressive Business: An Intellectual History of the Role of Business in American Society* (Oxford, 2015), 54–103; McCarraher, *The Enchantments of Mammon*, 202–4, 393–8.

[8]Khurana, *From Higher Aims to Hired Hands*, 23–50.

[9]Herbert Hoover, *American Individualism* (New York, 1922), 8, 10.

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Efforts to defend corporate power also helped drive the proliferation of collegiate business schools in the early 1900s. Elite universities like Harvard had long claimed to be the proper pathway to professions such as the ministry and law—a claim revitalized by the progressive faith in expertise, by the importation of research methods from Europe, and by the tuition and gifts of the ever wealthier upper class. Harvard's prestige and links to the wealthy won the fledgling HBS the support of businessmen, including, in 1924, Baker's $5 million for a dedicated campus and "a new start to better business standards." Delivering the main address at the campus dedication in 1927, Owen Young, head of General Electric and a leading welfare capitalist, hoped that someday all corporate leaders would be required to have a master of business administration (a degree HBS had invented) to ensure that business was socially responsible.[10]

The goal of using the corporation to harmonize labor relations drew Donham to the school after almost two decades in corporate law and investment banking, where he had gained considerable experience working with labor. As dean, Donham would echo both progressive disintegration theory and corporate ideology. HBS, in his view, would play a leading role in equipping corporations to solve many of the nation's problems. HBS would do so partly by forging social bonds among students to instill in them a dedication to duty.

Lowell and Donham's efforts to forge a national elite at Harvard

Donham's vision for HBS owed much to Abbott Lawrence Lowell. Born in 1856 into a leading Brahmin family, Lowell had graduated from Harvard College (1877) and Law School (1880). A pioneer in the emerging discipline of political science, Lowell had become Harvard's first professor of government before winning Harvard's presidency in 1909. Since his student days, Lowell had watched the nation's rapid change transform colleges like Harvard. As Harvard's president, he would emerge as a de facto leader of the broader effort of many university leaders across the nation to reform college education after the perceived harms of that transformation.

Donham's relationship to Lowell began when Donham was an undergraduate. Donham commuted to Harvard and graduated a year early, in 1898, to save on tuition. Impressed with Donham, Lowell helped fund his studies at Harvard Law. In 1919, Lowell appointed him dean. Donham's politics, aspirations for HBS students, and strategies for using social bonds to mold them would reflect Lowell's influence. Both Lowell and Donham would hope to turn Harvard students into vigorous, self-directing and dutiful individuals capable of leading the nation.[11]

Lowell's politics shaped his reforms at Harvard. Like many Gilded Age Brahmins, he worried that mass democracy, working-class activism, immigration, and the growth of the state threated the "sacredness of personal liberty and private property." He joined many Brahmins, for instance, in holding that immigrants like

[10]Harvard University, *Report of the President of Harvard College and Reports of Departments, 1923–1923* (Cambridge, MA, 1924), 122; Khurana, *From Higher Aims to Hired Hands*, 118.

[11]Jeffrey L. Cruikshank, *A Delicate Experiment: The Harvard Business School, 1908–1945* (Boston, 1987), 94–5.

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the Irish embraced unions and statism because they lacked the Anglo-Saxon's training in self-control and self-government. Although Lowell softened his opposition to the growth of the state in the early 1900s, he continued to warn that "paternal, perhaps even grandmotherly," laws granted workers and the poor "special rights" and threatened self-directing individualism.[12]

Lowell drew on social disintegration theory to explain the nation's flirtation with statism. The shattering of the bonds of the past, he believed, had deprived men of their capacity for self-direction. He was channeling a common worry among Brahmins: that even old-stock American men were losing their self-direction, self-reliance, vigor, moral rectitude, and respect for excellence. These were qualities that they associated with "manliness" and "character," and that they believed were the imperiled foundation of liberty and limited government.[13] Farming and small business, in Lowell's view, had once fashioned proudly self-reliant men who had internalized their community's uplifting norms. Now the American man was dissolving into the crowd and "the group," into his profession and "the organization to which he belongs." Men were losing their "force of character," including their drive to excel. "Like sheep," he told students, men had come to "move under the simple impulse of the mass." Immersed in "the busy life of the world," he complained, men take refuge "in the opinion of their associates, of the men in like occupations, of the party or group to which they belong." Corporations, for instance, led businessmen to care only about profit rather than their paternalistic duties. Mass democracy's trust in the "clamor of the crowd" and "judgment by popular vote" likewise eroded men's desire to think for themselves. Anticipating later critics of "mass society," Lowell was arguing that social disintegration had sapped men's capacity for self-direction, rendering the nation prey to mediocrity, immorality, exploitation, class conflict, and statism.[14]

Like many theorists of social disintegration, Lowell hoped that new, uplifting social bonds would help save the nation. He did not share, however, the common hope that these bonds were immanent in industrial and urban society and would thus reshape much of the population. He instead focused on making uplifting social bonds at Harvard. These bonds, he believed, would instill self-direction and self-reliance in Harvard men, thus forging a vigorous elite to steer the nation. Lowell "was absolutely convinced," wrote a friend and biographer, that "[Harvard] College and the nation were on the road to disaster if the descendants of old, well-to-do American families lost intellectual capacity and vigor."[15] Scions of these families, Lowell held, formed a "national type of manhood" with the duty to lead. Lowell knew, however, that wealthy students devoted themselves to athletics, clubs, pleasure, and social climbing rather than invigorating study.

[12]Robert Adcock, *Liberalism and the Emergence of American Political Science: A Transatlantic Tale* (Oxford, 2013), 191, 197–8.

[13]Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917* (Chicago, 1996); Jackson Lears, "The Managerial Revitalization of the Rich," in Steve Fraser and Gary Gerstle, eds., *Ruling America: A History of Wealth and Power in a Democracy* (Cambridge, MA, 2005), 181–214.

[14]A. Lawrence Lowell, *Facts and Visions: Twenty-Four Baccalaureate Sermons* (Cambridge, MA, 1944), 17, 32, 88–90; Ross, "Whatever Happened to the Social in American Social Thought?".

[15]Henry Aaron Yeomans, *Abbott Lawrence Lowell* (Cambridge, MA, 1948), 68.

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"There ought," he warned students, "to be no place 'where wealth accumulates and men decay.'"[16]

Lowell traced Harvard's problems to social disintegration. The close-knit college of his day, he believed, had instilled self-direction, morality, and the drive to excel. That community, however, had dissolved: Harvard College, he declared at his inauguration, was exhibiting a "marked tendency to disintegrate, both intellectually and socially." Lowell blamed factors including the growing presence of Jewish students, the retreat of rich students into private luxury apartment buildings, the dramatic growth of the student body, the rise of the elective system, and the focus of professors on research rather than teaching. Harvard had become an impersonal organization unable to instill higher values in its charges. Students instead concentrated on pleasure and, like American men generally, winning status in the eyes of their peers.[17]

Lowell tried to forge tight social bonds at Harvard. For Harvard to have a "permanent moral effect" on students, he wrote, it must "weld the students into a closely bound community." To this end, he built residential houses inspired by Oxford. Close living and "intellectual and social cohesion" would lead students to model themselves on faculty masters and exemplary seniors. Lowell also hoped to harness students' solicitude for status in the eyes of their peers: the *esprit* of the houses would focus students' emulous rivalry on the "struggle for marks" and the quest for academic honors. That struggle would act as "a principle of selection, or as a preparation, of the fittest," instilling discipline and vigor that would animate them throughout their lives. Harvard men would show "enterprise," "aggressiveness," "ferocious energy," "self-reliance," and "self-discipline, self-control, and self-direction."[18] Harvard community again would be a school of manly self-reliance. In the name of forging that community, Lowell limited the number of Jews in the houses and excluded African Americans.[19]

Although Lowell hoped to make self-directing alumni, he also was working to instill a shared worldview. Alumni would direct their lives according to the norms, values, and aspirations they had internalized at Harvard. Dormitory life and the examples of housemasters and seniors, in conjunction with the curriculum, would impart, Lowell hoped, a unifying and uplifting high culture. Culture, he wrote in a typical remark, "implies enjoyment of things the world has agreed are beautiful; interest in the knowledge that mankind has found valuable; [and] comprehension of the principles that the race has accepted as true."[20] In the late 1800s, Brahmins had embraced high culture to legitimate their wealth and power: high culture helped Brahmins seem fundamentally superior to the workers who challenged them.[21] In hoping to cultivate an *esprit de corps* and "atmosphere of

[16]A. Lawrence Lowell, *At War with Academic Traditions in America* (Cambridge, MA, 1934), 27; Lowell, *Facts and Visions*, 51.

