

As yet we have resisted any temptation to require doctorates of our faculty members, The glut in North America produced by the proliferation of batch production doctoral programmes in the sixties has had this effect there. We need to exercise considerable care to avoid such an outcome here. I do not for one moment believe a doctorate to be a necessary or sufficient condition for a good Business School teacher. It is just one route that some people prefer to follow. To produce researchers for our Business Schools I believe it has considerably more to offer, but even there other routes can serve very well indeed, like a career in marketing research.

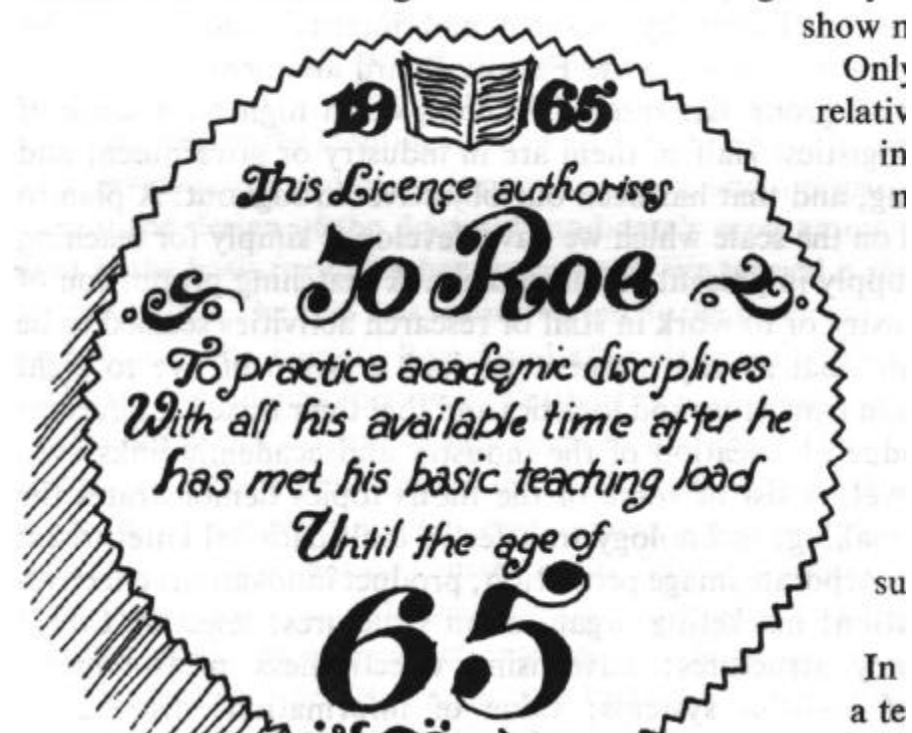
Graffito 33

## ACADEMIC LICENCE

It is a constant reminder to me that Business Schools are a matter of more peripheral concern to businessmen than they are to us when I am casually asked if I am 'on vacation'. It happens continually throughout the summer months from late June to late September. At Easter I am also quizzed when I propose a meeting that inadvertently falls on Easter Monday or Good Friday ~ not a deliberate ploy but a mistake I've been making since 1968 when I began buying UNICEF diaries which show no religious holidays at all. Only at Christmas am I left in relative peace, probably because industrial holidays there are now as long or longer than ours.

If I sound defensive it is because I am. Flexitime and academic freedom are regarded at times as synonymous with the good life of long vacations, punting in glorious sunshine and dining-in nights in medieval College Halls. In practice, we dined-in once a term at Bradford and so far never at Cranfield. Vacations consist of totally unguaranteed periods

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Class contact periods at Bradford lasted 33 weeks for undergraduates but 30 weeks for postgraduates. At Cranfield we run 4 x 11 week terms for the MBA programme which provides 3 x 2 week gaps between each term, partly spent marking exams for the start of the next term, or in the pause after the final term one of the two weeks is spent on 'Welcome Wagon/T Group' activities for the incoming class! Gone are the halcyon days I seem myself to recall of 21 or 24 week terms with teachers keeping casual hours of work.

This realignment of work load makes far better use of the capital resources of a university which in all but especially in the case of scientific and engineering equipment are very considerable indeed. In this respect we are better than most sectors of education which by and large use their buildings and equipment for much shorter periods of time. A factory manager getting the utilisation a high school gets from its facilities would be redundant in no time. Nonetheless, the greater use of capital resources puts a real strain on the academic staff members in terms of their responsibility to be academic, to think and ponder and conduct research to develop knowledge.

Sandwich courses which treat two or more sets of students in a university at the same time but have half or more of them out on attachment in industry or government, go even further towards utilising capital resources than our MBA pattern at Cranfield or the Bradford structure did. Its sheer increase ~n numbers, however, led to some even if less than proportionate staffing increases. Simply giving students an intensive 12 months MBA rather than a more leisurely 24 month programme gains no extra resource - it represents a pure productivity gain to the system as represented through increased teaching hours with students.

My typical working week on flexitime over the past decade has been 50/60 hours, without overtime. I lodge no complaint although it should be recorded on no less an authority than the Professor of Managerial Economics at the University Management Centre in Bradford that my real income has slumped 19 per cent during the period. In fact my nominal income has declined throughout the second half of the decade from all sources as I turned more and more from writing books which generated substantial income to scholarly pursuits.

Sympathy is neither sought nor required. A time perspective on the work and remuneration of the man with the academic licence is appropriate. I think I define my licence as the opportunity to work conscientiously and competently within my subject field and to have in terms of my teaching and research absolute discretion as to what I present by way of evidence and conclusions for views and knowledge I purvey. Such licence of necessity must be constrained by mutual consent by the academy in which I work and by my fellow academics in terms of co-ordinated programmes of teaching but it can seldom if ever lead to coercion in respect of the manner or content of what I teach within any particular part of a programme.

