

returning from a lunch he had been unable to reach “cleared his throat and said: ‘You know, I’ve been thinking this thing through, we ought to be able to work something out.’”⁴¹ The next day the business community threw in the towel, although the political elite wanted to carry on the struggle.

On June 19, 1963, President Kennedy sent a national civil rights bill to Congress. This was followed by the dramatic march to Washington in late August 1963, organized by Rustin, involving a quarter of a million people and culminating in King’s famous “I have a dream” speech. Civil rights were now assured a place at the top of the American political agenda.

Inevitably, at this point the movement came to face the fact that political rights did not guarantee improvement in economic or social conditions. The vote did not feed the children or pay the rent, although it did make possible further forms of political activity that might help over time. But King’s campaign culminated not with black satisfaction but with frustration, as riots broke out in the inner cities. As King began to turn his attention to issues of poverty, the question was whether the methods that had brought political gains in the South and launched him to national prominence could work across the country on issues that were much more intractable.

King had led a focused campaign with a clear set of objectives, working with communities he understood and with tactics that—once refined—served both to coerce local white establishments through economic pain and turn the media spotlight on to the iniquities of segregation by provoking their police forces into violence. The whites saw their local businesses being hurt by bus boycotts and city center mayhem. If they tried to suppress the movement with the methods that had served them well in the past, they alienated northern politicians and the media. If they held back, they had few options other than to find a new *modus vivendi* with blacks. The movement’s strategists could comfort themselves even as their people suffered harsh treatment that this played into their hands. So long as their people did not buckle under the pressure, the contrast between the dignity of the protestors and the brutality of the police created a stunning media spectacle.

The problem was never with the clarity of the cause. The segregationists’ arguments were incredible and untenable, at odds with liberal values. The challenge was to convince blacks that to gain the same rights as other Americans they had to work together and to develop a considerable local organization. In meeting both these requirements, the Church played a central role. The strategy also required nonviolence. This was not because of any expectation that segregationist hearts could be turned by this form of witness but because it ensured that the movement kept the moral high ground. Those who learned their politics in the civil rights movements were

convinced of the value of direct action and saw comparable causes to demand their attention, but these causes would not be so clear cut as civil rights. The radical politics of the sixties began with dignity and restraint but soon turned angrier, with riots in the urban ghettos and sharp reactions against an illegitimate war.

There is a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart, that you can't take part; you can't even tacitly take part, and you've got to put your bodies upon the levers, upon all the apparatus and you've got to make it stop. And you've got to indicate to the people who run it, to the people who own it, that unless you're free, the machines will be prevented from working at all.

—Mario Savio, *Free Speech Movement*, December 1964

IT HAD BEEN young people who had sustained the later campaigns of the civil rights movement. Their experiences in the South had radicalized them, both in their critique of American society and their demand for a new politics. In the early 1960s to the extent that they were organized it was as part of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which was largely made up of black activists (although initially not exclusively so), or else the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), which as the name suggests was based in the universities and was largely white. Both initially reflected anger at the gap between the ideals upon which their country was based and the reality of racial divides and preparations for nuclear war. Both were set up with firm commitments to nonviolence, but both by the end of the 1960s had embraced violence and factionalism.

Of the two, SDS attracted the most comment: an active and radical political force emerging out of a disadvantaged minority was less surprising than one emerging out of the affluent majority. Moreover, SDS came to be seen as part of a broad cultural shift that went well beyond politics. There was a generational break between those whose formative experiences had been depression and the fight against Germany and Japan and those who had grown up in relative comfort but found the social constraints they had inherited frustrating. This was reflected in changing musical preferences, attitudes to sex, and the use of recreational drugs. A key word for the decade, borrowed from anti-colonial struggles, was "liberation." The word came to be applied to any group, including women and gays, that felt constrained by social conventions and outdated laws. In this respect, it challenged the role of the state in everyday life and was individualistic rather than collectivist in inspiration.

This helps explain why there was such an uneasy fit with the orthodox Left, which was collectivist and enthusiastic about the possibilities of the state and the role of labor unions. It had been marginalized by affluence, its rhetoric seen as an echo of old struggles long lost and won, with its internal politics still marked by in-fighting between communists, Trotskyites, and social democrats. The young activists fresh from the freedom rides in the South, where they had often been in jail or suffered beatings, had little time for those who had spent their time trading theoretical blueprints for socialism. Although SDS was intended initially to be the student branch of the League for Industrial Democracy, another of John Dewey's causes which now represented the pro-union, anti-communist strand in American socialism, it took off on its own trajectory. So the revolt was against not only the complacent liberalism and social conservatism of mainstream America but also the social democratic tradition. This tradition of mass parties organized to fight parliamentary elections on the basis of an agreed program reflecting a more or less coherent ideology had never really taken root in America. The new radicals were more in a libertarian, anarchist, anti-elitist tradition, desperate for authenticity even at the expense of lucidity, suspicious of all authorities and organizational discipline. Instead of decisions being taken by individuals who were detached, remote, and looking after their own interests, a way had to be found to engage ordinary people so that they could shape their own destinies.

When SDS was formed in 1962, meeting at the United Auto-Workers retreat at Port Huron, Michigan, there was a clash with the social democrats of the League for Industrial Democracy. Tom Hayden, a Michigan student journalist and the lead author of the Port Huron Statement that set SDS in motion, described his wonder that "seemingly serious people could get so

enmeshed in such endlessly divisive hair-splitting debates.” “As a formative experience,” he noted, “we learned a distrust and hostility toward the very people we were closest to historically, the representatives of the liberal and labor organizations who had once been young radicals themselves.”¹ The old leftists in turn were shocked by the indifference of the young activists to the working-class cause and the unions, and their reluctance to get drawn into denunciations of communism. Instead of the rigorous analysis of classic texts, the new radicals were suspicious of theory. Political acts had to be genuine expressions of values and sentiments. Convictions took priority over the calculation of consequences, reflecting a wariness of expediency and a refusal to compromise for the sake of political effects. At times it seemed as if deliberate and systematic thought was suspect and only a spontaneous stream of consciousness, however inarticulate and unintelligible, could be trusted. Todd Gitlin, an early activist and later analyst of the New Left, observed how actions were undertaken to “dramatize” convictions. They were “judged according to how they made the participants feel,” as if they were drugs offering highs and lows. If it was the immediate experience which counted for most, then there was little scope for thinking about the long term.²

This left the new radicals caught by Weber’s paradox. Though Weber was dispirited by the steady bureaucratization of society and politics, he considered it irresponsible to ignore the logic of functionality. The emerging political form of the new radicals embraced an ethic of irresponsibility. There could be no separation of means and ends. Every compromise, every denial of a core value meant that something precious had been lost, diminishing whatever might eventually be achieved. Their tactics, highlighted by the sit-in, instinctively challenged all rules. They were often strikingly lacking in both theory and organization, reveling in activism but without a clear direction. The underlying philosophy was existentialist rather than socialist.

This experiment in existential strategy failed because those features that made it so culturally liberating, and where the effects were actually long-lasting, also made it politically exasperating. When positions were articulated in terms of core values rather than alternative outcomes compromises were hard to arrange and coalitions became fragile. Without hierarchy, when every decision was subject to constant challenge and re-examination, organization became slow and ponderous, and implementation tentative. The activists, doubting rationality and trusting feelings, became increasingly angry. Their distaste for the politics of expedience and compromise led to isolation and irrelevance and vulnerability to the intervention of groups based on hard theory and disciplined organization against which they had initially rebelled.

Rebels

Instead of the polarized class struggle anticipated by Marx, postwar capitalist society was marked by an improved standard of living, apparently developing into a self-satisfied but undifferentiated mass society. The salaried middle classes were on the ascendant, largely to be found in large, impersonal organizations. The daily grind of life was hardly grueling. Yet there appeared to be something missing. The critique was not of growing misery and poverty but of dreariness, not so much physical deprivation but of a psychological void. William Whyte's *The Organization Man* suggested a degree of homogenization in the American middle class, reflected in standardized career paths, consumer tastes, and cultural sensibilities, with an accompanying degree of docility. The fault, he argued, was not in organization but its worship, "the soft-minded denial that there is a conflict between the individual and society."³ Indeed, much of the writing about this group, including David Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd* and C. Wright Mills's *White Collar Workers*, suggested that the rise of this class was joyless.

Riesman argued that inner-directed personalities followed life goals established at an early age, had a strong sense of values, and were therefore apt to suffer from guilt when deviating from those values. They were giving way to other-directed personalities, who took cues from their environment and were dependent on their contemporaries or even the media for direction. The distinction was between following either an internal gyroscope or an external radar. *The Lonely Crowd* became one of the most popular books ever written by a sociologist. In contrast to the earlier progressives who looked to other-directedness as a means of binding society together and encouraging a democratic sensitivity, it encouraged the view, probably more than Riesman intended, that there was something pernicious about social conventions and political orthodoxy as uncritically transmitted through the mass media.⁴ The idea that adapting to the social environment risked denying core values was also a theme of Erich Fromm's *Fear of Freedom*. Fromm, a refugee from Nazi Germany, warned of the dangers of rootless individuals seeking security in conformism or authoritarianism. Freedom had to be about more than lack of restrictions. It needed to be more positive, creative, authentic, expressive, and spontaneous, as well as less respectful of the received wisdom of experts or the dictates of common sense. Social structures were presented as suppressing the natural, positive side of human nature rather than as restraining the negative, coercive side.⁵

The enthusiasts for the cultural developments of the 1960s saw it as an affirmation of this positive side of human nature against the conformism of

the corporate state. When in 1970 Theodore Roszak looked back approvingly over that decade, he described the many developments he applauded as responses to the “technocracy.” This, echoing Weber, was described as corporate power combined with a state of mind according to which

the requirements of our humanity yield wholly to some manner of formal analysis which can be carried out by specialists possessing certain impenetrable skills which can then be translated by them directly into a congeries of economic and social programs, personnel management procedures, merchandise, and mechanical gadgetry.

These experts, to be found at the corporate center, believed that most human needs had been filled; where there was a problem, it was the result of a misunderstanding.⁶ In different ways, Roszak claimed, the poetry, literature, sociology, political tracts, and demonstrations of the time challenged this technocratic presumption. In this respect, the politics of the decade was but one part of a general revolt against rationality, whether in challenges to bureaucracy and scientific expertise, or in hedonistic life styles and the disparagement of conventional careers. Claims of objective knowledge were distrusted. Instead of worldviews being shaped by the accumulation of knowledge, “knowledge” always deserved quotation marks, reflecting an underlying worldview rather than actual reality.

What did this mean for strategy? At a general level it challenged an idea of strategy based on not only the presumption of choice but also the availability of methods for choosing well, which included the need to pay close attention to the operating environment and think ahead. In some respects, liberalism as it had developed through the twentieth century could pride itself on having created the optimal conditions for strategy-making: the right of free political expression, the ability to organize, and respect for the scientific method as a means of bringing clarity to choice and thinking through consequences. Now the New Left appeared to see this approach as problematic, a form of thinking that constrained the range of choice and excluded those affected by decisions from contributing to their resolution, and a stress on organization, which meant hierarchy.

It could also be the case that there was little point in worrying too much about relating ends and means because of the utter hopelessness of the strategic task in the face of a complacent majority culture. The aspirations of the young radicals were beyond the scope of rational planning. Not surprisingly, therefore, a strategy of absolute ends emerged, heroic and romantic, doomed to fail but magnificent in its ambition and noble in its honesty. The aim was to affirm existence rather than realize goals, and in this there was a nod across

the Atlantic to the French existentialists with their deep musings about the human condition, full of absurdity, abandonment, and despair, but also stressing the unavoidability of choice. Jean-Paul Sartre might seem to dwell on the futility of action, but his point was that hopelessness was not in itself a reason for passivity. Indeed, choice was unavoidable for men were “condemned to be free.” They did not choose the circumstances of their existence, but they were obliged to respond. The quality of their responses, whether heroic or cowardly, was their responsibility and would eventually define their lives.⁷ More influential than Sartre, at least in the United States, was Albert Camus. Politically, Camus was closer to the anarchists than the communists, and his strong anti-Soviet views caused a break with Sartre. In 1940, he was a pacifist but the experience of occupation led him to join the resistance, eventually editing the underground journal, *Combat*. This was the inspiration for his allegorical 1947 novel, *The Plague*. As a plague almost overwhelmed the Algerian City of Oran, the citizens were in denial and then, instead of abandoning hope, the community found a way of defeating the disease and regained its solidarity in the process. The doctor, Bernard Rieux, summed up the philosophy: “All I maintain is that on this earth there are pestilences and there are victims, and it’s up to us, so far as possible, not to join forces with the pestilences.”⁸ From Camus came the argument that rebellion made a life worth living, even when this meant acting in the face of overwhelming odds. So long as one was acting with integrity there was no need to worry about being an underdog, for integrity mattered more than consequences.

Mills and Power

C. Wright Mills died of a heart attack in his mid-40s in 1962. Mills was controversial at the time and has remained so since, not least because of his larger than life personality and his readiness to cast himself as a dissident.⁹ He was the classic inner-directed man, true to his own values, describing himself as a loner who never worked with a political group. The early years of his career saw him subjected to three influences, two of which remained critical for his own ideas. The pragmatists were the first influence, and the subject of his doctorate. He shared their belief in the public role of intellectuals. There was an affinity with James’s anti-militarism and Dewey’s advocacy of participatory democracy. At the same time, Mills was skeptical of Dewey’s quasi-scientific framework and over-mechanical view of politics, his reluctance to come to terms with the problem of power and to acknowledge its manipulative, emotional, and coercive elements.¹⁰ Yet Mills also appreciated

Dewey's commitment to intelligence as a form of power. Both were opinionated, although by contrast with Dewey's ponderously functional prose, Mills's was laced with invective and value-laden categories.

Hans Gerth, an émigré from the Frankfurt School, helped move Mills from philosophy to sociology, and introduced him to the work of Max Weber. From Weber, Mills then derived his basic explanatory framework, the interweaving of class, status, power, and culture, and the alarm at the role of large bureaucracies in all areas of life. Marx was not read or taken seriously by Mills until well into his career, after which Mills became progressively more Marxist. He was also becoming more of an activist intellectual toward the end of his life, defending the Cuban Revolution and developing links with the British New Left (composed of Marxists, often scholarly, who had left the Communist Party). Part of his appeal to students was that he already identified them as potential agents of change, ready to challenge the forces of inertia and conservatism.¹¹

His books combined subtle analysis and research with a searing social critique. The critique became more strident during the course of the 1950s as his own international reputation as a dissenting intellectual grew. He was preoccupied with the structures of power: how in modern corporate America the elite no longer needed brute force or coercion to sustain its position but could instead rely on manipulation. His target was what came to be described as the "pluralist" school, which argued that democracy could function with a relatively low level of citizen participation. Since everybody got something out of the political process and had no cause for either excessive distress or joy, somehow it was working effectively and fairly.

The debate on power was an important one and Mills's book, *The Power Elite*, was always cited on one side of the argument, often against Robert Dahl's *Who Governs: Democracy and Power in an American City*.¹² Part of the difficulty was that they reflected two different views of power and how to measure it, and both views were relevant to the developing debates about radical politics. Power was, and still is, regularly referred to as an attribute of a political entity, measured in terms of the more blatant indicators of military and economic strength. Yet it was evident that an ample stock of both did not guarantee favorable outcomes in all encounters. The powerful did not always get their way. Resources needed to be considered in the context of the problems they were supposed to solve. A card player might have great skill and a wonderful hand of cards for bridge but not for poker. There was therefore a difference between *putative* and *actual* power, between capabilities and effects, the potential and the act.¹³ Dahl's definition stressed the ability to influence: "A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do

something that B would not otherwise do.”¹⁴ It was not enough that A had capacity: it was only really power as revealed in quite specific relationships through measurable effects, by B being made subject to A’s will.

One of the most important and lasting challenges to this view came not from Mills but two political scientists, Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz, in a 1962 article:

Of course power is exercised when A participates in the making of decisions that affect B. But power is also exercised when A devotes his energies to creating or reinforcing social and political values and institutional practices that limit the scope of the political process to public consideration of only those issues which are comparatively innocuous to A. To the extent that A succeeds in doing this, B is prevented, for all practical purposes, from bringing to the fore any issues that might in their resolution be seriously detrimental to A’s set of preferences.¹⁵

This second face of power had an almost insidious quality: it was about how A sustained a position in a power structure, of power over others, by keeping issues off the agenda and creating a background consensus that denied B the opportunity to begin to challenge A, never mind defeat A in a direct confrontation. It was this line of critique that by the end of the decade had been embraced by the radicals, although often in a far cruder, “false-consciousness” way than these authors intended. Mills avoided the simple Marxist analysis of government being the executive committee of the ruling class or of mass consciousness being shaped by bourgeois ideology. His description of the power elite was more about a bureaucratic convergence of interests, including corporate executives and the “warlords,” than an organized conspiracy, but he insisted that the system of checks and balances was no longer working and so encouraged the view of a vital resource being monopolized by a privileged view, so that they could get what they wanted when they wanted it.¹⁶

Mills became as much of a pamphleteer as a scholar, “prepared to step forth and brazenly pin his indictment like a target to the enemy’s chest.”¹⁷ His catchy rhetoric remained nonetheless an extension of his sociology. His impatience with mainstream sociology was reflected in his book *The Sociological Imagination*,¹⁸ in which he derided what he saw to be the two false paths of mainstream sociology: self-important grand theory on the one hand and abstracted empiricism, full of microscopic studies that remained marginal to the big questions of the day, on the other. The true purpose, he insisted, should be to connect private troubles with social and political structures. If an individual was unemployed that was a private trouble: if 20 percent of the population was unemployed that was a structural issue and thus a task for

sociology. In this role, he argued, sociology could be the master discipline of politics. The sociological imagination would feed the political imagination. "Before you are through with any piece of work, no matter how indirectly on occasion," he insisted, "orient it to the central and continuing task of understanding the structure and the drift, the shaping and the meanings, of your own period, the terrible and magnificent world of human society in the second half of the twentieth century."

The Port Huron Statement

Tom Hayden was a natural wordsmith and was the first to find fresh language to convey a new mood. The Port Huron Statement, for which he was the lead author, was discussed in June 1962 by a group of about sixty people, feeling—as he later remarked—that they "were giving voice to a new generation of rebels."¹⁹ There were a number of influences. Arnold Kaufman, Hayden's philosophy professor at Michigan, had introduced him to John Dewey as an exponent of the democratization of all social institutions. From Camus came a way of thinking about rebellion as a way of life, and from C. Wright Mills a critique of the prevailing distribution of power, but also something more personal. It was partly that they were both lapsed Catholics. But it was also that what unsettled him about his own family could be explained. As he read Mills, Hayden saw a portrait of his father, an accountant for Chrysler: "proud in his starched white collar, occupying his accountant's niche above the union work force and below the real decision makers, penciling in numbers by day, drinking in front of the television at night, muttering about the world to no one in particular."²⁰

Mills explained for Hayden "the factors that made people uninterested and apathetic in the face of Camus's plague." Bureaucratic elites welcomed passivity and had no incentive to encourage true democracy. Mills had written of the emergence of the "cheerful robot," a creature of mass society with an illusion of freedom but unable to influence the larger structures of power. "Between the little man's consciousness and the issues of our time, there seems to be a veil of indifference. His will seems numb; his spirit meager." In this spirit the Port Huron Statement opened, acknowledging the awkwardness of the position of students: "We are people of this generation, bred in at least modest comfort, housed now in universities, looking uncomfortably at the world we inherit." They did not claim to be speaking for the masses but were a self-declared minority observing that "the vast majority of our people regard the temporary equilibriums of our society and world

as eternally-functional parts." Students "don't even give a damn about the apathy."²¹

A Millsian analysis was offered of why people felt so powerless and had succumbed to indifference: "People are fearful of the thought that at any moment things might be thrust out of control. They fear change, since change might smash whatever invisible framework seems to hold back chaos from them now." Yet here was optimism about humanity. "We regard men as infinitely precious and possessed of unfulfilled capacities for reason, freedom, and love." If core values could be rediscovered in a "moral realignment" then there was a possibility of a "political realignment."²² Politics was not a means to an end. It was an end in itself, participation and engagement serving to heal the divide that had opened up between people and their society. The New Left, the statement insisted,

must transform modern complexity into issues that can be understood and felt close-up by every human being. It must give form to the feelings of helplessness and indifference so that people may see the political, social and economic sources of their private troubles and organize to change society. In a time of supposed prosperity, moral complacency and political manipulation, a new left cannot rely on only aching stomachs to be the engine of social reform.²³

The immediate cause for the students was civil rights in the South. This met their appetite for activism and provided experiences that were more instructive and meaningful than anything that could be gained through studying the political classics. But that could only take the movement so far. The aim was to move the demand for rights into all institutions rather than just the electoral process. The starting point for their demands to be heard was therefore their own institutions—the universities. Here they were expected to conform, accept what they were told in class without demur, and follow all rules at risk of expulsion. Gradually this new mood made itself felt. A clash over the rights of CORE to organize on the San Francisco Berkeley campus led to the first big student demonstrations.

Dick Flacks, a young academic closely involved with the Port Huron Statement, observed the tension between the developing movement as a way of life and as an agency of change. The way of life he called "existential humanism," which required no more than acting according to core beliefs, constantly striving "to approach an ethical existence," but he saw that this could be irresponsible, searching "for a personally satisfying mode of life while abandoning the possibility of helping others to change theirs; of placing tremendous hope in the movement of the immediate community

for achieving personal salvation and gratification—then realizing that these possibilities are, after all, limited and, consequently suffering disillusionment.” As did Weber, Flacks sought to reconcile convictions with responsibility. This meant acting “politically because our values cannot be realized in any durable sense without a reconstruction of the political and social system.” Politics, however, apart from an existential ethic would be “increasingly manipulative, power-oriented, sacrificial of human lives and souls,”—in short, “corrupted.” The answer, suggested Flacks, was “strategic analysis,” though he acknowledged the prevailing suspicion of an “explicit and systematic preoccupation with strategy” as imposing artificial constraints, restricting spontaneity, and reducing responsiveness to what people really wanted. As it was the property of a few, “acting in terms of strategy is elitist.” Unfortunately, without strategy there would be no sense of priorities, inarticulateness, and “almost random behavior among students who want to do effective social action.”²⁴

This described the problem rather than identified solutions. As with previous generations of radicals, the only way out of the dilemma appeared to be to get among the people, working with them to address their issues without claiming that they had all the answers. So it was that Hayden joined a community program, the Economic Research and Action Project, in Newark. The prohibition on elitism was limiting. There were other “liberal forces” in the area with whom it might be advisable to coalesce, but Hayden found them “extremely self-serving,” with “wide community contact but no active and radical membership base” and programs that “would do very little to change the real lives of the poor.” Entering into “political bartering” would violate “the basic trust we have with the neighborhood people. Our place is at the bottom.”²⁵ Liberal strategies assumed that the “masses are apathetic and can only be roused because of simple material needs or during short periods of great enthusiasm.” Because of this, “they need skilled and responsible leaders.” The complaint then followed a familiar path: leaders presumed that only they could maintain the organization. Because people reacted with “disinterest or suspicion” to such elitism, the leadership was able to call the masses apathetic, although he also acknowledged a worrying tendency to “think subserviently.”

Hayden was considering not the broad masses of Marxist mythology but a minority underclass.²⁶ He recoiled from the obvious answer, which was to form coalitions or at least make temporary arrangements with the powerful. This was rejected because no more than “welfare-state reforms” would be on offer, bound to fail because they were “not conceived by the poor people they are designed for” and allowed the middle class to relax “into the comfortable

sense that everything is being managed well." His focus was so relentlessly about power, and avoiding appearing to want it, that the assumption had to be that if those at the bottom had power they would do well by themselves and others. But would they want the things that the activist believed they ought to want? If their minds had been turned by years of powerlessness and a consumerist culture, might their demands and the efforts they were prepared to put behind be disappointing?

Unsurprisingly, he was left with a "mystery" when looking for a "workable strategy." His aim was "a thoroughly democratic revolution," reversing the abdication of power to "top-down organizational units," out of which a "new kind of man" might emerge who could not be manipulated because it was "precisely against manipulation that he has defined his rebellion." The poor would transform decision-making by acting on their aspirations, working against the grain of "an affluent and coercive society." As he later accepted, the flaw in this analysis was assuming that the aspirations of the poor would be any different from the middle-class society whose values he personally derided. He already was aware of the difficulty of finding leaders who could forswear an interest in the organization for its own sake or a rank and file who understood and committed themselves to the movement's goals.²⁷

While Hayden was struggling to sustain his commitment to participatory democracy, SNCC was in the process of abandoning it. James Forman, as executive secretary, had argued in 1964 for a proper mass organization rather than uncoordinated activists to compete with other civil rights organizations. To the centralizers, this simply required individuals to subordinate their own issues to the needs of the collective.

This was hard for many activists to take. They were afraid that a distant center would be insensitive to local concerns and indulge in empire-building. Moreover, it went against SNCC's founding ethos. Participatory democracy in practice, however, had been found frustrating and exhausting. There were the familiar problems of finding local people able to commit time and energy to the cause, and the tendency for the principle to paralyze decision-making with constant discussions which nobody dared bring to a conclusion, as every attempt to take an initiative was challenged as usurpation of democratic rights. In her book, *Freedom Is an Endless Meeting*, Francesca Polletta recounts how demands to "let the people decide" came up against the exasperating tendency of the people to be moderate and risk averse, seeking social services rather than revolution. This led to the conviction that people needed to have their real interests explained to them. There were also deeper factors at work. There was an issue with educated northerners who

were often seen by the local southerners as being self-serving, with a patronizing reverence for the untutored wisdom of the poor and ignorance of local culture. According to Polletta, this was more about class and education than race, though there were concerns about white liabilities as black community organizers. By 1966, however, black power had taken over and the new leadership of SNCC wanted to distinguish themselves from northern liberals by something tougher and more militant.²⁸

The Heroic Organizer

It is worth comparing the experience of community organization as an exercise in participatory democracy with that of the man who did more than most to develop the idea of organizing local communities to take on local power structures. Saul Alinsky was born in Chicago in 1909 and joined the University of Chicago's sociology department as an undergraduate in 1926. The department was then under the leadership of Robert Park. Park, who had come to sociology later in his career after starting off as a reporter, was attuned to city life in all its forms and studied it with an almost voyeuristic curiosity. *Introduction to the Science of Sociology*, the book he published in 1921 with his close colleague Edwin Burgess, was for two decades a core text in the field. Burgess, a diffident man and in Park's shadow, was more of a social reformer. He viewed "social research as the solutions to society's ills," but less in terms of elite prescriptions and more in democratic terms, as a means of "harnessing social change."²⁹

Park and Burgess took students on field trips to explore Chicago, from the dance halls to the schools, the churches, and the families. The city was large and diverse, with distinctive immigrant communities. Organized criminal gangs, of which Al Capone's was the most famous, flourished during the Prohibition Era. The proximity to Canada meant that Chicago was a natural base for smuggling illicit liquor into the United States, and vicious competition developed over the control of the trade. The city should be a focus of study, Park argued, for it showed "the good and evil in human nature in excess. It is this fact, perhaps, more than any other which justifies the view that would make of the city a laboratory or clinic in which human nature and social processes may be most conveniently and profitably studied."³⁰ Critical to this school of thought was the conviction, bolstered by research, that social problems had social rather than personal causes. Burgess took this a step further than Park, arguing that the role of researchers was to "organize the community for self-investigation." The community should survey its own

problems, educate themselves about social issues, and develop a core group of leaders prepared to organize for "social advance."

Burgess became a major influence on Alinsky, not least because he recognized in his student an ability that his academic record had obscured.³¹ Alinsky was drawn to criminology and upon graduation, he got a fellowship with Burgess's support. He decided to make a study of the Capone gang, if possible from the inside. Eventually he made contact by hanging around the gangsters and listening to their stories.³² For a while he worked as a criminologist in a state prison. Then, in 1936 he joined the Chicago Area Project designed to show how delinquency could be addressed socially. The cause of criminality was not individual feeble-mindedness but neighborhoods marked by multiple and reinforcing problems of poverty and unemployment. Burgess set the principles for the organizers. The program should be for the neighborhood as a whole, with local people autonomous in planning and operations. This required an emphasis on training and local leadership, strengthening established neighborhood institutions, and using activities as a device to create participation.³³ He argued that local organizers, preferably former delinquents, could help show their own people a way to more acceptable behavior. This approach was controversial. He was directly challenging paternalistic social work and was accused of tolerating criminality, encouraging populist agitators to stir up local people against those who were trying to help them and had their best interests at heart.

In 1938, Alinsky was assigned to the tough Back of the Yards neighborhood in Chicago, already notorious as the jungle of Upton Sinclair's 1906 novel. He was a natural in the organizer's role. Clever, street-wise, and brash, Alinsky had a knack of gaining the confidence of people who might otherwise feel neglected and marginalized. His approach was more political than the project allowed, however. Not only did he use the issue of delinquency to move into virtually all problems facing the neighborhood, but he also put together a community organization based on representatives of key groups who had clout because of who they represented and not just as individuals. Alinsky also drew organized labor into his campaign, well exceeding his brief by getting involved in a struggle against the meatpacking industry. By 1940 he had left the project and struck out on his own.