[17]Lowell, *At War with Academic Traditions*, 33, *passim*.

[18]Ibid., 7, 35–8, 45, 69, 110, 279; Lowell, *Facts and Visions*, 8, 32, 110.

[19]Marcia Graham Synnott, *The Half-Opened Door: Discrimination and Admissions at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, 1900–1970* (New Brunswick, 2010), 63.

[20]Lowell, *At War with Academic Traditions*, 117.

[21]Noam Maggor, *Brahmin Capitalism: Frontiers of Wealth and Populism in America's First Gilded Age* (Cambridge, MA, 2017).

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culture," Lowell was working to instill shared tastes, affects, and beliefs through which they would recognize themselves and other students of wealthy colleges as a national elite. He was using high culture to inculcate an elite habitus and consciousness.[22]

As dean, Donham shared Lowell's worries that the United States was on the path to sacrificing freedom for statism. Donham likewise feared that workers were prone to finding belonging in "a 'class-conscious' and fictitious social basis." He also shared Lowell's hopes that Harvard men would form a vigorous, national elite. To ready students accustomed to Gentleman's C's for business leadership, he intensified the workload. Like Lowell, he also hoped to use architecture and students' sociability to mold them. A campus—the school's "most trying need"—would forge students into "a socially and intellectually coherent group" that would instill self-discipline, morality, and a strong sense of duty.[23]

The resulting campus mirrored Lowell's efforts at Harvard College. HBS's neo-Georgian style would inspire students to excellence and duty. Students would live in dormitories that evoked the family home, the place whose warm bonds wealthy Americans saw as instilling morality. Each dormitory faced inward around a courtyard and had its own dining hall. The prominent placement of dormitories fostered "domestic feeling." Young instructors would live on campus so that they could humanize the students. The dean had a majestic house. The campus, Donham claimed, produced the "maximum development of opportunities for personal influence in awakening the men to their social responsibilities."[24]

Whitehead and Donham's theories of social disintegration

The famed English philosopher Alfred North Whitehead joined Harvard's Philosophy Department in 1924. Shortly thereafter, he gave a series of honorary lectures that he soon published as *Science and the Modern World*. In his lectures and book, Whitehead developed his own analysis of social disintegration—an analysis that would come to influence Donham deeply.

Whitehead cast science, expertise, and a crisis of leadership as the key drivers of society's decline. Science, he claimed, had undermined any values other than competition and self-interest. It had spread the view that morality was a myth, since reality was ostensibly nothing more than atoms governed by natural laws. Breakneck industrialization, rapacious competition, and the brutal exploitation of workers had resulted. Science also had fragmented knowledge, producing competing forms of expertise that, though each useful within their limits, were blind to their larger consequences. Chemists saw only chemical reactions, physicists only physical collisions. Economists likewise saw only economic laws, thus contributing to a rapaciously competitive individualism. Society was thus running according to

[22] Lowell, *At War with Academic Traditions*, 215.

[23] Harvard University, *Official Register of Harvard University: Report of the President of Harvard College and Reports of the Departments 1926–27* (Cambridge, MA, 1928), 123.

[24] "Program for Architectural Competition, George F. Baker Foundation, Graduate School of Business Administration" (Harvard Library, 1924), 9, Baker Library, Harvard Business School; Wallace Donham, "The Professional Side of Business Training," in Henry Metcalf, ed., *Business Management as a Profession* (Chicago, 1927), 227–8.

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partial rationalities that, unsubordinated to any centralizing force, were spinning out of control: "The directive force of reason is weakened … the generalised direction lacks vision … society is decaying, and there is need for preservative action." Democracy's inherent lack of "coordination," Whitehead added, only deepened society's crisis.[25]

Like Lowell, Whitehead put his hopes in a powerful elite. They would wield a "directive wisdom," imposing a "greater force of direction" on science and expertise. Directive wisdom would leaven the theoretical abstractions of science and expertise with intuition and judgement; where science and expertise saw parts, it would grasp the whole; where science and expertise dissolved values, directive wisdom would revive them. Whitehead put much of his hopes for forging this elite in ideas and education. The new metaphysics he was developing would join other emerging fields like the study of relativity in teaching that cooperation and values helped constitute the fundamental fabric of reality. He also hoped that new forms of education would hone students' intuition and not just their theoretical reason. A well-honed intuition would help them grasp the dense connectedness of all things. Elites would thus help subordinate expertise, master rapid change, coordinate social processes, revive values, and reintegrate and harmonize society.[26]

Donham quickly befriended Whitehead and invoked the philosopher's theorizing. Science and rapid, laissez-faire industrialization, he held, had made Americans materialistic and selfish. He also criticized consumerism, which corporate apologists frequently claimed as among corporate capitalism's chief benefits. In multiplying "materialistic temptations," Donham held, science had "brought about and intensified the selfish and materialistic development of a large part of the race." Affluence and consumerism, he concluded, had been false idols, leaving Americans perhaps less happy than before. Like Whitehead, Donham also held that the United States was suffering from a critical "abdication of leadership." The lawyers who had once helped lead the nation now served corporations. Scientists, entrepreneurs, and businessmen, in turn, pursued their aims without regard for the consequences. Pointing to Christian fundamentalists, Donham warned that revolutionary discontent lurked under the placid surface of the times.[27]

Donham also drew on Whitehead to develop his vision of businessmen as society's holistic leaders. Even before Whitehead's arrival, Donham had envisioned businessmen as a holistic elite. Many thinkers in the early 1900s thought that the nation lacked holistic leaders. The nation's rapid change, it seemed to them, had been so harmful partly because it had lacked top-down coordination. Whitehead had traced this coordination crisis partly to an unusual cause—the centrifugal myopia of expertise—but his view that an elite coordination crisis drove social disintegration was common. Both Theodore Roosevelt and Walter Lippmann, for instance, had held in the 1910s that the nation needed strong political leaders to impose order on rapid, uncoordinated change. Other coordination crisis theorists consigned the state to a smaller role. Corporate ideologists, for instance,

[25]Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* (New York, 1948), 196–7, 205.

[26]Ibid., 197.

[27]Donham, "The Professional Side of Business Training," 216; Wallace Donham, "Business and Religion," *Bulletin of the Harvard Business School Alumni Association*, 2/4 (1926), 121–9, at 122, 124–6.