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Such licence is often more imaginary than real. I know of few academics who assert such a right; rather most of us look for mutual guidance within the faculty group as to patterns of presentation and balance of content. Only our interpretation remains wholly free-wheeling and even here, the two or three abnormal faculty members will usually face rejection by the students if they deviate too strongly from their preconceptions and normative expectations.

Academic licence extends in practice well beyond the words we utter. Once a faculty member's 'hours before a class' requirement has been met he is licensed to allot his time as he wishes. There are no sanctions against the man who chooses to form a dramatic club, play golf or squash or tend his garden. He is unlikely to win promotion but the activities of our Association of University Teachers (AUT) has ensured that virtually no other sanctions exist. Such a stewardship approach to time allocation works well for a small percentage of faculty members who are almost entirely self-motivated. Many more of us require group-supportive relationships if anything much is to be made of the stewardship. Hence my earlier views about the role of professor as a leader not recluse. In the absence of academic leadership many resources do and will go to waste under the conventional university scheme of things. Even with active leadership, considerable problems will exist with the faculty member who prefers to spend time in other, non-academic pursuits despite his acceptance of full-time employment from the institution.

Academic licence is enshrined in the principle of tenure which most academics gain after a period of three years' probation although even this is now in some doubt under recent changes in the law affecting dismissals. During the probationary period the faculty member is assessed as a teacher, researcher and fellow member of the academy. It is in my view an eminently sensible time period for it reflects realistically the gestation period for effective teaching and fruition in research work. We have in Britain of late got ourselves into the hazardous position in some but not all Business Schools of failing to use probation to sort out the best faculty members from the average. Few if any probationers ever leave after three years. Social, institutional and union pressures seek to prevent probation being what it was meant to be. As such it throws enormous emphasis onto selection procedures in the first instance and drives one to a series of new devices to reintroduce the necessary flexibility. Fixed term teaching posts are used at London, Henley and Cranfield to my knowledge where short term contracts with no implied tenure are offered. Academic freedom for the contract period is afforded but at its end infringement of academic norms or preferences within the group can by implication be a reason why no further contract is offered. Which is a pity if we value academic freedom, the licence to say what we think regardless of its current

any other juncture in his career. To define academic licence as the right to do nothing with one's stewardship of time outside the classroom in my view a travesty of the notion.

None of which is intended to suggest it is a big problem. I have dwelt on it here because I am appalled at the current direction of some social and legal trends which have made removal for poor stewardship a virtual impossibility. Neither, incidentally, is it a problem unique to universities. It goes right back to skills at initial selection of staffs, and management's ability to 'motivate' colleagues as workers. Having done the best we are able to do in this field however, a system of stewardship requires accountability and the power to remove.

*Graffito 34*

## **CASES CASES EVERYWHERE**

More than any other teaching device the case study and its major dynamic variants the incident process and business game, have revolutionised management teaching in Britain over the past ten years. Yet they still divide most faculties and many programme participants, some giving avid support and others believing they signify a renunciation of teaching initiative by the tutor. It is trite and often incorrect to observe that they need to be used only where they can extend teaching more effectively than any other technique.

During my study tour in North American Business Schools in the late sixties on a Yablon Fellowship I was granted an audience with the headman at Harvard. I got ten minutes which I imagine was considerably more than I deserved. The poor man was and I suspect still is overwhelmed with visitors wanting to make oblation at the shrine of twentieth century management education. The gist of my questioning was:

"Can the case method be used here and there on a programme of education?" The reply, I remember clearly, was simply "No". Either you use the case method or you do not. That does not prevent you from inviting students to go over in class well-documented examples of what happened in certain business situations with a view to criticising them and seeing how lessons taught in other ways can be reinforced or ideas conveyed in principle can be applied. But that is not the case method. The case method involves using case studies all the way, from teaching business policy to statistics.



At the time I know I was amazed, even incredulous. Nonetheless, I have increasin

At the time I know I was amazed, even incredulous. Nonetheless, I have increasingly moved over the years to a position where I can understand at least what the proposition amounts to. It is a laboratory form of learning by doing, where all teaching or subject matter injections are presented to the participating student in the context of a problem they are looking at. If we are to continue without our own campus business enterprise to run on a day to day basis, and if the pattern of in-company education is not to flourish to such a degree that it obsoletes our Business School work, then a very strong argument needs to be advanced educationally against the case method, far far stronger than anything so far presented.

It does, of course, go right to the heart of our objectives in university Business Schools. Are we seeking to convey knowledge the effective recall of which is alone sufficient to qualify for an academic distinction or do we also expect to see students demonstrate an ability to use the knowledge in real situations? The answer is certainly normally the latter yet we do not accomplish it-rather they accomplish the first goal, the traditional goal. Again and again we aspire to ensure that the student covers all that's to be known on new product planning or venture group management He can recall the various structures but he does not have the confidence to relate or apply it. How much more realistic and viable it is to ask him to study twenty real life situations in which these ideas either were applied or could he applied. The strength and confidence it affords is so much greater.

Most of us, myself included, had not the courage or could not see the wisdom of such a complete dedication to one method. It seemed almost a contradiction of what we felt as teachers and there was no doubt at all that it flew in the face of what we had all experienced in our separate studies at university in politics, or economics, or

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physics or whatever. Instead we 'picked and mixed' eases with lectures, seminars, tutorials, games, guided reading, films and the rest. We prepared good overhead transparencies to ensure that we got overall the points we felt needed to be mentioned. As marketing teachers we should have known better in terms of our models of customer behaviour and the power of our communications with them.

effectiveness at education within other industries may be called into question, its impact on performance and behaviour within the companies concerned is remarkable. Never has this been more necessary than when working with hostile groups ~ most memorable are my experiences of four years' flirtation with librarians. Many senior members of this profession manage the information systems they are charged with more like a warehouse than a potentially active element in the educational process. They view budgeting, personnel management and the promotion of library services as quite undignified activities which bear no resemblance to their own roles. Once, however, specific case materials had been developed and used both in Britain and North America their receptivity was almost totally transformed.