Over time he became more scathing in his critique of the social sciences as remote from the realities of everyday existence. Quoting a description of the University of Chicago's sociology department as "an institution that invests \$100,000 on a research program to discover the location of brothels that any taxi driver could tell them about for nothing," he added his own observation that "asking a sociologist to solve a problem is like

prescribing an enema for diarrhea.”³⁴ Certainly tendencies in sociology had moved on since the Park/Burgess era at Chicago. Nonetheless, Alinsky’s initial trajectory reflected the preoccupations of the discipline during the interwar years.

In an article published in the *American Journal of Sociology* in 1941, Alinsky provided a clear account of his approach. He described the wretched lives of those working in the slaughter houses and packing-houses of the Back of the Yards area. The neighborhood was a “byword for disease, delinquency, deterioration, dirt, and dependency.” The traditional community organization would be of little value in such an area because it considered individual problems in isolation from each other and the community in isolation from the “general social scene.” Instead, by placing each community within its broad context, its limited ability to “elevate itself by means of its own bootstraps” could be acknowledged. He identified “two basic social forces which might serve as the cornerstone of any effective community organization.” These were the Catholic Church and organized labor: “The same people that comprise the membership of a parish also form the membership of a union local.” He got local organizations to come together to form the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council. Membership did not just involve the church and the unions, but also the local chamber of commerce, the American Legion post, as well as “the leading businessmen, the social, the nationality, the fraternal, and the athletic organizations.”

Through the council, problems such as unemployment and disease were shown to be threats to all the people, both labor unions and businesses dependent upon local purchasing power. The various leaders “learned to know one another as human beings rather than as impersonal symbols of groups which, in many cases, appeared to be of a hostile nature.” Behind this was a “people’s philosophy” that emphasized rights rather than favors and the need to rely on an organization “built, owned, and operated by themselves” to get their rights.³⁵

This was obviously a completely different philosophy to Hayden’s. Alinsky went out of his way to draw in local organizations; Hayden was worried that this kept ordinary people excluded and reinforced local power structures. At the time, many on the Left would have queried working with the Catholic Church, which was deeply hostile to the atheistic Communist Party. Alinsky’s self-definition as a radical was reflected, as his biographer notes, in his “inclinations, convictions and rhetoric, and wishes” but less so “in his actions, which took a more pragmatic form.”³⁶ He was prepared to forge coalitions with whosoever appeared appropriate. His role model was not so much the communist agitator but the labor organizer.

This was the heroic age of the American labor movement, led by John Lewis of the United Mineworkers, which had broken away from the sleepy American Federation of Labor, dominated by elitist craft unions, and formed the Confederation of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Lewis combined a strident anti-communism with a belief in a centralized state stabilizing and planning the economy. He provided dynamic leadership to the burgeoning labor movement, with his tough and imaginative negotiating style demonstrated to the full in the sit-down strike at the General Motors Flint plant in 1937. After Flint, other industries were wary of head-on confrontations. He was able to do a deal with U.S. steel without making direct threats. He challenged the racial discrimination of southern mineworkers (who argued that black workers could make do with lower wages to support their more modest lifestyle). Within two years, the CIO had 3.4 million members. Alinsky met Lewis in July 1939 when he spoke on behalf of the Chicago packing workers. Lewis's daughter Kathryn was on the board of Alinsky's Industrial Areas Foundation.

Lewis was Alinsky's role model. He was egocentric, entered confrontations with relish, and led with nerve and panache. Later, Alinsky would write an admiring biography. From Lewis he learned how to provoke and goad opponents, promote conflict and then negotiate its resolution, using power to best advantage at all stages. Alinsky paid attention to the intellectual justifications for action and their rhetorical expression. He was impressed by the way Lewis managed to pursue a program which menaced the establishment by associating the CIO with American ideals of fairness and justice. "Similarly, Alinsky's own argumentation sought to place the objectives of his Industrial Areas Foundation firmly within familiar-sounding American political tradition."³⁷

In 1946, Alinsky published his first book, *Reveille for Radicals*, which became a surprising bestseller. The basic idea behind this was that the sort of techniques that had been used so effectively by the labor unions in the factories could be used within urban communities—as he put it, "collective bargaining beyond the present confines of the factory gate." The radical was described as a militant idealist, someone who "believes what he says," has the common good as the "greatest personal value," "genuinely and completely believes in mankind," takes on every struggle as his own, avoids rationalization and superficiality, and deals in "fundamental causes rather than current manifestations." His goals were described in terms of a utopia—where every individual's worth was recognized and potentiality realized; all would be truly free politically, economically, and socially; and war, fear, misery, and demoralization would be eradicated. By contrast, liberals attracted Alinsky's

scorn, for flaws in temperament and attitude rather than philosophy. They came over as feckless, hesitant, complacent, lacking the stomach for a fight, combining “radical minds and conservative hearts,” paralyzed by their insistence on seeing both sides of an issue, and fearful of action and partisanship.

The fundamental difference revolved around the “issue of power.” Radicals understood, according to Alinsky, that “only through the achievement and better use of power can people better themselves.” Where liberals protested, radicals rebelled.³⁸ Given the heroic concept of community organization (a “program is limited only by the horizon of humanity itself”), it was not surprising that Alinsky also had a heroic concept of the organizer. “One could envision Alinsky’s organizing flying high in a Superman cape,” observed his biographer, “swooping into a forlorn industrial community, ready to fight for truth, justice and the American Way!” The organizer would lead the “war against the social menaces of mankind.”³⁹

Over the next couple of decades, before his sudden death in 1972, Alinsky’s acolytes were involved in a number of organizational efforts across the United States. Alinsky himself was particularly associated with two: one in the Woodlawn District of Chicago and the other in Rochester, New York. Both involved largely black communities and had as their key demands improved employment and an end to the discriminatory practice of only hiring blacks for the most menial jobs. In Rochester, the target was the town’s dominant corporation, Eastman Kodak. In both cases Alinsky enjoyed a degree of success, though this required negotiations rather than the capitulation of the employers.

Not long before he died, he published another book, *Rules for Radicals*, which set out his basic philosophy. We shall return later to this book, which is important in terms of how he positioned himself in relationship with the other radical social movements of the 1960s. For the moment, we can consider the “rules” themselves.

He set down eleven. A number were basic to any underdog strategy. The first was pure Sun Tzu: persuade the opponent that you were stronger than was really the case (“If your organization is small, hide your numbers in the dark and raise a din that will make everyone think you have many more people than you do”). The second and third were about staying close to the comfort zone of your own people and going outside that of the opponent in order to “cause confusion, fear, and retreat.” Rule 4 was to use the opponent’s own rulebook against them, and Rule 5 was to use ridicule (“man’s most potent weapon”) because it was hard to counterattack and infuriated the opposition. This led to Rule 6, which was that a good tactic was one your people enjoyed, while a bad tactic was not only not fun but also (Rule 7) dragged on

and became hard to sustain. This was because (Rule 8) the essence of a good strategy was to keep the pressure on the opponent. "The major premise for tactics is the development of operations that will maintain a constant pressure upon the opposition. It is this that will cause the opposition to react to your advantage." Rule 9 was an observation about how threats could be more terrifying than the reality, and Rule 10 was about the need for a constructive alternative, an answer to the question, "Okay, what would you do?" Lastly, Rule 11 commanded: "Pick the target, freeze it, personalize it, polarize it. Don't try to attack abstract corporations or bureaucracies. Identify a responsible individual. Ignore attempts to shift or spread the blame."

These rules were those of a campaigner and in that respect were different from a form of strategic thinking that consisted largely of worrying about how to relate, if at all, to the local power structure and the principles that should govern any action. Alinsky was all about the campaign and the specific goals that had been set for it. The rules reflected Alinsky's appreciation of the elemental requirements of strategy in terms of endurance, coalitions, a capacity for surprise, and a need to keep an eye on public perceptions. The sense of community and confidence in the organization must grow with the campaign until it became strong enough to withstand setbacks and was able to move from one issue to another. One of Alinsky's admirers, Charles Silberman, compared his approach to guerrilla warfare. He explained the need "to avoid a fixed battle where the forces are arrayed and where the new army's weakness would become visible, and to concentrate instead on hit-and-run tactics designed to gain small but measurable victories. Hence the emphasis on such dramatic actions as parades and rent strikes whose main objective is to create a sense of solidarity and community."⁴⁰ The aim was not just to keep pressure on the targets but also to build up the community and its organization at the same time. Certainly Alinsky was clear that violence was a bad idea. This was not a moral issue. He was against actions that almost guaranteed defeat, and resort to arms came into that category.

Some of the tactics for which Alinsky became best known reflected a sense of mischief and provocation. One was to unnerve a Chicago department store that had discriminatory hiring policies by sending thousands of blacks on a normally busy Saturday for a shopping spree that would lead to very few purchases while deterring normal customers. Another tactic, intended to pressure Chicago's mayor, was to occupy all the toilets at O'Hare airport so that arriving passengers would be left desperate. The most notorious ploy, though possibly largely intended to amuse his audiences, was a proposed "fart-in" at the Rochester Philharmonic, sponsored by Eastman Kodak. The effect was to be achieved by feeding copious quantities of baked beans to young men prior

to their joining the audience. What is notable about these tactics, apart from their dependence to some extent on white stereotypes of blacks, was that none of them were actually implemented, although Alinsky claimed that getting word to the targets had a coercive effect. One of his tactical innovations was the use of share proxies to gain a right to speak at shareholder meetings and put companies on the spot, first achieved with Kodak stock in April 1967. Reports of the meeting suggest little sympathy from other shareholders, but here was a way to embarrass company boards and put them on the spot in a way that might be picked up by the media.

Alinsky's distrust of liberals and tendency to romanticize the poor were traits he shared with the young radicals who moved into community organizing in the mid-1960s. But there were important differences. He was results oriented. He wanted victories, even if small, which meant that he would form coalitions and cut deals. He knew that his natural constituents were minorities, and this became even more so as a majority of the American people identified with the middle class. He therefore understood the need for support from those who might otherwise be spectators. He was prepared to get his funds from rich liberals, and was always looking to his targets' vulnerabilities on external support as a source of pressure (for example, customers or stockholders or some higher governmental authority). In terms of tactics, his basic need was to find new ways of sustaining campaigns and keeping them in the public eye (and here his own notoriety could be an advantage). He also understood that the degree of organization required, especially when undertaken by outsiders and professionals, was bound to be an issue in itself. The establishment was quick to point to the malign presence of outside "agitators" (a label Alinsky happily embraced) to delegitimize campaigns, just as the young radicals were wary of strong leaders who could easily set themselves up as an alternative establishment and leave the people as powerless as they had been at the start. Just as the young radicals now hoped, Alinsky had begun assuming that the organizer was drawing out a latent political consciousness, creating awareness not only of injustice but of the possibility of redress. Communities would be self-reliant and self-sustaining not only in their organization but in their consciousness, with a local leadership able to give voice to this consciousness and ensure its long-term authenticity. Alinsky made it a rule, which he only came to question toward the end of his life, that no more than three years' support should be provided to a community organization, after which they were on their own.⁴¹

Yet he was working with people with few resources and little self-confidence, who were almost completely absorbed by coping with the everyday problems of existence. Alinsky's colleague, Nicholas von Hoffman, who

worked with him for a decade before leaving in 1962 to become a journalist, described how the "lumpen proletariat" faced a series of emergencies and a chain of bad news: "Gas is cut off, electrical service terminated, the landlord is evicting them, a cousin is in jail, the baby has to be rushed to the emergency room, one of the kids sassed a social worker and the family is getting cut off, the reigning male came home and beat the hell out of the mother, Wilson stole the food money, Janice is pregnant, Mother missed her appointment with the vocational counsellor because she was drunk." As a result, the poor were "unreliable, not the stuff of organizations which are bound together by keeping their commitments." In practice that meant (as the civil rights movement also discovered) that the pool of credible and capable local leaders was small; the activist base was narrow. Only a few percent of any community were involved in Alinsky's campaigns. His methods, therefore, came to rely on careful organization and strong leadership. While that did not fit with the later fashion for spontaneity and participatory democracy, he judged that he got better results. His pragmatism was also reflected in his choice of campaigns. Von Hoffman recalled that Alinsky "had no tolerance for a defeat that could have been avoided, no patience with moral victories." He picked fights that he could win on the grounds that not all injustices could be righted.⁴²

Chávez

Although the younger Alinsky had been prepared to cast himself in the role of heroic organizer, the elder Alinsky was more wary of the notion. The people who grasped power and its uses were rarely pure in their motives, if only because they enjoyed the rough and tumble of politics. That could make them devious and cynical, relishing their notoriety, as he certainly did. An awareness of imperfection was to be preferred to a claim of perfection. In this regard, he worried about Cesar Chávez, a man whose work he supported. Chávez had been hired in the early 1950s by Fred Ross, who was running the Alinsky-sponsored Community Service Organization in California to promote voter registration and workers' rights among Mexican farm workers. A decade later, Chávez left to form what became the United Farm Workers Union (UFW). He was a follower of Gandhi, adopting methods such as fasting and pilgrimages and insisting on nonviolence. In the spring of 1966 he led farm workers in a march from Delano to Sacramento, the California state capital. This was combined with a campaign for a nationwide boycott of Californian grapes. Alinsky was skeptical, but the boycott gained widespread

support. It lasted five years and ended in victory: higher wages and rights to organize unions enshrined in law.

Traditional unions were wary of migrant workers, who were presented as threats to white employment. An earlier attempt by the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)⁴³ to organize farm workers failed because the leadership did not understand local conditions or speak Spanish and instead relied on familiar models from old labor campaigns, despite having to work with a transitory workforce with a high turnover. Chávez saw the value of rooting the union in local communities, which offered educational possibilities, access to the church, and added to the tactical repertoire—for example, rent strikes. He could also use the example of the civil rights movement:

How have negroes won their battles? When everyone expects them to run . . . they kneel and pray. When they appear beaten, they turn their defeat into victory. They use only what they have, their bodies and their courage . . . We farm workers have the same weapons—our bodies and our courage . . . The day we farm workers apply this lesson with the same courage as they have shown in Alabama and Mississippi—on that day, the misery of the farm workers will come to an end.⁴⁴

Chávez's strategy put him at the center of his movement. An iconic moment came in 1968 when his people were wearying of a long strike that appeared to be going nowhere, and the value of nonviolence was being questioned. He embarked on a fast to reassert his authority, spiritual more than coercive, and to demonstrate the power of suffering. His penitence was presented as a response to those in the union who had spoken of violence. Mexican Catholics appreciated the symbolism and saw him to be suffering on their behalf. With ministers in attendance, the fast became a religious event. It had a galvanizing effect on the workers, many of whom made their own pilgrimages to the site of the fast.

The advantages gained in strengthening union support were further reinforced when the grape growers, who apparently believed that the fast was a fraud, decided to issue an injunction against the union's tactics at this point. This provided a frail Chávez with a perfect opportunity to turn up in the courtroom, attended by thousands of praying supporters. When he ended his fast after twenty-five days (one day more than Gandhi's longest fast) he did so after an ecumenical service with a piece of bread handed to him by Senator Robert Kennedy (about to declare his candidacy for the presidency). A minister read Chavez's speech:

I am convinced that the truest act of courage, the strongest act of manliness is to sacrifice ourselves for others in a totally non-violent struggle for justice. To be a man is to suffer for others. God help us to be men.⁴⁵

Alinsky was wary of piety. He told Chávez that he found the fast “embarrassing.” Nor was he impressed by Chávez’s insistence on living on a low wage, ensuring an appropriate level of suffering, when he had a family to support. Eventually Chávez’s insistence that UFW staff all work on a subsistence wage became a source of discontent.⁴⁶

One of those who worked with Chávez, Marshall Ganz, observed the importance of the initial motivation as a source of strategic creativity. Strategy did not come first but followed the commitment to act, which inspired “concentration, enthusiasm, risk taking, persistence, and learning.” The intense interest in the problem at hand encouraged critical thinking, challenging expectations and contexts.⁴⁷ Chávez provided the impetus, but he also had a view of organization that depended on strong leadership, and in which the people who did the work made the decisions. This was far removed from participatory democracy, or any sort of democracy, really. Building a movement and running an organization were two different activities. In the latter role Chávez became autocratic and eccentric, eventually leaving the UFW in disarray. Chávez remained an inspirational figure, and many of the alumni of the UFW went on to play important roles in other social movements. Nonetheless, he ended up destroying his own creation by purging insufficiently sycophantic staff.⁴⁸

Imperfect Communities

The natural imperfections of human beings were reflected in the rank and file as well as the leaders. Perhaps Alinsky’s most bitter lesson was that there was no natural coincidence of views between politically aware outside organizers and the communities they urged to seize power. After 1945, the collective efforts of the revitalized Back of the Yards community were devoted to keeping out blacks. As von Hoffman observed, once the area had been rebuilt and revitalized it became “a stable rock of racial exclusion.” There was now something to defend. Even people who were not actively racist still believed that blacks coming into the community “were harbingers of slumification, crime, bad schools and punishing drops in real estate values.”⁴⁹

In his last interview (where he was described as one “who looks like an accountant and talks like a stevedore”), Alinsky recognized somewhat ruefully the irony of this and a less-than-romantic view of “the people.” When he arrived at the Back of the Yards in the late 1930s, it was already “a cesspool of hate; the Poles, Slovaks, Germans, Negroes, Mexicans and Lithuanians all hated each other and all of them hated the Irish, who returned the sentiment in spades.” As he diagnosed the problem, it was one of “dreams of a better world” being replaced by “nightmares of fear—fear of change, fear of losing their material goods, fear of blacks.” He was thinking “of moving back into the area and organizing a new movement to overthrow the one I built 25 years ago.” He still thought it was right to help people escape from “filth and poverty and despair,” even if they now shared the “establishment’s prejudices.” Just because the “have-nots exist in despair, discrimination and deprivation” did “not automatically endow them with any special qualities of charity, justice, wisdom, mercy or moral purity.” They were just ordinary people with all the normal weaknesses.

History is like a relay race of revolutions; the torch of idealism is carried by one group of revolutionaries until it too becomes an establishment, and then the torch is snatched up and carried on the next leg of the race by a new generation of revolutionaries. The cycle goes on and on, and along the way the values of humanism and social justice the rebels champion take shape and change and are slowly implanted in the minds of all men even as their advocates falter and succumb to the materialistic decadence of the prevailing status quo.

During the 1960s, such sentiments ensured that Alinsky was a popular speaker on campuses. He argued for radical, though not revolutionary, change and the redistribution of power. And he did not pretend that it would be easy or straightforward: “Change means movement; movement means friction; friction means heat; heat means controversy.” Yet he had little affinity with the leaders of the New Left. In the summer of 1964, a meeting was arranged between Alinsky and a few of the key figures in SDS, including Tom Hayden and Todd Gitlin. It did not go well. Alinsky was dismissive. Little would be achieved without leadership and hierarchy, and it was naïve to suppose that the poor wanted anything other than the lifestyles that these middle class youngsters were rejecting.⁵⁰ For Alinsky, being the underdog was a liability to be overcome rather than a badge of honor.

Alinsky’s skepticism also extended to Martin Luther King, Jr., although he admired his achievements and copied some of his tactics. There was an attempt to get them to join forces when King came to Chicago in 1966,

but they never met. Alinsky was resistant, wary of such a celebrity entering his home base, especially as he had made a deliberate decision not to try to campaign in the South, where he suspected he would be neither welcome nor effective. He was not one to take second place, even to a Nobel Peace Prize winner, and he also questioned whether a southern preacher could succeed in this setting. Alinsky appreciated that the civil rights movement's basic approach was similar to his own, in terms of using direct action to dramatize key issues. The key to its success, he thought, was the stupidity of the southern establishment and international pressure. "A Bull Connor with his police dogs and fire hoses down in Birmingham did more to advance civil rights than the civil rights fighters themselves."⁵¹ Alinsky had always insisted on proper organization, and his people noticed the difference with King's entourage. Some were "very talented and some crazy as hoot owls," but too many spent time bickering with each other, seeking to get close to King. The leadership never fired anyone and exercised no control over spending.⁵²

Bayard Rustin had argued vehemently with King about Chicago, warning him about the harsh, cynical culture of the northern ghettos and the complexity of city politics, especially the formidable machine of Mayor Michael Daley. Life was often tough, but blacks were not excluded from the political process and local conditions were less simple than the morality play that had been played out in the South. In one row Rustin told King that he did not know what Chicago was like. "You're going to be wiped out." King ended the argument by saying that he was going to pray and consult with the Lord. Rustin was furious. "This business of King talking to God and God talking to King," he complained was no way to resolve serious strategic questions.⁵³ Rustin's misgivings were justified. King received a hostile reception and failed to gather any momentum behind his campaign. Rather than choosing a single issue around which to mobilize, nothing was precluded and any issue might be picked up. In other words, the campaign lacked focus. The aim was to draw a number of potential constituents, from slum dwellers to the unemployed to students, into activity and then escalate into a mass movement that could take dramatic action. Financial difficulties, poor local leadership, distractions in the South, and the complexities of which Rustin had warned all meant that King's campaign never acquired momentum.

Alinsky demonstrated what could be done with community organization but also the limits of a bottom-up approach. Battles could be won and lives improved, but the results were bound to be disillusioning if set against romantic notions about what the people might achieve collectively once mobilized. The people, especially those with tough lives, had their own priorities and ways of coping. Only on occasion did these coincide with those of

activists. Moreover, few campaigns could have the moral clarity of the civil rights movement, which put the establishment on the spot from the start. It was impossible in a liberal society to argue against the principle of desegregation, so the only issues were about pace and method. Other issues were more complex, both analytically and ethically. In addition, as Rustin began to argue forcefully, the changes sought—whether in civil rights or addressing the causes of poverty—required support from central government. Merely raging against the system resulted in largely unproductive consequences for the people on whose behalf the activists claimed to be raging.

*We had fed the heart on fantasies,
The heart's grown brutal from the fare;
More Substance in our enmities
Than in our love.*

—William Butler Yeats, “*The Stare’s Nest by My Window*”

IN THE ABSENCE of perceptible progress, the consequences of the reluctance to accept compromise and forge coalitions lay either in disillusionment and apathy or else anger and more extreme policies. This could be seen in the swift evolution of the SNCC during the course of the 1960s. SNCC’s founding statement affirmed “the philosophical ideal of nonviolence as the foundation of our purpose, the presumption of our belief, and the manner of our action.” This affirmation became strained as the SNCC activists became impatient, uncertain about what they were achieving for their pains, frustrated at the limits of their open and inclusive political style and with the restraint required by a nonviolent philosophy. They were told to play safe to keep the support of white liberals, even as the Democrats refused to disown racist politicians. They became suspicious, not only of the segregationists and police, but also of the elitism of Martin Luther King.

In the North there was already a more radical aspect to black politics. For example, Malcolm X, who converted to the Nation of Islam while in jail and

became its most prominent and charismatic figure, provided a striking contrast to King's Christian message of love and peace. Malcolm X proclaimed black separatism, denounced whites as devils, and refused to reject violence. Self-defense, he insisted, was not really violence but "intelligence." He spoke in ways that King could not to the disaffected and frustrated blacks of the inner cities. The civil rights leaders rebuked him for stirring up racial hatred and playing to white stereotypes of blacks. Eventually he did have a change of heart. He continued to push for a distinctively black consciousness but left the Nation of Islam in 1964 and moderated his rhetoric. He was murdered soon after, in February 1965.¹

A more distant influence with a clearer message was Frantz Fanon. His views developed through his encounters with French colonialism and culminated in his time in Algeria, where he went as a psychiatrist before joining the National Liberation Front (FLN). His main testament, *Wretched of the Earth*, was written in 1961 as he was dying from leukemia. It was later argued that the English translation of this book, and Jean-Paul Sartre's introduction, sharpened the tone, more so than Fanon intended. His insights on colonial conditions were played down as a result of the stress on violence as the only strategic language that colonizers recognized.² The psychiatrist in him offered an existentialist take on violence, providing the book's intensity.

Fanon picked up on Sartre's claim that it was not the Jewish character that provoked anti-Semitism but instead "the anti-Semite creates the Jew," and so argued that "the settler" had "brought the native into existence and perpetuates his existence."³ Violence was a means of escaping from this psychological as well as physical domination. "At the level of the individuals, violence is a cleansing force. It frees him from his inferiority complex and restores his self-respect . . . the colonized man finds his freedom in and through violence." Sartre added: "The native cures himself of colonial neurosis by thrusting out the settler through the force of arms. When his rage boils over, he rediscovers his lost innocence and comes to know himself in that he himself creates himself."⁴ The philosopher Hannah Arendt suspected that most of Fanon's admirers had not gone beyond his first chapter—"Concerning Violence"—for later he showed awareness of how "unmixed and total brutality" would lead "to the defeat of the movement within a few weeks." She was most appalled by Sartre's claim to be a Marxist while espousing notions that owed more to Nechayev and Bakunin, and his excitement over what might be achieved by "mad fury" and "volcanic outbursts."⁵

Fanon's anger resonated with young black activists who were concluding that it was pointless trying to work with white power structures. Jacobs and Landau, who surveyed the New Left in 1965, observed how "the weary veterans

of harassment, arrests, beatings, and the psychological torture of living in the South, have begun to re-examine their objectives at the very time they confront the full and often subtle power of the American economic and political system.”⁶ The idealism was being drained away from SNCC. The “generals,” influenced by Malcolm X and ready to contemplate their own form of guerilla warfare, replaced the “poets.” The dire economic position of blacks in the urban ghettos and the escalation of the Vietnam War, which disproportionately drafted blacks into the army, added to the grievances. “No Vietcong ever called me a nigger,” observed the boxer Cassius Clay, now Mohammed Ali. The alarmed reaction of white society to the prospect of black violence and the rioting in the inner cities brought a satisfaction in itself.

One of the pioneering SNCC activists and chairman of the organization in 1965, Stokely Carmichael, became an advocate of black power. Raised in Harlem, he spoke the language of the streets more naturally than that of the Church. He began to toy with ideas for a new SNCC slogan in 1966. Then after yet another arrest (his twenty-seventh), this time in Greenwood, Mississippi, he exclaimed to a crowd:

We want black power! That's right. That's what we want, black power. We don't have to be ashamed of it. We have stayed here. We have begged the president. We've begged the federal government—that's all we've been doing, begging and begging. It's time we stand up and take over.⁷

He claimed that any white person, even those in the movement, had “concepts in his mind about black people, if only subconsciously. He cannot escape them, because the whole society has geared his sub-conscious in that direction.” With racism so ingrained it was meaningless for blacks to talk about coalition—“there is no one to align ourselves with.” Only once it was shown that blacks could speak and act for themselves would it perhaps be possible to work with whites again, but then on equal terms. SNCC would henceforth be “black-staffed, black-controlled and black-financed.”⁸

A book coauthored with the academic Charles Hamilton argued for “pride rather than shame, in blackness, and an attitude of brotherly, communal responsibility among all black people for one another.” White Americans could afford to “speak softly, tread lightly, employ the soft-sell and put-off” because they “own the society.” It would be ludicrous for black people to “adopt *their* methods of relieving *our* oppression.” If they followed this path they would gain “crumbs of co-optation” in return for holding back on condemnation.

The problem was not with the underlying premise. There were many other examples in American politics of groups organizing politically on the

basis of ethnicity, using a shared identity to create an effective bargaining position. "Before a group can enter the open society, it must first close ranks." Only when blacks spoke up, not asking for favors but seeking power, could they expect the system to respond. But Carmichael sought a shared "sense of people-hood" on the basis of an extremely radical posture. Blacks must not adopt the values of the middle class that had sanctioned and perpetuated black oppression, yet if the aim was economic advancement then this would lead naturally to a black bourgeoisie.

The big question was whether to continue with nonviolence, the stance which had sustained recent political advances. Carmichael and Stevenson answered that nonviolence had handicapped blacks by creating an image of passivity. "From our viewpoint," they argued, "rampaging white mobs and white night-riders must be made to understand that their days of free head-whipping are over. Black people should and must fight back." This was about self-defense: "Those of us who advocate Black Power are quite clear in our own minds that a 'non-violent' approach to civil rights is an approach black people cannot afford and a luxury white people do not deserve."⁹

Martin Luther King was appalled by the turn of events. Not only did he object to the resort to violence, but he found it frustrating that violence became the issue rather than those his movement was trying to highlight. He insisted that power should be a means to an end—the "creation of a truly brotherly society"—rather than an end in itself.¹⁰ In a posthumously published book, he critiqued Black Power, pointing to its self-defeating character as blacks were a minority in the United States and defended alliances with whites. In the end, both races needed each other. They were "bound together in a single garment of destiny."¹¹

In 1967, whites were expelled from SNCC and the commitment to non-violence was dropped. The new chairman, H. Rap Brown, described violence as "American as cherry pie." Carmichael, who later acknowledged that black power killed SNCC, joined up with the Black Panthers, a group that had been set up in Oakland, California, in 1966, and employed a tough, violent rhetoric from the start. In his autobiographical account of the origins of the Black Panthers, Bobby Seale described the early fixation with acquiring an arsenal, paid for by selling at a profit copies of the "Little Red Book" of Chinese leader Mao Zedong, compared with the casual way the party's manifesto was put together.¹² The striking imagery and rhetoric associated with the Panthers, and their militarist affectations, gave them an influence beyond their actual numbers, probably never more than five thousand.

Carmichael continued with his own advocacy of black separatism. "The major enemy," he said in a speech in 1967, "is not your brother, flesh of your

flesh and blood of your blood. The major enemy is the honky and his institutions of racism, that's the major enemy, that is the major enemy. And whenever anyone prepares for revolutionary warfare, you concentrate on the major enemy. We're not strong enough to fight each other and also fight him."¹³ He fell out even with the Panthers, who were more willing to work with whites than he was. He decided the only way to get close to the African people was to move to Africa and adopt an African name, Kwame Ture.