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championed managers as adroit coordinators: managers not only coordinated their firm's many parts, but also worked together to coordinate production and stabilize the markets. Similarly skeptical of the state, Lowell had hailed Harvard men as the holistic leaders the nation badly needed. As president, he had imposed course breadth requirements to ensure that students were "intellectually well rounded" and capable of "unfettered judgement" rather than being "defective specialists."[28]

Already in his first few years as dean, Donham had searched for ways to turn HBS students into a holistic elite. Like Lowell and other champions of wealthy private colleges that claimed the mantle of the liberal arts, Donham believed that the liberal arts cultivated a breadth of mind that prepared graduates for higher positions in life. (Since students at wealthy colleges were also far more likely to be from affluent families than students at more vocational colleges, this rhetoric disproportionately benefited the wealthy.) Lesser business programs, Donham held, fit "individuals for particular positions in particular industries," whereas liberal-arts-undergraduates-cum-MBAs had a "less concrete but broader training" that prepared them for the top. He had also experimented with the curriculum, searching for ways to train students to rise to top positions. Harvard students, he held, should gain exposure across specialties and develop experience integrating them. In Whitehead's wake, Donham hailed his ideal businessman as answering the crisis of leadership and values. Only the businessman stood at the "storm center" of modern problems and hence the "solution … must be worked out largely through him." Unfortunately, he held, the peaceful prosperity of the 1920s had lulled businessmen into complacency despite the latent but grave threats to society.[29]

Donham would spend his deanship oscillating between proclaiming that businessmen were taking up their social duties and ruing that they remained selfish and oblivious. Whitehead's critique of expertise would eventually play a starring role in Donham's argument for why the state must remain small. Whitehead's hopes for intuition would likewise inform Donham's view of how businessmen should arrive at their crucial decisions in guiding firms. Most importantly, Whitehead's theories empowered the dean to envision businessmen as playing a capacious role in saving society from the loss of its old communities and values. Businessmen, he held in 1926, must get "deeper into the ethical and social foundations of men." Elton Mayo and Lawrence Henderson would help him figure out how.[30]

Mayo's initial search for social harmony

Mayo devoted much of his career to a typical progressive goal: the "whole-hearted and spontaneous co-operation" of social classes. Labor strife and the Great War drove Mayo's quest. He had been born in 1880 into an affluent family in

[28]Jewett, *Science, Democracy, and the American University*, 142–5; Alfred Chandler Jr, *The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business* (Cambridge, MA, 1993); Lowell, *At War with Academic Traditions*, 36.

[29]Wallace Donham, "The Unfolding of Collegiate Business Training," *Harvard Graduate's Magazine* 29/115 (1921), 333–47, at 335, 342; Donham, "Business and Religion," 124; Donham, "The Professional Side of Business Training," 227.

[30]Donham, "Business and Religion," 125.

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Australia at a time when such families had considerable authority and saw themselves as morally elevated leaders. In the early 1900s, however, labor gained considerable political power. During the war, labor relations reached a fever pitch, culminating in a two-month general strike in 1917 ignited by railroad workers protesting a time-and-motion study. Mayo, then a philosophy professor, used psychoanalysis to treat neurasthenic patients and shell-shocked soldiers. In the late 1910s and early 1920s, he forged an antistate theory of social disintegration and an analysis of how alienated labor drove that disintegration.[31]

A shared worldview and corporate funding united Mayo and Donham. After arriving in the United States in 1923, Mayo published a series of articles in *Harper's*. Declining productivity, class-consciousness, worker turnovers, strikes, susceptibility to socialism and political demagogy—these were ills that psychopathologists like himself, he claimed, could cure. The United States, he warned, was hurtling towards class war unless a new type of "administrators set themselves the task of understanding human motives, of cultivating desirable social movements, and checking the undesirable." Such claims won him Rockefeller funding. Mayo was part of an incipient movement of thinkers and practitioners who invoked the emerging fields of psychoanalysis and psychology to argue that businesses' neglect of the psychological needs of workers drove labor strife. They often criticized Taylorism for ignoring workers' psychosocial needs. Employers, in turn, embraced the promise of using experts like Mayo to make work more humane and workers more content, productive, and cooperative. The potential of using expertise to cast workers as suffering from mental ills also resonated with the long tradition of employers and the wealthy viewing workers as moral and mental inferiors who required paternalistic oversight: Henry Ford, for instance, had sent "sociologists" to monitor workers at home in the mid-1910s. After the 1914 Ludlow massacre had brought him national notoriety, John D. Rockefeller Jr had helped pioneer ways, such as company unions, for business to reduce labor turnover and conflict. As dean, Donham had quickly incorporated human relations into the curriculum alongside scientific management and asked Rockefeller for an interview. Several years later, Rockefeller foundations gave Harvard money to hire Mayo in 1926 before lavishing $1.5 million on Mayo and his colleague Lawrence Henderson through 1942.[32]

In the late 1910s and early 1920s, Mayo argued that mass democracy and the strong state helped trigger "social disintegration." He claimed, for instance, that industrial arbitration laws turned managers and workers into antagonists rather than partners. More perniciously, workers and capitalists each struggled to use the state for "absolute control" of the other. Mass democracy had spurred this struggle over the state by devolving power to manipulable voters. Politicians channeled the "unreasoned prejudices of the mob" into hatred and trust in "quack

[31]Elton Mayo, *Democracy and Freedom* (Melbourne, 1919), 49; Mark Griffin, Frank Landy, and Lisa Mayocchi, "Australian Influences on Elton Mayo: The Construct of Revery in Industrial Society," *History of Psychology* 5/4 (2002), 356–75. For a guide to the capacious literature on Mayo see Kyle Bruce, "George Elton Mayo," in Morgen Witzel and Malcolm Warner, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Management Theorists* (Oxford, 2013), 94–111.

[32]Elton Mayo, "The Great Stupidity," *Harper's Monthly Magazine* 151/902 (1925), 225–33, at 226; Bruce and Nyland, "Elton Mayo and the Deification of Human Relations."

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remedies" such as socialism. Combined with laissez-faire industrialization, Mayo warned, mass democracy and statism had made civil war, revolution, and tyranny imminent possibilities. The state, Mayo warned, must remain small.[33]

In casting the state as an agent of social disintegration, Mayo stressed the importance of strong social bonds. Customs, values, and institutions helped unite people in harmonious interdependence. In doing so, they also fulfilled people's deep needs for connections to others and for a purpose greater than themselves. Explicitly rejecting the claim of theorists like Le Bon that "humanity is necessarily unreasoning," he hoped for a reasoning public, which he believed would recognize the proper limits to state power. Like many progressives, including Dewey, Mayo also held that strong bonds were necessary to realizing a higher form of individualism than that allegedly imagined by nineteenth-century theorists like John Stuart Mill: strong bonds were necessary to "human freedom," "personal autonomy," and "self-development."[34]

Influenced by British idealists like T. H. Green, Mayo traced the functionality of social bonds to their gradual evolution. "Social traditions" like marriage and English common law were the result of "the accretion of slow centuries." These bonds had survived because they played important roles in harmonizing individuals and contributing to individual and collective flourishing. The cutthroat competition of laissez-faire, the "excessive individualism" of social and economic theorists, and the contest to control the state, however, imperiled their functionality. "Representative government," he complained, had substituted "the ballot-box" for "historically transmitted tradition, and the slow accretion of skill and knowledge." Proponents of socialism, mass democracy, laissez-faire, and atomized individualism all forgot, Mayo warned, that change must be continuous with the "historic social structure."[35]

Mayo vowed that society would heal itself if employers and labor would cease warring. Corporations and professionals, in his view, would act as society's agents of self-healing. The increasing scale of corporations, he declared, meant that corporations "could hardly fail to realise, if intelligently handled, that social service was [their] chief duty." Professionals, whom Mayo cast as repositories of the wisdom that society had gained over time, would help corporations improve working conditions and harmonize labor relations.[36]

Mayo used psychoanalysis in the early 1920s to analyze labor strife. He posited that labor strife largely resulted from workers' loss of "sanity and self-control," problems he in turn traced to illness, troubled homes, and poor pay and living conditions. Mayo also blamed deskilling, forging in effect a psychosocial theory of alienated labor. Deskilling's rote tasks, he argued, had deprived workers of fundamental needs—the "right to intelligent self-direction" and feeling that their work had a social purpose—while trying to sate them with consumer "amusements."