Once embarked upon the use of case studies other than for illustrative purposes, the tutor's need to structure the syndicate work situations is extremely important. Groups can devote very long periods of time in discussion without really learning very much at all. The classic problem of the fascinating digression that amuses us all but contributes little to learning must be kept in proper perspective. Typically we do it through the social pressures of the plenary sessions in class when any member of the syndicate can be chosen to discuss or analyse any aspect of the case study.

With large numbers of syndicates any pattern of syndicate reports from each group is tedious to all in the extreme whilst it is vitally important that the work each group has undertaken is not ignored or passed over lightly, a cardinal sin for a teacher. The case leader has to draw together an overall treatment of the case with occasional small technical cameos of this or that technique perhaps allied with directed reading suggestions. One device colleagues and I have used extensively in our work in Holland and at Cranfield on short programmes is to permit all syndicates to proceed with a

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cast generally for the first three quarters of an hour or so; then we visit them and get them to focus on a particular topic within it. This implies that at report-back time all syndicates will have a sufficient grasp of the case to join in all of the discussion but also a differentiated unique contribution can be obtained from each syndicate group member as well. We have been meticulous on all occasions to insist that although each syndicate will need a chairman it may not appoint him raconteur. We reserve the right as tutors to call on whom we wish to proffer views in class.

To offer case-bound courses in their entirety, whether industry specific or not, is still broadly speaking impossible in Europe unless great use is made of North American materials. The sterling work at Harvard and elsewhere to publish annotated bibliographies of case materials makes this feasible but I have jibbed at too extensive a use of North American cases. It has been my intention and it so remains to develop and use European materials as part and parcel of the development of a pan-European view of marketing for British students.

*Graffito 35*

# ALUMNI UPS AND DOWN

I was sure I recognised the well dressed figure in front of me at the check-in desk at Heathrow but it was not until we went onto the tarmac to board the plane for Helsinki that I realised he was an alumnus. Naturally, he went into the first class and I into the tourist economy cabins after a brief verbal exchange. I was kindly invited to visit him whilst teaching in Finland where he was a local manager. As is customary on such occasions, after the usual exchange of reminiscences we got around to talking about the basic purpose of the Business Schools and what progress had been made since nineteen sixty whatever. The inevitable answer was little but steady.

For alumni in general rose-tinted spectacles are normally used when viewing what transpired on campus several years back. The highlights linger in the mind but what was bad tends to be either forgotten or kindly and sympathetically remembered. It is really rather like 'family', a charitable attitude towards almost everything done at Bradford or Cranfield no matter how well or badly. The critical faculties are seldom exercised as sharply about the School as we had hoped they would be about matters under academic consideration therein.

Alumni on the way up seldom feel any great need for further contact, and since so few attempts so far have been made to consolidate links from the Schools' side, few are present. The occasional phone call, in response to a learned or not so learned paper, may well come through or a personal invitation to help tackle a consultancy.

ensure of facilitate comradeship and intellectual interchange

The problems of years one to ten have typically lain in the relatively small numbers of alumni produced thus far and the consequent difficulties which arise in creating any momentum. It is of course a chicken and egg situation. The lack of momentum leads to lack of interest or involvement and it never is the right time to get started. We launched a modest start at Bradford through the Management Centre Association, run from the School's office with a small membership fee. A newsletter, short course details and a syndicated journal were provided but membership never flourished.

At Cranfield the reverse course of action was attempted. Rather than a School-originated activity, each year of MBA graduates was encouraged to organise itself into a small and effective cell. Like all reunion groups only a few stalwarts remain enthusiastic beyond the first two or three years unless the bond is something greater than simple social interaction.

In both Schools there was an elitist argument and debate about who should qualify for membership of any such alumni group rather along the lines for which I have already castigated the Business Graduates Association. Should those who attend shorter courses, undergraduates, middle managers and MBA students be mixed together; and what of PhD candidates on completion of their theses? Such arguments seem spurious, even pathetic. Membership of an alumni group is not a symbol of status or academic standing but rather one of common interest in the School itself. Some but not many MBAs I can well remember qualified less in this respect than some, although but a few, on two day seminars.

Business Schools need their alumni perhaps more than alumni feel they need their alma mater. We want them to continue taking an interest in our work by feeding back evaluation to faculty members so that syllabi can be continually kept up to date. Equally, opportunities for employment for MBA graduates are perpetually sought as are introductions amongst potential students through word of mouth communication about the School. Last but not least there will be times when alumni support at both political and economic levels is required. Library or case writing funds are notoriously short at almost all times; good research opportunities are always welcomed; faculty exchange programmes as part of their continuing development as discussed earlier are regularly required. For all these reasons we should keep our alumni relations in good repair.

Alumni on the way up need us as well however-we do have a very real role to play which Business Schools have consistently failed to meet. I have dwelt at length in Graffito 20 on the need, which is ever more apparent today, for refreshment throughout the working life of a manager, be he an MBA or not. What we can teach in a year or six weeks can never hope to suffice a manager for more than a decade unscathed. The development of alumni workshops on a regular basis has already taken place in North America and become a vitally important facet of several Schools' academic work. It affords a uniquely homogeneous group of students for a programme which

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enables a great deal to be achieved. It affords the opportunity for feedback of a rare type to tutors and faculty members. We are placed in the context of having known alumni well some ten years previously and now being able to observe how they have proceeded in business or government. We all too often can be surprised and perhaps learn from our surprise how it was they managed to move in the directions they did. I have not so far seen any evaluative research comparing British MBA performance at School with real world performances, but the opportunity to conduct it now exists.

There are very real geographical problems in attempting to maintain contact with alumni via personal attendances at workshops or seminars. There can be little doubt that an intellectual management journal can play a vitally important part in such long distance contacts, as can correspondence programmes or any range of communications media like video tapes or audio cassettes. I recall being greatly impressed in Finland with the Management Book Selection offered by LIFIM, the Finish Management Association, in the context of structured continuing professional refreshment for its members. Getting together good, valuable, non-personal communications with alumni takes much more effort than any School in Britain has devoted to the problem so far. In their absence few if any links can remain for long and little of the important feedback into the School will materialise.