The trend in black politics alarmed Bayard Rustin. He became disenchanted as his former friends in SNCC turned to violence and black separatism. "The minute you had black anger, rage," he later observed, "you automatically had to have white fear, because we're always enumerator to their denominator... These two things have to move with each other." A focus on direct action added to the polarization, alienating whites and "breeding despair and impotence" among blacks.¹⁴ He agreed with Martin Luther King that poverty and unemployment were significant triggers of race riots, but that led him to explore how blacks and whites could be united in struggle under the aegis of the labor unions. His conviction that the big issues were economic, requiring federal programs, meant that it was vital to support a government prepared to fund a "war on poverty." This led to another disagreement, which included most of his former colleagues, over whether protest against the Vietnam War should be a priority. The case for coalitions was made with particular force and provocation in a February 1965 article. Rustin observed the "strong moralistic strain in the civil rights movement which would remind us that power corrupts, forgetting that the absence of power also corrupts." Self-help was not enough. "We need allies" he insisted, and that meant compromises. In particular, he wanted to work with the labor unions and the Democratic Party. "The leader who shrinks from this task reveals not his purity but his lack of political sense."¹⁵

The compromises involved at this time were just too much, especially in the light of the escalation in Vietnam. Where Rustin now led few followed, and he became increasingly distant from his former colleagues, no longer a pacifist and unconvinced that the tactics of nonviolent direct action he had pioneered were of much relevance. He became, as a biographer put it, "a strategist without a movement." Rustin was accused of exaggerating the liberalism of the Johnson administration, and therefore its ability to solve fundamental problems, while encouraging blacks to abandon the direct action that could give them an independent voice.¹⁶ Carmichael and Hamilton charged Rustin with promoting three myths: the interests of black people were identical with the interests of liberals and labor; a "viable coalition could be effected between the politically and economically secure and the

politically and economically insecure”; and “political coalitions are or can be sustained on a moral, friendly, sentimental basis; by appeals to conscience.” The proposed coalition was with groups with no interest in a “total revamping of society” but only peripheral reforms.¹⁷ In line with their general argument they insisted that they were not against coalitions, only those that were paternalistic. Until blacks could stand on their own they would be too weak to make a coalition work.¹⁸ The only acceptable coalition would be between poor blacks and poor whites.

Revolution in the Revolution

Vietnam was a nagging issue in 1965 but an overriding one two years later. This made it impossible for radicals to imagine having anything to do with an administration prosecuting such a terrible war. The troops sent to fight were inevitably young, largely draftees, and disproportionately black. Anger against the war, which reached a crescendo in 1968, changed the whole direction of the movement. The SDS activists, instead of settling down to the patient cultivation of poor communities, turned to antiwar agitation. From the micro preoccupation with the frustrations of ghetto life they moved to the macro issues of imperialism and war. Nonviolence, so natural and effective just a few years earlier, began to seem soft and unworldly. It was no longer good enough to campaign on particular issues. It was necessary to get to the source of the problem.

The SDS president in 1965 was Paul Potter, a thoughtful intellectual who had studied sociology and anthropology and had been developing the idea of the “system” rather than individuals working within it as the main problem. This was a radical idea, for if the “system” was at fault, then reform would achieve little. He saw Vietnam as one issue among many. A march on Washington, which had been organized for April 1965, and so took place at a time when the U.S. intervention in Vietnam was escalating, was far larger than anticipated and gave the occasion an edge. Potter used it to offer his radical critique of an American social order that could not help itself in its oppressiveness. “We must name that system,” demanded Potter. “We must name it, describe it, analyze it, understand it and change it. For it is only when that system is changed and brought under control that there can be any hope for stopping the forces that create a war in Vietnam today or a murder in the south tomorrow.”¹⁹

Thereafter “the system” appeared as the enemy. But its designation was vague, its make-up nebulous, and its workings unclear. Potter’s academic

background may well have led him to adopt a systemic approach, which considered societies as made up of interconnected parts, as a matter of course. In mainstream sociology this encouraged the view that political and social change would always find its own equilibrium. For radicals such as Potter, the system was not a neutral representation of how a complex social organization could be made to work for the general benefit but instead a distortion that had become ingrained and self-reinforcing. The United States had become systematically dysfunctional, turning people against themselves and their better nature. The result was a "cultural genocide," a sort of mass lobotomy, so that people could not appreciate what was being done or imagine alternative possibilities. If they could, then they might regain control of this system, "make it bend itself to their wills rather than bending them to its." Talk of the "system" could easily convey some grand but hidden conspiracy, the power elite pulling the economic, social, and political strings. Potter wanted to avoid the old labels of capitalism or imperialism, but in the end they were the easy labels to use. As essentially a radical pragmatist in the tradition of James and Dewey, Potter became concerned that the movement would become more violent and confrontational, and that the words he had used in his Washington speech would encourage it to be so. Potter's successor as SDS president, Carl Oglesby, challenged the notion that naming or analyzing this system would be enough, as if "statements will bring change, if only the rights statements can be written." Words were to be discarded in favor of action. Eloquent language could be disregarded; eloquent deeds would be harder to ignore.²⁰

Hayden went to North Vietnam in December 1965, his first trip abroad, to witness the consequences of American bombardment. He moved from opposing America's war to supporting the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam as it fought the Americans. Questions about the extent to which this was a true insurgency or a creation of the communist regime in North Vietnam, or exactly the nature of the ideology and freedoms promoted by the North, tended to get neglected or played down in the face of the awfulness of the government in the South and the American tactics. A belief that some Americans should keep open lines of communication to the communists was another argument against being too critical. Hayden was aware of the danger. In a book he wrote with Staughton Lynd, *The Other Side*, he insisted that they were not pretending that their hosts were admirable in all respects ("We do not believe we are Sartres who require a Camus to remind us of the existence of the slave labor camps"). Yet the overall impression given was that these young middle-class activists were in awe of the tough revolutionary cadres who suffered for their beliefs and who were committed selflessly

to a protracted struggle. There were similar results when pilgrimages were made to Cuba. In the background, there were hints of a local politics that was crude and cruel, but this got lost in the excitement of association with true revolutionary spirits.

If the aim was to develop a broad coalition against the Vietnam War, these visits made little sense. Public opinion was turning against the war and did so increasingly during 1968, because it was both costly and futile. That was not the same as embracing the nation's enemies, and many recoiled from the apparent lack of patriotism and naïveté of those who did so. Yet for the activists this did not matter. They were giving up on the United States, and its docile population, in the conviction that it was bound to be left behind as the tide of history worked through the anti-imperialist people of the third world. At best they could serve as the supporters and agents of these people, gaining their revolutionary credentials by acting from within against the imperialist behemoth.²¹ Once Cuba and Vietnam were accepted as sources of radical inspiration, Marxism-Leninism had to be taken seriously. The old ideologies of the Left were able to stage a comeback. One radical later ruefully recalled how the Maoist faction in SDS became an "external, disciplined ingredient in our ultra democratic anarchist soup."²²

The emerging analysis linked the American poor with the whole of the third world as victims of the same system of corporate power and liberal indifference. Instead of being a hopeless minority, American radicals started to see themselves as part of a global campaign. The term "third world" had been coined in France in the early 1950s to describe countries that were economically underdeveloped and politically unaligned, keeping their distance from the liberal capitalist first world and the state socialist second world. The long-forgotten inspirational model was the "third estate" of commoners, who eventually revolted in 1789 against the first and second estates of priests and nobles. The term therefore captured an idea of a coherent group, a coalition of the disadvantaged, which might one day overthrow the established order. It came to include many states who gained independence as a result of post-Second World War decolonization. The issue of imperialism moved beyond the baleful influence of the decadent old European powers to the pernicious domination of American neocolonialism, rationalized by a crude anti-communism and driven by corporate greed. Cuba was one example of this struggle; Vietnam was another. There were more confrontations to come, and at some point imperialism would be unable to cope. This was the point which the movement within the United States must work to bring about as soon as possible.

This line of thought was validated by Herbert Marcuse, who had taken over from C. Wright Mills as the vogue intellectual of the New Left in its uncompromising late 1960s form. He had been a member of the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research, a base for Marxists who kept their distance from the Communist Party, which moved to New York in the 1930s. His reputation was largely as an Hegelian with an interest in Freud until the publication of his book *One Dimensional Man* in 1964. This explained why despite all the apparent qualities of Western countries—political pluralism, affluence, welfare states, access to art—it was natural to feel intensely dissatisfied. All good things turned out to be instruments of social control, preventing people from realizing their true nature and achieving genuine happiness. Even worse, notional forms of opposition had been co-opted, creating a new liberal totalitarianism through what he later described as “repressive tolerance,” which claimed to “reconcile the forces opposing the system and to defeat or refute all protest in the name of the historical prospects of freedom from toil and domination.” Because people were not free, they could not pass judgment on their own lack of freedom.

With his newfound fame among student radicals, Marcuse returned the compliment in *An Essay on Liberation* by celebrating them as agents of change, not only in the West but also on behalf of the whole world. The Cuban and Vietnamese revolutions might not survive the weight of Western repression. The “preconditions for the liberation and development of the Third World must emerge in the advanced industrial countries.” The system must be broken at its strongest link. This required resistance against both political and mental repression. This would be done without bureaucracy and organization, through small groups acting autonomously. The aim was explicitly utopian, the alternative to be developed through trial and error. “Understanding, tenderness towards each other, the instinctual consciousness of that which is evil, false, the heritage of oppression, would then testify to the authenticity of the rebellion.”²³

The inspirational figure symbolizing the direct challenge to “Yankee Imperialism” was Ernesto “Che” Guevara. Che, as he was known, had been born to a middle-class Argentinean family, trained as a doctor, and then became a lieutenant of Fidel Castro in his campaign to overthrow the Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista. Although a minister in Castro’s government when barely 30 years old, he returned to the field, determined to open up new fronts against imperialism, putting into practice his theories of guerilla warfare first in the Congo and then in Bolivia. Both campaigns were unsuccessful. The second led to his capture in 1967 and summary execution.

The poster image of him—handsome, hirsute, and determined, sporting his revolutionary beret—became, and remains, iconic.

In January 1966, he sent a message to the founding conference of the Tricontinental, or the Organization of Solidarity with the People of Asia, Africa, and Latin America taking place in Havana. He warned against allowing Vietnam to be isolated in its struggle. There should be “a constant and a firm attack in all fronts where the confrontation is taking place.” Imperialism was “a world system, the last stage of capitalism—and it must be defeated in a world confrontation.” It was therefore necessary to create the “Second and Third Vietnams of the world.” The Americans would gradually be drained by being forced to fight in diverse and unwelcoming regions. The road ahead would be hard, he warned, but the imperative was to carry out “armed propaganda” to galvanize the spirit, putting aside national differences so that all should be prepared to fight in any relevant arena of armed struggle.²⁴

In subsequent years, his manual on guerrilla warfare and the diary of his doomed campaign in Bolivia were published (making clear his inability to win over peasants). The key concept was the “foco.” This small group of dedicated men would stimulate the insurrection by both forcing the state to reveal its inner brutality while demonstrating the availability of an alternative, more sympathetic government. In practice, Guevara’s ideas were more influential among “the generation of 1968” in Europe and the United States than in the third world. Outside Latin America, revolutionaries tended to look at the quite different, and generally more successful, Maoist model.

Che’s romantic model was based on a misreading of the Cuban revolution. Castro had presented himself as a liberal and leader of a wide anti-Batista coalition, not as a Marxist-Leninist—an affiliation that was only announced after the seizure of power. Castro claimed that the major influence on his concept of irregular war was Ernest Hemingway’s novel on the Spanish Civil War, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. He was careful to work hard to gain sympathy from Americans. Just as Mao had used Edgar Snow to burnish his image in the 1930s as a moderate, “Lincolnesque” and with a “lively sense of humor,” so Castro used *New York Times* reporter Herbert Matthews, who reported back on the idealism, probable anti-communism, and strength of Castro’s force. At the time it was probably about forty men, but by talking of “groups of ten to forty” and having an aide deliver a message about a non-existent second-column, Castro conveyed an illusion of numbers.²⁵ This helped bring in external funding, notably from sympathetic Americans. Castro’s importance had grown because his rural base allowed him to survive while the key figures in the urban leadership

were killed. At first the urban aspects of the struggle and the support of key elements of the middle class were acknowledged, but postrevolutionary politics and Castro's own shift to the left led to the systematic distortion of the "lessons" of the revolution.²⁶ Castro and Che rewrote the history of the revolution in order to stress their own role and play down the importance of the urban working class and its leadership.

In 1961 Che presented the three key elements of his theory:

Popular forces can win against the army.

It is not necessary to wait until all the conditions for making revolution exist; the insurrection can create them.

In underdeveloped America the countryside is the basic area of armed struggle.²⁷

The question of preconditions went to the heart of revolutionary theory. To be a revolutionary at a nonrevolutionary time could be intensely frustrating, but the risks involved in acting as if the conditions were latent and could be brought to the surface by dramatic action had led to many futile campaigns in the past. If discontent was present but inchoate, then it was possible that it could be turned by some spark into mass anger, but the professional revolutionaries tended not to be the source of the spark. Rather, they came in after the event. Mao, for example, understood the importance of political education and action to create mass support and never claimed that guerrillas could take on an army by themselves. Che claimed that it was possible for a revolution to be Marxist in character without this being recognized by the participants. This meant playing down the political context, and thus failing to take it properly into account. When Che wrote a prologue to Giap's *People's War, People's Army*, he reinterpreted the Vietnamese experience as fitting in with his theory, as if Giap had started in Vietnam with a "foco" and had paid no attention to the politics of the struggle.²⁸

The foco substituted for the vanguard party, and the fighters generated support through their military courage and by provoking the regime into atrocities, turning opinion against it. Che at first acknowledged the importance of democratic institutions in giving legitimacy to a regime and so rendering it less vulnerable. By 1963, democracy was dismissed as representing the dictatorship of the ruling class. The doctrine was further transformed by its internationalization, exemplified by the Message to the Tri-Continental, according to which the revolutionary struggle could and should be conducted without regard to geographical boundaries. Che may have been an audacious and brave commander, but he lacked political nous and paid a high price for his simplified theory. He never forged effective political alliances and did not

appreciate the need for a strong local leader to be the public face of a revolution. Rather, he believed in his own mystique, as if the presence of such a famous fighter would inspire courage and confidence.²⁹

Nonetheless, Che had a significant influence on Western radicals. First, and not to be discounted, he looked the part. Second, he provided a theory for the defeat of U.S. imperialism that did not depend on the efforts of those living in its midst. Last, for impatient young radicals who could not face the hard grind of building a mass movement with such unpromising materials, here was a theory about the difference a small group of committed revolutionaries might make if only they could find a way of unleashing the revolutionary potential of the masses. Che's ideas were most effectively spread by a young French intellectual-cum-journalist Régis Debray, whose book title *Revolution in the Revolution* captured the erroneous idea that the Cubans had hit upon a way of modernizing the very idea of a revolution.³⁰ Debray's book was actually sponsored more by Castro than Guevara. Che only saw it when Debray visited him in Bolivia, a journey that accelerated his defeat, especially after the Frenchman was picked up by the Bolivian authorities and confirmed that Che was in the country. Che was critical of Debray for simplifying his theory, focusing on a "micro-level" of the foco and, most importantly, failing to give due note to the Tricontinental aspect of his "macro-strategy."³¹

Another Latin American, Carlos Marighela, picked up for a short time where Che had left off. He was a veteran communist politician in Brazil, into his fifties when Che was killed. He attended the Tricontinental in Havana in 1966. In 1968, he broke with the Communist Party, which he considered ossified, and announced his support for urban guerrilla warfare. The urban element was his main divergence from Che. Largely as a result of the Bolivian failure, Marighela believed the guerrilla should operate in familiar terrain. He was most familiar with the city. Until he was shot dead by police in late 1969, Marighela's group carried on a number of actions, including kidnappings and seizure of railway stations. Most notably he was famous for the *Mini-manual of the Urban Guerrilla*, circulated in Havana after his death.³² Although Marighela looked forward to a popular army after a campaign designed "to distract, to wear out, to demoralize the militarists," his methods for getting the revolution underway were essentially terrorist. They relied on a version of "propaganda of the deed" to attract the mass media. Terrorism's "most conspicuous effect," he supposed, was to provoke a "violent counterattack that may be so offensive as to drive the populace into the arms of the insurgents." As was often the case, the effect was the opposite.

Mirages of Violence

In December 1967, the issue of the legitimacy of violence was addressed at a forum in New York. The panel on the topic included Hannah Arendt and Noam Chomsky. Arendt argued against the “mirages of violence,” warning that this was a weapon of impotence and not power, a means that could overwhelm the ends it was supposed to serve. It was not hard for fellow panelists to provide examples where violence was justified and effective, but the most striking intervention came from the floor. Tom Hayden (“a thin, pale young man whose untied tie flapped loosely as he spoke,” according to the *New York Times*) observed how in Cuba violence had been “amazingly successful” when used by a small group to create the “political foundations.” He argued that people in the ghettos “getting mattresses and clothes and a supply of liquor for the winter is a constructive and revealing form of violence” and then decried the failure of democratic procedures:

It seems to me that until you can begin to show—not in language and not in theory, but in action—that you can put an end to the war in Vietnam, and an end to American racism, you can’t condemn the violence of others who can’t wait for you.

Arendt objected: “To oppose the government in the United States with violence is absolutely wrong.”³³ Over the next year, she developed her arguments on violence further, insisting that it could destroy but not create power.³⁴

Attempts by the American radicals to emulate Latin American guerrillas were disastrous. The Black Panthers went so far as to establish a training center in Cuba and had a plan to set up foci in the more mountainous areas of the United States. The plan, as Eldridge Cleaver (a Black Panther leader of the time) recalled, was “to have small mobile units that could shift easily in and out of rural areas, living off the land, and tying up thousands of troops in fruitless pursuit.” He added that in retrospect it seemed “pretty ridiculous.”³⁵ The most serious emulation came from the Weathermen, a faction of SDS.

This group can be traced to the April 1968 occupation of New York’s Columbia University by students who complained about the university’s encroachments into black neighborhoods and professors doing weapons research. This was not a unique event. Around the world there were upheavals on campuses and demonstrations against Vietnam. In May, the Fifth French Republic was almost brought down by rioting on the streets of Paris. Most depressingly for liberals, Martin Luther King was murdered that April as was Robert Kennedy in June, just when his presidential bid was gathering pace. These murders eliminated in turn the leaders of nonviolent direct action and

those seeking change through electoral politics. After this, Hayden—who knew Kennedy³⁶—saw no hope in democratic politics. He wrote an article headed “Two, Three, Many Columbias,” picking up on a slogan written on a university wall, which in turn picked up on Che’s call to the Tricontinental. He still clung to his own original vision:

The student protest is not just an offshoot of the black protest—it is based on authentic opposition to the middle-class world of manipulation, channeling and careerism. The students are in opposition to the fundamental institutions of society.

But his analysis was now harsher. Universities were linked to imperialism. Hayden spoke of barricades, threats to destroy buildings in face of police attacks, and raids on offices of professors doing weapons research. “A crisis is foreseeable that would be too massive for police to handle.”³⁷

Even sharper was Mark Rudd, one of the leaders of the Columbia revolt. Unlike Hayden, whose radicalism had developed slowly and thoughtfully during the late 1950s, Rudd had radicalized abruptly. His political analysis was correspondingly less subtle and his politics more outraged. He later provided a candid description of himself as “a member of the cult of Che Guevara” who had “evolved a belief in the necessity for violence in order to end the war and to make revolution.” He recalled a regular line in his speeches—“The ruling class will never give over power peacefully”—and Mao Zedong’s famous aphorism: “Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.” With the Panthers already fighting a revolutionary war within the United States, a “heroic fantasy” developed by which “eventually the military would disintegrate internally, and the revolutionary army—led by us, of course—would be built from its defectors.”³⁸

Faced by Maoists who brought to the campus a developed revolutionary theory, Rudd’s group believed that they had to counter with one of their own, based on a combination of Cuba and Columbia University. They would be urban guerrillas, “rejecting the go-slow approach of the rest of the Left, just as Che and Fidel had begun to reject the Cuban Communist Party’s conservatism by beginning guerrilla warfare in Cuba. Our bible was Debray’s *Revolution in the Revolution*.” It was out of this faction that the Weather Underground was formed with the aim of moving out of the universities to organize young people for a coming armed struggle. The name came from one of Bob Dylan’s lyrics (“You don’t need a weather man to know which way the wind blows”). In place of the sense of experimentation and openness of the early SDS, there was now an old-fashioned Marxist factional fight. The attempts at being urban guerrillas involved farce and tragedy, with their

numbers never more than three hundred and with key figures soon killed by their own explosive devices, on the run, or imprisoned. The fate of the Black Panthers was similar, and even more violent. Rudd later lamented how with his friends he had chosen to “scuttle America’s largest radical organization—with chapters in hundreds of campuses, a powerful national identity, and enormous growth potential—for a fantasy of revolutionary urban-guerrilla warfare.”³⁹ Sociologist Daniel Bell, a professor at Columbia, saw it coming. He remarked that “desperado tactics are never the mark of a coherent social movement, but the guttering last gasps of a romanticism soured by rancor and impotence.” The SDS, he predicted, would “be destroyed by its style. It lives on turbulence, but is incapable of transforming its chaotic impulses into a systematic, responsible behavior that is necessary to effect broad societal change.”⁴⁰

Back to Chicago

The 1960s had begun with innovative forms of protests that dramatized the gap between the American dream and the harsh reality of southern segregation. Its participants embodied American idealism—dignified, restrained, and articulate. During the course of the 1960s, the context for protest changed dramatically. Political advances in the South came up against the economic despair of the urban ghettos and the fear of being sent to fight in a vicious war that was widely seen to be both pointless and illegitimate. As the hard political core of the movement began to turn into an approximation of a Leninist vanguard or a Guevarist foco, around the edges a much more individualistic, libertarian, permissive culture was taking root, posing a provocative and enduring challenge to the American way of life. Though they swam in the same demographic tides, there was no logical reason why the counterculture and radical politics had to move hand in hand, other than Vietnam. This pulled them together.

During 1967, gentle, hedonistic “hippies”—often high on drugs—made their appearance offering “love and peace” as a form of “flower power.” They had nothing so formal as a leader, but as a prophet there was the beat poet Allen Ginsberg. Although his parents were communists, this had, if anything, turned Ginsberg against political activism. His primary focus, as his reputation grew during the 1950s, was not “rebellion or social protest” but the “exploration of modes of consciousness.”⁴¹ A visit to Saigon in 1963, however, had led him to be more political and he became a strong opponent of the Vietnam War.⁴² There was playfulness about Ginsberg, as if he knew

at times his claims were absurd, yet his belief in the ability of poetry and Buddhist chants to affect consciousness was sincere. His ideas, which were not always intelligible in conception or execution, depended on the power of language.

In 1966, after a poetry reading, he had screamed “I declare the end of the war” to the National Student Association convention. He later explained that the aim was to “make my language identical with the historical event,” so when he declared “the end of the war” this would “set up a force field of language which is so solid and absolute as a statement and a realization of an assertion by my will, conscious will power, that it will contradict—counteract and ultimately overwhelm the force field of language pronounced out of the State Department and out of Johnson’s mouth.” In almost postmodern terms he offered his language in a trial of strength with the “black mantras” of the war-makers. It was a political critique which traded “argument for incantation.”⁴³ The theme was picked up by the folk singer Phil Ochs and led to a November 1967 demonstration in New York with three thousand young people running through the streets, proclaiming loudly “I declare the war is over.” Out of this came the idea for the “Yippies” as the political wing of the hippies.

The founders of the Yippies were Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin. Both had been involved in radical protests since the start of the decade. Rubin had been involved in the Berkeley free speech movement and had become a full-time activist, organizing “teach-ins” against the war. He had a reputation as an imaginative tactician but had also moved well to the left. Both had concluded that standard forms of protest were losing their bite and that new types of spectacle were needed to gain media attention and get the message across. Rubin had urged in 1966 that activists become “specialists in propaganda and communication” and saw in the counterculture a way to challenge the system he opposed on every possible front, from comic books to street theater. This is why Ginsberg’s mantra had appealed to them. As they thought ahead to the protests planned for the August 1968 Democratic Party convention in Chicago, they wanted something more than a conventional demonstration. They hit upon the idea of a counterculture event, a “Festival of Life” that would help turn the convention into a circus, blending surreal humor and anarchism. When the Yippie manifesto was launched in January, it looked forward to the festival: “We are making love in the parks. We are reading, singing, laughing, printing newspapers, groping and making a mock convention and celebrating the birth of FREE AMERICA in our own time.”⁴⁴

With the war going so badly, Lyndon Johnson had decided not to stand for reelection. His vice president and anointed successor, Hubert Humphrey,

got the nomination after Robert Kennedy's assassination and antiwar senator Eugene McCarthy's effective withdrawal from campaigning. Johnson's withdrawal was no reason to abandon the protest. All the different factions of the movement converged on Chicago "like moths to the flame." There were the new hard men of the SDS, radical pacifists still committed to nonviolent direct action, and the Yippies taunting the authorities with talk of LSD in the water supply, smoke bombs in delegates' halls, and sexual shows of varying degrees of provocation. The gathering mood spoke more of violence than peace. The city's long-time mayor, Michael Daley, who ran one of the most formidable machines in American politics, had form when it came to turning the police onto demonstrators. He was determined to make life as difficult as possible for all those who opposed the careful orchestration of the convention. The police were under orders to show no restraint. Some were operating undercover. Both sides had their provocateurs and both had an interest in confrontation.

Tom Hayden was at the center of the preparations for Chicago, including seeking permits for demonstrations. His rhetoric when talking with other activists was becoming wilder. This was his existential moment. He could show he was not like the "good Germans" who were in denial about the Holocaust. In making his stand against a terrible war, he was prepared—as an existentialist—to pay his own personal price. This was reinforced by the persistent notion that underdogs benefited by appearing as innocent victims of police brutality. Heightened confrontation would push up the internal costs of the war. The establishment, he had concluded, would only abandon South Vietnam on the basis of a cost-benefit calculation, even if this involved arousing "the sleeping dogs on the right."⁴⁵ Rubin also bought into the theory that the movement required repression to grow. Repression, he enthused, would turn "demonstration protest into wars. Actors into heroes. Masses of individuals into a community." It would eliminate "the bystander, the neutral observer, the theorist. It forces everyone to pick a side."⁴⁶

Such talk made Ginsberg wary. He had never, he explained later, been a poet of "revolt." That would have meant trying to "become wiser by becoming dumber, you want to become more peaceful by getting angry." His aim was to alter consciousness.⁴⁷ In Chicago, instead of the "academies of self-awareness" and "classes in spirituality" he favored, he saw "bloody visions of the apocalypse."⁴⁸ He flew there writing a poem ("Remember the Helpless order the/ Police armed to protect/the Helpless Freedom the Revolutionary/ Conspired to honor"). He later explained his presence at Chicago as a "religious experimenter," not only on behalf of the Yippies but "also in the context of our whole political life, too." In the face of police determination to

close down the music festival, he urged caution. Presenting himself as a calming influence, he encouraged demonstrators to chant “Om” in the face of violence or hysteria. “Ten people humming Om can calm down one hundred. One hundred people humming Om can regulate the metabolism of a thousand. A thousand bodies vibrating Om can immobilize an entire downtown Chicago street full of scared humans, uniformed or naked.” At one point during the demonstrations he led chanting for seven hours. The aim of this, and his other antiwar performances, was not to transmit a thought or assert a principle but to “bring about a state of being.”

Once again we see the idea that getting the state to reveal its true nastiness would set people against it, without considering the circumstances in which ordinary people might support the state. The radicals, disappointed with their own numbers, sought to use police brutality as a means of expanding their constituency. Watching it all were the world’s media, who were treated to a spectacle of baton charges and bloodied demonstrators.⁴⁹ Tactically, the hard-liners had won and the movement lost. The progressive radicalization of the decade had reflected the limits of a politics based on gaining attention through sacrifice, appeals to conscience, and assertions of shared values. The early concepts of dignified nonviolence, which “implied erect bearing, silent passage, and respectable dress,” had given way to “shouting and threats, hissing, hoaxes, foul language, heckling, garbage-dumping, a sense of great anger vented, and a growing tendency to violence.”⁵⁰

One type of Marxist analysis of the clashes at Chicago would have observed that they were largely between working-class police and middle-class demonstrators. Working-class anger was directed at those who had enjoyed privileged lives and now turned on the system that had pampered them, mocking those who upheld traditional values, turning away from responsibilities and challenging the patriotic symbols (notably the flag) of which they should be proud. Fears of disorder and decadence began to influence working-class political attitudes. Alinsky feared that the rise of the right would be the inevitable response to violence and extremism on the left. He wrote *Rules for Radicals* to remind the new revolutionaries of the “central concepts of action in human politics that operate regardless of the scene or the time.” He argued the need for a “pragmatic attack on the system.” He warned, correctly, of the dangers of insulting and ignoring ordinary working people. “If we fail to communicate with them, if we don’t encourage them to form alliances with us, they will move to the right.” In urging an ethic of responsibility on a new generation of radicals, Alinsky and Rustin were aware that they must appear like old men jealous of the energy of youth and with evidence of their failures all around them in persistent poverty, inequality, and violence. At

the same time they recognized that the people for whom they struggled were underdogs precisely because they lacked the capacity to become the majority, and that organizing them was a hard slog that would require compromises and certainly coalitions. They understood the futility of expecting people absorbed in a daily struggle for survival to sign up for an even larger and more dangerous struggle defined only by vague slogans.