[33]Mayo, *Democracy and Freedom*, 7, 32, 38, 42, 48; Elton Mayo, "Industrial Peace and Psychological Research. V: Revolution," *Industrial Australian and Mining Standard* 67 (1922), 253–4, at 253.

[34]Mayo, *Democracy and Freedom*, 13, 17, 33.

[35]Tuomo Peltonen, "History of Management Thought in Context: The Case of Elton Mayo in Australia," in P. Genoe McLaren, A. J. Mills, and T. G. Weatherbee, eds, *The Routledge Companion to Management and Organization History* (London, 2015), 241–52; Mayo, *Democracy and Freedom*, 4, 6, 13, 47, 64.

[36]Mayo, *Democracy and Freedom*, 55.

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The unrelenting pace of industrial work, in turn, sapped workers' control of their thoughts. Workers thus fixated on pessimistic, hateful, and escapist fantasies—episodes that Mayo, borrowing from Pierre Janet, named "obsessional reveries." In making this diagnosis, Mayo was also drawing on his treatment of neurasthenia and shell shock, both of which commonly were seen as involving fatigue, loss of mental self-control, and obsessional fears. Factories with labor problems, Mayo wrote, were like a "'shell-shock' hospital" or "nervous clinic" rife with "hysteria." Workers fell prey to fear, hatred, paranoia, the demagoguery of labor agitators and some politicians, and even the desire "to sweep out of existence the whole social order." They fled from their pain into "Socialism, Syndicalism, Bolshevism—irrational dreams of anger and destruction." Neither shell-shocked victims nor workers knew the real cause of their suffering and thus needed expert help.[37]

Community as a form of workplace control

When Mayo joined Harvard, he thought that giving workers more rest would fortify their self-control. With Rockefeller largesse, he and Lawrence Henderson opened the Fatigue Lab at the school in 1927. Mayo, however, soon deemphasized fatigue. In his 1933 *Human Problems of Industrial Civilization*—his first major publication on the Hawthorne experiments—he claimed that many workers did not mind monotony and that most work was not very fatiguing.[38]

Mayo instead reworked his analysis of social disintegration and its cure, incorporating the language and concerns of American social science. Workers' lack of sanity and self-control, he now held, reflected insufficient "social control," a term that had become shorthand among intellectuals for the need for strong bonds to harmonize atomized individuals. Society was failing to socialize individuals into "social codes": the pre-reflective beliefs, values, desires, and norms that had formerly knit individuals into a harmonious whole.[39]

Mayo blamed many of the usual suspects—albeit no longer the poor pay and living conditions of workers—for this "social disintegration" or "social disorganization." Laissez-faire, industrialization, immigration, urbanization, and rapid change had eroded the close-knit communities of the past. As a result, the social codes lost their grip. Cities, for instance, isolated individuals in small families where society had few chances to socialize them. Mayo also blamed businessmen, scientists, intellectuals, and reformers for ignoring the psychosocial core of human nature. They acted, he held, on the assumption that workers needed only rest and pay; they

[37]Elton Mayo, "The Maladjustment of the Industrial Worker," in *Wertheim Lectures on Industrial Relations, 1928* (Cambridge, MA, 1929), 165–96, at 172; Mayo, "The Irrational Factor in Human Behavior," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 110/1 (1923), 117–30, at 123, 125; Mayo, "Industrial Peace and Psychological Research. III: The Mind of the Agitator," *Industrial Australian and Mining Standard*, 67 (1922), 111; Mayo, "Industrial Peace and Psychological Research. II: Industrial Unrest and 'Nervous Breakdown'," *Industrial Australian and Mining Standard*, 67 (1922), 63; Mayo, *Democracy and Freedom*, 53.

[38]Elton Mayo, *The Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization* (New York, 1933), 118; on Hawthorne see Richard Gillespie, *Manufacturing Knowledge: A History of the Hawthorne Experiments* (Cambridge, 1991).

[39]Mayo, *The Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization*, 164.

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did not grasp workers' deep needs for stability, community, and purpose. In remaking the world, they had thus eroded the social codes that would otherwise automatically regulate "the relations between persons and their attitudes to one another." They had sowed unhappiness, neurosis, anomie, labor strife, and radicalism.[40]

Mayo cited Durkheim, the sociology of the Chicago school, and the functional anthropology of Bronisław Malinowksi and George Pitt-Rivers. He also developed his views with his friend and partner, Lawrence Henderson. The heir of a wealthy ship chandler, an 1898 graduate of Harvard College, and a close friend and adviser of Lowell, Henderson was a biochemist renowned for his study of blood. He and Donham had become friends shortly after Lowell appointed them to serve on a committee he tasked with limiting the admission of Jewish undergraduates. Donham convinced Lowell that a social crisis lurked, and Henderson helped persuade Lowell to hire Mayo. In 1927, Henderson cofounded the Fatigue Lab partly in the hopes of applying physiology to labor problems. In 1926 or 1927, Henderson had also discovered Vilfredo Pareto's *Treatise on General Sociology*. In 1932, Henderson led a group of Harvard faculty worried about the welfare state and communism through the *Treatise*. Rising stars like Talcott Parsons, George Homans, Joseph Schumpeter, Bernard DeVoto, and Robert Merton attended. Mayo and his eventual successors, Fritz Roethlisberger and T. North Whitehead (son of the philosopher), also came. Donham encouraged his new faculty to attend.[41]

Building on Mayo, Henderson formulated a theory of why rapid change harmed society. Mayo, in his early writings, had stressed that social bonds owed their functionality the "accretion of slow centuries," and he urged Australians to let society again find its way to gradual solutions. Henderson turned that claim into a theory of social equilibrium. Like organisms, Henderson believed, societies had evolved ways to maintain their stability. Organisms and societies owed their stability and thus their survival to the dense interrelation of their many parts. Blood, for instance, had evolved to stabilize itself: when one element went askew, others compensated. Like any system, however, blood could only handle limited change—too much was fatal. So with society. Society's interdependent parts could handle slow change, but too much was deadly.[42]

Henderson also rooted social equilibrium in the fundamentally emotional nature of humans. "People," Henderson declared, "are more often than not emotional, irrational, or at least nonlogical in making decisions." Pareto had named these nonrational motives "the sentiments." Sentiments and values that derived from them, such as loyalty and morality, were nonrational in that people did not come to them through reason. The sentiments, however, played a key role in stabilizing

[40]Ibid., 120, *passim*.

[41]Oakes, "Alliances in Human Biology"; John Parascandola, "Organismic and Holistic Concepts in the Thought of L. J. Henderson," *Journal of the History of Biology* 4/1 (1971), 63–113; Isaac, *Working Knowledge*; Steve Fuller, "The Higher Whitewash," *Philosophy of the Social Sciences* 44/1 (2014), 86–101; Annie Cot, "A 1930s North American Creative Community: The Harvard 'Pareto' Circle," *History of Political Economy* 43/1 (2011), 131–59.

[42]Henderson was also building on a vein of thinkers who theorized the differential rate of change among society's parts. See Ross, *The Origins of American Social Science*, 239; Stephen J. Cross and William R. Albury, "Walter B. Cannon, L. J. Henderson, and the Organic Analogy," *Osiris* 3/1 (1987), 165–92, at 167.