Alumni are not always voyaging upwards. There are occasions when we sight them coming down from heights they have ascended. Often their advancement has been too rapid, sometimes their ego is in poor shape. Occasionally they are thinking of becoming teachers, seeking refuge from the hard world of business. I do not think this latter group can have even the vaguest idea of the impact such a declared intention has on those of us who perceive the work of Business School teachers in quite another light.

The most commonly encountered reason for alumni downs seems to be unreasonable expectations on the part of both employers and graduates. During the sixties the concept of the MBA was wildly oversold and ludicrous starting salaries were paid, reaching twice as high as for a comparable graduate in the sciences or technology. No matter how well we did our job of educating managers, and we did not always do too well, graduates were seldom if ever able to step directly into a management job without further acculturation. The most significant problem encountered is a lack of *human* judgement and sometimes decision making paralysis. Employers who did not recognise difficulties such as these, and overwhelmed

## *HUFF AND PUFF*

It was a beautiful day in Bradford in early 1972 when the boss asked me if I could spare a moment. I could and we walked in the rose garden at Heaton Mount. He wanted to let me into a badly kept secret that he had been invited to return to Henley as Principal. I was delighted. He indicated that he was still considering it but everything I knew about him told me he would go. It had much to offer in terms of its resource base although some academic surgery was considerably overdue. When I learnt that it was to become an associated college with Brunel and to receive UGC funds for developments in the next quinquennial planning period it became crystal clear that not to go would be a great opportunity foregone. The problem was, therefore, quite simply one of succession.

Building Bradford Management Centre from 1963 to 1972 had been team work by a group of some twenty or more individuals but there were four or five most dearly associated with its development at a senior level. In addition, there was a group of three newly appointed professors, one taken from industry and two from predominantly academic careers. Whilst the boss had always delegated well and effectively in all major areas of activities he had been loath to designate or imply a deputy in terms of the overall discretion or leadership of the Centre that was his domain. In relationships with the outside world and with the Senate and senior administrators of the university, he was the boss. There was accordingly no designated or natural successor waiting or groomed in the wings. *Après lui, le deluge.*

As is so frequently the case in organisational relationships the formal and informal structures of power diverged at Bradford throughout the period I was there. The reality was that the Director of the Management Centre was nominated by Senate of the University which naturally enough is a body representing all its academic members. Accordingly, *de jure*, it was up to Senate to replace the Director as and when he left. This they proceeded to do on the basis of the deliberations of a small senior committee of the top university and faculty administrators. Each of the professors and selected senior staff from the Management Centre were asked to attend at the committee to express their views on the issue. Of their own volition, staff within the Centre and students also proffered their opinions which I was flattered and grateful to learn supported myself. I was not uninterested in the post certainly in the short term, since I did not believe that other senior faculty members were deeply enough immersed in the full gamut of the Centre's affairs to be able to sustain the momentum after the boss left. Such was the rationale also of staff opinion in general. I believe Senate's special committee thought otherwise and after some debate Senate endorsed their recommendation although not with any overwhelming majority. The job was offered

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to a senior staff member who had been totally unassociated with the Centre's development and who could clearly be expected to consolidate on the basis of the achievements others had wrought.

Many members of the Centre's academic staff were quite naturally disappointed, myself included. I had argued and indeed submitted detailed supplication to Senate's decisive meeting, which since I was not a member I was unable to attend, that organisational alternatives should be explored. To no effect. The Senate on the advice of its guiding committee was apparently intent on a break with the past.

I think there were two underlying issues present although the extent to which they were explicitly discussed or stated varied. Firstly, as I have already identified, the collaboration between the Management Centre and technology in the period then current was of vital importance. The Business School had been extremely successful ahead of all other areas within the university at attracting external resources for new chairs and for buildings as well as gaining especial reference in the UGC's grant letter for the quinquennial planning period. Such external strength and influence created rancour within on occasions, particularly when the derived power was flouted. A new Director who did not have such power, indeed owed what he did have to the internal folk who wanted a much closer relationship with the technologies, was an obvious requirement. Since Senate was dominated by the technologies and the guiding committee by the key university officers, its recommendation was

unlikely town, within a most unlikely university. When the boss announced his departure the time to make the change had arrived and with him off the scene it was also possible. He left behind no Crown Prince, just heirs-presumptive.

The struggle was fierce at times, even a little dirty. One professor withdrew into his shell, shocked. Once Senate's decision was promulgated, by sealed, personal letter to the vanquished and the victor, there was no revolution, no 'free Business School', no attempt to rally staff in opposition to the newly designated leaders. Rather, thoughts turned to fresh pastures.

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I had not been idle whilst the debate was in progress. With help from my friendly friends I was invited to visit with a number of competitive Business Schools to see whether it was possible to transfer my team there to continue our work in a potentially more conducive environment. Cranfield obliged and by the late summer several of my academic and research colleagues and all the group's doctoral colleagues decamped from Yorkshire to make our way to Bedfordshire. The Research Councils obliged by transferring the quota awards held by our students and all the industrial and governmental research sponsors transferred resources as well other members of staff were to move a little later to Henley where both Bradford's senior production and management development academics of the 1963-1972 era can be found at work. The Director of Doctoral Studies subsequently emigrated to Loughborough. The remainder lingered behind in what quickly became a different culture ~ not necessarily better or worse, just different.

It remains my view that Senate's decision was inept in that it sapped more life blood from the Management Centre than necessary or than was good for it. In the face of internal disagreement an outsider should have been introduced onto the scene. Others, however, believe it was inevitable and cathartic, that it finally got Bradford into a gentlemanly posture vis á vis the world outside and the university within.