The United States did not withdraw from Vietnam until 1973. But the American role became less toxic politically with the end of conscription. The young activists of the New Left moved on, some becoming milder versions of their former selves, others abandoning their commitments. What lasted was the critique of everyday life, reflected in music and fashion, and to a degree in the use of recreational drugs, but also in a distrust of elitism and hierarchy and a wariness of bureaucracy.⁵¹ The focus on the worth of individuals led to the anticolonial language of self-determination and liberation coming to be applied to groups, such as gays and women, who had felt stigmatized and oppressed.

Women's Liberation

Feminism was not a new cause and important books were written prior to the growth of the student movement, but "women's liberation" flowed naturally out of a movement dedicated to the idea of humans controlling their own destinies and asserting their worth. The original groups from the suffragette era had disappeared. Demands for equal rights tended to be promoted through the labor movement, if at all. Women had been given a boost in 1961 when President Kennedy established a Commission on the Status of Women, chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt. It produced a report in 1963 detailing the restrictions on women's rights and opportunities. "Sex" was added to the 1964 Civil Rights Act, suggested at first by a segregationist congressman as something of a joke and then pushed through in a curious coalition with feminists. The Equal Employment Opportunities Commission treated it as a joke and did nothing. In 1966, the National Organization of Women (NOW) was founded in response to this rebuff. Its president was Betty Friedan, whose book *The Feminine Mystique* gave voice to a generation of women who felt marginalized by both workplace practices and the expectations of home-making.⁵² Women were steadily becoming a vital part of the American workforce (40 percent by the start of the 1970s) and were increasingly disinclined to accept second-rate pay and conditions. Friedan was an effective publicist and used her role as the head of what was a relatively

small organization to gain media attention for her views and those of her colleagues. From the start, the movement had an articulate leadership.

Quite apart from NOW, another strand of the movement was developing among numerous young women who had experienced their own rebuffs as they worked as New Left activists. They could not help but notice the contrast between the denunciations of oppression coming from a largely male leadership, coupled with expectations of women occupying subordinate roles and offering sexual favors. The “only position for women in SNCC,” observed Stokely Carmichael in 1964, “is prone.” In a landmark essay, Mary King and Casey Hayden (Tom Hayden’s first wife) reported that women in the movement were not “happy and contented” with their status, and that their talent and experience was being wasted. In what now appears as a rather tentative document they judged that “objectively, the chances seem nil that we could start a movement based on anything as distant to general American thought as a sex-caste system.” For that reason they expected to continue to work on the problems of war, poverty, and race. They nonetheless insisted that “the very fact that the country [couldn’t] face, much less deal with” the questions they were raising meant that the “the problems of women functioning in society as equal human beings are among the most basic that people face.”⁵³

Soon, however, the dismissive attitude of male activists became too annoying to ignore. The more women were treated with condescension by their male colleagues, the greater their anger. In 1967, groups began to push a more distinctively feminist agenda and by 1968 they had their own national conference. Unlike NOW, this group of women had considerable experience of protest and grass-roots organization.⁵⁴ In 1969, Carol Hanisch wrote a paper reflecting on the position of women in the movement and complained that when they got together for mutual support it was a form of “therapy,” as if they were seeking a cure for some sickness. The key was to understand that the personal was political. These were issues that could only be solved through collective action.⁵⁵ The reason this worked as an existential strategy was that it did not depend on leadership and organization, other than when seeking legislative changes, but on the routine assertion of core principles of equality and worth, often without agreement on where the movement should or could lead, and accommodating a range of lifestyle choices. The core feminist complaints, once they were out in the open, were easy to understand and hard to ignore. Some might recoil at more radical denunciations of patriarchy and the coercive quality of marriage and motherhood but they were free to ignore this and concentrate on issues that mattered to them, whether abortion, indifference to sexual assault or rights to equal pay.⁵⁶

As women moved increasingly into the space opened up by the civil rights movement, so did gays. After blacks, they pointed out, they constituted the largest minority group in America. Many just craved respectability, so that they were not stigmatized for their sexual preferences. This was the time when homosexuality was considered aberrant, a psychiatric disorder that might benefit from treatment. During the 1960s there was a push to end this pariah status, insisting that whatever consenting adults did together in private was no business of government or employers. Under the influence of the counterculture, concerns about mainstream respectability came to be pushed to one side by demands for "gay liberation" and full sexual freedom. In July 1969, a police raid at the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in New York's Greenwich Village, produced an outraged response that led to a riot. The more conservative homophile groups were anxious, but the event encouraged radical activists to embrace gay rights as a vital cause.⁵⁷

In some respects, the activism against the Vietnam War was similar. The more dramatic acts of protest—burning draft cards, let alone the American flag—might not have been to everybody's taste, but the increasingly large demonstrations against the war demanded attention. The fact that SDSers had been to the fore of the original opposition did not endow it with a right to continue to set its terms. As opposition became broad-based, backed by opinion polls and mainstream commentators, it carried a political weight that the government could not ignore. These movements had a Tolstoyan quality in that out of the individual decisions of many people emerged new lifestyles, cultural forms, and political expressions.

The methods that could be used to dramatize issues that mattered to many individuals, helping the personal to become political, could not forge a broader political consciousness. The initial preoccupation with power, as a precious resource unequally distributed, led to wariness about anybody getting an unfair share. Power should not be sought; indeed, the appearance of an interest in power created suspicion. The preferred organizational forms were designed to hold back putative leaders and avoid a stifling bureaucracy. Such organizations could work, to a point, when populated by educated, articulate, committed, and energetic young people communicating in a common cause, but they soon faltered when energy levels dropped; the causes became routine; difficult choices had to be faced; the emerging strategies had to be implemented over extended periods; and when the feelings reflected boredom, fatigue, and confusion.

Alternatively, when the feelings were intense anger and deep frustration, actions could be impulsive, involving lashing out and grandiose gestures. The fate of SDS and SNCC could be taken as a warning of the consequences of a lack of deliberation and distrust of leadership. Even here, however, there

was a legacy: the inclination to think about power from the bottom up and not solely from the top down, for making organizations and their decisions more transparent, had a lasting effect on governmental and corporate bureaucracies, reflected in demands for flatter hierarchies and more open structures. The futile terrorism of Far Left groups made more headlines in the 1970s and 1980s than nonviolent direct action. Yet events in Eastern Europe in 1989 and—at least initially—in the “Arab Spring” of early 2011 provided echoes of the techniques used by the civil rights movement in the early 1960s. The link between the two was provided by Gene Sharp, a long-standing pacifist who had worked with Muste and participated in some of the early sit-ins. He became the leading contemporary theorist of nonviolence, even gaining the patronage of Tom Schelling, who supplied the introduction to Sharp’s major three-volume treatise, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*.⁵⁸ This emphasized Gandhi’s innovative role and employed Gregg’s concept of jiu-jitsu, but was mainly notable for a view of power by which governments were assumed to be dependent upon the “people’s good will, decisions and support” rather than the other way around. When this was the case, obedience was voluntary and consent could be withdrawn. He listed many ways by which this could be achieved, from demonstrations and petitions to boycotts, strikes, and even mutinies.⁵⁹ Authoritarian regimes in the 2000s, from Iran to Venezuela, identified Sharp as a dangerous agitator, and his ideas reached the Arab streets.⁶⁰ The experience underlined both the potential and limits of nonviolence. A regime so intolerant of disobedience that it was prepared to use uncompromising violence was likely to push its opponents to violence as well.

The inspirational and imaginative aspects of the movement during the 1960s provided its initial momentum. Those who thought about short-term consequences would probably have been deterred if they placed their hopes on what might be achieved in the early boycotts, sit-ins, and demonstrations. The weight of experience was against them. It was the cause which animated the movement and the sense of worth that came from doing what was right, even against the odds. Once mobilized, a movement that was about political rather than social change would be under pressure to become more organized and calculating, thinking about consequences. Todd Gitlin, one of Tom Hayden’s early comrades in SDS, became an academic sociologist and also memoirist of the movement. He was aware of the impact of the counterproductive talk of violence, and how that had played into the Right’s agenda, allowing the New Left to be portrayed as mindlessly disruptive rather than idealistic. This was a common theme of rueful SDS memoirs. At an age approaching Saul Alinsky’s when he wrote *Rules for Radicals*,

Gitlin wrote *Letters to a Young Activist* in which he advised how to avoid the mistakes of his generation. He opened with Max Weber and later returned to him, acknowledging that he had found “Politics as a Vocation” irritating and “anti-inspirational” in his youth. Against Weber’s assertion of an ethic of responsibility, Gitlin noted that then he would have responded with the claim that “radical action might just transform the circumstances, make the impossible somewhat more possible.” Now he accepted: “Consequences: there’s no getting away from them. How disconcerting that ideals and passions are compatible with gross miscalculations!” For activists considering a campaign of civil disobedience to address contemporary ills, he urged that it be “farsighted, strategic.” Such a campaign should “not hope to reinvent the world at will” or “simply express itself.” It must argue and “take place within history, not beat on its doors from outside,” seizing opportunities and calling on “popular (even if latent) convictions and sentiments.”⁶¹

Frames, Paradigms, Discourses,
and Narratives

I'm no prophet. My job is making windows where there were once walls.

—Attributed to Michel Foucault

THE IDEAS OF the counterculture, carried forward by the educated middle classes, had profound influences not only on social choices but also on the conduct of politics and business, and on intellectual life in general. These ideas did not prompt a leftward shift in American politics—far from it, as we shall see in the next chapter—but they did have a major impact on the way that big ideas were discussed. The major insight, which was not at all new, was that as mental constructs are needed to make sense of the world, we can never have more than a particular take on reality. Nor was it new to argue that those who could shape the constructs of others could thereby influence their attitudes and behavior. This was the whole point of Lippmann's theory of public opinion and Bernay's approach to the "engineering of consent." Lippmann and Bernays claimed this could be benign, if undertaken by enlightened people in the name of sound public policy. The effects of the state manipulation of the media by Nazi and Communist totalitarianism, demonstrating just how insidious propaganda could be, undermined any optimism on this score.

The liberal response to totalitarianism was to argue that whatever the natural limits to human comprehension, the best course was to open up minds to a range of possibilities and share experiences and experiments. Rather than

the imposition of a single view, however well intentioned and researched, the best hope for humankind lay in diversity and plurality, a marketplace of ideas. Liberal democracy could be guaranteed by a free, diverse, and argumentative media, combined with the highest standards in the search for truth. This put the onus on the media—and even more so, the academy—to seek to the extent possible objectivity in their reporting and analysis. The exemplary philosopher of the tolerant, open society was Karl Popper, who grew up in Austria but moved to London to escape the Nazis. He asserted the need for a rigorous empiricism in all scientific endeavors, putting every proposition to the test of falsifiability, gaining comfort from the wealth of accumulated and tested human knowledge upon which the flawed constructs of individuals were founded.¹

The challenge posed by the New Left was to argue that the apparent plurality and diversity of Western liberal democracies was an illusion. Propositions that deserved challenge were taken for granted, while other perspectives and claims were marginalized. This was standard fare for Marxists and had been at the heart of Gramsci's concept of hegemony, which gained increasing attention during the 1950s. Debates on the left were also influenced by the legacies of the Frankfurt School, such as Herbert Marcuse. Émigré theorists, gathered at the New School of Social Research in New York, explained how knowledge was developed and maintained through social interactions, and introduced the concept of the "social construction of reality."² Of increasing importance were French theorists, this time not so much the existentialists but the poststructuralists and postmodernists.

The field research and experimental observations of mainstream social science might avoid the higher reaches of European theory but regularly confirmed the limits of cognition and the importance of interpretative constructs. The political issue was whether the interpretative constructs could be deliberately manipulated from outside. Research suggested that this was done regularly, not necessarily as part of some organized elite conspiracy but in the way that the issues were moved on and off the political agenda, and how these issues were posed in the first place, setting the terms for subsequent debate.

William James had addressed this question as early as 1869. Instead of asking whether what we know is real, James had asked, "Under what circumstances do we think things are real?" Building on James, the sociologist Erving Goffman explained, "We frame reality in order to negotiate it, manage it, comprehend it, and choose appropriate repertoires of cognition and action." Goffman considered how individuals struggled to make sense of the world around them and their experiences and so needed interpretative

schemas or primary frameworks to classify the knowledge.³ When there were a number of possible ways of viewing an issue, framing meant that one particular way appeared to be the most natural. This was achieved by highlighting certain features of a situation, stressing likely causes and possible effects, and suggesting the values and norms in play.

The Whole World Is Watching

The media was bound to play a major role in creating and sustaining the background consensus, especially now that TV had supplanted newspapers and the radio as the main source of information about political affairs. The possibility that media might play a less than benign role had been considered in the 1940s by Robert Merton, attuned to the question of the social influences on knowledge from the 1930s. Although he had been skeptical about Lasswell's claims about the effects of propaganda and concerned about how little was known about the "propagandee," he was also alarmed as a Jew by the rise of the Nazis. When he joined Columbia University in 1941, he began an intensive collaboration with Paul Lazarsfeld, who had some psychological training and now ran the Bureau of Applied Social Research at Columbia. Merton believed strongly that empirical research had to be combined with theory, and this is what he brought to the partnership.⁴

Their early research noted the limited effects of mass communications compared to friends and family. They tended to reinforce more than convert. In a joint piece published in 1948 they addressed the question of media impact on "social action," by which they meant progressive causes such as improved race relations or sympathy for the labor unions. They noted the concerns of high-minded critics that after all the efforts reformers had put into releasing people from wage slavery and constant toil, the masses now spent their extra leisure immersed in media products marked by triviality and superficiality.

They summed up the media's political impact in terms of enforcing social norms, by exposing deviations from these norms in private lives; by acting as a narcotic, encouraging public apathy and leaving people with only a secondary exposure to political reality; and lastly by encouraging conformism. Because they provided "little basis for a critical appraisal the commercially sponsored mass media indirectly but effectively restrain the cogent development of a genuinely critical output." Any minor tokens of progressive attitudes would be dropped from TV or radio shows if they went against the economic interests of the owners. "He who pays the piper generally

calls the tune." Were there circumstances in which the media could shape public attitudes in a more progressive direction? This could happen, but it would require that the media itself was not divided and that preexisting views could be channeled in the preferred direction (instead of attempting to change basic values). Even then it would be necessary for any movement to be supplemented by face-to-face contact.⁵

By the early 1970s, it had become established that there was a relationship between the importance attributed to issues by a mass audience and the processes of agenda-setting, referring to how some issues gained prominence while others were barely noticed, resulting from the coverage given to an issue and where it was placed—on a page or in a news bulletin.⁶ It was a truism in that if there was nothing in the media about a "topic or event, then in most cases it simply will not exist in our personal agenda or in our life space."⁷ Some issues reflected the agenda of the media outlets; in many cases, it was the government that was best placed to set the agenda.

The media therefore could encourage people to think about certain issues to the exclusion of others, but could people be told what to think? In moving from radical activism to professional sociology, Todd Gitlin reflected on the divergence between what he considered to be the character and course of SDS and the way it had come to be portrayed. As we have seen, it had been a general assumption that one way to get sympathy for a cause was to be beaten by the police while demonstrating on behalf of that cause. In Chicago, as the police were wading into the activists, they chanted back, "The whole world is watching," as if this should serve as a warning that their attackers would be subjected to international condemnation. Yet, unlike the civil rights activists of earlier in the decade, the political effects were at best ambiguous. In many media outlets, it was the demonstrators rather than police who were condemned.

Gitlin sought to demonstrate that the media did not so much hold up a mirror to reality as shape what people assumed to be reality. "I was still in the grip of a noble, rationalist, post-Sixties prejudice," he later recalled, "that started with a distaste for bad ideas and proceeded to a sort of retrospective optimism to the effect that if the ideas and images had been different, a thoughtful population would have warmed to the movement instead of turning a cold shoulder, and the movement would therefore have created a healthier political climate for the years, even decades to come."⁸ His book *The Whole World Is Watching* acknowledged the importance of the media in reporting the movement's demonstrations, for without a report they might as well not have happened, but that created a dependence on how they were interpreted.

Gitlin was aware of Gramscian analyses of hegemony, as shaping popular acceptance of the established order, by uniting persuasion from above with consent from below. By tracing the history of the movement and how it had been reported, he was in some respects updating Gramsci in the light of the modern mass media. He drew on Goffman's notions of frames in explaining how the media made choices about what to report and how. "Media frames are persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion." They were a way of organizing discourse, and there had to be some way. It was impossible completely to report the world that exists.

Many things exist. At each moment the world is rife with events. Even within a given event there is infinity of noticeable details. Frames are principles of selection, emphasis, and presentation composed of little tacit theories about what exists, what happens, and what matters.⁹

What concerned him was how the media had undermined SDS by at times ignoring, trivializing, marginalizing, and disparaging it, as well as by highlighting differences among its members and focusing on its more disruptive behavior rather than addressing the issues being raised. This led him to ruminate on the circumstances in which radicals could make space to challenge hegemony. When elites were unsure of the situations, they could not define them to suit their interests. The key factor might not be the unity of the radicals but the unity of the establishment. Also relevant were the responses of ordinary people, with their own values and norms, which they saw being challenged by the protests. The issue went beyond establishment views or media methodology.

Thomas Kuhn

The idea that there were loose systems of ideas which could be politically influential despite their limited empirical basis was captured by Kenneth Galbraith's notion of the "conventional wisdom." This term had been around for some time to refer to commonplace ideas, but Galbraith used it in 1958 for "those ideas which are esteemed at any time for their acceptability." What was held to be truth, he suggested, was often a reflection of convenience, self-esteem, and familiarity as much as relevance. At the simplest level, the conventional wisdom could be seen in the rarity with which the businessman was denigrated as an economic force before the chamber of commerce. But it was found even at the "highest levels of social science scholarship." Minor

heresies, he noted, may be much cherished, but the vigor of debate surrounding these heresies “makes it possible to exclude as irrelevant, and without seeming to be unscientific or parochial, any challenge to the framework itself.” Galbraith accepted that the conventional wisdom had value as a check against a facile flow of intellectual novelties which could deny any possibility of stability and continuity. The danger lay in avoiding “accommodation to circumstances until change is dramatically forced upon it.” The enemy of the conventional wisdom, according to Galbraith, was obsolescence, not “ideas but the march of events.”¹⁰

Galbraith gave the conventional wisdom a negative connotation. A more neutral term, which also caught on more, was “paradigm.” Thomas Kuhn described the dynamic that might be created by the combination of elite uncertainty and the march of events, while reinforcing the view that structures of power were dependent on embedded structures of thought, in one of the most influential books of the 1960s. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* addressed an area often held up as being separate from politics, propelled forward by the experimental method and the accumulation of evidence. Instead of scientific endeavor representing the progressive revelation of objective reality, Kuhn argued that it was actually a series of paradigm shifts. A “paradigm” was a set of ideas that could become so embedded within a scientific community that dislodging them became as much a political as an empirical challenge. When the scientific community worked within a prevailing paradigm this was “normal science.” Its core precepts would be taught to students and research encouraged and celebrated which followed its framework and validated its conclusions. Eventually, challenges would appear as observations threw up apparently inexplicable anomalies. The cumulative impact of these anomalies would eventually become overwhelming. This Kuhn described as a “scientific revolution,” when everything scientists thought they knew would be reassessed, all the prior assumptions and information reappraised, often against fierce resistance from the old guard. Eventually the new paradigm would usurp the old. The classic example of this was the Copernican Revolution, which overturned the prior assumption that planets revolved around the earth by showing how they were actually in orbit around the sun.

Kuhn’s message was that beliefs, even in an area committed to reason and experimentation, could be influenced by factors that were at their root non-rational. This was an intensely political account, involving a confrontation between radicals and defenders of an old order that could no longer be accommodated within the established institutions of governance. Just as approved political strategies no longer sufficed at revolutionary times, so

with approved scientific methods and reasoning. What made the difference at critical moments were factors extraneous to the scientific method, such as force of personality or the scientific equivalents of the revolutionary mob and coercive pressure. A new paradigm would acquire a form of collective consent, there would be a consequential circulation of elites, and normal science would continue until the process began again with the accumulation of more anomalies.¹¹ As revolutions went, this was more Pareto than Marx.

Kuhn himself stressed the underlying conservatism of his view when discovering to his horror during the student rebellions of the 1960s that he was being cast as a revolutionary for having identified paradigms as instruments of intellectual oppression. "Thank you for telling us about paradigms," the students were saying, "now that we know what they are we can get along without them." At this point he felt "badly misunderstood," disliking "what most people were getting out of the book."¹² He was not saying that paradigms were invariably harmful and misleading. They made sense of material that would otherwise appear inchoate and confusing. Scientific inquiry would be impossible without "at least some implicit body of intertwined theoretical and methodological belief that permits selection, evaluation, and criticism."¹³ Nor was he arguing that it was only scientific politics that would allow a paradigm to become entrenched or supplanted. Crises in normal science would develop because of the continuing search for new discoveries and impatience with research designed to do no more than reaffirm what was already supposed. Kuhn did however insist that the "decision to reject one paradigm is always simultaneously the decision to accept another, and the judgment leading to that decision involves the comparison of both paradigms with nature *and* with each other."¹⁴

There were many criticisms of Kuhn, not least that his history represented an oversimplification. While there had clearly been occasions when the processes he described had been present, theories also changed significantly during periods of "normal science" and even adherents of old paradigms could get excited by new breakthroughs. It was also suggested that his focus was too internal to the scientific profession, with insufficient attention paid to the broader social context in which scientists operated and the developing impact of professionalism and bureaucratization. Kuhn polished and developed his ideas after the book's publication, notably in a 1970 revision. Thereafter, the radicalism of his message was diminished as his intellectual energies became focused on the more abstruse aspects of the philosophy of science.

By this time, however, whatever meaning he wished to assign to his ideas, his terminology was already well on its way to being co-opted by people working in a range of other disciplines. In 1987, Kuhn's work was reported

to be the twentieth-century book most frequently cited from 1976 to 1983 in the arts and the humanities.¹⁵ A “paradigm shift” became a cliché, used in circumstances far removed from a full-blown scientific revolution. His model, at least in a simplified version, appeared as a gift to relativists, suggesting that what mattered with any coherent set of views, including social philosophies, was not their relationship to any discernible reality but the political power behind them. An influential example of this was Sheldon Wolin’s use of Kuhn to challenge the claimed objectivity of the “behaviorist” tendency in political sciences, which claimed to be following the same methodological path as the physical sciences. “Up to a certain point,” Wolin observed, “what matters is not which the truer paradigm is but which is to be enforced.”¹⁶

From a way of describing explicit, formal scientific theories that could be unsettled by contrary evidence, paradigms started to allow bundles of prejudices and preconceptions that were implicit, informal, and often confused, contradictory and in flux, to be treated as if they were embedded, internally coherent, tight and controlled, and in key respects impervious to facts. The tendency to categorize systems of belief as strong paradigms and then fit individuals and groups into them often failed to do justice to the extent to which individuals and groups were likely to deviate from a paradigm in particular aspects, interpret paradigms in culturally specific ways, tailor them to their political circumstances, or draw from them quite divergent inferences on how to act. If what counted for truth could be the result of political manipulation as much as scientific endeavor, then possibilities were opened up for a range of topics to become politicized.

Consider, for example, the curious case of intelligent design. In 1996, a Center for the Renewal of Science and Culture, based in California, set itself the objective of replacing “materialism and its destructive cultural legacies with a positive scientific alternative.” By 1999 a strategy had been developed. This was known as The Wedge Project.¹⁷ The metaphor was materialistic science as “a giant tree,” the trunk of which could nonetheless be split by a small wedge applied at its weakest points. The “thin edge of the wedge” was represented by a number of books challenging evolutionary theory, beginning in 1991 with Phillip Johnson’s *Darwinism On Trial*. The alternative to evolutionary theory was intelligent design. This challenged Darwinism by insisting that the world could not be explained by the randomness of evolution but must have required a coherent design, although it stopped short of saying that the God of the scriptures was *the* intelligent designer. The proponents used Kuhn’s theory to argue that evolutionary biology was no more than a dominant paradigm upheld by a scientific elite willfully dismissive of

contrary views, denying them publication in peer-reviewed journals. Social pressure discouraged inquisitive young scientists from exploring subversive notions.¹⁸

The wedge was to be broadened by promoting intelligent design as “a science consonant with Christian and theistic convictions.” The next phase would involve “publicity and opinion-making.” This work would be widely communicated into schools and the media, with a particular emphasis on mobilizing Christian opinion behind this cause. The big challenge would come with the third phase of “cultural confrontation and renewal,” with direct challenges in academic conferences, a determined push—backed by law if possible—into the schools. The challenge would then be directed at the social sciences and humanities. The long-term aim was not only to make intelligent design “the dominant perspective in science” but to extend into “ethics, politics, theology, and philosophy in the humanities, and to see its influence in the fine arts.”

The proponents were aware of the importance of framing. Johnson urged: “Get the Bible and the Book of Genesis out of the debate because you do not want to raise the so-called Bible–science dichotomy.” The need was to get heard in the secular academy and unify religious dissenters. One practical reason to avoid creationism was that court rulings prohibited its teaching as science. The arena for the battle was school textbooks, and the key demand was that intelligent design be taught in schools. This involved getting proponents to sit on school boards. As the movement faced difficulty in getting their views accepted as suitable for textbooks, the demand had to be watered down to evolution being taught as a contested and controversial theory whose rightness should not be taken for granted, especially when other compelling theories were available as alternatives. In the end, the December 2005 *Kitzmiller v. Dover Area School District* court case decided against intelligent design on the grounds that it was insufficiently distinctive from creationism to deserve a place on the science curriculum.¹⁹

The case demonstrates the difficulty with the “paradigm” paradigm. Neither evolution nor intelligent design referred to fully coherent world-views. Among evolutionary biologists there were substantial differences but no sense of crisis: evolution was accepted as a powerful theory that kept on pointing researchers in fruitful directions. In Kuhn’s terms, within the dominant matrix there were still a number of exemplary paradigms under challenge. Nor did intelligent design base its case on anomalous experimental evidence. Its own paradigm did not stand up to scientific scrutiny. As a design the world is not always intelligent, with many obvious imperfections and curiosities. There was not even a single creationist theory. Much

depended on how literally the scriptures were followed. The Bible, for example, referred to the “four corners of the earth,” so extreme literalists could claim that the earth really was flat. Others still argued with Galileo that the sun was at the center of the solar system. More common was Young Earth Creationism, following the Bible sufficiently literally to assert that the earth was six to ten thousand years old, was created in six days, that subsequent death and decay were the fault of Adam and Eve’s original sin, and that Noah’s Flood could provide a key to much of the world’s geology. By contrast, Old Earth Creationists believed God created the earth but accepted that it was really ancient. Other versions suggested that the biblical sequence of creation worked so long as it was accepted that each biblical “day” really referred to extremely long periods. Others argued that the record of fossils could be accepted, but that the emergence of new organisms reflected deliberate acts of God rather than the accidents of evolution.²⁰ While creationists would be Christians (or Muslims), there were plenty of Christians (and Muslims) who had no problem with evolutionary theory. The material world might be explained by DNA as created by God, leading to a natural evolutionary course, which would still leave the spiritual world and the human soul to be addressed by religion.

So even within a self-conscious paradigm that had its own label there were a number of distinctive and contradictory viewpoints. The same was true among evolutionary biologists, although at least they had the scientific method to manage and even resolve disputes. While, as Kuhn observed, the scientific community had its gatekeepers and dogmatists, it could also be pluralistic and theories of evolution have, for want of a better term, evolved. Because intelligent design eschewed the methodology of “naturalist” science, there was no basis for it to cause a paradigm shift. Its only hope was to develop a sufficiently strong and vocal constituency to get its paradigm put onto the curriculum and if possible have evolution taken off. This was not at all the sort of struggle Kuhn had in mind, because it was between two very distinct communities rather than within one.

Michel Foucault

Another thinker whose ideas developed over the 1960s and thereafter shaped the way questions of ideology and power were addressed was the French social philosopher Michel Foucault. A thinker for whom the interplay between the personal and the philosophical was unusually intense, his engagement with the history of both psychiatry and sexuality reflected his difficulties with

his homosexuality and depression. After an early dalliance with the French Communist Party, he appeared to distance himself from Marxism only to return as an enthusiastic proponent of the “spirit of ’68,” encouraging student occupations and leftist scholarship. In turn, he enthused about and then became disillusioned with Mao’s Cultural Revolution and the Ayatollah Khomeini’s revolution in Iran. He died from an AIDS-related illness in 1984, aged 57, halfway through writing a six-volume work on sexuality. As with many important thinkers, there were significant shifts in his work over the course of his life, and he refused to accept any label, although he came to be regularly identified as a leading postmodernist. Interpretations of what Foucault really meant can reach special levels of paradox as arguably, by his own account, he never “really meant” anything at all. His abstract writings, though not his histories, were dense and hard to follow, so any attempt to present his ideas in a simplified form (or indeed any form) posed a challenge. Yet his approach shaped much contemporary social thought, including the study of strategy and, in some respects, its practice.