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society: they were deeply rooted, bonded people together, and persisted in the face of change. Communities recovered from disasters, Henderson asserted, because people continued behaving as before. In stable societies, bonding sentiments, such as loyalty and morality, predominated. Rapid industrialization, rationalization, and social change, however, had exposed the volatility of the sentiments, triggering the anger and hatred that labor unions and politicians channeled. The sentiments that normally glued society together could also tear it apart. Society's leaders therefore had to tread cautiously. They should imitate the Hippocratic doctor who acted on the body to restore and heal its innate functionality.[43]

Both Mayo (who sometimes used Henderson's language of equilibrium) and Henderson also blamed their era's overweening trust in reason for social disintegration. Although Mayo had earlier expressed guarded hopes for a reasoning public, he and Henderson now asserted that the human capacity for reason was highly limited. Individuals could only effectively reason about limited topics on which they had deep familiarity. Unfortunately, however, people did not grasp these limits. Mayo and Henderson accused modern education—the hope of many intellectuals like Dewey for producing a rational, knowledgeable public—of instilling an inflated sense of reason's promise. Education misled people into overestimating their reasoning ability and into believing that reason could guide rapid progress. In overemphasizing reasoning, education encouraged individuals to form their own values and beliefs, thus weakening the grip of the social codes that would otherwise knit individuals together through pre-reflective beliefs, values, and practices. In preferring book learning to the exclusion of real-world experience, in turn, education also fatally insulated people from knowledge of the world. The penchant of college students for late-night metaphysics, the ignorance of businessmen about worker's psychosocial needs, and the delusional aspirations of intellectuals and radicals to revolutionize society exemplified this danger. Mayo and Henderson instead called for modest theories, born out of experience and constantly tested through it, that aimed to heal and fortify the innate functionality of social bonds. The complex interdependence of society's many parts was too great, human reason too limited: large-scale reform would cause large-scale harm.[44]

Mayo and Henderson held that healing society chiefly required acting on workers' sentiments rather than appealing to their reason. Corporations, Mayo held, must transform plans for reshaping work processes "from logic and the abstract into the human and actual routine with deep emotional attachment." The "decisions of large groups are chiefly … almost altogether emotional," Henderson wrote, "and I feel certain that the reason of the wise man has got to be turned into the sentiments and emotions of the masses in order that they may support the reasoned decisions." "If you are talking with, giving orders to, planning for, making use of a man," Mayo, Henderson, and T. North Whitehead

[43]Lawrence Joseph Henderson, "Sociology 23 Lectures," in Henderson, *On the Social System: Selected Writings*, ed. Bernard Barber (Chicago, 1970), 57–148, at 62–63, 135; Henderson, *Pareto's General Sociology: A Physiologist's Interpretation* (Cambridge, MA, 1935), 54–5.

[44]Elton Mayo, "Psychiatry and Sociology in Relation to Social Disorganization," *American Journal of Sociology* 42/6 (1937), 825–33, at 830; Mayo, *The Social Problems of Industrial Civilization* (Boston, 1945), 15–23. On Henderson's epistemology see Isaac, *Working Knowledge*, 63–91.

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wrote, "he cannot, in general, be persuaded by reason but only by an appeal to the sentiments."[45]

Mayo and Henderson sought to act on the sentiments of workers by forging and shaping community on the factory floor. They hoped to form close-knit work-groups—Mayo sometimes called them "teams." Whenever a small number of individuals, they believed, were brought together for a sustained time, they formed "a group with appropriate customs, duties, routines, even rituals" and "common activities, interests, and loyalties." Mayo and Henderson believed that these groups would fulfill workers' deep needs for community, purpose, and stability. Their tight bonds would also govern workers' minds, helping them avoid the obsessional reveries and misdirected anger that turned into labor strife and radicalism. Healthy groups made "for social order and discipline … and for happiness and a sense of security in the individual." They channeled "the eager human desire for cooperative activity" towards productivity. They helped discipline their own members into cooperation and efficiency, partly replacing, partly augmenting, the discipline of supervisors. "Morale is high in industry," Mayo explained, "when workers enjoy personal relations with each other and with their superior officers as members of a human group inspired by the same sentiments and desires, participating in the same routines of functional personal relationship …. His reflection while at work, his 'blind thinking,' is tied so closely to the group preoccupations, and disciplined by them." Healthy workgroups aided management in getting workers to see management "without reservation … as authority and leader."[46]

Unfortunately, Mayo and Henderson held, management was unwittingly destroying these groups or turning them hostile. In frequently redesigning work processes and reassigning workers to new locations in the factory, management was depriving workers of the security, stability, and social purpose of healthy workgroups:

> The stability of the world … is of first importance to every man … Change too rapidly imposed from without for him is evil, because his social system cannot change very rapidly Without [*sic*] breaking; it is bound together by sentiments, which change slowly and resist change, because rapid change is destructive of routines and rituals, of habits and of conditioned behavior.

Undermining the ties binding workers together, they held, made workers, both as individuals and as groups, slow, uncooperative, and prone to mental disturbances.[47]

[45]Elton Mayo, "Routine Interaction and the Problem of Collaboration," *American Sociological Review* 4/3 (1939), 335–40, at 336; Lawrence Joseph Henderson, "Letter to Conant," 11 Oct. 1939, Lawrence J. Henderson Papers, Baker Library Special Collections, HBS, Carton 1, Folder 35, 3; Lawrence Joseph Henderson, T. N. Whitehead, and Elton Mayo, "The Effects of Social Environment," in Luther Gulick and L. Urwick, eds., *Papers on the Science of Administration* (New York, 1937), 154–69, at 168.

[46]Elton Mayo, *The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization* (Andover, MA, 1945), 81–2, 101, 112; Henderson, Whitehead, and Mayo, "The Effects of Social Environment," 161, 164; Mayo, *The Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization*, 164; Elton Mayo, letter to Wallace Donham, Elton Mayo Papers, Baker Library Special Collections, HBS, [1937/1938], Carton 2, Folder 2, 7–8.

[47]Henderson, Whitehead, and Mayo, "The Effects of Social Environment," 167–8.

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Mayo and Henderson also wanted corporations to use therapeutic methods to act on workers' sentiments. Mayo, as is well known, championed supportive, non-judgmental, and nondirective interviews. Talking freely, Mayo explained, Hawthorne's "girl operatives" found relief from paranoiac fantasies about their bosses that "had preoccupied [their] mind[s] for years." In voicing their obsessions, they would grasp their irrationality and move beyond them, becoming better group members and workers. Mayo also held that workers would repay the sympathetic attention of management with loyalty. Interviews would likewise help management read worker complaints as symptomatic of deeper, displaced problems of group dynamics that experts could fix. "In any industry where there are individuals trained to listen carefully for the first hints of [obsessional] preoccupation," Mayo argued, "it is always possible to anticipate and prevent the emergence of 'unrest.'" Such interviews, Mayo maintained, required listening to "(a) What [the worker] wants to say. (b) What he does not want to say. (c) What he cannot say without help."[48] Henderson, in turn, generalized Mayo's therapeutic approach for everyday management. "Control your own [sentiments]," he lectured a business school class, "do not let others act on yours. Diagnose the sentiments of others, listen for (1) What people *want* to say, (2) don't say, (2a) won't, (2b) can't … Management of men is skill in utilizing existing sentiments (1) by tact, good manners, good breeding, considerateness or (2) correct diagnosis, prognosis and treatment of sentiments." In courses he taught to faculty and undergraduates on Pareto, Henderson used a series of case studies based on historical leaders to illustrate these points.[49]

Mayo and Henderson emphasized that future research must find ways of acting on sentiments and social bonds. The "social environment" of "sentiments, routines, and rituals" was of crucial importance, they wrote. "Let us study, weigh, modify, and use them." Researchers must discover how management could foster cooperative workgroups. Stabilizing workgroups was essential, but so was finding ways for effecting changes such as updating production techniques or adding group members. Mayo and Henderson, however, had few concrete suggestions beyond undirected interviews, sympathetic listening, and small and persistent teams.[50]

More generally, Henderson emphasized the importance of salvaging customs, routines, and practices of the past. If individuals did not fulfill "custom," he asserted, they were likely to develop "a neurosis like the experimental neuroses of Pavlov's dogs." Society would disintegrate, he held, "unless such words as home, father, mother, justice, truth, beauty are honored." Although intellectuals despised breeding, discipline, "loyalty, the bonds of family, the sense of kinship, love of country, and religious devotion," it was those "cohesive forces," he warned, that

[48]Mayo, *The Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization*, 91, 114; Mayo, "The Maladjustment of the Industrial Worker," 184–5.