If Cranfield felt they got a bargain when we joined they soon had occasion for second thoughts. The Business School at Cranfield had no doctoral work in hand nor any research appointments as such. Overnight it was in business in both these fields which naturally disturbed its balance of power both in faculty and subject area focus. Even the short courses which we transferred were atypical in comparison with the extant programmes. For several years we have accordingly been a butt for jokes and accusations that the MBA was not our major focus of attention. Indeed it is not nor ever has been, which is not the same as saying it is not an important focus. Whereas the group developed at Bradford had been one amongst several, at Cranfield it was unique and foreign. The physical layout of buildings did not much encourage contact, so like most foreign bodies there was a tendency to reject. Such observations are not criticisms of my present colleagues outside our group but rather what one would expect to find. The process of acculturation so widely known in sociological circles was with us. To date, we have come further towards the Cranfield norm than it towards our group culture as in 1972. This is largely because our involvement with and acceptance of MBA norms is mandatory in the School whereas other faculty members do not have to work in doctoral or academic research areas. Nevertheless, through a short spell of responsibility for doctoral studies and now with a leadership role in continuing studies I do perceive that the two cultures are moving closer together with some of the best of each coming to the surface.

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*Graffito 37*

# THE FINEST THIBGS SINCE SLICED BREAD

It is inevitable that during a hectic period in which very considerable resources are being applied to new fields of university work, fads should emerge. Many if not all of Ike topics on which great attention was fleetingly focussed went on to a realistic place within the total offerings of the Business School. The decade began with enormous even delirious excitement about discounted cash flow analysis or dcf. The technique is an obvious necessity most especially in times of inflation and is



think, it reassessed the control of the company by the directors over several years of growing bewilderment in the face of increasingly complex and quantitative approaches within the operating sectors of the business. For a great many senior managers devoid of a corporate 'translations' group, the professional advice or dictate of functional barons had perforce to be accepted.

Long range corporate planning proved tricky to implement without good technological or long term market forecasts. The financial and manpower forecasts seemed less of a problem although I am not certain they were. In any event, a fad for technological forecasting (TF) to which I have alluded in Graffito 12 was triggered; and the marketing area dipped into studies of the 'customer in the year 2000' and other aspects of social forecasting. Typical problems we sought to explore were will the growth of socialised medicine affect the self-prescribing habits of today's teenagers as they grow older; how will the increasing terminal age of education (TEA) affect consumption patterns; how will trends in environmentalism and consumerism affect the pattern of industrial manufacture in the years ahead, and so forth. Major think-tank industries grew up at the Batelle Institute for example, which probed such issues, developing a language of their own and making hair raising assumptions to arrive at 'surprise free projections'.

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A good friend of mine wondered aloud to me how long the seer phase would last. It was not too long as a fad but it has now taken a properly modest place with dcf and corporate planning in the company's armoury of management techniques

Next attention switched to the "economy's last dark continent" to quote Drucker: distribution. Always considered a down-town, vocational college activity in Europe and mainly so in America, it came of age fad-wise in the late sixties. Voices were heard from Michigan that transportation studies were dead, but a long life lay ahead for logistics. Logistics proved to be merchandised in attractive outer clothes. It offered a new management focus within the enterprise which could be systems analysed. The purpose of logistics management was to deliver customer service levels for the organisation at least total cost, deploying whichever logistics mix elements were most appropriate. Cost minimisation on inventory, on transportation, on facilities, or the customer communications system as individual activities was out, A rationalisation of the container revolution under the generalised concept of unitisation was an integral part of the total cost approach to logistics, emphasising both physical distribution management and materials management in one sweep. It had a great deM to offer as a conceptualisation for a usually ulcerous sector of any business but it could not hope to fulfil its promises in less than ten or twenty years. Existing staffs in distribution departments were inadequate for the new challenge and cost accountants typically did not know how, nor had they the inclination, to provide the cost information that could make the total approach effective. This is no new phenomenon. Marketing activities to this day are hampered by a predominance of ex-sales staffs holding integrative jobs and an almost complete lack of adequate costing information to enable trade-offs between one mix element and another to be sensibly made at the marketing director's desk.

In areas outside of my own immediate concern the same process was occurring. Personnel management began modestly enough as a descriptive subject area ~ how to organise the department and so on. It soon blossomed in the sixties with a massive surge into industrial relations Studies of power and negotiation tactics were de rigueur. Allied foci in manpower planning and management development quickly emerged and eventually a major new initiative into organisation development (CD). CD was a startling, exciting, and for personnel folk, radically new departure. It was tantamount to their assumption of a staff role to topmost management. They set themselves up as experts on how the company should best be organised. Building on a very tenuous base from organisational sociology grand designs were offered as well as an on-going audit function for any department in the company. it could alternatively be viewed, of course, as an extension of the organisation and methods cam management services activities of the fifties.

In the production area of company activities few initiatives appeared. Its heyday had run fro~ the turn of the century intellectually, and in implementational terms throughout the forties and fifties. OR, work study and management services had all had their moments of high fad, but sixties fads seemed to elude them, Procurement or

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purchasing and supply as it is more commonly known in Britain failed to take off, even at the turn of the seventies with tile energy and resources crises, Somehow it also Failed to harness the enthusiasm of environmentalism. Its major conceptualisation was perhaps too grand in its claim to oversee all operational activities ~ in contra-distinction to planning.

The most substantial fad of all, however, was and still remains the study of inter-national business. In some Schools in the early seventies it became a threat to the very structure of all that was in hand. A new breed of scholar grew up within a new division of studies who was an expert on 'international' marketing or logistics, or finance, or production, or organisation, or personnel. He challenged the fabric of studies which had already emerged. I believe it demands far more serious attention than we have typically accorded it. It cannot be allowed to last without doing irreparable damage to the teaching and study of the fundamental areas in a Business School. All the subjects should in my view incorporate an international perspective, indeed they do. There are in fact few aspects of international business not already encompassed in typical syllabi. The danger in permitting separate development is largely psychological. Most especially in Britain, with its total dependence on world and most recently European trading activities, all its managers must be internationalist in methods. Not just some. It should never be allowed to become a specialisation.