There were obvious comparisons with Kuhn. Both men drew attention to the extent to which claims about truth were contingent and dependent upon structures of power. Where Kuhn had his paradigms, Foucault had “epistemes.” He described these as the “apparatus” which made possible “the separation, not of the true from the false, but of what may from what may not be characterized as scientific.”²¹ At least in his earlier thought, epistemes were at any time unique, dominant, and exclusive, unable to coexist with others. There was “always only one *episteme* that defines the conditions of possibility of all knowledge.”²² Kuhn always assumed a greater plurality in the social sciences and broader culture in which distinctive schools challenged each others’ foundations. Unlike the natural sciences they did not share the same problem-solving approach. In addition, his paradigms were quite conscious and deliberate frameworks for scientific research. Foucault’s epistemes could be and often were unconscious, setting the terms for thought and action in ways that could be invisible to those affected. While Kuhn acknowledged the importance of empirical observation and that there might be more or less objective tests against which competing paradigms might be judged, Foucault admitted of no such possibility. There was a constant battle for truth, not in order to discover some absolute but to establish the boundaries on action.

This was because all forms of thought were inextricably linked to questions of power. He described a historical sequence of power systems. In feudal society, power was about sovereignty, with general mechanisms of domination but little attention to detail. The great invention of the next period with the coming of bourgeois society was the mechanisms that made possible

“disciplinary domination” with forms of surveillance and incarceration that controlled the activity of individuals, whether in prisons, schools, mental hospitals, or factories. Thus what interested him about the development of the mass armies spawned by the French Revolution were the practices they employed for turning a multitude of individuals into employable armies. In this way Foucault could show that the conceptualization of bodies was a reflection of new forms of power.

By the late eighteenth century, the soldier has become something that can be made: out of a formless clay, an inapt body, the machine required can be constructed; posture is gradually corrected; a calculated constraint runs slowly through each part of the body, mastering it, making it pliable, ready at all times, turning silently into the automatism of habit; in short, one has “got rid of the peasant” and given him “the air of the soldier.”

This was the basis for the disciplinary power which migrated into civil society where comparable forms of control were instituted.

This control did not require violence, as it taught forms of behavior that constituted a form of self-discipline.²³ In this way, power and knowledge became one and the same, and Foucault referred to them together as “power/knowledge.” Such power was not something owned or wielded, but an essential feature in all spheres of life, including the notionally most personal and intimate. It was diffuse rather than concentrated, discursive as much as coercive, unstable rather than fixed. There was no real “truth,” so it could neither be repressed nor excluded. Considerations of truth were really about power, about who was served by what, and the forms of domination and resistance to which it gave rise.

His approach to power therefore underplayed physical constraint and queried the durability of apparent consent. It was through discourse that the thought of others was shaped so that actions followed a particular view of the world. “Regimes of truth” set standards for what was true and false and the procedures by which they might be discerned. These became embedded in everyday discourses, ensuring that certain matters were taken for granted while others were given prominence. In this way, views of reality could take hold, reinforcing structures of power without it being realized, resulting in accommodating forms of behavior being adopted without the necessity of enforcement. For Foucault, strategy was inextricably linked with power. While he discussed strategy in a mainstream sense, referring to “winning choices” in overt struggles, his concept was much broader. Strategy was “the totality of the means put into operation to implement power effectively or to maintain it.”

Foucault's influence on the humanities came to be profound, its value still a matter for intense debate. His influence on thinking about strategy was also significant. First, his view of the ubiquity of power potentially turned all social relationships into arenas of struggle, touching the micro-level of social existence as well as the macro-level of the state. Second, he conveyed a sense of the continuity of struggle without end. There was confrontation, an apparent victory, and a stable period, but then it could all open up again. There was thus an ever-present possibility of resistance and so reversion. A victory might allow "stable mechanisms" to "replace the free play of antagonistic reactions," but it would only be truly embedded when the other was reduced to impotence. There could then be "domination," a "strategic situation more or less taken for granted and consolidated by means of a long-term confrontation between adversaries." But even periods of apparent stability, sustained by the dominance of a particular discourse, could turn to struggle, following the opening up of the discourse.

In effect, between a relationship of power and a strategy of struggle there is a reciprocal appeal, a perpetual linking and a perpetual reversal. At every moment the relationship of power may become a confrontation between two adversaries. Equally, the relationship between adversaries in society may, at every moment, give place to the putting into operation of mechanisms of power.²⁴

In an inversion of Clausewitz, he presented politics as a continuation of war.²⁵ War was a "permanent social relationship, the ineradicable basis of all relations and institutions of power." Social relations were thus orders of battle in which there was "no such thing as a neutral subject" and in which "we are all inevitably someone's adversary." Taking sides meant it was "possible to interpret the truth, to denounce the illusions and errors that are being used—by your adversaries—to make you believe we are living in a world in which order and peace have been restored." Therefore as much as the discourses of power were diffused throughout society, so too could be resistance, with forms of evasion, subversion, and contestation. In this respect, claims about knowledge were weapons in a struggle over truth. He wrote of "knowledges" (in the plural) in conflict "because they are in the possession of enemies, and because they have intrinsic power-effects."²⁶

Analyses of discourses, by exploring what appeared settled and non-contentious, could reveal their contingency and relationship to structures of power. This could have a liberating effect, offering the subjugated a way out. This was not a particularly new thought and was one of the themes of the intellectual currents circulating around the New Left. There was the same notion

of a form of unspoken warfare throughout society that had yet to manifest itself but might break out once the victims understood their situation. What was different with Foucault was that rather than focus on questions of class struggle and revolutionary politics, which he seemed to find passé, he focused instead on the “specific struggles against particularized power” of “women, prisoners, conscripted soldiers, hospital patients and homosexuals.”²⁷ When lecturing in 1976, while the spirit of ’68 was still fresh, he was impressed by the “dispersed and discontinuous offensives” within Western societies during the previous decade. The “increasingly autonomous, decentralized, and anarchistic character of contemporary forms of political struggle” suited his method. He referred to the “antipsychiatry movement” which had “helped in opening up the space of the asylum for social and political critique.” At this time he was becoming involved in a movement giving voice to prisoners. His project was about the “desubjugation and liberation of disqualified peoples and their knowledges.” One of Foucault’s lasting impacts lay in the recognition that the plight of individuals at the margins of society, often in institutions where they had been placed for their own safety and that of society, were part of power relationships which could and should not be beyond challenge.

Foucault’s theories made it possible to undermine established power structures without mounting physical challenges, but instead analyzing the “specificity of mechanisms of power...locate the connections and extensions...build little by little a strategic knowledge.”²⁸ It could be argued, at least on the evidence of Foucauldian scholarship, that the language by which discourses were analyzed could obscure as much as illuminate, and be of little practical help to subjugated groups.²⁹ Moreover, while this was a way into understanding power relationships, it raised its own difficulties by bypassing questions of agency and structure, the intent of individuals, and the role of force. So much was loaded on his concept of power, and indeed of strategy, that these concepts risked losing any precise meaning. When everything, whether a written communication or a pattern of behavior, could be considered as strategy, then nothing was worth considering because the term was losing its meaning. Playing down coercive power might be sensible for subjugated groups. Seeking a liberating discourse should be safer. But in the end, force could still be an arbiter of struggles.

Narrative

The word which came to describe the essential instrument in the battles over ideas was not *discourse* but *narrative*. During the 1990s, this became

a requirement for any political project: explaining why a political movement or party deserved to be taken seriously and conveying its core messages. This was based on another set of ideas that could be traced back to the radical intellectual ferment in France of the late 1960s that saw the concept move from being literary and elaborate to elemental and at the heart of all social interaction. It gained traction from reflecting evident aspects of human behavior as well as the better understanding of the workings of the brain.

Until the late 1960s, narrative was still largely to be found in literary theory, referring to works distinguished by a character telling of an event (rather than a stream of consciousness or some interaction between personalities).³⁰ It moved into wider theory under the influence of the French post-structuralists. They rejected the idea of meaning as a reflection of the intention of an author but instead insisted that texts could support a range of meanings, depending on the circumstances in which they were read. With every reading there could be a new meaning. A key figure in this group, with whom Foucault was linked, was the literary theorist Roland Barthes. He pushed the idea of the narrative to the fore, moving it away from purely literary texts into all forms of communication. There were, he wrote in 1968, “countless forms of narrative,” including “articulated language, whether oral or written, pictures, still or moving, gestures, and an ordered mixture of all those substances; narrative is present in myth, legend, fables, tales, short stories, epics, history, tragedy, drama . . . comedy, pantomime, paintings . . . stained-glass windows, movies, local news, conversation.” It was to be found “at all times, in all places, in all societies.” There had “never been anywhere, any people without narrative; all classes, all human groups, have their stories, and very often those stories are enjoyed by men of different and even opposite cultural backgrounds: narrative remains largely unconcerned with good or bad literature. Like life itself, it is there, international, transhistorical, transcultural.”

Not only were there an “infinite number of narratives,” they could be considered from many vantage points, including history, psychology, sociology, ethnology, and aesthetics. Barthes believed it possible to identify common structures through deductive theory.³¹ The next year another member of this group, Tzvetan Todorov, introduced “narratology,” which involved distinguishing the component parts of a narrative and considering the relationships between them. What was narrated was the story, a sequence of events with characters, held together by a plot line that gave it structure and explained causation—why the events occurred when they did. Discourse described the presentation of the story, what determined its eventual appearance to an audience.

By the late 1970s, there was talk of a “narrative turn” in social theory. A recollection of a conference at the University of Chicago in 1979 spoke of an “aura of intellectual excitement and discovery, the common feeling that the study of narrative, like the study of other significant human creations, has taken a quantum leap in the modern era.” It was “no longer the province of literary specialists or folklorists borrowing their terms from psychology and linguistics but has now become a positive source of insight for all the branches of human and natural science.”³² It was later reported how during the 1980s the social sciences became caught up in a “wave of theorizing about narratives,” inspired by the belief that analyzing the stories people told would provide vital insights into how they lived their lives.³³

Narratives were often described as being interchangeable with stories, and stories could be extremely simple. The argument that anything could count as a story reflected their importance in basic human communication. Mark Turner argued that life would be chaotic without simple stories turning pieces of information into a coherent pattern. Even babies developed links between containers, liquid flows, mouths, and taste in a story that eventually became entitled “drinking.” With only partial information, these simple stories facilitated imagining the next step or what happened before. Narrative imagining, argued Turner, was fundamental both to our ability to explain and our ability to predict.³⁴ William Calvin suggested a close relationship between our ability to plan and our construction of narratives. “To some extent, we do this by talking silently to ourselves, making narratives out of what might happen next and then applying syntax-like rules of combination to rate a scenario as unlikely, possible or likely.”³⁵

Here was a concept that could explain how meaning was given to lives and relationships and how the world was understood. It fit in with theories of cognition and accounts of culture. The narrative turn therefore captured the uncertain confidence about what was actually known, the fascination with the variety of interpretations that could be attached to the same event, and the awareness of the choices made when constructing identity. It highlighted the importance of human imagination and empathy while challenging the idea of a perfect knowledge of an external reality.

Soon the academic interest in narrative found its way into the public domain. Psychologists used narratives as forms of therapy, lawyers employed them in their efforts to move juries, and claimants needed them when seeking redress. Over time, the self-conscious use of narratives extended to all types of political actors. Initially the major interest appears to have been among radical groups and others who were seeking to compensate for a lack of material resources. It was another way the weak could take on the strong: less

muscle but better stories. A battle of narratives was to be preferred to a real battle. Eventually any political project, from whatever part of the spectrum, demanded its very own narrative.

The narratives could have a number of functions: means by which support could be mobilized and directed, solidarity sustained and dissidents kept in line, strategies formulated and disseminated. Their role, not always particularly deliberate, could be detected in the movements coming out of the counterculture, such as those demanding rights for women and gays and other marginalized groups. Their use gained credence from Foucauldian type analysis, using stories of victimhood, humiliation, and resistance to let people in similar situations gain strength from being part of a wider movement, linking their private frustrations with a public cause.

They would challenge stories firmly embedded in the culture, casting doubt on their veracity and fairness. As early as the 1950s, for example, Native Americans began to object to the classic westerns, which pitched brave cowboys against savage Indians. Italian Americans complained about their image being dominated by mobster movies. The civil rights movement depended on the contrast between the comfortable presentations of the American dream and the black experience. The black singer Paul Robeson deliberately changed the lyrics of "Ol' Man River" from "I gets weary and sick of trying, I'm tired of living and scared of dying" to "I keep trying instead of crying, I must keep fighting or else I'm dying."³⁶ In this case there was an established sense of oppression, and the question was whether much could be done about it. Many of the movements of the late 1960s began with far less clarity about whether personal feelings of frustration could be translated into political action. Here autobiographical stories could help otherwise disparate individuals find common cause through their shared experiences. In 1972 in the first issue of *Ms.*, a magazine for the women's movement, an article by Jane O'Reilly described the immediate understanding a group of women had to another's story. This was the "click," a moment of recognition, "that parenthesis of truth around a little thing that completes the puzzle of reality in women's minds—the moment that brings a gleam our eyes and means the revolution has begun." Soon "click" had become a "feminist term of art," a way of referring to a shared understanding of the deeper meaning of an apparently banal comment.³⁷

Narratives describing social situations from the perspectives of those who in the past might have been belittled or marginalized found their way into more established literary forms, such as novels, movies, and even situation comedies. Black and gay characters were shown in positive lights, women were expected to be more assertive, and male assertiveness and insensitivity

was often derided. Especially on TV, the story-telling might be controlled, with the progressive themes sanitized so as to render the new characters safe and unthreatening. There was no single, approved narrative of what it meant to be a “liberated” woman or a gay man operating among “straights.” It was easier to confront white prejudice when the victims epitomized goodness, for example, a figure such as Sidney Poitier as the idealistic physician in the 1967 movie *Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner*. It took some time before the full complexity of black experience and its encounters with white society could be portrayed. Change of this sort was only barely politically directed or controlled, although political leaders were obliged to give their views on where it all might be leading. So the process was nothing so simple as one paradigm or narrative being changed for another. The diversity of the contributions and their cumulative effects altered the terms of the debate, but this was not the result of any deliberate strategy.

According to David Ronfeldt and John Arquilla, who were at the fore in exploring the new forms of politics made possible in the information age, stories could express “a sense of identity and belonging” and communicate “a sense of cause, purpose, and mission.” This would help a dispersed group cohere and guide their strategy. They knew the sort of action expected of them and the message to be conveyed.³⁸ Within a movement, inspirational stories might be told to enthuse activists, exemplary ones to reinforce approved norms, and cautionary tales to warn of the danger of rash moves or deviations from the agreed line. In developing support, stories could be told to illustrate the core message and to undermine the claims of opponents. This also meant that internal arguments about strategy could take the form of debates over narratives. Those nervous about strategic departures might offer warnings based on reminiscences about how campaigns were waged in the past and how well they fared.

The greatest challenges came with attempts to influence those who were not natural supporters. As the concept moved into the political mainstream, there was talk of grand narratives as setting the basic terms in which a political group would wish to be identified, its aims and values, and its relationship to the issues of the day. Once this narrative was set, then individual episodes might be “spun” by specialist communicators known as “spin doctors,” who understood the media and made it their business to influence the daily news agenda and frame events.³⁹ Convincing the public that the economy was really doing well when the latest data suggested the opposite, or that the murky past of a candidate for high office was irrelevant, required a keen sense of media methods and schedules, including how to time news announcements and brief key journalists. Such narratives were not necessarily

analytical and, when not grounded in evidence or experience, could rely on appeals to emotion or suspect metaphors and dubious historical analogies. A successful narrative would link certain events while disentangling others, distinguish good news from bad tidings, and explain who was winning and losing.

The impact of these ideas, whether framing paradigms or discourses—or propaganda, consciousness, hegemony, belief-systems, images, constructs, and mind-sets for that matter—was to encourage the view that a struggle for power was at root a struggle to shape widely accepted views of the world. In the past, a similar understanding had led socialists to prepare for long campaigns of political education, conducted by means of pamphlets and lectures. This was now a media age and the opportunities to shape and disseminate opinions and presentations of the truth were now many and various. The techniques pioneered by Bernays, with his intuitive grasp of the importance of framing, now promised an even greater impact. The struggle over images and ideas did not become one between radicals and resisters but between mainstream political activists, with the beneficiaries in the first instance turning out to be the Right rather than the Left.

Don't you see that the whole aim of newspeak is to narrow the range of thought?

—George Orwell, 1984

IN THE AFTERMATH of President Bush's victory over Senator John Kerry in November 2004, an election Democrats thought they could and should have won, early postmortems stressed the lack of a narrative. Kerry's pollster, Stanley Greenberg, observed that the Republicans had "a *narrative* that motivated their voters." Robert Shrum, another member of Kerry's team regretted: "We had a *narrative*, but in the end, I don't think it came through." Top Democrat consultant, James Carville, was harsher. "They say, 'I'm going to protect you from the terrorists in Tehran and the homos in Hollywood.' We say, 'We're for clean air, better schools, more health care.' And so there's a Republican *narrative*, a story, and there's a Democratic litany." William Safire, a columnist with a keen eye for shifts in political language, reported the views of Jim Phelan, editor of a journal on narrative studies, that all this sounded like the development of a new Democrat narrative. "That is, they are selecting events from the campaign and abstracting from them in order to supply a coherent *narrative* of why Kerry lost. Their coherent *narrative* is that he had no coherent *narrative*." He suggested that if Kerry had won he would be being congratulated for the coherence of his narrative.¹

It was the case that Republicans had been paying attention for some time to the use of language to sharpen their political message. In this the key event had been the collaboration between Representative Newt Gingrich and consultant Frank Lutz to take Congress for the Republicans in the 1994 midterm elections. The centerpiece of the campaign was the “Contract with America.” According to Lutz, the word *contract* was chosen because plan sounded insufficiently binding, promises were made to be broken, pledges went unfulfilled, platforms were too political, oaths too legal, and covenants too religious. The adjective “Republican” was left off to encourage independents to keep an open mind.² In the actual document, a lot of effort went into talking about personal responsibility, family reinforcement, and tax cuts (“American Dream Reinforcement”). In 1995, the two men combined on a memo for the new Republican Congressmen entitled “Language: A Key Mechanism of Control,” which urged that they talk of themselves using such words as “opportunity, truth, moral, courage, reform, prosperity” and portray their opponents in term of such words as “crisis, destructive, sick, pathetic, lie, liberal, betray.”³

Even before the 2004 presidential election, anxious Democrats who specialized in language, notably the linguist George Lakoff, had been urging that attention be paid to the clever way that issues were being framed to put Democrats on the defensive (for example, talking about the “inheritance tax” as the “death tax”). Once the conflict was being fought in the enemy’s language, too much had been conceded. To Lakoff the great challenge was to turn these frames around so that Americans came to see the issues with new ideas. “Reframing is social change.”⁴ After the election, he pressed home his point, insisting that big philosophical debates were arguments over metaphors, and that impact of facts depended on the frames with which they were understood.⁵ Drew Westen, a clinical psychologist and active Democrat, expressed his frustration by writing a book urging his party to learn to appeal to voters’ emotions. It was enthusiastically endorsed by Bill Clinton and Westen appears to have been read carefully and consulted by the Democratic field during the 2008 campaign.

The problem, Westen suggested, was that Democrats wanted to believe that campaigns were about issues and that it would be possible to appeal to the rationality and better nature of voters. Unfortunately, human beings are barely rational creatures. Instead, they respond to messages which tug on their emotions and are prone to feel as much as see the world. “Most of the time, this battle for control of our minds occurs outside of awareness, leaving us as blind spectators to our own psychodrama, prisoners of the images cast on the wall of our skulls.” Republicans understood this and developed a

narrative of themselves as on the side of patriotism and God. Democrats were soft and fuzzy, inattentive on crime and limp in facing the nation's enemies, stuck with rhetoric about fighting for the working people of America as if the country was still facing the challenges of the 1930s. When persuading voters to back them, Republicans had no compunction about resorting to negativity, while Democrats continued to act as if they could rise above such aggression, dismissing the negativity as irrelevant and a turn-off for voters.

To remedy the situation, Democrats had to learn to frame issues to their advantage and go on the attack, finding ways of convincing voters that their candidate was in tune with voters' interests and values, defining the party and its principles in ways that were emotionally compelling. This involved developing a grand narrative that was coherent, using policy positions to illustrate principles and not the other way around. Such a narrative would be simple, coherent, and accessible, not depend on too many leaps of inference or imagination. It could be understood and then told and retold. "It should have a moral, be vivid and memorable, and be moving. Its central elements should be easy to visualize, to maximize its memorability and emotional impact." It was best to act first, before views had been fully formed, when there might be opportunities to "inoculate" against the opponent's negativity by acknowledging minor weaknesses. Westen's basic claim was that elections were "won and lost not primarily on the issues but on the values and emotions of the electorate including the gut feelings that summarize much of what voters think and feel about a candidate and a party."⁶

Westen's proposals, and those of Lakoff, indicated a considerable faith in the power of words and images, encouraging a belief that even the most liberal platform could be embraced by a majority of the electorate if only it was put together with sufficient emotional intelligence and professional media skills. It reflected in its own way a rather dismal view of public opinion as malleable and manipulable, tugged in one direction or another by the quality of rival narratives. The psychologist Stephen Pinker warned that this approach exaggerated the importance of metaphors, which were often used without much sense of the origins or implications, and of the role of frames. The idea that better metaphors and frames could be pounded into voters' brains risked turning into a retreat from reason, caricaturing opposing beliefs and underestimating opponents.⁷ Lutz's own guide to the use of language acknowledged the importance of framing issues, but his stress was on more basic rules of communication. He aimed for simplicity and brevity; short words and short sentences; attention to consistency, imagery, sound, and texture; and language that was aspirational and offered novelty. Only toward the end of his list did he point to the need to "provide context and explain

relevance.” Credibility, he noted, was as important as philosophy. Explicitly addressing Lakoff, he observed that “language alone cannot achieve miracles. Actual policy counts at least as much as how something is framed.”⁸

Studies of the influence of mass communications gave little encouragement to suggestions that it was easy to shift public opinion in a direction it was not prepared to go. Partisans might be engaged, but the bulk of the target audience tended to be inattentive and distracted, so key messages did not reach many people. People could remain indifferent to issues in which they had little interest and resistant to views which contradicted those already held. Either they deliberately avoided such views or saw them as weak and riddled with error when they did confront them. One account of the relevant research recorded as a core finding that personal influence was more important than mass communication: “Political persuasion is contingent on circumstance. Persuasion grows more likely when campaigns face little opposition, when resistance is diminished, when well-placed sources provide simple and decisive cues, and when history intrudes on attentive citizens.”⁹

The New Politics

The issue of the political use of language emerged out of the “new politics” of the 1960s. The events of 1968 turned out to serve the American Right more than the Left. This was in part because the upheavals on the campuses and the inner cities created a strong negative reaction that Republicans were able to exploit thereafter, and they were still trying to do so four decades later. Norman Mailer observed that year, while waiting for a civil rights leader to turn up for a press conference for which he was already forty minutes late, of how he had experienced a “very unpleasant emotion: ‘he was getting tired of Negroes and their rights.’”¹⁰ This led him to reflect that if he felt “even a hint this way, then what immeasurable tides of rage must be loose in America?” The “backlash” was already underway, directed not only at blacks but also at unpatriotic radicals, drug-taking hippies, and protesting students. One beneficiary was Richard Nixon, who regained the White House for the Republicans. If a new politics was making an appearance, it depended less on the rejection of professional politicians as a barrier to the authentic expression of popular feelings and more on the cultivation of more professional political forms, as a way of maximizing voter turnout. The New Left’s despairing attitude to electoral politics had left the field open to the New Right.

Successful politicians always had campaign managers. By and large these were close associates of the candidates with a feel for popular moods and the sort of ruthless streak that left them with little compunction when it came to blackening the names of their opponents. By the late 1960s, the role was becoming much more professional. A series of advances in polling, advertising methods, and tactical analysis were coming together. The possibilities for shaping opinion opened up by the mass media reached a new level when television was added to newspapers and radio. The ability to disseminate a message to extraordinary numbers of potential voters was coupled with possibilities for tailoring that message to the interests and views of particular constituencies. Sophisticated forms of polling based on demographic sampling, pioneered by George Gallup in the 1930s, made it possible to monitor developing trends in opinion and identify issues of high salience.

In 1933, the campaigning socialist journalist Upton Sinclair, author of *The Jungle*, wrote a short book entitled *I, Governor of California and How I Ended Poverty*. It was a bestseller, a history of the future. Sinclair claimed it was a unique attempt by a historian "to make his history true." California was then a one-party Republican state, but also had 29 percent unemployment. Sinclair decided to run as a Democrat on a promise to end poverty through cooperative factories and farms and higher taxes. The first part of his story became a reality. He did get the nomination for governor and generated great national excitement. Unfortunately for him, the possibility that the script set out in his book might be followed alarmed California Republicans. Clem Whitaker and Leone Baxter, publicists for the "California League against Sinclairism," adopted a simple method to head off this threat. They immersed themselves in everything he had written and found a stream of deadly quotes—for example, statements doubting the sanctity of marriage—without worrying about context or whether these were attributed to characters in his novels. They appeared on a regular basis in the *Los Angeles Times*. Sinclair's nonfiction sequel was "How I Got Licked."

Whitaker and Baxter ran Campaigns Inc., the first political consultancy to offer their services at a price. They took advantage of reforms which had been initiated by the Progressives in order to break the hold of local party bosses over state politics. These prevented parties from endorsing candidates who therefore had to engage more directly with the electorate. Whitaker and Baxter claimed that in their first two decades, they had won seventy out of the seventy-five contests in which they were involved. They only worked for Republicans, which was often the case for the first generation of consultants. They also ran campaigns against health care reforms, first in California and then nationally, helping create the bogey of socialized medicine. They

pioneered techniques to influence public opinion that continue to be employed: sending rural newspapers press releases dressed up as ready-made editorials and features, focusing on personalities rather than issues, always attacking (“You can’t wage a defensive campaign and win”), taking the opponent seriously and anticipating their moves, and keeping the campaign theme simple. Subtlety was bad; repetition was good. According to Baxter, “Words that lean on the mind are no good. They must dent it.”¹¹ Their services did not come cheap, but their clients were big businesses and the Republicans, the party of business. Republican senator Mark Hanna of Ohio, an accomplished campaign manager, remarked early in the century that “the three most important things in American politics are money, money and I forget what the other one is.” Over time, fundraising became so important that it became yet another task for which consultants were needed.¹²

The party bosses were undermined by the increased role of primary elections in the nominating process, which after 1968 involved the majority of the states. The complexity of the American political system, with regular timetabled elections for numerous positions at all levels of government, provided plenty of business for consultancies with credible track records of getting their people elected. One estimate in 2001 suggested that if all elected posts were included, some quite lowly, there were over five hundred thousand elected officials in the United States with about a million elections over a four-year cycle.¹³ This was one reason why James Thurber described campaign consultants in 2000 as being at “the core of the electoral process in the United States and in many other states.”¹⁴ As early as 1970 it was claimed that campaigns were less between candidates than between “titans of the campaign industry working on behalf of those personalities.”¹⁵

When the journalist James Perry wrote *The New Politics* in 1968, it was therefore not about how protests, demonstrations, civil disobedience, and community organizations might be shaking up the old elite, but about how polling and marketing were becoming more sophisticated. He even drew attention to the potential uses of computers.¹⁶ Yet these techniques, no more than the efforts of the New Left, did not guarantee success. Much of Perry’s book described how the moderate George Romney was taking advantage of these techniques in the race for the 1968 Republican presidential nomination. By the time the book was published, Romney’s campaign had collapsed, having failed to connect with voters—a problem aggravated by Romney’s disastrous claim that his past support for the Vietnam War was the result of “brainwashing” by the Pentagon.

The importance of television had been underlined in different ways in the previous two elections. John Kennedy had famously gained an advantage

over Nixon in the televised presidential debate in 1960, and then the possibilities of negative advertising had been underlined by one used by the Democrats against the hawkish Barry Goldwater in 1964. This showed a small girl counting daisies as a missile countdown began leading toward a nuclear explosion, with President Johnson in the background urging peace. This became identified as a turning point in technique. It played on an established image of Goldwater's recklessness. The appeal of the ad was emotional. It contained no facts and Goldwater's name was not mentioned.¹⁷

On the basis of his 1960 experience, Nixon's attitude toward television was one of deep suspicion, but he was persuaded by television producer Roger Ailes that it could work to his advantage. His efforts in that regard were recorded by a journalist friend of Ailes, Joe McGinnis. The title of his book, *Selling of the President*, captured the idea that someone so unprepossessing could be turned into a marketable political product. In contrast to the later focus on negative advertising, the aim at this stage was positive. The intention was to create a Nixon image independent of his words. As McGinnis explained:

Nixon would say his same old tiresome things but no one would have to listen. The words would become Muzak. Something pleasant and lulling in the background. The flashing pictures would be carefully selected to create the impression that somehow Nixon represented competence, respect for tradition, serenity, faith that the American people were better than people anywhere else, and that all these problems others shouted about meant nothing in a land blessed with the tallest buildings, strongest armies, biggest factories, cutest children and rosier sunsets in the world. Even better: through association with the pictures Richard Nixon could become these very things.¹⁸

Ailes was probably happier with the book's message than Nixon.