[49]Lawrence Joseph Henderson, "Lecture Given before Prof. Doriot's Class," Lawrence J. Henderson Papers, Baker Library Special Collections, HBS, 1936, Carton 4, Folder 27, 4, original emphasis.

[50]Henderson, Whitehead, and Mayo, "The Effects of Social Environment," 169; Mayo, *The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization*, 32, 65–8, 108.

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"might even save us from disaster." Although Mayo likewise had stressed the importance of organic social change and the "historic social structure," by the late 1930s he often held that the fate of society hinged primarily, perhaps solely, on forging new bonds in factories. Struck by the nation's massive mobilization for the war, he held in 1945, for instance, that either researchers would discover how to turn factories into anchors of community amidst a world of constant flux or society would "destroy itself." Healthy workgroups, he optimistically noted, had even overcome divisions of race, gender, and region.[51]

Donham had a close relationship with Mayo and Henderson and championed their theories.[52] Only a "thin veneer of rationality," Donham held, overlay the "crossgrained and knotty foundation of human emotions." Pursuing the goal of a healthy "moving equilibrium" thus required leaders to attend to the "necessarily slow process of building routines and stabilizing group emotions." Leaders must strengthen "traditions and loyalties … [to] keep emotional reactions in predictable form" and to fortify the "cohering forces in society." They must "strengthen, purify, and use, so far as possible, all existing loyalties, customs, and institutions." Change had become so rapid, the injury to the "social organism" so acute, that the "true liberal seeking slow and orderly reform" must "join the conservative in defense of the past, trying to slow down change and strengthen the inherent forces of rehabilitation." He must "oppose new changes and … give society time to readjust itself." "Strong social routines, institutions, habits, traditions, and customs are the only methods except brute force," Donham explained, "which keep men's emotions within bounds, integrate society, and ward off chaos."[53]

Administration: the science of leaders

Donham, the most public-facing of the three, drew on Mayo's and Henderson's theories to damn many New Deal programs. A hardline antistatist in the mid-1920s, he conceded in the mid-1930s that the state should regulate work hours and conditions, provide for the sick and elderly, and stimulate the economy during downturns. He also, however, denounced programs such as the Tennessee Valley Authority and the National Labor Relations Board for sacrificing liberty. Such programs, he also claimed, augured the end of initiative, courage, socioeconomic mobility, and progress. He also argued that the New Deal imperiled democracy. The New Deal's "vast and multifarious changes," its "constant disturbance to customs, habits, and institutions," he warned in a typical remark, could unleash the violent potential of the sentiments and trigger fascism.[54]

[51]Lawrence Joseph Henderson, "Prospects of Liberty in the Modern World," Lawrence J. Henderson Papers, Baker Library Special Collections, HBS, 1938, Carton 5, Folder 18, 14, 21, 24; Lawrence Joseph Henderson, "What Is Social Progress?", in Henderson, *On the Social System*, 246–60, at 259–60; Mayo, *The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization*, xvi, 110.

[52]R. C. S Trahair, *Elton Mayo: The Humanist Temper* (New Brunswick, 2005), 323–4, 351.

[53]Wallace Donham, "Training for Leadership in a Democracy," *Harvard Business Review* 14/3 (1936), 261–71, at 263, 266, 267; Donham, "Business in Wonderland," *Today: An Independent Journal of Public Affairs* 3/14 (1935), 3–4, 22–3, at 4, 22.

[54]Donham, "Training for Leadership in a Democracy," 266.

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The trio fought the New Deal by outlining a holistic master science, "administration," wielded by an ideal leader, the "administrator." "We need a new type of business executives [*sic*]," Donham wrote in 1931, "administrators with understanding of the complex organism which we refer to as civilization." Mayo likewise concluded *Human Problems* envisioning a "new administrator" to "restore effective human collaboration" since "all social controls … have weakened or disappeared."[55]

The administrator culminated the trio's search for a holistic elite to reintegrate society. Administration was integrative, joining theory and praxis: it was "where social theory and action must meet." It was also integrative because it grasped the psychosocial dynamics that rationalization had neglected. "The universities," Donham explained, "must train many men for leadership who understand the nature of social stability, the danger of breaking many routines simultaneously, and the necessity of constant efforts to establish new routines to take the place of those which become weakened." Administrators would act on the sentiments and social bonds and would regulate the rate of change on the factory floor and in society at large.[56]

The trio's veneration of the administrator's holism mirrored incipient efforts among intellectuals like Charles Merriam to overcome disciplinary fragmentation to equip government for the "public administration" of society's problems.[57] The trio's veneration of holism also, however, derived from longer struggles over intellectual authority. The rise of the research university and disciplinary fragmentation had triggered these struggles in the late 1800s. One struggle took place among disciplines. Fueled by hopes that they could help steer the nation, academics like sociologist Albion Small jockeyed to position their discipline as the one that integrated all others.[58] A second struggle over intellectual authority took placed between the wealthy and the professoriate. In the mid-1800s, the gentry members of the pioneering American Social Science Association had claimed to have a holistic knowledge of society and saw themselves as society's coordinating leaders. The emerging research professoriate, however, largely did not come from upper-class families, and in the late 1800s many had invoked their expertise to call for reform. Although the academic freedom trials drove many academics to cast themselves as apolitical and narrowly focused specialists, others continued to endorse reform, if more cautiously.[59]

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[55]Harvard University, *Official Register of Harvard University: Report of the President of Harvard College and Reports of the Departments 1930–31* (Cambridge, MA, 1932), 140; Mayo, *The Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization*, 172, 183, 185.

[56]Wallace Brett Donham, "The Theory and Practice of Administration," *Harvard Business Review* 14/4 (1936), 405–13, at 409; Donham, "Training for Leadership in a Democracy," 267.

[57]Ethan Schrum, *The Instrumental University: Education in Service of the National Agenda after World War II* (Ithaca, 2019), 24–32; for accounts situating Donham, Mayo, and Henderson in Harvard's departmental milieu see O'Connor, "The Politics of Management Thought," 121–4; Isaacs, *Working Knowledge*, Ch. 2.

[58]Ross, *The Origins of American Social Science*, 54–63, 222; Thomas Haskell, *The Emergence of Professional Social Science: The American Social Science Association and the Nineteenth-Century Crisis of Authority* (Baltimore, 2000), 166–7; Sklansky, *The Soul's Economy*, 110–11.

[59]Mary O. Furner, *Advocacy and Objectivity: A Crisis in the Professionalization of American Social Science, 1865–1905* (New Brunswick, 2010).