The last and most recent fad is the social responsibility of business. It comes in several garbs. consumerism; fair trading; equal pay for women; environmentalism; and the business environment are five of the most frequently encountered. Its impact in Britain, indeed in Europe, has been noticeably less strident than in Nader territory across the Atlantic. Our social democratic traditions and legislative acts together with the relative maturity of most of the women's liberationists have helped avoid overreaction on this score. Nevertheless, there are pressures present in some Schools, often exerted by the economist in a fighting comeback to popular favour, to put it into a dominant place in the syllabus.

My tips for the coming decade include a state capitalism fad, offering a long long overdue synthesis of cost-benefit analysis and political economy with the principles and practices of profit-oriented management. As a political economist by

## PITY POLLY

University education in Britain is not an inexpensive service. It was accordingly no great surprise when politicians conceived a lower cost alternative strategy in tertiary education during the middle sixties, which involved the designation of some thirty or so colleges as Polytechnics. Today they are a powerful second force in higher education but their distinctive role still remains unclear in practice. In essence the strategy involved upgrading groups of LEA colleges, typically the Colleges of Technology, Commerce and Art, under a unified structure. It was an operation which resembled the creation of the CATs in the fifties but the resemblance was only superficial. The CATs had begun, as at Bradford, by stealing away from LEA Colleges all of their advanced work but building afresh in terms of the greatest part of their work. The Polytechnics took over LEA Colleges lock, stock and barrel and proposed to up-grade the levels of work with the same staff members. Coming only a decade after the first blood letting for the CATs this posed a very real set of problems.

The CATs spent a decade in apprenticeship for their Diploma in Technology awards before the Robbins' Report recommended their elevation to fully autonomous university status. The Polytechnics began with immediate plans to offer degree courses under the tutelage of the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA). That posed problems also, which were not relieved by major expansion goals laid upon them by government. They recruited their new staff in competition with the parallel expansion in the university sector, not only of existing universities and former CATs, but also of the new grass field institutions like Lancaster, Kent, Sussex, Essex and Warwick. Too many university faculty members who moved to senior positions in the Polytechnics were doing so from career opportunism rather than any dedication to a different set of educational goals.

The simplistic statement of the difference between a university and a polytechnic seems to be that the latter is simply dedicated to teaching, albeit to degree level. On the other hand, the universities are dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge per se, as well as to teaching. As such, a convenient comparison can be drawn between the North American Junior Colleges and 'lesser' universities and the major institutions. The problem with such a demarcation is that it takes no sensible account of the academic and professional aspirations which were inculcated into all our graduates who became teachers in the polytechnic sector. They inevitably, if not necessarily correctly, tended to see advancement career-wise and success in professional terms in the pursuit of Masters and Doctoral degrees and the initiation and pursuit of research.

The problems were finally made even worse by the collapse of student recruitment programmes which was the overt manifestation of erroneous manpower plans by the

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DES. The nation at large had surplus capacity of anything up to ten per cent of undergraduate places in science and technology even *after* admitting very considerable numbers of overseas students. The surplus capacity was even more substantial at postgraduate level. The student seeking a place for undergraduate studies was accordingly able to go to a university, which inevitably held a much more clearly understood role in society, rather than to the polytechnic. Unless the polytechnics were outstandingly innovative or offered programmes in fields of study left untouched by universities, they got only the poorer students.

Low student numbers in turn led to a distressingly low level of crude productivity. Whether a class has five or twenty five students it will need a teacher. The proliferation of different courses to attract students in the polytechnics led to small class sizes. Accordingly by the mid-seventies the university system was the cheaper alternative for teaching both undergraduate and postgraduate. The anatomy of the paradox was erroneous manpower planning, perceived status differentials and proliferation of course offerings.

Not surprisingly the politicians were slow to admit the extent of their bungling. Rather than rewarding the universities for outpacing the productivity of the fledgling institutions, the polytechnics teachers were offered pay increases which put them ahead of the university sector by a shameful manipulation of 'voluntary' economic controls in the summer of 1975.

The strategic error was to attempt to expand both university and polytechnic sectors simultaneously. In such open competition against the background of demand for places which materialised, the polytechnics could not succeed. Today we have, therefore, not a new range of efficient teaching institutions but a new range of less efficient teaching institutions too

programme.

At postgraduate level the polytechnics became the main standard bearers of the DM8, which has recently been brought under the aegis of the CNAA. It had been hitherto the direct responsibility of the DES. A small scatter of MBA programmes is also just emerging. Equally, the polytechnics engaged widely in post-experience work but typically at a less than postgraduate level.

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Organisationally, the DES strategy was to create a dozen or so Regional Management Centres (RMCs) up and down the country. They were to pool the teaching resources of small groups of polytechnics and other senior colleges in a vicinity in order to avoid duplication and dilution of effort at postgraduate level. As an idea it was virtually stillborn. The only areas where it seems to have succeeded are where only one of the institutions to be co-ordinated had any real strength in the management fields and was thereby able to dominate the arrangement. As an exercise in legal monopoly it worked well. Wheresoever two or more of the institutions were active they were extremely loath to see their route to graduate development and research headed off by an external organisation they could not dominate. In essence, therefore, the RMCs offended the basic tenets of territory theory.

All of which was the greatest possible tragedy. Britain urgently needs excellent Graduate School work, both in terms of part-time MBAs and continuing studies, based on particular geographical territories. Such Schools, like their parent polytechnics, could and would draw their strength at a sufficiently senior level from the relationship they would develop with their local business community. I have already referred to the inherent tendency for university Business Schools to look nationally and internationally rather than locally for their franchise. Strong Polytechnic Schools could have forged such effective local links on a wide scale. Some, of course, have done so already; others have done so at a lower level than that to which I allude. The fillip which RMCs could have given to this movement was dissipated however. Rather than seeking a regional pattern of co-ordination, a more successful strategy would have been that of designation of key Schools as the UGC and FME did for the university sector.