The aim of the media campaign was to demonstrate that Nixon was more likable than supposed and could be found safely in the center ground of politics. In this respect it fit in with what was in practice a rather "old politics" campaign. This was the last Republican nomination in which the majority of delegates were chosen by the party organization rather than primaries, so Nixon was able to follow a traditional route through deals with party insiders rather than demonstrating broad appeal. His basic strategy was standard for a candidate whose core support did not command a majority: he moved to the center and sought to soften his own right-wing image. Positions were carefully formulated to draw in the maximum amount of support, even if few were left excited. His former speech writer described Nixon's "centrism" as

based on the “pragmatic splitting of differences along a line drawn through the middle of the electorate.” The aim was to find the “least assailable middle ground.” Instead of the “grand theme,” his interest was in the “small adjustment, which might provide an avenue of escape.”¹⁹ Moreover, however expertly Nixon was marketed, his cautious approach to the campaign meant that his early lead was whittled down and he became president on a surprisingly narrow margin.

The New Conservative Majority

To one commentator, who worked for Nixon in 1968, the candidate's failure was in not recognizing the true opportunities created by the turmoil of the 1960s. Kevin Phillips, a young lawyer with an interest in ethnography, wrote a book in 1967 entitled *The Emerging Republican Majority*. Because the publisher had held it back to see whether it was validated in the 1968 presidential election, it was not actually published until 1969. The book was long and analytical, with 143 charts and 47 maps, but the underlying message was straightforward. The country had been dominated by a liberal establishment that was now old and out of touch, “a privileged elite, blind to the needs and interests of the large national majority,” a position of course also taken by the New Left. The elite had created “a gap between words and deeds which helped to drive racial and youthful minorities into open revolt.”

Phillips saw in the developing racial politics an opportunity for Republicans, because they could mobilize whites even as the Democrats attracted new black voters. Against the New Left's idealism and the old progressive hope that ethnic differences could be transcended, Phillips asserted that these identities were strong and enduring. While Jews and blacks might go with the Democrats, the minorities with a more Catholic background—Poles, Germans, Italians—were lining up against the liberals. Though immigrant communities once saw the Democrats as a defense against the Protestant Republican establishment in the North, now their children saw the Democrats as hostile. In New York, Phillips charted the movement of working-class Catholics to the right, mapping it by district and showing that it was safe for Republicans to oppose the urban liberal agenda of rent subsidies, equal opportunity, and community action. This agenda, he argued, was pushing whites away from the inner cities to suburbia, and this was part of a wider movement from the decaying North to the “sunbelt” of the South and West. Phillips was not arguing that the new configuration was inevitable.

It required Republicans to seize the opportunity. He argued that Richard Nixon's majority in 1968 was so thin precisely because Republicans did not follow his ideas and tried to pretend that the candidate was something milder than was actually the case.

One objection to Phillips's thesis was with his "grim satisfaction" in the "incorrigible meanness of the American voter" and his "undisguised scorn" for "sentimentalists" who resisted his findings.²⁰ The fact that politics could play on human difference was anathema to many. Against this it could be argued that he was only making explicit what had long been a feature of American politics. Roosevelt's New Deal coalition had worked precisely because he found a way of keeping in the same party racists and blacks, anti-labor and pro-labor groups, ardent reformers and corrupt party machines. The Depression made it possible to subsume ethnic identities under shared economic interests, but few working in city politics believed that they had gone away.²¹

A second objection was that it was poor political science because it required Republican Party politics to follow a path many Republicans would resist.²² There were limits to the southern strategy Nixon could follow in 1968. Governor George Wallace of Alabama was running as a third-party candidate on a segregationist platform and eventually took five southern states. Nixon's main nod in the direction of the new political configuration was to snub the Republican Party's liberal wing in his choice of vice president. New York governor Nelson Rockefeller had fought a poor campaign, and so Nixon felt able to ignore him as a possible running mate and opt instead for the relatively unknown Maryland governor Spiro Agnew, who had a moderate past but was moving to the right. As vice president he made his name by attacking the liberal elite with some memorable alliteration ("pusillanimous pussyfooters," "nattering nabobs of negativism").

In 1970, Phillips's message was repeated in a more careful form by two moderate Democrat pollsters, Richard Scammon and Ben Wattenberg. The Republican majority was not yet in place but, they warned, it could be if the Democrats did not acknowledge anxiety among their natural constituents about crime and permissiveness.²³ Instead, the Democrats moved to the left, with young activists pushing those issues that alarmed centrist voters, thus marginalizing the party's former establishment. The Democratic nominee in 1972, the liberal and antiwar George McGovern, was trounced by Nixon. The administration was then rocked by scandal as first Agnew was forced to resign because of corruption and then Nixon because he was being impeached for dirty tricks during the 1972 campaign and an attempted cover-up. The accidental president Gerald Ford and his

vice president Nelson Rockefeller, neither of whom had been on the ticket in 1972, lost in 1976. The conservative theme was then picked up with a vengeance by Ronald Reagan.

Ronald Reagan

After his Hollywood career came to an end, Ronald Reagan had made his political name as a right-wing speaker. In 1954, he was hired as official public spokesman for General Electric Corporation—which meant he spoke at GE plants around the country, lauding the virtues of free enterprise and warning of the dangers of big government and communism. Reagan was telegenic with an easy, affable style that helped him link with people who might otherwise recoil from his politics. Reagan also had an ability to drift in and out of the fictional and nonfictional worlds which he inhabited, which made his claims credible even when they were fanciful. His biographer described a mind occupied by “stories, a make-believe world in which heroic deeds had the capacity to transform reality.” The make-believe and real worlds coalesced in his mind. He always sounded sincere because he said what he believed, even if it did not correspond to the facts. In any conflict between feelings and fact, feelings won. “He believed in the power of stories, sincerely told.”²⁴

When he ran for governor of California in 1966, he followed the traditional route by edging sufficiently to the center to ensure that voters were not put off by his reputation. He avoided replying to attacks that he was right wing and inexperienced, toned down his speeches, and put together supporting committees which included known moderates. One of his managers later explained that they dealt with the inexperience charge by agreeing that “Reagan was not a professional politician. He was citizen politician. There, we had an automatic defense. He didn’t have to have the experience. A citizen’s politician’s not expected to know all the answers to all of the issues.” It even put his opponent, long-time governor Pat Brown, on the defensive for being a professional. This became a theme in many American elections thereafter. Reagan’s team relied on question and answer sessions to address the charge that he was no more than an actor who knew how to memorize and deliver a good speech. While the campaign managers had not intended to dwell on the unrest of the Berkeley campus, they also noted that it worked in their favor.²⁵

Once elected as governor, Reagan was seen as a potential conservative candidate for the presidency. His hat was tentatively in the ring in 1968 but his real preparation did not begin until after he had finished his second term as

governor in 1974. He used a nationally syndicated column and radio program to keep himself in the public eye and also as a means of refining his messages, identifying the words and themes that got the best response from his audiences. By this time, more than twice as many Americans (38%) described themselves as conservative rather than liberal (15%). This still left a majority describing themselves as middle of the road (43%).²⁶ In 1976, Reagan's bid for the Republican nomination against Ford made sufficient headway to set him up for a successful campaign in 1980. In this he was helped by Jimmy Carter's doleful presidency as he struggled to cope with the economic and international crises of the late 1970s. Reagan's message began by noting the distinction between the social conservatism associated with the Democratic Party and the economic conservatism, opposed to deficit spending and big government, associated with the Republican Party. He then insisted that "the old lines that once clearly divided these two kinds of conservatism are disappearing." He envisioned "not simply a melding together of the two branches of American conservatism into a temporary uneasy alliance, but the creation of a new lasting majority."²⁷ The second strand was to claim that not only could these two traditions be combined, but that this would lead to a bountiful future. In this respect he offered a traditional politician's promise of more of everything, an America both stronger and wealthier, a sunny optimism in sharp contrast to Carter's melancholy. When he debated Carter as the Republican nominee, Reagan sought to present himself as the mainstream and sealed his bid by asking the pointed question of whether people were better off than they were four years earlier.

In two areas Reagan demonstrated the importance of getting messages across that cemented his support among groups that were essential to his new Republican majority. One part of this was his appeal to Southern voters, who had to be weaned away from Jimmy Carter—one of their own. While carefully avoiding overt racism, Reagan began his campaign in Philadelphia, Mississippi, a town notorious for the murder of three civil rights workers in the 1960s. Standing beside a known segregationist, Reagan stressed his belief in "states' rights," an evident code for the obstruction of black advances. The second area in which Reagan made a definite appeal for a particular constituency was in his pitch to the religious right.

Reagan, who was not known to be a regular churchgoer, concluded his acceptance speech in 1980 with a moment that was apparently spontaneous although actually carefully prepared. He had been wondering, he said, whether to include some thoughts as an addition to the distributed version of his speech. "Can we doubt," he then asked, "that only a divine Providence placed this land, this island of freedom, here as a refuge for all those people

in the world who yearn to breathe freely.” Carefully he turned his presidential campaign into a religious crusade. He asked for a moment of silent prayer and concluded with what became his customary “God bless America.” A new religious politics was born. This was in part because of the positive reaction Reagan’s ploy elicited among two-thirds of Americans. More importantly, it was because he knew before he stood up that if he could send the right message he would get the support of an increasingly powerful evangelical bloc.

Although Carter was clearly deeply religious and regularly spoke of his faith, in no sense could he be said to be following a particularly religious agenda in his presidency. The landmark January 1973 Supreme Court vote on abortion, *Roe v. Wade*, galvanized evangelicals and Catholics. The radical claim that the personal was the political was now embraced by conservatives as they looked to politics to reverse what they saw as a deep moral decline, marked by drugs, crime, and sexual permissiveness. Jerry Falwell, a Southern Baptist with his own television show, published a sermon in 1979 entitled *America Can Be Saved*. The gravamen was that the secular and the sacred could not be separated. Therefore, men of God needed to be trained to “go on to be directors in the largest corporations, who can become the lawyers and the businessmen and those important people in tomorrow’s United States. If we are going to turn this country around we must have God’s people mobilized in the right direction and we must do it quickly.” The aim was to establish a moral majority with an agenda that opposed abortion, supported prayer in school, and favored traditional notions of sexuality and gender. “If all the fundamentalists knew who to vote for and did it together, we could elect anybody.” He formed the Moral Majority, and if Reagan offered an exciting platform that it could support he promised three to four million votes. Another leader of the Moral Majority, Paul Weyrich, described the organization as “radicals working to overturn the present power structures in this country.”²⁸ Reagan’s speech and the appearance of a proposal for a constitutional amendment to “protect the unborn child” did the trick for Reagan. He got the votes.

Lee Atwater

The man who came to be credited as ensuring that the new conservative majority survived the 1980s was Lee Atwater. He made his name as a Republican political activist in the South during the 1970s and then was a leading figure in Reagan’s 1984 campaign before managing Vice President Bush’s successful campaign of 1988. He was then promoted to chair the

Republican National Committee before being struck down suddenly by a brain tumor in 1991, at the age of 40.

Atwater was an intriguing figure. He was charming and charismatic, but also devious and manipulative, with people notionally on his side as well as obvious opponents. With his existentialism and casual lifestyle he appeared to be at one with other student radicals of his generation. He also had a musical affinity with black culture. In his case, being rebellious and anti-establishment led to Republicanism. "The young Democrats were all the guys running around in three-piece suits, smoking cigars and cutting deals," he later observed, "so I said 'Hell, I'm a Republican.'" He added that this was also "a response to what was going on in the early '70s. I resented the way the left wing claimed to have captured the hearts and minds of American youth. They certainly hadn't captured mine." Being a Republican in the South put him in the position of insurgent. Victory could not be based on the issues, so it had to be based on character. "You had to make the case that the other candidate was a bad guy." Atwater marketed himself as "a Machiavellian political warrior, skilful at using ad hominem strategies and tactics, characterized by personal attacks, dirty tricks, and accentuating the negative."²⁹

Atwater's timing was significant in another respect, as he entered politics when opportunities were opening up for professional strategists. The structure of American politics, with its numerous elections and constant campaigning, created opportunities for those who combined an understanding of the mechanics of getting out the vote with the possibilities of modern communications and a flair for campaigning. His reputation was as a maestro of negative campaigning, manipulating the "wedge" issues connected with race and crime. This reputation was confirmed by the ruthlessness with which he disposed of the Democratic nominee in 1988, Michael Dukakis. A driven outsider, he understood that he was in a profession where a single slip could abruptly end a career, yet he enjoyed the limelight and was constantly telling a story about himself as well as his clients. He understood the needs of the media and played upon them. As a creature of the television age, he grasped how a carefully contrived stunt or a hard-hitting advertisement could become a talking point for days and reframe the voters' views of a candidate.

He was also an intense student of strategy, who was said to be a regular reader of Machiavelli and always liked to have at hand Clausewitz's *On War*. Sun Tzu was his favorite. He claimed to have read it at least twenty times. Quotes from *The Art of War* were included in the program for his memorial service. "There's a whole set of prescriptions for success," he observed in 1988, "that includes such notions as concentration, tactical flexibility, the difference between strategy and tactics, and the idea of command focus."³⁰

He considered Lyndon Johnson to be a master of the political art and took Robert Caro's biography of the Texan politician's rise as a sort of bible.³¹ He studied the battles of the Civil War, acknowledging that it was the Union's Sherman who best understood the merciless logic of total war.

The only sport that interested Atwater was wrestling. Here was a tussle between two tough men who were expected to use deception and tricks in their fights, in a setting that was knowingly phony. This helps explain the appeal of Sun Tzu. He was operating in a context where craftiness could reap dividends, especially if the opponent was playing a less imaginative game. Atwater insisted on thorough research of the opponent ("know the enemy"), so that he could target weakness. Likewise, awareness of his own candidate's vulnerabilities was important for defensive purposes. In helping Bush gain the Republican nomination, he exploited Senator Robert Dole's known temper and managed to get under his skin ("anger his general and confuse him"), and then confounded Dukakis by attacking him in his home state Massachusetts on one of his preferred issues, the environment. Dukakis was forced to devote resources to an area in which he had felt safe ("move swiftly where he does not expect you").³²

As the traditional ideological element, and party discipline, waned in American campaigns, more depended on the qualities of individual candidates. Strategy for elections was like that of battles in being geared to one-off, climactic duels. Elections were zero-sum games, so that what one gained the other must lose. This gave the contest its intensity. Given the size of the electorates, personal contact with the voters was impossible and so campaigns had to be conducted through the mass media. They were competitions of character as much as policy. Atwater was considered the master of spin, providing each situation with its own logic, so that everything that happened could be explained in a way that served a larger narrative. Through spin, innocent candidates could be tarnished with an undeserved label, while guilty parties could escape untainted; the fake and the true could be muddled; and the accidental could become deliberate, while the planned became happenstance. Even though he spoke on his deathbed about the Bible and sent apologetic notes to some of his victims, there remained a question mark as to whether this was sincere or just the latest way of managing his own image. According to Mary Matalin, one of his protégés, he wanted to apologize to people to whom he had been personally rude, but there was "no deathbed recantation" of his political methods.³³

Atwater worked hard on the media, playing to the desire of individual reporters to have their own stories. He developed his techniques from his early days as a campaigner, with press releases hand delivered—never mailed—to

increase reporters' "feelings of importance and help them feel appreciated and taken into confidence." The delivery would be an hour before deadline so that reporters could work the "news" into their day's work without necessarily having time for checks. A release would rarely run longer than one page, with no more than twenty-five words at the head, so they could be read at a glance. "The average reporter is lazy, as the rest of us are," he observed, "and sufficiently harassed by deadlines that he will want to use material as filler without need for an extensive rewrite."³⁴ The media beats can "only be chewing on one ankle at the time." Matalin described his talent as having "the pulse of the press."³⁵

Behind all of this was a shrewd analysis of American politics and society. In the early 1980s, Atwater came across the memo sent by Clark Clifford to Harry Truman in November 1947 on "The Politics of 1948," which accurately predicted the nominees for the next year's election and also that Truman would win. By looking at the Electoral College, he realized that Truman could lose some of the big eastern states, normally assumed to be essential to victory, so long as he held the "Solid South" and those western states carried by the Democrats in 1944. Atwater picked this up in a memo of March 1983 entitled the "South in 1984," which described how Reagan could get reelected on the same basis. "The South's gut instincts are still Democratic," he observed. Southerners would "only vote Republican when they feel they must." But he noted that Reagan had managed to persuade southerners to vote against one of their own (Jimmy Carter) in 1980. He identified as the key a swing constituency which he described as the "populists." This group could go either with the Republican "country clubbers" or else the Democratic blacks.³⁶ Another memo the next year emphasized the South as the key to victory and urged driving "a wedge between the liberal (national) Democrats and traditional southern Democrats."

What interested him about populism was that, unlike conservatism, it was not so much an ideology as a set of largely negative attitudes. "They are anti-Big Government, anti-Big Business, and anti-Big Labor. They are also hostile to the media, to the rich and to the poor." This negativity meant that it was difficult to mobilize them. "When they do get mobilized, it is just about as likely that they will support a liberal, or a Democratic, cause as a conservative or Republican cause."³⁷ To the populists he added the libertarians. This group he considered to be as important as liberals or conservatives. This philosophy he associated with the baby boomers (born from 1946 to 1964) who would come to represent about 60 percent of the electorate. They had been born into the television age and were into "self-actualization" and "inner-direction," with an interest in values and lifestyles.

They therefore opposed government intervention in their personal lives as well as in economic affairs. In all this, Atwater was exploring prevailing attitudes, which he saw as more deeply ingrained than opinions, emotional as much as intellectual. All this resulted in a more fluid political context than in the past and challenged campaigns to engage with voters' attitudes. The logic was "to find the specific example, the outrageous abuse, the easy-to-digest take that made listeners feel—usually repulsion—rather than think."

For Bush's presidential campaign of 1988, the election had to be about Dukakis rather than Bush, who was assumed to suffer from his privileged background and his association with some of the less savory moments of the Reagan presidency. Initially the polls went against him. Rescue came in the form of Willie Horton, a Massachusetts prison inmate, who committed armed robbery and rape after being let out on a weekend furlough program that Dukakis had supported as governor. While sparring for the Democratic nomination, Al Gore had mentioned that Dukakis had handed out "weekend passes for convicted criminals." Nothing more came of this, but Atwater's team took note, researched the issue, and saw how badly it could damage Dukakis. "Willie Horton has star quality," exclaimed Atwater, "Willie's going to be politically furloughed to terrorize again. It's a wonderful mix of liberalism and a big black rapist."³⁸ Ronald Reagan had established a similar plan in California, and the one in Massachusetts was set up by Dukakis's Republican predecessor. Although Dukakis did not want to abandon the policy, he had agreed to tighten it when it involved first-degree murderers. Yet this was turned into a story about Dukakis as a weak liberal making a habit of releasing rapists and murders to commit crimes. The main ad introducing Horton was not an official part of the Bush campaign, but Republicans followed it up remorselessly (Illinois Republicans: "All the murderers and rapists and drug pushers and child molesters in Massachusetts vote for Michael Dukakis." Maryland Republicans had a flier showing Dukakis with a fearsome-looking Horton: "Is This Your Pro-Family Team for 1988?"). Horton was used to address issues of crime and race, the latter more subliminally. Dukakis's image of being indifferent to crime was reinforced when he answered a question in a presidential debate about how he would respond to his wife being raped and murdered by restating his opposition to capital punishment. Although by the time the ad appeared, Bush was already ahead of Dukakis, the Democrat later said that the failure to respond was "the biggest mistake of my political career."³⁹

The Bush team also played the religion card effectively. The movement of southern evangelicals toward the Republicans continued. They might support Carter but not Mondale, Reagan's opponent in 1984, or Dukakis. Bush,

also an unlikely evangelical, picked his moment when during a debate he was asked which thinker had influenced him the most. "Christ," he replied "because he changed my heart." Evangelist Billy Graham described this as a "wonderful answer." Bush then habitually spoke of an almost intimate relationship with God—keeping a straight face while he did so—and got the support he needed.⁴⁰ These, however, were not the only reasons why Dukakis was defeated in 1988. He was complicit in his own downfall because he ran a lackluster campaign. The Clinton campaign in 1992 noted well the consequences of failing to respond to negative, personal attacks, as if it would be undignified to offer more than a disdainful silence.

The Permanent Campaign

The Democrats made their own contributions to political strategy. One of the more important, which pre-dated Atwater, was to recognize that elections were only one moment in a stream of activity. A period of intensive campaigning might culminate in an election, but that did not mean that the candidate could get on with the business of governing, the ostensible purpose of all this effort. It was Jimmy Carter who stretched the campaigning season at both ends. His campaign manager Hamilton Jordan advised him to start as early as possible to get name recognition, which required early fundraising so that he could get involved in the early state primaries. This was described by journalist Arthur Hadley as the "Invisible Primary," the period between the end of one election campaign and the formal start of the next with the first state primaries, during which time prospective candidates need to prepare themselves, in particular by raising funds. For the same reason the period has also been referred to as the "money primary."

It was a natural step from the invisible primary to the "permanent campaign," a concept introduced by Pat Caddell (Carter's pollster) in a memo written in December 1976, during the transition, when he observed that: "Too many good people have been defeated because they tried to substitute substance for style; they forgot to give the public the kind of visible signals that it needs to understand what is happening." According to Caddell, "governing with public approval requires a continuing political campaign." The concept was developed by Sidney Blumenthal, a journalist who later became an advisor to Bill Clinton.⁴¹ One imperative behind the permanent campaign was the intensity of the daily news cycle and evidence of the costs of failure to deal with negative material as soon as it first appeared. The sense that the daily narrative mattered at least as much as and possibly more than

the business of policy formation and government pushed short-termism to its limits.

In 1992, the lesson the Clinton campaign drew from the Willie Horton episode and the general ease with which the Democratic nominees Walter Mondale and Michael Dukakis had been blown aside in the previous two elections was that there must be an immediate and aggressive riposte to any negative campaigning from the opposition. As soon as stories of Clinton's infidelity surfaced during the primaries, the team was able to swing into action and deflect attention away from them. Campaign manager James Carville told Hillary Clinton that the campaign needed a "focal point... It's gotta look like a military campaign. I want some maps up there, some signs, anything to project a sense of urgency. I almost wish we could get some big electronic color-coded map." Clinton's response was that this was "a war room." There were similarities between elections and war as a battle between two opposing camps in which there could only be one winner. Carville admitted that while he began by trying to "look at things in an analytical, calculating way and not let my own emotions get in there," in practice "it never works. I end up hating the opposition, I hate the media, I hate everybody who is not completely swept up in getting my candidate elected. If you're not in a campaign, if you're not living it every day, if you're not working eighteen hours a day, you're not part of this." On the same basis, he added: "And, it almost never fails, I always fall in love with my candidate." Staying with the war metaphor, it was much more satisfying to be on the offensive. It was much more "psychically rewarding" to "slash the opposition than to cobble together another round of gushy, flag-waving, isn't-our-guy-great ads."⁴² In 2012, Carville provided an enthusiastic commentary on a guide to electioneering in ancient Rome, noting the advice to go negative early ("smear these men at every opportunity with the crimes, sexual scandals, and corruption they have brought on themselves").⁴³

In a book written with another veteran of the 1992 campaign, Carville explained his philosophy by linking it to the demands of the media. The starting point was an observation he attributed to Ailes. If a politician called the media to announce a cure for cancer and then fell into the orchestra pit, the headline would be "Politician Falls into Orchestra Pit." As the media were only interested in scandals, gaffes, polls, and attacks, the only hope of controlling the agenda was going on the attack.⁴⁴ Attacks could be prepared over time, waiting for the right moment to pounce, but timing was still essential, linked to both the progressive contraction of the news cycle, which created a media appetite for a new story even before the last one had fully worked its way through, and to the small chunks of time allowed by

broadcasters for any story. In 1968, each candidate could be heard without interruption on network news for 42.3 seconds; by 2000, the length of a sound bite was 7.8 seconds.

This led to a stress on the importance of speed, which in turn put a premium on accuracy, agility, and flexibility. There was no time for the "paralysis of analysis" and no "second chance to make a first impression." The original media take was the one that would last, so it was important to be the first in the news cycle and not the follow-up. Once a judgment was made and acted upon, there could be no second thoughts; hesitation would be fatal. To frame the debate, the core message must be simple and repeated relentlessly. Communication required memorable stories: "Facts tell, but stories sell." Carville's team worked the media continually, making sure that the right messages were received after the debates and that nothing negative about the Bush campaign was missed. Having noted Dukakis's fate, a rapid-response team was set up to respond to any challenge to the candidate. Even as Bush was delivering his acceptance speech in 1992, point-by-point rebuttals were being sent out. By the time of the candidates' debates, knowledge of Bush's stances and his record in office was leading to "prebuttals," countering his claims before he actually made them.⁴⁵ Whether or not they were aware of each other, Carville was following Boyd's OODA loop by seeking to keep the opponent disoriented. At the final meeting of the aptly named war room, the slogan on his T-shirt read "Speed Killed . . . Bush."

The steady domination of negative campaigning at all levels of American politics reflected the conviction of candidates and campaign strategists that it worked, especially when races were tight and money was not a major constraint.⁴⁶ The reason why it could work was that people tended to be more attentive to negative than positive information, in part because it raised issues of risk (Can this person be trusted with my security and standard of living?). Positive messages extolling the virtues of the candidate were less likely to elicit a strong response. Negative messages would not work so well either, if they were too shrill, came into the crude "mud-slinging" category, or appeared irrelevant to current concerns. A riotous youth or past infidelities were likely to be seen as irrelevant, unless the candidate appeared incompetent or devious when allegations were made.⁴⁷ Rebuttal was therefore important not only to deny allegations but also to demonstrate that the targeted candidate posed no risk. In addition, as with all messages, there would be multiple audiences. A constant problem in national campaigns was that the claims that might inspire the base could turn off moderate opinion.

This was one of the important lessons of 1992. Aware of the danger, Clinton was well placed to neutralize attacks from Bush. He could focus on

the tough economic conditions and the need for change by regular references to twelve Reagan/Bush years. As a southerner, he could also play the populist role identified by Atwater, skillfully adopting religious themes but giving them a more liberal twist, by speaking of a “new covenant” and “one nation under God.” In this he was helped by Bush believing that he could continue to play to the religious right without alarming the more secular center.⁴⁸

Bush, having so effectively used religion in 1988, found it did not work so well for him this time. Part of his problem was that the persistent push from the Moral Majority had led to the Republican Party taking minority positions on matters that might have been considered more social than political. The evangelicals, now joined by Catholics, compared themselves to the abolitionists by presenting abortion as the equivalent of slavery. They not only opposed same-sex marriage but condemned homosexuality. Paul Weyrich declared that “if you’re for gay rights, you’re violating a specifically articulated tenet of Holy Scripture.”⁴⁹ The target then became the Supreme Court, for it had banned school prayer, permitted legal abortion, and tolerated same-sex relationships. Meanwhile, as they sought constitutional amendments and challenged judicial nominees on these issues, they were urging the Republican Party away from an equal-rights amendment. At the Republican Convention in 1992, the Christian Coalition hosted a “God and Country” rally, Jerry Falwell had a prominent seat in the hall, and the Republican platform—along with many of the convention speeches—was full of religious language. In his acceptance speech, Bush criticized the Democrats for leaving three letters out of their platform: “G-O-D.”

The move backfired. There was no post-convention “bounce” for Bush in the polls. The pollsters recorded anxiety at divisive attempts to suggest that the opposition was irreligious, and the extremity of some of the positions being taken by Bush’s Christian supporters. “The feminist agenda,” observed Pat Robertson, “is not about equal rights for women. It is about a socialist, anti-family political movement that encourages women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practice witchcraft, destroy capitalism and become lesbians.”⁵⁰ The associations damaged Bush; he was putting himself outside mainstream social values and ducking the main issue, the economy.

The Republicans were at risk of missing the significance of changes taking place in American society. Dan Quayle, Bush’s running mate in both elections, had sought to identify the Republican Party with traditional values. “The gap between ourselves and our opponents,” he had declared in 1988, “is a cultural divide.” At the 1992 convention he wanted to demonstrate the importance of the family. To do so, he picked on Murphy Brown, a fictional character played by Candace Bergen in a television comedy series.

The latest plotline had her deciding to become a single mother. Quayle complained this ignored “the importance of fathers by birthing a child alone.” It illustrated the challenge being posed to the American family, connected with the rise in divorce, sexual permissiveness, crime, and a general moral decline. This was soon shown to be a muddled line of attack. Would she have been a better model if she had gotten an abortion instead? It was also unwise to attack single mothers, working women, and the divorced—a substantial segment of the American electorate. By 1990, only about a quarter of American families approximated the nuclear family ideal. The percentage of mothers in the workforce with children under 18 was 27 percent in 1955; by 1992, it was 76.2 percent. Women, who were also often uncomfortable with the Republican anti-abortion stance, were soon moving into Clinton’s camp.⁵¹

Given Bill Clinton’s success in the 1990s, it was a surprise that in 2008 his wife Hillary lost an intense battle for the presidential nomination of the Democratic Party to an outsider, Barack Obama, who had apparent disadvantages of being of mixed race and liberal. Both offered “firsts” if elected—either the first female president or the first black president. In other respects, the intensity of the struggle reflected the similarities of the candidates. Both were senators who had trained as lawyers. Clinton was more senior, could claim broader experience, and—as the former first lady—came out of the party establishment. Obama was the insurgent, who had only recently achieved a national profile and had been an early opponent of the unpopular Iraq War. Beyond that, their policy differences were not huge. Obama was a gifted orator, and it was tempting to attribute his success to his way with words. He also symbolized the American dream, for he had overcome many disadvantages to aspire to the country’s top job.