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In the face of their diminishing intellectual authority, some Brahmins attempted to reclaim the mantle of holistic leadership. The trio, for instance, often quoted Brooks Adams, brother of Henry Adams and an 1870 graduate of Harvard. Brooks Adams also believed that the nation suffered from an elite coordination crisis. Capitalism, he claimed, was digging its own grave since it focused even the elite on making money—a problem he termed "excessive specialization." Society therefore lacked elites with the "administrative or generalizing mind" necessary to stabilize a society experiencing disruptive change. "Modern society," Adams wrote, "must have a high order of generalizing mind—a mind which can grasp a multitude of complex relations—but this is a mind which can, at best, only be produced in small quantity and at high cost." A similar anxiety about the loss of intellectual authority had spurred Lowell's claims that the "general" or "liberal" education of elite universities would produce not blinkered specialists, but men ready to "touch the world on many sides, or touch it strongly." In the face of the fragmentation of knowledge, claims that the liberal arts produced generalists positioned wealthy college men as society's proper leaders.[60]

In venerating the administrator, the trio countered politicians, reformers, and reform-oriented social scientists like those (including Merriam) upon whom President Franklin Delano Roosevelt relied. In the trio's eyes, these groups were well-meaning specialists eager to impose reforms that seemed rational from their myopic specialization but would result in unintended social disruption. Reformers and social scientists did not know that society's complexity eluded human reason. They did not realize that their pursuit of quick progress would provoke the explosive potential of the sentiments. Demagogic politicians like FDR, Donham explained, were experts in playing on voters' emotions but "lacked the broad training and essential knowledge of diversified factors." Their nostrums imperiled society.[61]

In casting administrators as society's ideal leaders, the trio drew on the legitimation strategy of professionalization. Administrators should have power because they monopolized a unique skill: integrating myriad fields of expertise to make important decisions. Echoing Whitehead, the trio rooted the businessman-cum-administrator's superiority in his local knowledge and experience-honed, intuitive judgment. They frequently likened the administrator to the Hippocratic doctor or Machiavellian leader who had an "intimate, habitual, [and] intuitive familiarity" with the body or state upon which they acted. Intimate knowledge and experientially honed wisdom and judgment helped administrators know what they could achieve and how they could best achieve it. Acting also disciplined businessmen: in guiding their firms, they submitted their views to the disabusing "test of observation and experiment." Unlike intellectuals and politicians, businessmen wedded to speculative or myopic theories did not survive. With their superior experience and intuitive judgment, businessmen were more capable of leading than the politicians and intellectuals who were, according to the trio, dependent on theoretical expertise. Defenders of

[60]Brooks Adams, *Theory of Social Revolutions* (New York, 1914), 208, 217; Lowell, *At War with Academic Traditions*, 108.

[61]Wallace Donham, "The Failure of Business Leadership and the Responsibility of the Universities," *Harvard Business Review* 11/4 (1933), 418–35, at 424.

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corporate power had responded to the threat of increasing regulation by christening themselves as the market's coordinators. In venerating the administrator's intuitive holism, the trio were upgrading the corporate manager to the chief coordinator and cultivator of society too.[62]

HBS, the trio hoped, would pioneer the study of administration and the training of administrators. It would largely enroll graduates of elite colleges whom the liberal arts had versed in holistic thinking. HBS would train them in what the trio cast as the businessman's defining act: deciding. After gaining exposure in their first year to the different functional areas of business such as marketing and accounting, students took an integrative capstone, Business Policy. The school likewise increasingly used the case method to accustom students to deciding how to handle real business problems. Business Policy, for instance, asked students to decide cases from the perspective of a firm's leader. The case study, Donham explained, taught the HBS student to "consider all the facts bearing on his concrete situation" and do "his own selecting and weighing" of the situation. Students would also learn that the social sciences "are never by themselves the basis for administrative decisions." Administrators reexamined the premises of social scientists to see what those academics had missed (especially the importance of the sentiments and social bonds in maintaining social equilibrium) and to "select from the mass of material the most significant facts and forces" to arrive at the best decision. "Specifically," he explained, "students needed training in the use of experts and protection against abuses by them." In the trio's view, making business decisions required a synthesizing judgment guided by an intuition forged through experience. In practicing students in deciding, the case method honed their intuition and capacity for leadership.[63]

Although the trio hoped that corporate elites would be society's chief leaders, they also wanted administration to guide politicians, bureaucrats, and union leaders. Donham hoped that administration would eventually grow essential to undergraduate education and thus shape future leaders of all organizations. In the meantime, he aimed to improve and limit government by training its bureaucrats. In his view, bureaucrats were myopic experts: absorbed in their regulatory specialties, they did not see that their regulations often harmed the social whole. In 1935, Donham announced that the school would train students for "public administration." Future bureaucrats would learn "that inept government programs … may destroy initiative, courage, and confidence, in the multitude of men on whom economic progress and the relief of poverty ultimately depend."[64] That same year, however, the conservative businessman Lucius Littaeur gave Harvard $2 million for a separate school of public administration. Rebuffed, Donham hoped his own school would still help train "administrators in public life who will use their power with restraint." Growing more despondent in the late 1930s that the nation was headed toward disaster, Donham and Henderson

[62]Lawrence Joseph Henderson, *The Study of Man* (Philadelphia, 1941), 14. See also Wallace Donham, *Business Adrift* (New York, 1931), 6–7.

[63]Harvard University, *Official Register of Harvard University: Issue Containing the Report of the President of Harvard College and Reports of Departments for 1941–1942* (Cambridge, MA, 1944), 262; Donham, "The Theory and Practice of Administration," 411.

[64]Wallace Donham, "A School of Public and Private Business," *Bulletin of the Harvard Business School Alumni Association* 11/1a (1935), 15–16.

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dreamed of turning "the School of Business into a School of the Social Sciences." In 1942, however, Henderson died and Donham retired. Mayo remained at HBS until 1947.[65]

Conclusion

Donham, Mayo, and Henderson had conceived their ideal society as a steadily evolving system. In that system, a small, largely elite segment of society would exercise power, reason, and self-direction. Entrepreneurs, inventors, and pioneering businessmen would continue to drive social change; corporations would master and limit it. To aid corporations in fulfilling that role, the trio aimed at populating corporations with two types of subjects, each the inversion of the other. At the top were businessmen in whom education, professionalization, business associations, and corporate life had instilled a sense of duty. They would exercise initiative, self-discipline, expertise, intuition, and wisdom in steering firms and thus society. They would aid social advancement by, for instance, ushering in new technology. At the same time, however, they would also preserve and enhance the functionality of the social system—a functionality rooted in the ability of tight social and cultural bonds to govern the psyche, fulfill the individual's deep needs for community and purpose, and knit people harmoniously together. Workers, in contrast to elites, had little reasoning ability and often lacked mental self-control; they were largely ignorant of the true causes of their problems and were prone to false, destructive remedies, and they thus needed paternalistic administrators to inculcate new customs, routines, and values. Corporations needed to direct not just workers' motions, in effect, but their emotions and social ties too.

The trio were not the only theorists in the first half of the 1900s who emphasized social bonds while also arguing that the state should remain small. They were part of a vein of like-minded opponents of the growing state, including William Graham Sumner, Walter Lippmann, Frank Knight, and Friedrich Hayek. Sumner, for instance, believed that deeply internalized "folkways" and "mores" had evolved gradually over time to knit individuals into functional interdependence. Social scientists, he believed, must nudge the folkways and mores to help the masses adapt to change. Hayek similarly stressed that pre-reflective bonds between people were vital to harmonizing society. "Conventions and traditions," he argued, enabled people "to work together smoothly and efficiently" with minimum "compulsion." Unfortunately, however, the "exaggerated belief in the powers of individual reason" promulgated by many intellectuals inclined people to reject these conventions and traditions as "seemingly irrational." Like the trio, Hayek also claimed that the exaggerated faith in reason led to the belief that the strong state could rapidly improve society. In reality, however, statist reform would sap the crucial social functionality arising from "the voluntary and spontaneous collaboration of individuals."[66]

[65]Morton Keller, *Making Harvard Modern: The Rise of America's University* (New York, 2001), 132; Norman Scott Brien Gras, "The Development of the School's Curriculum, 1919–1941," *Harvard Business School Alumni Bulletin* 18/3 (1942), 222–5, at 225.