I have looked closely at the work of RMCs and their opportunities, indeed I was privileged to be invited to lead one. I reluctantly had to decline the offer because I could not see how it could work in terms of the 'realpolitik'.

*Graffito 39*

## *TOO YOUNG*

The only three level building which the Royal Air Force designed for Cranfield was the Station Headquarters, immediately inside the main gate. Until recently the Finance Officer occupied that third floor. I was always a keen long distance runner and still relish a jaunty dash upstairs and that was how I used to visit him. He remarked that I was to his knowledge the only professor on campus who could run up them. Typically, professors are created at older rather than younger ages, and running up stairs is not one of their skills. His remark lingered in my mind; I have twenty seven

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years to go until retirement now and if I stay in university work that will mean I have been a professor for thirty five years altogether. With the best will in the world that seems to pose problems both for me and for my colleagues and particularly my subordinates.

Business Schools suffer from a skewed age distribution amongst their senior faculty members. They are by and large youngish. The majority of the most senior jobs are

introduce a much bolder approach to the staffing or senior administrative jobs. The North American example of the circulating departmental chairmanship is one that we can think of emulating. Already at Cranfield we have identified mission co-ordinative roles for excellent staff members below professorial level; the deanship and subject area administrative jobs must also surely follow as well. I do not underestimate the magnitude of the step involved, however, nor the political reluctance that others and I myself feel towards it. There is also, I discern, a very real danger that such separation of administrative power from academic leadership can exacerbate the problems of externalised power and authority I discussed in Graffito 26.

The classical solution as we teach it for industrial organisations is the venture or brand management approach. I have studiously sought to adopt this but am con-strained more often than not by a lack of sympathy for my goals amongst 'fly peers and an absence of an adequate reward structure to match the delegated patterns of responsibility. On several occasions I have found my proposals for rewarding and acknowledging good or excellent work thwarted by contrary judgements from peers not seemingly faced with the same difficulties.

The Business Schools elected a host of professors who were younger than thirty five in the past decade; probably too many. Yet the scope it gave for enthusiastic pursuit of youthful ideas possibly made it worth it. There were, in any event, no older folk available in most cases who were willing to enter on such a risky profession, forsaking a successful career in industry or commerce.

So if most of us are *not* old enough to pass on the baton what can we set our sights upon in the next one or two decades? What different challenges await us in the Business School world? Is there any reason to suppose that the empire building

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entrepreneurs of the first decade are the best folk to carry on the leadership role in the Business Schools? Was Bradford's Senate right when it looked for a new leader of the advocates of consolidation rather than asking the entrepreneurs to change their style?

My brief but traumatic excursions into merchant banking in Yorkshire taught me the compelling truths of management in the transitional enterprise. To build a group of marketing scholars from scratch is a different task indeed from leading them in terms of nil growth, when qualitative rather than quantitative dimensions must become

the focus for interesting progress and development. What seems most important of all therefore and to afford the best chance of success is a keen awareness that a dramatically new situation exists, and that new styles of managerial activity are required. Qualitative improvements I think should be our keynote, together with in depth development of all we do as teachers, as researchers and as administrators. Fortunately these are classic university goals we can clearly recognise and to which we can bend our efforts.

In addition, we have to switch the balance of our work away from on-campus programmes amongst full-time students towards the provision of facilities for continuing refreshment of managers at work. Psychologically we are in grave danger of missing this imperative need simply from conventional devotion to the well tried degree structures of centuries. As Ted Levitt would counsel us, however, we are not in the degree awarding business. We are in the knowledge development, dissemination and application business par excellence. Whether conventional degree courses will last beyond the end of the century must be a moot point.

We also have to fight for our independence from the choking embrace of the SSRC. I have argued earlier that the SRC would be a better home; a realistic alternative could well be a Management and Administration Research Council. The crucial need is to liberate management research from the academic dogmas of the behavioural sciences in the same way that the advent of the Business School liberated the study of management from their clutches, most especially from economics.

The same argument also applies in relation to student funding. The evidence is mounting daily that the mature student makes the finest raw material for MBA or almost any other style or postgraduate education. If this is so, the current modes of SSRC awards are redundant in the longer term to our work. The newer patterns indicated by the Department of Employment's Training Opportunities Scheme (TOPS) awards, allied to personal loans from the financial services world seems most appropriate. This can perhaps be sensibly rationalised on a national scale in the near future in order to ensure that all styles of management education are financially within the reach of those in need.

All these points are inward looking however. Our over-riding concern must be to stay in effective contact with industry. We must not allow ourselves to be seduced away by siren calls even if they appear to come from the groves of Academe. Business Schools should go into business. The use of the simulated business, be it case study or

powerful institutional framework that can keep management alive and our work relevant for the decade ahead, and create a style for the Schools' relationships for ever, longer.

It is perhaps no bad thing that the youngsters who built the Schools up should be required to see them through their second decade as well, and beyond. It is in my event a valuable management lesson to live with the consequences of one's own earlier judgements, and to be forced to change with the times, I look forward to re-reading *Business School Graffiti* in 1986 as I suspect may the odd malevolent reader.

*Graffiti 40*

## CREAM CARAMEL

The relatively short and poorly documented history of management knowledge and understanding poses some considerable difficulties for academic studies in our field.

Little sense of any evolutionary perspective exists and a tendency towards rediscovery is widespread. Where work has been done it will frequently be uncovered in the most unlikely places and journals. Josiah Wedgwood's marketing strategies nearly two hundred years ago, for example, which demonstrate *an* incisive understanding of what today we would term a total communications mix have been documented by economic historians. They inevitably fail to draw any valid academic lessons for contemporary marketing; rather they are interpreted simply as evidence of commercial life in those times. I have already illustrated this point elsewhere when I observed that my own group's researchers on fashion marketing found some of the most rigorous early work in the *Californian Anthropological Records*.