It was not just in oratory (he was bested in many of the debates by Clinton) but in basic organization that Obama scored. His strategy was set out clearly enough in June 2007, when his campaign had yet to make much headway in the polls. It was going to be a “classic insurgent’s campaign,” relying on a “surge of momentum from early-state victories.” He was already winning the fundraising race in terms of the number of contributors and the amount raised. David Axelrod, his chief strategist, explained that they were not running a national campaign but focusing hard on the early states with an aim of getting a “sequential series” of victories. There was, it was noted, nothing new in the script. Reform candidates would always try to combine grass-roots energy with media momentum, and they normally failed.⁵²

Looking back on the victory against Clinton, Obama’s campaign manager, David Plouffe, observed that what made the difference was the combination of a clear message—which was an amalgam of “vision, issues and

biography”—and identifying the “most accessible path to a winning vote margin.” Part of the strategy was not to change the strategy. There would be no dithering or second-guessing. They stuck with a core slogan and allocated time and resources strictly by reference to the chosen approach through the many caucuses and primaries. Plouffe quoted Obama as saying he was not going “to cast about for a political identity,” and one of George W. Bush’s advisors who observed that he would “rather have one flawed strategy than seven different strategies.” A key factor was using technology, in particular becoming the dominant Internet presence. Having started in early 2007 with ten thousand email addresses, the Obama campaign had over five million by June 2008. Of these, 40 percent had either volunteered or contributed. The people they needed to attract were already immersed in social networking and the Internet, and this made it easier for them to engage with the campaign. They did not rely solely on digital communications but also on traditional media, direct mail, and personal conversations.

The principle underlying this was fairly simple: we live in a busy and fractured world in which people are bombarded with pleas for their attention. Given this, you have to try extra hard to reach them. You need to be everywhere. And for people you reach multiple times through different mediums, you need to be sure your message is consistent.⁵³

Obama’s campaign also benefited from wider demographic shifts. America was becoming a more diverse society, racially and culturally, and the Republicans risked being seen as the party of a white, male middle-class elite that had once been dominant but was now on the defensive. The underlying coalitions behind the American parties were shifting again. For three decades the Republicans had benefited from the reaction to the cultural shifts foreshadowed in the 1960s; now these shifts were starting to make themselves felt in turn.

In somewhat unfortunate timing, a book published in 2002 promised an emerging Democrat majority based on the fact that those sections of the population most inclined to vote for the Democrats were growing: upper-class professionals, working women, blacks, Asian-Americans, and Hispanics.⁵⁴ The problem was not with the trends but with the framing. From September 2001, the issue was national security and George W. Bush worked hard to use his status as commander in chief to forge a winning coalition. By 2006, as a result of events in Iraq, this was wearing thin. By 2008, it completely failed to work for a Republican candidate in the face of developing economic crisis,

which reached crisis proportions during the closing stages of the campaign and for which the Republican Party was taking the blame.

There was therefore nothing automatic about a new political realignment in the United States. It required an ability to relate to the shifting demographic and socioeconomic trends with messages that were both appealing and credible. In this respect, the Republican Party did face a problem if its main appeal continued to be to white voters, particularly from rural areas and without higher education. The themes that worked in the 1970s and 1980s were increasingly turning off new voters while at the same time continuing to motivate Republican Party activists, especially those associated with the Tea Party movement, whose prime motivation was to defend a way of life and set of values they saw as threatened.

The two candidates who battled it out for the Democratic nomination in 2008 illustrated the shifts in attitudes that had taken place since the 1960s. They both had a Chicago link. It was Clinton's home town and it was where Obama settled and learned his political trade. Chicago provided another link: Saul Alinsky.⁵⁵ Clinton, the former student radical, had written her senior year thesis about Alinsky while a student at Wellesley College in 1969, in which she described him as "that rare specimen, the successful radical."⁵⁶ He had even offered her a job. Obama, who was castigated during the campaign for his connections to Bill Ayers, a former member of the Weathermen, worked in the mid-1980s in the community organization established by Alinsky in Chicago. Once Obama had secured the nomination in 2008, a number of his Republican opponents sought to use the Alinsky connection to discredit him, portraying him as a replica of this Marxist fire-brand who preferred direct action to democratic politics. Obama's rise could be seen as a vindication of Rustin's belief that black political advancement would most likely come through working the system. Both represented the triumph of an ethic of responsibility over one of ultimate ends.

The ethic of responsibility was intended by Weber to undermine those prepared to risk calamity in the pursuit of utopian goals. Had he lived he would have found grim vindication in the onset of totalitarianism. This represented the victories of those revolutionary utopians of both left and right who formed vanguard parties to seize power. The few who were successful (Lenin, Hitler, Mao, and Castro) came to be idolized as heroic strategists. They were celebrated for their foresight, grasp of theory, resolve, and dedication as they saw and took opportunities for power missed by lesser mortals, playing down the extent to which they might have been helped by circumstances or the errors of their opponents. Western liberal democracies rejected

this model. They came to define themselves in opposition to totalitarianism by asserting a commitment to the rule of law and rejection of cults of personality.

The corollary of limits to arbitrary power was limits to what political strategy could be expected to achieve. Constitutions must be respected, terms of office honored, spurious reasons to eliminate opponents or muzzle the media resisted. This reduced possibilities for one-party rule—domination of one group over another—but also the definitive resolution of disputes. The result was constant but inconclusive and restrained political struggle. Strategy was in regular demand, even as its scope was restricted. No sooner was one election over than preparations had to be made for the next. Legislative programs were subject to attempted influence, challenge, and potential repeal. Social movements generated divisions within their ranks as well as counter movements. All this could keep numerous amateur and professional strategists very busy but offered few definitive victories. Only on occasion, when political efforts combined with broad social and economic changes, could new ways of thinking be institutionalized, transformational policies implemented, or new constitutional provisions enacted to the point where it came to be forgotten that these were once contentious. This is what happened, for example, with the civil rights movement or the introduction of the welfare state. The normal political experience was of more modest advances and regular frustration. Not all campaigns were winnable, resources imposed constraints on what could be achieved, the most compelling narratives were temporary, coalitions were fragile, and overpromising created hostages to fortune. The best causes could be misunderstood, the best legislation could be misinterpreted, and the best candidates could make stupid mistakes. When the going got tough, there would always be temptations to focus on personalities, usually negatively, rather than issues. This was perhaps not what the progressive proponents of pragmatism had in mind, because they hoped that it would provide a means to transcend social divisions. Instead, political life could at times appear irresponsible and even outrageous in its practices. Yet, in another sense, this was the logic of eschewing an ethic of ultimate ends. This messy, infuriating, unceasing political activity reflected the limiting logic of an ethic of responsibility.

PART IV

Strategy from Above

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Imagine the consequences of that comprehensive bureaucratization and rationalization which already today we see approaching. Already now, throughout private enterprise in wholesale manufacture, as well as in all other economic enterprises run on modern lines . . . rational calculation is manifest at every stage. By it, the performance of each individual worker is mathematically measured, each man becomes a little cog in the machine, and, aware of this, his one preoccupation is to become a bigger cog.

—Max Weber, 1909

THE PREVIOUS SECTION was concerned with strategy from below, that is, how those who lacked power sought to acquire it for the people they claimed to represent. This section is concerned with those who already had power, in the sense of being in a position to take authoritative decisions, but had to work out what to do with it. The focus is largely on business, but much of the discussion is as relevant to those at the top of any large organization, including in the public sector. This group, which we will call the managers, has been the recipient of more strategic advice than any other group, including generals. The provision of advice to the top of organizations and then to subunits explains why the idea of strategy became so ubiquitous.

Strategy was necessary because relationships were complicated. Executives in a major corporation, for example, would have to deal at the same time, *inter alia*, with owners, unit heads, suppliers, competitors, governments, and customers. Each relationship was likely to involve a mixture of cooperation and conflict, often in ways that were not quite captured in the official rhetoric of partnership and collegiality internally and cutthroat competition externally. The challenges of managing down the vertical axis of the organizational hierarchy would be quite different to doing so across the horizontal axis of competitors and regulatory bodies, and thus generated different types of strategic literature. Because the advice in this literature was largely generic and often not geared to any particular scenario, it discussed relationships in broad terms, more about how to relate over time to the internal and external operating environments than how to mount specific campaigns. It was more about the impact of changes in administrative practice or available technology than how to address the power of others. The diversity of relationships, activities, and structures meant that management strategy struggled more with theory than did the military and political spheres. There developed a relationship with the social sciences as intense as it was unsatisfactory. The interactions with economics, largely in the form of game theory, and sociology, largely in the form of organization theory, demonstrated both the possibilities and the limitations of the social sciences.

In this section, therefore, we will take forward issues of contemporary social theory, which began in the last section with consideration of notions of paradigms and narratives. Just as the rise of the managers represented the logic of bureaucratization and rationalism, so too was the rise of the social sciences. They developed as reflections on and studies of modern industrial societies, with all their upheavals and conflicts, and then came to offer remedies to the troubles they described. Yet the processes of professionalization took them into forms of specialist analysis and presentation that left them detached from those who might have been expected to find their work the most valuable. Theory and action struggled to relate to each other.

The Managers

The derivation of the verb “to manage” is found in late thirteenth-century Italian. *Maneggiare* referred to the ability to handle a horse, drawn from *manus*, the Latin for “hand.” It was used in the sixteenth century in this way and eventually moved over to the conduct of any affairs, from war to marriage, from the plot of a novel to personal finances. It suggested something

more than administration but less than total control, requiring persuasive or manipulative as well as coercive skills, a flair for extracting more from a person, organization, or situation than might have otherwise been expected. The sense of less than total control remained important. Managing implied coping, dealing with a state of affairs that could never fully be controlled.

The profession of management referred to people employed for their administrative and supervisory skills in handling complex affairs, such as those of an estate or business. For this reason, the role of the manager could be expected to stop short of strategy. Ultimate control, and therefore strategy, would stay in the hands of the owner. This remained the case in standard forms of business governance. Managers reported to a board appointed by the shareholders, responsible for approving budgets and making big decisions. The more complex the organization to be managed, however, the greater the dependence on the managers, and so whatever the organizational charts might say, effective power began to rest with those who actually understood the issues. Full-time managers could soon learn how to frame an issue so that their preferred outcome was the obvious one for a board to take.

As business enterprises grew into massive corporations, the managers appeared to be effectively in charge, with their own preferred candidates appointed to the boards that were notionally supervising them. Nonetheless, management still involved less than control. Managers were employees who could be—and often were—fired when affairs were badly handled. Their success would depend on an ability to get the best out of those beneath them in the hierarchy, but unlike the military chain of command (with which comparisons were natural), there was likely to be a greater range of functions to be coordinated and less reliance on unquestioning obedience.

The notion that management was a new profession of increasing importance, essential to the performance of modern businesses, was recognized in the establishment of business schools. The first was the Wharton School at Pennsylvania, founded in 1881. The management in question, however, was of potentially unruly workforces as much as complex business processes. The “labor issue” was a major preoccupation. Joseph Wharton wished the school to teach “the nature and prevention of strikes” as well as “the necessity for modern industry of organizing under single leaders or employers great amounts of capital and great numbers of laborers, and of maintaining discipline among the latter.”¹ A quarter of a century passed before the Harvard Business School opened in 1908. It followed an endowment to promote an “applied science,” initially assumed to be engineering. Eventually the university opted for business, raising at once the tension between what many supposed to be vocational training and the university’s true purpose of

disinterested scholarship. As the first dean, Edwin Gay, searched for a way to resolve this tension he came across the ideas of Frederick Winslow Taylor. Taylor himself was skeptical, to say the least, about the value of a university education. He declined to join the faculty, but he did give regular lectures to the new school, and more importantly, his philosophy permeated the early curriculum.

Taylorism

Taylor had begun work as an engineer in the steel industry where he started to address the question of how the workforce could be used more efficiently. He claimed that he had hit upon a form of management that was “a true science, resting upon clearly defined laws.” So the attraction of Taylor was that he offered a way to bring together a business culture, inclined to the practical and suspicious of unnecessary erudition, with an academic culture prone to disparage the merely technical. Dean Harlow Person of the Dartmouth Business School, which had been founded in 1900, described Taylorism as the “only system of management which was coherent and logical, and therefore was teachable.” In 1911, Person organized the first international conference on scientific management.² For the new managers this was an important development: their expertise and professionalism could now be recognized with proper qualifications and cloaked in academic respectability.

The starting point for Taylor’s method was the belief that for each elemental task of an organization there should be “one best way” found through careful analysis and measurement. Those who analyzed and measured, and acted upon the findings, would become a new profession. Here he posited an extremely sharp distinction between planning and doing. The first required very clever people; for the second it did not matter if people were stupid. A doer, he remarked, would not be able to “understand the principles of this science,” because of either a “lack of education or insufficient mental capacity,” and so would have to be guided at all times by the educated.³ It required people to work smarter but not by being smart themselves.

The more a worker could be treated as an unthinking machine the better, because without the complication of independent thought it would be possible to calculate how best to extract optimal performance. Part of the pretence of science was the presence of quantification and mathematics in establishing the most efficient way to work with given tools when accomplishing defined tasks. Work tasks would be broken down into constituent elements and then standardized in a form that simple workers could follow. “Time-and-motion”

studies used stopwatches to time each element so a rate could be set for its completion. Once the scientific basis of work could be demonstrated, there should be no argument about how it should be done. Thus this would also represent progress in solving the “labor problem.” Taylor wrote about workers as natural “loafers,” who failed to work as hard as they could. Their managers let them get away with this because they did not know any better. They evaluated performance by rules of thumb and looked to the workers to use their “initiative,” which to Taylor meant only that they persisted with traditional, inefficient ways of working. Moreover, without greater efficiency, the management would have to reward the workers with means other than pay, and Taylor clearly thought that pay was the best motivation of all.

Taylor's claims about the efficiency improvements he had achieved in the steel industry were exaggerated. Those for which he took credit could often be attributed to other sources. The limits of his actual achievements were established long after his death, and after his path-breaking work had been described to generations of management students. His basic story was about a worker called Schmidt at Bethlehem Steel (one quarter of this company was owned by Joseph Wharton). Schmidt was presented as an exemplary worker, none too bright but ready to work harder for better pay, who met the target of quadrupling the amount of pig iron loaded. Charles Wrege and Amadeo Perroni, who discovered just how flawed Taylor's research had been, regretted that he had not been scrutinized early enough, before this idol with “feet of clay” had been “hoisted onto a pedestal.”⁴ Jill Hough and Margaret White later came to Taylor's defense, arguing that his purpose was to argue for a new approach, that the discrepancies between his account and the evidence were not that great, and that others successfully replicated his results. The original story must have been embellished, but this was still a compelling way to illustrate his arguments about industrial efficiency. The stories were part of Taylor's strategy: acts of communication rather than research reports. He should therefore be viewed “with an artistic appreciation for his story telling style” and recognition that his principles have served as a building block for later theorists addressing issues such as how to select and train workers, especially for standardized procedures. The basic lesson remained: “Even the most basic processes can be substantially improved while providing benefit to both employer and employee.”⁵

Certainly Taylor packaged his ideas in a systematic and coherent manner. By this means he was able to turn himself into the first management “guru” providing seminars to business leaders and with a bestselling and influential book, *The Principles of Scientific Management*. After he died in 1915, described on his gravestone as “The Father of Scientific Management,” his

followers—such as Henry Gantt and Frank and Lillian Gilbreth—continued to develop and spread his ideas.⁶ They promoted a form of “aggressive rationality,” with science sweeping away custom and superstition for the benefit of all.⁷ This involved, as Taylor put it, a “mental revolution,” required of both the workers and the management. Instead of arguing about the division of the current profit they should work together to increase the size of the profit to mutual benefit. Here was the key to another part of Taylor’s appeal. He was offering a great compromise between management and labor, made possible by a new caste of “efficiency engineers.” Peter Drucker, who three decades later saw himself picking up where Taylor had left off, suggested that scientific management

may well be the most powerful as well as the most lasting contribution America has made to Western thought since the Federalist Papers. As long as industrial society endures, we shall never lose again the insight that human work can be studied systematically, can be analyzed, can be improved by work on its elementary parts.⁸

This philosophy was in tune with the temper of the times. Taylor opened his book by urging efficiency as a great national goal rather than just one for companies. He hoped the principles could be applied to all social activities, from the management of homes to churches, universities, and government departments.

The idea that this was a “science,” which raised the standing of Taylor’s claims, came from progressive lawyer Louis Brandeis, who eventually became a member of the Supreme Court. During a court case in 1910, Brandeis challenged a rise in freight rates on the railroads and sought to show how the railroads could save money by introducing new techniques (described as “scientific management”) rather than by charging more. Brandeis’s advocacy went well beyond the courtroom. He linked scientific management with a wider social goal of “universal preparedness.” Planning in the form of a predetermined schedule, clear instructions, and constant supervision would bring great rewards: “Errors are prevented instead of being corrected. The terrible waste of delays and accidents is avoided. Calculation is substituted for guess; demonstration for opinion.”⁹ Brandeis was by no means the only figure in the progressive movement to see Taylor as the answer to a rationalist’s dream. The investigative journalist Ida Tarbell praised Taylor as one of the creative geniuses of the time, contributing to “genuine cooperation and juster human relations.”¹⁰ Science offered a way to circumvent the powerful conflicts that threatened to tear industrial society apart and a way to promote the general good out of the tangle of clashing sectional interests.

The progressives were particularly interested in Taylor because they were perplexed by the large organizations that were now essential to economic growth but challenged both liberal economic and democratic theory. Thus far they had gone for legal solutions, trying to cut the large corporations down to size. Scientific management suggested a possible administrative solution. "Efficiency" fit in with the progressive conviction that science rather than intuition could provide a neutral and objective basis for evaluating policies and reorganizing society to serve the needs of the majority rather than the self-interest of the few. Brandeis urged the labor unions to embrace it, taking the chance to become actively involved in running the enterprises which employed them. To the dismay, even bewilderment, of the progressives, the unions bitterly resisted Taylorism. They had no interest in blurring the line between capital and labor and understood that at root scientific management was not about partnership but centralized control based on strict hierarchy. Providing management with insights into core tasks undermined workers' control over the shop floor and treated them in a patronizing and dehumanizing manner. They saw Taylor's methods as means by which more could be extracted from workers without commensurate reward.

The hostility to Taylorism in the labor movement makes its adoption by the Soviet Union even more significant. Before the revolution, Lenin studied Taylor and pronounced his methods exploitative—at least so long as they were being applied within capitalism. A fourfold increase in productivity would not lead to a commensurate increase in wages. Yet the ideas continued to intrigue him and once in power, facing a desperate economic situation, he urged their careful study. In May 1918, he advised that this "last word in capitalism" be adapted for socialist purposes. "We must introduce in Russia the study and teaching of the new Taylor System and its systematic trial and adaptation." He recognized that this would mean drawing on bourgeois experts in a system that the unions had bitterly opposed. But this would be different, Lenin insisted, for now the "workers' commissars" could watch management's "every step."¹¹ It was Trotsky, charged as commissar of war, who followed this up with enthusiasm, against the objections of the so-called left-communists who saw this as another example of the new regime's move away from true socialism.

Lenin and Trotsky had little trouble with a system dependent on an enlightened elite and docile followers. For Trotsky, this was about the "wise expenditure of human strength participating in production." The work of Taylor and his acolytes was published and applied, and a number of theorists were invited to the Soviet Union as advisors. The urgency came because of the struggle to cope with a country whose infrastructure was in a mess and

where a civil war was raging. Discipline and productivity were essential. For the same reasons, the Bolsheviks welcomed returning tsarist administrators, engineers, and officers with vital practical knowledge. Part of this package was piecework for workers and bonuses for specialists. Unions were abolished on the grounds that in a socialist society they were no longer necessary.

In the short term, all this effort did help raise productivity and sort out the infrastructure. In the longer term, it helped set the framework for the Soviet system of industrial organization, based on centralized planning and detailed instructions to workers who had little choice but to obey as well as they could, more out of fear of punishment than expectation of reward. The system as it evolved during the 1920s, including the abolition of the unions and the militarization of industry, has been described as “Taylorism with teeth.”¹² This is not to hold Taylorism responsible for everything that befell the Soviet Union. In the circumstances of the time, there were many reasons why Lenin and Trotsky—and then Stalin—would have been inclined to regiment the Soviet workforce. It fit in with their ideological predispositions and authoritarian leadership. Nor were they applying Taylor as his followers, who tended to be less bombastic in their claims, intended. But the grotesque version of scientific management that emerged in the Soviet Union, disconnecting planning from doing, relying on instructions from the center to a disciplined workforce, and persistent insistence on “one best way,” in the end illustrated the limits of the approach when followed to its logical conclusion.

Mary Parker Follett

In some respects, it became far easier to push Taylorism in the Soviet Union, where resistance was crushed, than in the United States, where resistance remained active and labor unrest high. This led to a search for a business strategy that went beyond extracting greater efficiency out of the workforce but also addressed the broader “labor problem.” The management theorists of this time claimed a way forward to harmony through better management.

Mary Parker Follett was as much a philosopher as a social scientist, with an impressive background in social work and education rather than business. She was following in the same line as Jane Addams, that of a “social feminist.” This built on a traditional woman’s role but broadened it to include “city housekeeping,” which suffered—according to Addams—because women, who understood such things, had not been properly consulted. Follett followed Addams into community work and progressive politics. Like Addams she challenged the popular dichotomies of the time, whether elite/mass or

capital/labor, as imposing divisions instead of creating an integrated community. The crude elitist view that some were better than others seemed to her to be a recipe for disharmony and discord. In particular, she objected to the word *masses* and she challenged Le Bon's corrupting "conception of people as a crowd," susceptible to "the spread of similarities by suggestion and imitation."

Her aim was to find means of bringing the community together as an integrated whole.¹³ Follett objected to the idea of power ("the ability to make things happen") when it was a domineering "power over." Exercising power in this way left the dominated resentful and reluctant to change their prior positions, which would be reasserted as soon as an opportunity arose. Better to have "power with," because all energies—not just those of elites—would then be mobilized in the same direction toward shared goals. This faith in humanity led her to view democracy in terms of the evolving views of individuals coming together in groups. There was so much going on within any group, with ideas interweaving, modifying, and reinforcing each other; returning in new forms; and focusing on shared problems. Crude assertions of interest would be undermined and prejudices challenged. The outcome would represent integration, her key goal. There would neither be individuals nor society but "only the group and the group-unit—the social individual." In this context, consent should be positive and not grudging, a result of participation in decisions and a sense of shared responsibility and ownership. She was not after partnerships between previously antagonistic entities, such as negotiated agreements between management and unions, for these were inherently non-creative. The integrated outcomes she sought would be far more valuable. In this way (and following Dewey), democracy was a process as much as an attainment, informed by the interplay of individual interventions. Authority would come not from specific individuals but from "the law of the situation" which required all to accept and address the problem as framed. If anything, therefore, her approach was anti-strategic, creating situations which it would be difficult for individuals to manipulate.

Although her views developed as she addressed the larger issues of democratic theory, her stress on the importance of group processes, and her determination to turn conflict into a creative rather than a destructive factor, led her naturally into the study of organizations. From 1926, she began to challenge business groups about the need to view their enterprises within the wider social context. She urged them to reassess their reliance on delegation and take advantage of the social bonds forged within groups,¹⁴ arguing the need for more bottom-up approaches to management and innovation. Follett now appears ahead of her time with her strictures against micromanagement

("bossiness"), in favor of flatter management structures and participatory approaches. She argued the importance of the more informal aspects of business organization, noting how social interactions contributed to overall performance. At the same time she did not challenge Taylorism directly, accepting the expanded role for management and the advantages of authority being vested in those with technical expertise and access to knowledge. This did not remove hierarchy, but at least it was not based on social position nor exercised arbitrarily. The problem went back to consent, and was reflected in her definition of management as "the art of getting things done through people."¹⁵

Follett was influential in her time more as a social philosopher than as a management theorist, although she did have practical experience in Boston on management-union relations and the development of personnel policies. Her mission can be discerned from the title of her 1918 book: *The New State: Group Organization—The Solution of Popular Government*. Here she observed, "Our political life is stagnating, capital and labor are virtually at war, the nations of Europe are at one another's throats because we have not yet learned how to live together."¹⁶ Her remedy, however, only worked when the conditions were already in place, when there was a prior willingness to work together on shared problems. Beyond that, there was little more than an injunction to put differences aside and think about power relations differently. The method required that people did not think strategically for themselves but only on behalf of the group. This did not of course mean that the integrated outcome would be wise or appropriate, noted much later in reference to "groupthink" when individuals reinforced each others' wrong assumptions.¹⁷ Furthermore, as representatives of groups met with each other in a higher group, were they supposed to disregard the views of the lower group in pursuit of a higher integration? If each group was responding to the laws of its own situation, then at some point the variations in group situations would matter, and there would still be conflict to be resolved by hard bargaining or else a tough fight. Follett's shrewd observations on group dynamics illustrated the organizational benefits of enlightened self-interest, but they provided no answer to the problems of conflict, the point at which strategy would be most needed.

The Human Relations School

Follett overlapped with another group of management theorists, with whom she is often associated and almost certainly influenced, the so-called human

relations school. These other theorists had a harder edge to their philosophy and were more clearly part of the elitist school, although they also stressed the importance of social networks in making organizations work. A key figure here was Elton Mayo, an Australian who managed to get himself attached to Harvard Business School in 1926 and whose name has come to be linked to the first sociological studies of industrial practice at Western Electric's Hawthorne plant near Chicago. Before considering how he got to Harvard and the Hawthorne studies, it is worth noting his general views.

Mayo did not present himself as a fan of Western civilization, individualism, or democracy. In his view, democracy took advantage of voter emotions and irrationality, left little room for reason, encouraged class war, and favored "collective mediocrity" rather than the sovereignty of the "highest skill." The idea of workplace democracy, which appealed to Follett, was anathema to Mayo, for it would hand over control to people who had no real understanding of business issues. His knowledge of psychological theory encouraged him in his belief that economics could not grasp the human factor because it ignored the extent to which feeling and irrationality shaped motives. It also suggested how to deal with conflict without addressing what were claimed to be the underlying issues. Radical movements and industrial unrest were not responses to genuine grievances but more the expression of the "hidden fires of mental uncontrol." If agitators were essentially neurotic, "prone to conspiratorial delusions, with minds obsessed with rage and the savage lust of destruction," then democratic processes could do little to help. In fact they made matters worse, dividing society into two hostile camps and leading workers, unaware of the real sources of their discontent, to pursue "will-o-the-wisp phantasies with all the energy of his starving intellect and will." Mayo's remedy was to treat not the material conditions of the working class but the psychopathological tendencies of democracy, reflected in disoriented lives, disintegrated personalities, and disordered values.¹⁸

Mayo's views were well known when the dean of the Harvard Business School, Wallace Donham, approached him about joining the faculty. Donham was a banker who had trained at Harvard Law School. After being appointed in 1919, he stayed until the early 1940s. He saw his task as raising the academic standards of the school while also improving links with business. This was essential for fundraising, but Donham also had to contend with the university's reputation for harboring radicals and socialists. Funding for Mayo eventually came directly from industry rather than the university. The attraction of Mayo lay in his underlying views, which Donham shared, and in his claimed expertise in psychology. The gap to be filled was explained in a letter to the university's president in 1927: "I see no really promising

hope of lessening the critical nature of the Labor Problem in Industry except through a scientific study of Industrial Physiology including Psychology.” As O’Connor observed, “Mayo’s research spoke directly to the core of executive concerns: it revolved around how to calm the worker’s irrational, agitation-prone mind and how to develop a curriculum to train managers and executives to do so.” In 1933, Mayo reinforced the point. The problem was not the lack of an “able administrative elite,” but the elite’s lack of understanding of the “biological and social facts involved in social organization and control.” Donham saw training this elite as an essential task for the business school.¹⁹

Complementing the efficient physical engineering of the ordinary worker by Taylor, Mayo offered a psychological revival. Like Taylor, Mayo also had a story about how he realized this could be done, this time based on a flash of inspiration as he pondered the meaning of experiments with a small group of workers at Western Electric’s Hawthorne plant. The research, which had begun well before Mayo joined, was designed to see whether changes in physical conditions, such as better illumination, made much difference to productivity. In this regard, the most important stage in the experiments involved a group of six women working on relay assembly. The aim was to ascertain the impact of rest periods and hours of work. Eventually it was decided to consider them on a group rather than an individual, so that there was a shared bonus for higher productivity. The researchers found a 30 percent increase of productivity over two and a half years, along with greater work satisfaction.

Explanations of exactly why this had happened were uncertain until, as Mayo reported, he had his “great *éclaircissement*” and realized what made the difference was that the researchers were actually showing interest in them. His large conclusion was that psychological conditions were more important than the physical and that workers responded to their own group dynamics and informal social networks. Motivations went beyond self-interest into seeking recognition and security. The recommendation was that management should seek a good working relationship with their staff, and that happy workers would be more productive. As with Taylor, the original story was embellished and interpreted within Mayo’s own preconceived notions. Once again a simple explanation was offered to make sense of a complex set of facts. In retrospect, the best explanation for the improvements in productivity was a combination of pay incentives (in a non-unionized plant and against the background of the depression) and the attitudes of individual workers. The replacement of two women who had not joined in the spirit of the experiment by two who did was a turning point.²⁰ Mayo’s conclusion was not in itself preposterous. It fit in with the theories of Follett in encouraging managers to view their workers in more rounded, softer, human terms and

was widely considered to have encouraged a turn for the better in management practice.