[66]Sklansky, *The Soul's Economy*, 130–36; Jewett, *Science, Democracy, and the American University*, 132–5; Friedrich Hayek, *Individualism and the Economic Order* (Chicago, 1948), 8, 16, 22–4. On Hayek, Lippmann, and Knight see Angus Burgin, *The Great Persuasion: Reinventing Free Markets since the*

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This vein of antistate thought reveals the continuity of ideas between the social theorists of the late 1800s and early 1900s and the conservative movement that crystallized in the 1950s. Many mid-century conservatives fused antistatism with the valorization of social structures and traditions deriving from the past. In doing so, these conservatives were reprising arguments that progressive intellectuals had popularized. Responding to the nation's rapid modernization and intensified social strife, disintegration theorists had ascribed a rationality and harmony to the past that they had sought to restore and strengthen. The social bonds that they thought were emerging, though taking forms appropriate to modern society, would fulfill, they hoped, the same harmonizing function as those of the past. These bonds also would bridle, they believed, technology and the market. If these thinkers embraced "progress," they did so partly by attempting to recapture the social rationality of the past. From the early to mid-1900s, in turn, both proponents and opponents of the growing state drew on this ubiquitous faith in social bonds. Proponents argued that the state actualized social bonds and empowered society. Opponents from Lowell and Sumner to the 1950s *National Review*, in contrast, held that social bonds more than the state must do the chief work of neutralizing the negative effects of the market. Many took this argument a step further: the strong state, they argued, eroded those vital bonds by, for instance, undermining self-reliance, family structure, or Christian morality. Although small-state conservatives and pro-state liberals disagreed about the role of the state, they both emphasized social bonds. They both shared roots in "progressive" social thought.

The trio left an important legacy. Chester Barnard's 1938 *The Function of the Executive*, which he wrote while associating with the trio, helped popularize the view that corporations must knit individuals into a stable social equilibrium. In the postwar period, the school's prominence helped it popularize the archetype of corporate leaders as profoundly concerned with the commonweal. During the early Cold War, a succession of professors, deans, and HBS fellow travelers, such as Peter Drucker, likewise called for business elites to embrace their social responsibility and limit the welfare state by attending to the needs of workers for meaning, stability, and workplace community.[67] So, too, the school's celebration of its case method as preparing businessmen to be expert and intuitive decision makers left a lasting legacy, especially among its alumni.[68] The trio thus helped popularize an archetype of the ideal businessman, one summoned to a certain vision of social responsibility while also warranted in their use of concentrated power.

Depression (Cambridge, MA, 2015); and Hanlon, "The First Neo-liberal Science." Hanlon captures key similarities between the trio and Hayek, but his implication that the trio sought to shape the worker into an "entrepreneurial subject" is incorrect. The trio largely sought to dampen the market's effect on workers.

[67]William G. Scott, *Chester I. Barnard and the Guardians of the Managerial State* (Lawrence, 1992); Nils Gilman, "The Prophet of Post-Fordism: Peter Drucker and the Legitimation of the Corporation," in Nelson Lichtenstein, ed., *American Capitalism: Social Thought and Political Economy in the Twentieth Century* (Philadelphia, 2006), 109–31; Bert Spector, "'Business Responsibilities in a Divided World': The Cold War Roots of the Corporate Social Responsibility Movement," *Enterprise & Society* 9/2 (2008), 314–36; Khurana, *From Higher Aims to Hired Hands*.

[68]Ryan M. Acton, "Harvard Business School and the Making of a Capitalist Elite, 1908–1980" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 2015), 110–41.

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The trio's thought also was a pivotal moment in the history of labor discipline and management theory. Mayo's protégé and successor, Fritz Roethlisberger, continued the study of human relations at Harvard Business School, eventually helping found the discipline of organizational behavior, which became a staple of business schools. Likewise, Mayo was, according to Sanford Jacoby, "enormously influential" in shaping the search for strategies of managing workers. On one hand, Mayo's visibility and intellectual authority helped draw managers' attention to factors such as job stability at a time when they otherwise were not, as Jacoby notes, inclined to listen to workers themselves. On the other hand, Mayo also armed management, a long line of critics has argued, with a novel rationale for invasive forms of power.[69]

More broadly, the trio's techniques of labor discipline proved influential and long-lasting legacies of "progressive" social thought. The trio turned the ubiquitous faith in social bonds into new, collectivizing tools of control. Many forms of labor discipline, in contrast, individuated workers. Firms, for instance, often tied a worker's pay to their rate of production or denigrated closed shops as threats to individual liberty. In the second half of the 1900s, many forms of labor discipline would likewise train workers, in Foucault's view, to be self-directing entrepreneurs of themselves. Nor did the trio anticipate future techniques of labor discipline that cast the workplace or the labor market as a source of vitalizing competition that constituted true individual freedom and revealed the individual's meritocratic worth. The trio instead tried to forge workers into collective subjects: tight groups whose pre-reflective customs, habits, and values, tended from above, would discipline them. Their aspirations for workgroups countered worker solidarities such as soldiering, unions, political movements, and intra-ethnic bonds. The trio were a theoretically sophisticated vanguard of business's emerging—and still ongoing—effort to use workplace community, emotional attachment, and sense of collective purpose to drive workers' productivity and compliance.[70]

Indeed, the trio's vision for workers assigned social bonds an expansive role in shaping the self. In his early writings, Mayo had looked forward to resurgent social bonds actualizing "human freedom," "personal autonomy," and "self-development"; he had envisioned a reasoning public immune to demagoguery; and he had condemned deskilling for depriving workers of self-direction at work and "the right to think at all."[71] The trio's eventual answer to deskilling, labor strife, and political radicalism, however, was to diminish workers' capacity for critical thought and self-direction. They did not seek to preserve or fortify workers' ability

[69]Sanford M. Jacoby, *Modern Manors: Welfare Capitalism since the New Deal* (Princeton, 1997), 221; Jacoby, *Employing Bureaucracy: Managers, Unions, and the Transformation of Work in the 20th Century* (Mahwah, 2004), 180. For recent critiques of Mayo see Kyle Bruce and Chris Nyland, "Human Relations," in Adrian Wilkinson, Steven Armstrong, and Michael Lounsbury, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Management* (Oxford, 217), 39–56; and Hanlon, "The First Neo-liberal Science." For an appreciation see Eva Illouz, *Cold Intimacies: The Making of Emotional Capitalism* (Cambridge, 2007), 11–15.

[70]Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919–1939* (Cambridge, MA, 2008). On using racial identity as collectivizing control see David R. Roediger and Elizabeth Esch, *The Production of Difference: Race and the Management of Labor in U.S. History* (Oxford, 2012).

[71]Mayo, *Democracy and Freedom*, 52.

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to distance themselves, psychically and intellectually, from the communities and cultures of which they were a part. Rather than calling for workers to use reason to guide their own lives, for instance, they held that workers' attempts to do so furthered social disintegration. Rather than trying to make workers individually "self-directing"—their goal for Harvard men—they emphasized the need for immersive communities and cultures to continuously and pre-reflectively determine workers' psyches, beliefs, values, and habits. The passivity and inability to think for oneself that Lowell had feared would spell the death of individualism, liberty, limited government, and social harmony looked to the trio like a font of social health. Championing liberty from the state, the trio aimed to equip corporations with expansive power over workers' inner and collective lives. The emphasis that early 1900s intellectuals put on social bonds gave rise to influential theories that justified the strong state, but also to influential techniques for controlling workers.

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