The great discipline rush for marketing, and for many other subject areas, has started to pull these strands together and to heighten awareness amongst their originators of their relevance to contemporary studies of management. However, no

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amount of casting about can overcome the plain fact that the history of formalised management activity in any event is relatively recent. Our earliest well documented forms of major corporate organisation outside of government were the great chartered

companies like Hudson's Bay and the East India Company. The former can be traced in direct line of descent to a major Canadian department store chain today. Omnipresent medium or large sized firms, organised managerially both for production and

distribution, are a late nineteenth century phenomenon. Earlier forms were more akin

to today's holding companies or conglomerates, with little concern for the total activity managed, rather a fascination with how money works. Entrepreneurship, itself renescent today, implied managerial control on an almost uncritical basis; the

goals of the individual and of the company were typically synonymous. The extended base of shareholdings and the growth of stock exchanges meant entrepreneurship

and managerial control could be separated one from the other as Burnham so elegantly pointed out in his *Managerial Revolution*. Management became a separate activity where standards of performance from salaried employees were expected. It did not last overlong. We soon returned to a dominant managerial group as size and complexity grew, based on the techniques of mass production and mass marketing.

Once again shareholders were unable to comprehend or control in anything but financial terms.

Such is the poor record of universities as innovative organisations in areas of study that the initiatives were taken and the early lessons were almost all learnt outside our academies. Only when management's overwhelming relevance to society had been demonstrated did the universities take management studies into their fields of scholarship. In Britain this meant 1965. Much of the early evidence is accordingly lost. As I have already observed in Graffiti 18, the new academic dogma is bent on repeating those same errors of exclusion again.

Unable as we are to examine the historical evolution of marketing activities save through occasional glimpses, we must perforce turn to comparative methods of analysis. They involve nothing more revolutionary than is implied in the old adage



My own comparative frameworks for the study of marketing have emerged from several key directions. Perhaps the most resounding effect is from reading American textbooks. From Holloway and Hancock's book which I used in 1965 on, they always have chapters about the Federal Trade Commission and various Acts of Congress; about the geographical spread of sales organisations; the identification of best marketing areas; the presentation of models of buying behaviour and life styles. In addition, of course, the learned journals of the American Marketing Association are a rich feast both for methodologists and also for those seeking evidence of what Americans actually do. What are the channels of distribution, or the logistics models, or the preferences for quickfoods or readymixes? What is the structure of American industry? and so forth.



immature society, overly concerned with conspicuous consumption and women's liberation, espousing the cause of environmentalism with a childlike enthusiasm. They pursue social responsibility in business but choke on the term democratic socialism because of their ideological attachment to freedom in commerce as well as in word and thought. Ironically, I find them less free in word and thought than a typical social democrat in Europe.

Neither North America nor its textbooks tell me much about the problems of Africa, Asia, the Middle East or Southern Europe. I have been fortunate to work on occasions with the United Nations in these sectors to relate some basic concepts to the real situations that exist in such countries as Egypt, Libya, Turkey, Cyprus or Malta. I have been able to travel with research support from the Advertising Association into Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania and East Germany to see and discuss what marketing means for them. There are few absolutes to be unearthed; the quest for them through system after system is enormously rewarding. What is more, to teach and help in less developed economies requires that we have a clear understanding of how those absolutes are related to their environment.

Oak trees from acorns grow; you cannot transplant large oak trees. Like all plants they need careful nurturing in their early days or they wither and perish.

Alien textbooks and research papers in a language I can understand, allied with travel, have both played a very significant part in my comparative studies. Yet I believe working with foreign students, both at Bradford and Cranfield and in the field for the United Nations, does much more. The student creates a compelling requirement that I relate and attempt to explore the similarities and differences between what I am familiar with in Britain and what his experience is. Doctoral theses on retailing in urban Turkey and marketing in Libya have had a significant influence on my own perspectives. The work of our Marketing Development Centre as it prepares teaching materials for export marketing from less developed countries to the more advanced economies reinforces the lesson. The participation in class of

Venezuelans or Malaysians, Greeks or Australians, Tanzanians or Dutchmen all sustain the comparative orientation. They sustain our realisation that there are hundreds of different goals an economic system can pursue and thousands of different ways of gaining them. It is unlikely that we shall happen upon the best unless we look around us unendingly.

Such is my attitude to cream caramel. I have already confessed my liking for African poetry. I resolved in 1965 to attempt to become a connoisseur of cream caramel. I have now eaten cream caramel in thirty two different countries on some two hundred and eighty four occasions since 1965. It is a dessert of such varied presentation ranging from the outright contemptible to the truly exquisite. I have not sought recipes, simply gourmet experiences. I anticipated for many years that the English could do it well, but as with so much British cuisine it falls woefully short. You can imagine my surprise therefore when I mounted the stairs to the top floor of the finest hotel in Galway and enjoyed a most delightful caramel creme in its *Cladagh Restaurant*.

The key dimensions I have identified for judging cream caramel are texture, solidity, moistness, flavour and ambience. I have eaten cream caramel from a jerry can which was excellent on texture but scored poorly on flavour; I have eaten caramel custard in Acapulco with a texture and flavour of cream cheese; but I had never eaten *crème Caramel flambée* until I was in Barcelona in December 1974. It was a most unlikely restaurant yet it was the finest cream caramel I have ever tasted. A colleague who was with me at the time believed my judgement on all dimensions save presentation was susceptible to distortion at the sight of brandy afire. Perhaps; but I can recommend it to all cream caramel gourmets.

So strong is my desire to return to that small Barcelona restaurant that I prevailed upon ESOMAR to convene its inaugural workshop *for Marketing Teachers* there in June 1976. I shall not let my research end there however We all hear too many statements of absolute opinion in our Business Schools which habitual comparison and her cousin, analogy, can do much to mollify if we give them the chance.

Chance is a fine thing. I thank her.