In this way the so-called human relations school was founded, attending to the informal aspects of the organization and the social conditions of the workplace. Mayo's place was assured in the history of industrial sociology, though were it not for the Hawthorne experiments he would by now be forgotten. He had exaggerated his own qualifications, including his psychiatric training, and was considered by colleagues to be snobbish, lazy, and uninterested in teaching, with only the occasional publication to his name. As we have seen, Mayo's underlying philosophy was deeply conservative, seeing conflict as in effect a "social disease" to be remedied by healthy cooperation across the supposed divides.²¹ By the same token, cooperation among workers for their own ends was unhealthy. Because he saw politics as aggravating the problem, and was generally reluctant to consider the problem of power, any solution was the responsibility of the administrative elite, who must be trained to develop social competence to match their technical competence.

In the Hawthorne Studies, the claimed positive response had been to inadvertently enlightened researchers rather than truly enlightened managers. In the mid-1930s, Mayo made acquaintance with Chester Barnard, president of New Jersey Bell, a cerebral man and a voracious reader with hard experience in industry and practical administration. By 1938 he was giving lectures at Harvard. With some rewriting, these were turned into what is now considered to be a seminal text on management thought, *The Functions of the Executive*. Barnard forged an extraordinary bond with the physiologist Lawrence Henderson, a leading figure in the university and a colleague of Mayo's. This was based on their shared interest in the Italian sociologist and notable elitist Vilfredo Pareto.

Having discovered Pareto in the mid-1920s, Henderson became something of an evangelist in the 1930s, establishing what became known as the "Pareto Circle" at Harvard. To Henderson's scientific mind, Pareto's notions of social equilibrium struck a chord as well as matched his own conservative inclinations. Although he dominated the circle, with a seminar technique that was said to be "only feebly imitated by a pile-driver," the group did include people such as Talcott Parsons and George Homans among the most influential of their generation of sociologists.²² It was also a refuge for conservative academics seeking an alternative to Marx and attracted by the underlying treatment of society as an interdependent and largely self-correcting system. Henderson was impressed by Barnard as a man who not only had read Pareto originally in French but had sought to apply his ideas in the real world.

Pareto's influence can certainly be detected in Barnard. This was evident in his stress on nonlogical factors in human decision and action, on how choice was shaped by the logic of situations, and on the circulation of elites. Pareto is there in the idea of organizations as social systems analogous to human bodies seeking some sort of equilibrium. To achieve equilibrium, the organization needed to achieve both effectiveness and efficiency, and he emphasized how many declined because they failed both tests. By efficiency he meant the ability to satisfy the individuals who made up the organization; effectiveness involved the ability to meet goals. Management must formulate the organizational goals and decide how to meet them, but it must do so in a way that kept all members involved, not least through forms of direct and accessible communications. He emphasized the importance of respect and cooperation, suggesting—in line with Mayo—that the former was more important than material incentives and that the latter was put at risk by divisive ideologies and forms of political action. In both these aspects, the workforce was prone to mistaken notions about their interests and therein lay the special leadership role of management.²³

In addition to their technical and social skills, managers should work actively to create a cooperative organization underpinned by appropriate values. Otherwise the organization would fail.²⁴ It was therefore important “to educate and to propagandize” people to “inculcate” appropriate motives and perceptions. The executive must not only conform to a moral code but also create moral codes for others which would be reflected in high morale. To this end, “points of view, fundamental attitudes, loyalties to the organization or cooperative system, and to the system of objective authority” must be inculcated to encourage the subordination of “individual interest and the minor dictates of personal codes to the good of the cooperative whole.”²⁵

Barnard also had a story to illustrate his point. In a popular lecture he referred to an episode involving a riotous situation at New Jersey in 1935 when he was director of the New Jersey Emergency Relief Administration. He claimed that he defused the situation by respecting the dignity of the rioters.²⁶ According to Barnard's account, a meeting with representatives of Trenton's unemployed in his office had to be adjourned when some two thousand unemployed demonstrators, who had been urged on by New York radicals, clashed with the police in the street outside, leading to a number being arrested and some taking a beating. Barnard saw that publicity such as this could harm the cause of the unemployed by increasing taxpayer animosity to the relief program. This was the point he made when the delegation returned, after he had first carefully listened to a litany of their grievances,

and a degree of harmony was restored. According to Barnard's account, picked up enthusiastically by his friends at Harvard, the problem was solved through human relations rather than by economics. Dignity was important to the unemployed, even more than food for themselves or their families.

It may well be that Barnard's sensitivity and tact did make a difference, but once his account was checked against contemporary reports of the episode it became evident that this was only part of the story.²⁷ There was in fact a strong economic dimension: the unemployed were demanding a substantial increase in food allowances and Barnard had promised to help. Nonetheless, Barnard's argument that more mayhem would put the whole program at risk was a serious political point. This reflects the observation made earlier about Follett's promotion of group dynamics. There are groups within groups, and Barnard's strategy in this case was to make common cause with the unemployed in support of the relief program against those who resented the subsidies when their own economic circumstances were so tight. Talking about groups rather than classes or parties or states did not remove the problem of conflict. Unless society could be reshaped as one big amorphous group, individuals were going to identify with some groups against others, and the interests of these groups were going to clash. The more inter-group conciliation became necessary, the more intra-group harmony was likely to be put under strain.

The original role of managers was to manage the workforce. Their understanding of what this required was shaped by the social theories of the time, many of which encouraged unflattering views of ordinary people as essentially simple-minded, suggestible, and manipulable. At best, they could be encouraged to be efficient cogs in the machine by more pay, tempered by threats of dismissal. At worst they could be swayed by agitators, drawing on the psychology of crowds. As the century progressed, the possibilities of maintaining a docile, regimented workforce receded with the growing strength of labor unions and the increasingly demanding and specialist nature of much work. Moreover, while the original inspiration for the human relations school might have been to draw workers away from socialism and unions, it encouraged managers to recognize that their organizations were complex social structures rather than simple hierarchies and that their workers might respond positively to being treated as rounded human beings. The approach risked replacing autocracy with paternalism as it struggled to work out what these developing views of organizational life meant in terms of structures of power. The more these structures had to be addressed, and the more they had to be related to the wider social and economic changes underway, the more managers would need a strategy.

The business of business is business.

—Alfred P. Sloan

BEFORE WE CONSIDER how the next generation of management theorists discovered strategy, we need first to explore the issues of power being faced by business over this period. The important developments in theorizing about business strategy after the Second World War reflected the forms taken by large industrial corporations in the United States, at a point when the tensions between capital and labor were subdued if not eliminated. The origins of these corporations, however, were to be found in a much more turbulent period in the country's industrial development, marked by labor unrest and arguments over the excessive power of the large trusts.

Against the expectations of Marx, capitalism transformed itself as the nineteenth century turned into the twentieth. Capitalists found means of coping with the volatility of the system that produced cycles of growth followed by recession. One of the most important coping mechanisms appeared to be size. Very large companies were capable of surviving sudden changes in economic conditions. In this effort they were increasingly supported by layers of management. The process which led to those changes began at about the same time as Marx was arguing with Bakunin over how to prepare for revolution and then what to make of the Paris Commune.

John D. Rockefeller

The story of John D. Rockefeller and Standard Oil is well known.¹ In 1865 as an ambitious 26-year-old in Cleveland, Ohio, Rockefeller bought out his partner in the town's largest oil refinery. Taking advantage of the economic expansion that began with the end of the Civil War, he added to his refineries and the profits rolled in. Unfortunately, others had the same idea and soon refinery capacity far outstripped demand for kerosene and other oil products. To survive, Rockefeller determined to be the most efficient producer, improving quality while keeping costs down and then, more imaginatively, by integrating the business, controlling both supply and distribution. In addition, he made sure that he had enough cash so he would not be caught short by sudden market fluctuations. He then strengthened his position by controversial links with the railroads, gaining discounted rates in return for shipping a guaranteed number of carloads a day.

Rockefeller did not accept for one second that it was improper to tamper with market forces. He was convinced that it was too easy to open a refinery resulting in an overcrowded industry and a chaotic, chronically unstable market. Instead of living by the market's capricious disciplines, Rockefeller decided to exert control. "The oil business was in confusion and daily growing worse." As each refiner "struggled hard to get all of the business...he brought to himself and the competitors nothing but disasters."² Supply and demand might never reach equilibrium. Rockefeller's strategy was one which in other circumstances would have seemed wholly appropriate: he sought cooperation as a sensible alternative to a wasteful and disruptive competition.

Given the state of the oil industry, Rockefeller may well have been correct in his assumption.³ This was nonetheless a challenge to the prevailing ideology of free markets. In the case of Rockefeller, the challenge was aggravated by his methods. He normally offered prospective partners reasonable terms and at times helped his erstwhile competitors out of a desperate position. Those who did not wish to combine, however, would often be harried into submission, their position worsened by means of aggressive price cuts by Standard Oil. In 1870, when it incorporated, Standard Oil controlled a tenth of America's refining capacity; by the end of the decade, the figure was 90 percent.

When independent companies made a last daring move by building a long-distance pipeline, even managing to catch Standard Oil by surprise, there was no real threat to the company's position. There was time and the financial muscle to respond. Standard Oil built its own pipelines and soon controlled the whole network connecting the Pennsylvanian oil regions with

the rest of America. The only exception was the original line, and even here Standard Oil acquired a minority stake. When the remaining independent refiners demanded legal remedies to restrain Standard Oil, the court cases lifted the veil on the sort of techniques the company employed in its drive to a near monopoly. In 1882, Rockefeller found a way to bring the veil down again, using a legal device that was normally used for people who could not look after their own finances. The companies in which Rockefeller held stock came together by means of a secret agreement. The stockholders conveyed their shares “in trust” to nine trustees, including John and his brother, William. That meant that, strictly speaking and whatever the appearances, Standard Oil did not own other companies. It was only the trust, owned by the company’s stockholders, which could appoint directors and officers and set up administrative offices in individual states.

Standard Oil had a virtual monopoly. All that was missing was any actual production of oil. Potentially that was a great vulnerability, especially if the oil ran out. But by the end of the 1880s, new oil fields were being found around the country and U.S. production was no longer dependent on the Pennsylvania fields. Rockefeller saw the opportunity for further integration and reduced dependency on suppliers. Energetic acquisition began. Soon Standard Oil was pumping a third of America’s crude oil as well as marketing 84 percent of all petroleum products sold. As both producer and consumer, Standard Oil could set the prices. Without quite squeezing out all the competition, it was in effective control of the U.S. oil industry and was developing substantial interests overseas. Things also turned out well for Rockefeller on the demand side: kerosene was replaced by electricity as the major source of illumination, but the arrival of automobiles and gasoline-powered engines transformed the market again. Gasoline suddenly moved from a minor product to the major output of refineries.

By the turn of the century, Standard Oil had reached the peak of its influence. The size of the international market, which already included significant competitors, meant that its relative position was bound to decline. The process was accelerated, however, as a result of the trust’s substantial political liabilities. Rockefeller was blamed for using dubious practices to gain vast wealth. Grudges were held by the small independent producers who had been gobbled up, broken, or marginalized during Rockefeller’s inexorable rise. They could appeal to American values and the image of the virtuous little man struggling against concentrated, corrupt power and great wealth. Rockefeller was by no means the only “Robber Baron”—Andrew Carnegie, Cornelius Vanderbilt, and J. P. Morgan were similarly denounced. Nor was Standard Oil the only entity using the trust as a way of controlling markets

and rebuffing competition. It was, however, the largest and most notorious. While Rockefeller believed combination to be a better way of guaranteeing efficiency and stability, the practice tended toward monopoly. The 1890 Sherman Antitrust Act gave the federal government power to investigate and pursue the trusts. Rockefeller acquired the best lawyers to take on the courts and develop elaborate arrangements to beat legislation. He used donations to buy political support and plant friendly stories in newspapers. New companies were established, proclaiming their independence, though they were in practice controlled by the trust. Meanwhile, with remarkable attention to detail, using superior intelligence and communications, and keeping track of markets and competitors on an increasingly global scale, Standard Oil kept its prices down and its hold on the market secure. Through all this it “treated the federal government as a meddlesome, inferior power.”⁴

In the end, Rockefeller's nemesis proved to be a writer called Ida Tarbell, whom we met in the previous chapter as a champion of Frederick Taylor. As it happened, her father had struggled in the early oil business against Standard Oil and suffered as a result. This gave an edge to her reporting. The opportunity came because she was on the staff of *McClure's Magazine*, a progressive “muckraking” journal, which had decided to make the trusts its main target.⁵ Tarbell got a break with an introduction to one of Rockefeller's lieutenants, who became a key source of information. In 1902, a monthly serial began which lasted for two years, telling the Standard Oil story in compelling detail, arousing great indignation as it exposed underhanded business methods. Tarbell insisted that she did not object to the company's size and wealth but rather its methods. “But they had never played fair, and that ruined their greatness for me.”⁶

The exposure was timely. The antitrust cause had been taken up by the progressive president, Theodore Roosevelt. He argued that corporate power had to be brought under control, using legislation where the abuse was greatest. He launched investigations into Standard Oil, and in 1906 a suit was brought accusing it of restraint of trade under the Sherman Act. Standard Oil's legal defense was strong, but the evidence was damning. After an initial verdict ordering the trust's dissolution in 1909, it was confirmed by the Supreme Court in 1911. The “very genius for commercial development and organization,” the chief justice concluded, “soon begat an intent and purpose to exclude others.”⁷ Standard Oil was dismantled, giving birth to thirty-four new entities, including what became Exxon.

At the time it seemed like a defeat, but Roosevelt had done Rockefeller a favor. It was increasingly beyond the capacity of a single company to control a developing market of such size and complexity. The ability of smaller

units to respond flexibly to new conditions eventually made for a stronger and more profitable industry. Rockefeller, now retired, held stock in the new and largely successful companies. He lived until he was almost 100. A great philanthropic trust bore his name and soon came to affect the way that economics and management was studied in the United States. His descendents continued to have a major influence on business and politics. So this story hardly counts as a tragedy.

Rockefeller was undoubtedly a master strategist. He could take a view of the system as a whole and assess the position of the individual parts. Yergin describes Rockefeller as “both strategist and supreme commander, directing his lieutenants to move with stealth and speed and with expert execution.” He was not averse to military metaphors, for example, justifying his secretive methods by wondering “what general of the Allies ever sends out a brass band in advance with orders to notify the enemy that on a certain day he will begin an attack.”⁸ Chernow describes him brooding over problems. Plans were “quietly matured plans over extended periods. Once he had made up his mind, however, he was no longer troubled by doubts and pursued his vision was undeviating faith.”⁹ But because his strategic success was the result of objectionable methods and in pursuit of retrograde aims, he could hardly be presented as the model for an aspiring businessman.

Henry Ford

By contrast, at least for a time, Henry Ford was presented as an exemplary and forward-looking businessman. Ford’s vision for the automobile industry was developed while he tinkered with machinery as a young man on his father’s farm in Michigan. He wondered about horseless carriages and how they could take some of the worst drudgery out of rural life. Steam engines were too big, heavy, and dangerous. Perhaps gas-powered internal combustion engines might be a way forward. In the mid-1880s, he got a chance to work with one of these engines, understand its principles, and then experiment on his own.

There was at the time no mass market for cars. They were considered expensive toys for racers, with speed more important than reliability. As good money could be made by selling individual cars to order at high prices, there was no incentive to go for a volume. Ford’s genius was to see how to develop an affordable car for a mass market, anticipating both a public demand and a means of production that did not yet exist. He got no support from independent investors and banks. This left him with an enduring disdain for those

who put money ahead of work, feared competition, and were uninterested in consumers. He sought to liberate himself from dependence on creditors and shareholders. Although when he founded the Ford Motor Company he did not at first have the controlling share, by 1906 he owned more than half the stock.

He also had to take on a cartel. The Association of Licensed Automobile Manufacturers (ALAM) used a dubious patent to control the entry into the industry of new manufacturers. In 1903, they refused entry to Ford. In the context of the antitrust campaigns of the time, Ford realized that ALAM could readily be castigated for its greed and the use of specious claims to exclude proper competition. He was in the opposite position to Rockefeller, on the side of the people versus the trusts, the underdog, “an industrial David standing alone against a powerful, monopolistic Goliath.” He was, he claimed, infused with “that instinct of American freedom to cause us to rebel against oppression or unfair competition.” It went against the grain to be “coerced, or bluffed, or sandbagged.”¹⁰ In 1909, after a long legal battle, Ford won—to general acclaim.

In the company's first advert, he explained the wish to “construct and market an automobile specially designed for everyday wear and tear,” a machine to be admired for its “compactness, its simplicity, its safety, its all-around convenience, and—last but not least—its exceedingly reasonable price.” To get the price down he needed the volume of a mass market, and that required new forms of assembly. The prevailing model was the bicycle industry, which offered customers a range of models, a new one coming out each year. To Ford this was the wrong philosophy, based on the “same idea that women submit to in their clothing and hats.” He wanted to build to last, like the watches that had first kindled his fascination with machinery. His view was that price was the key. That meant fewer models and more focus on simplicity and reliability.

Out of this came the idea of the “universal car,” built with high quality materials and simple to operate. He settled on a design that became famous as the Model T and then concentrated on manufacturing this one model in large numbers. When his salesmen worried about the lack of different models to appeal to distinctive customers, he remarked that: “Any customer can have a car painted any color that he wants so long as it is black.” This car was not to be a luxury item for a few but one for “the great multitude.” The assembly line, first introduced in 1913, had tools and men placed in sequence as each component moved along until the car was finished. This reduced “the necessity for thought on the part of the worker and...his movements to a minimum.” When in 1914 Ford started to have difficulty maintaining

a stable workforce because of the dreary and routine nature of assembly-line work, he announced that his workers would be paid five dollars a day. This he described as one of the “finest cost-cutting moves we ever made.”

Ford understood better than any other manufacturer at the time what might happen if ordinary people were treated as consumers and how their growing aspirations might be met. He worked single-mindedly to realize his vision, exploring better materials and methods. At this stage he also had the advantage of no real competition, as the other manufacturers were tardy in appreciating that Ford represented the future. This was a new and rapidly expanding market without obvious bounds. Once Ford hit upon his successful formula he was made.

Ford claimed a breakthrough not only in car manufacturing but in the development of industrial society, offering an alternative course between socialism and crude capitalism. He had given a decisive impetus to two critical and related developments: the techniques of mass production which in turn fed the desires of mass consumption. The five-dollar pay offer bought stability in the workforce and turned the workers into consumers. He sought to show how his own ordinariness and simple tastes, his readiness to bridge the gap between rich and poor, and the civic action programs around his factory all made him close to ordinary people. This was part marketing, part genuine. It soon became wrapped up in populist rhetoric, turning Ford into a special sort of businessman. Not only had he not forgotten his roots but he understood that looking after people was good business, a source of loyalty, productivity, and customers.

This addressed a wider political agenda. His close associate James Couzens, as much responsible for the underlying philosophy as Ford, put it clearly: “The follies of socialism and the terrors of anarchy will fade away in an industrial system that guarantees to every man, rich or poor, a fair field and a square deal.”¹¹ An answer had been found to the constant unrest that had marred the process of industrialization, as workers fought to improve their wages and conditions. The five-dollars-a-day move enthused many on the left as it appalled other industrialists who saw expectations created among their workforces that they could not afford to meet. Progressives saw a man of wealth who understood his debt to labor. Some socialists argued that it made more sense to look at the practice of Ford rather than the theories of Marx. A cult of personality developed around Ford as one who made good on his promises and guaranteed service, not only a master car builder but a mechanical genius and democratic hero.

Inevitably, the political implications of Fordism soon turned out to be more complex than a historic bringing together of the hitherto opposing

demands of capital and labor. His approach was intensely paternalistic. Factories were organized to do everything possible to reduce the scope for individual initiative, as if a universal worker could be one of the universal parts in a universal machine to produce the universal car. In such an interconnected system, where if some went slow the whole line slowed down, there was need for discipline and no scope for initiative. "We expect the men," Ford insisted, "to do what they are told." He assumed an "unevenness in human mental equipments" that meant many men were content with tedious work. A "sociological department" was established at his main plant to ensure that newly enriched workers did not lose their sobriety or industriousness. Their private lives were monitored and regulated to an extraordinary extent.

Beyond industrial matters, he campaigned actively against war. He toyed with politics and was touted as presidential material in 1916, until he eventually threw his considerable weight behind Woodrow Wilson. In 1918, he ran to become a senator for Michigan. He refused to actually campaign but still only lost by a narrow margin. His loss was largely due to his past pacifism and anti-militarism now that the country was at war. Over time, his attitudes began to appear idiosyncratic and, in the case of his virulent anti-Semitism, downright dangerous.

Ford was an autocrat, encouraging sycophancy and unable to grasp the major changes in the social and political context in which he was operating. When he was riding high he used his dominance to prevent any interference in the development of company policy, whether from partners, stockholders, or independent-minded managers. He sought personal control and oversight over what had become a massive company, with hundreds of thousands of employees and sales in the millions, yet ran it "as if it were a mom and pop shop."¹²

The company reached its peak in 1923, when it produced two million cars as well as many tractors and trucks. But by then competition was developing from General Motors and Chrysler. While Ford stuck with the Model T, the others set the pace with a greater range of new cars. By 1926, Ford's production barely reached 1.5 million vehicles. The competitors also offered new forms of payment, accepting credit and installments. With his horror of debt, Ford was unwilling to offer similar terms. Convinced that price was all that mattered, he put pressure on his workforce to increase productivity and on his dealers to accept the risk of unsold cars. His reputation as an enlightened man of the people became tarnished. He did not even appreciate how consumers, whose aspirations he had championed, were becoming more demanding about products, fickle in their tastes, interested in style, and self-indulgent in their spending. He assumed that low prices would continue to

persuade customers to forego the novelties and gadgets offered by his competitors. He even fought with his son Edsel, who argued the case for modernization of both products and practices. Henry considered Edsel to be weak and prone to panic. It was only as evidence of falling sales became impossible to ignore that he accepted the need for a replacement for the Model T. By the time the production run ended in 1927, some fifteen million had been sold. The price had come down from \$825 in 1908 to \$290.

By 1933, with the Great Depression taking hold, Ford was selling only 325,000 cars, less than Chrysler's 400,000 and half of the 650,000 produced by General Motors. Now an elderly man, Ford appeared distracted. Moreover, with the arrival of the Roosevelt administration and the New Deal, the days of a lax and benevolent attitude of government to big business were over. The accent was now on reform and regulation, including support for labor unions. Ford became a bitter opponent of the New Deal. He saw it as promoting collectivism, sapping energy and enterprise from the economy, and motivated by an urge to redistribute wealth rather than support its creation.

Ford had long been hostile to the unions, along with the notions of class antagonism they supposedly fostered. Their aim, he believed, was to claim for themselves the benefits of mass production rather than pass them on to the consumer. They were in the same parasitical category as financiers. Ford paid good wages in the early 1920s, but as the company struggled in the 1930s, the demands on workers had become excessive. In 1925, 160 men produced 3,000 units; by 1931, the same number were expected to produce 7,697 units. The productivity was maintained through worsening conditions policed by a security force, often likened to mafia enforcers. Workers could be dismissed for minor infractions.

Ford was prepared to use physical force to keep the unions out. This became apparent in March 1932 when there was a battle between some 2,500 unemployed workers, urged on by communist activists, and the police. The skirmish involved stones on one side and tear gas and water hoses—and eventually guns—on the other. It ended with four men dead. For a while the intimidation worked, helped also by the divisions within the union movement. By May 1937, unionism had received a political boost through President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal and the 1935 Wagner Act, which tilted the law more in favor of the unions. After a wave of sit-down strikes, General Motors and Chrysler had both given in to demands to allow the United Auto Workers sole rights to represent their workers. When union leaders tried to do the same with Ford, they were set upon and beaten up by security men. The result was more dire publicity for the company. And although Ford continued to resist, his position became more isolated. When

the state ordered a poll of workers it turned out that 70 percent favored unionization. Ford's subordinates wanted to accept the result. Ford appeared ready to resist whatever the consequences until his wife, fearing bloodshed, persuaded him to relent.

Though a great innovator, Ford was a terrible strategist. He was absolutely sure in his own views and put himself beyond challenge in the running of his company. So long as others agreed then all was fine, but he expected business to be undertaken on his terms and showed no flexibility when he faced resistance, whether from his own executives, workers, the government, or even consumers. He saw no need for advice from anybody else. "When you have to solve a problem that nobody has yet thought about, how can you learn the solution from a book?"¹³ In his memoir, *My Life and Work*, he was contemptuous of "experts," associating them with a state of mind where everything was already known and therefore new methods were deemed impossible. "If ever I wanted to kill opposition by unfair means I would endow the opposition with experts." There was an obvious connection with Taylor, with whom Ford was often twinned. Ford's own ideas were infused with the same spirit of rationalizing the labor system, and the dangers of a thinking workforce. It is unlikely he had read Taylor. He reached his conclusions through his own experience, and much of his push for higher productivity came from innovations in techniques and materials. Nonetheless, many of those around Ford were well aware of Taylor's approach and considered that they were working in the same spirit. Certainly Ford's success could be taken as further validation of the approach. Both "Taylorism" and "Fordism" became bywords for advanced manufacturing methods.

His early paternalism might have been embraced by the human relations school, who would have endorsed his determination to transcend the capital-labor divide, but his treatment of his workforce became increasingly harsh and suspicious, and the result was the surge of industrial unrest which concluded when he had to give ground to the unions. The administration of Franklin Roosevelt gave no support to those who thought that labor unions represented outdated thinking based on conflict. By the 1930s, almost submerged by competition and defeated by the unions, Ford was also a poor model for the aspiring business strategist.

Alfred P. Sloan

The man who came to fit this bill was Alfred P. Sloan, the presiding genius of General Motors for some thirty-six years, first in charge of operations, then

president, chief executive, and eventually chairman, until he retired in 1956. The company, also based in Michigan, was founded in 1908 by William C. Durant. While Ford was aiming for his universal car, General Motors grew through the acquisition of small companies until it got into so much debt that it was taken over by a bankers' trust and Durant lost control. Sloan, who had studied electrical engineering at MIT and then become president of a subordinate company, was put in charge of operations at General Motors in 1920. He became president in 1923, when the industry faced a slump. From the start he set about transforming the company's structures and products in ways that were widely copied in corporate America.

Sloan's position was different from Ford's in three key respects. First, and most obviously, Ford led the pack. Second, Sloan had a range of cars to sell, produced by the companies that had been brought together under the General Motors umbrella, rather than just one "universal car." Third, Sloan had to take account of his major stockholders, the DuPont family. It was the DuPonts, alarmed at the reckless way the company was being run, that bought Durant out. At first Sloan was reporting to Pierre DuPont, who was chairman and chief executive. This meant that, unlike Ford, Sloan had to have an internal strategy as well as one to deal with the competition. He had to debate company policy with colleagues and take care of a range of distinctive and possibly conflicting interests. For example, DuPont backed a bold scheme to challenge Ford by developing a new type of copper-cooled engine. If the scheme failed, as Sloan suspected it might, the result would be disastrous. Sloan was careful not to fight the project: he just made sure that there was a fallback position based on a safer, water-cooled engine, if it failed, which it did.

Over the 1920–1921 period, Sloan came up with two related sets of ideas that reshaped the modern corporation as well as the automobile industry. The first was a set of proposals about getting the best out of General Motors' complex structure while still providing a central lead. His plans were set out in a 1920 document known as the "organization study," later described as having a "canonic quality" and as a "touchstone for management theory and practice."¹⁴ Sloan presented this study as a result of his scientific approach, as a man "who followed the factual approach to business judgment." He drew solely on his own business experience. He had not been in the military and was not a book reader. Had he been, he noted, "I would not have found much in that line in those days to help." The plan was adopted because it met the needs of a board that "desired a highly rational and objective mode of operation." It depended on two propositions that apparently contradicted each other. The first was that the company should be split up into divisions, each

with its own chief executive with a responsibility for its operation that “shall in no way be limited.” The second proposition was that certain “central organization functions are absolutely essential” to the Corporation’s development and control. Sloan saw the contradiction between the two as “the crux of the matter.”¹⁵ One was about the ability to get on with the business without constant interference from the center; the second was about doing so within clear financial and policy guidelines. The intellectual breakthrough was to recognize that there was a tension and that this presented the core challenge for management. It introduced what Sloan’s biographer described as “a new kind of corporate music, a symphony of controlled, decentralized production, operation, and administration in which there is a reward for the virtuoso performer and regard for the conductor.”¹⁶

The key question of strategy was what to do about Ford, which at the start of the decade accounted for some 60 percent of all cars sold in the United States. Against the legendary Model T, General Motors had ten models produced by a number of divisions, some at the luxury end of the market and others more basic. In principle, the product range catered to all sections of the market, but in practice the company’s cars were competing against each other in some areas. As things turned out, Ford was the ideal adversary, complacent and stubborn. But even if Sloan suspected this he could not rely upon Ford failing to respond to the challenge he intended to pose. His script for General Motors dared not assume complete stupidity on Ford’s part. Sloan could, however, assume that he had some time. Ford was under no pressure in 1921 to abandon the Model T when it had served him so handsomely. Moreover, Ford’s eventual likely response was also predictable, as he had the financial clout to push the price of the Model T lower to see off any direct competition.

Through the summer of 1921, Sloan headed a task force charged to address this conundrum. According to Sloan:

We said first that the corporation should produce a line of cars in each price area, from the lowest price up to one for a strictly high grade, quantity production car, but we should not get into the fancy price field with small production; second that the price steps should not be such as to leave wide gaps in the line, and yet should be great enough to keep their number within reason, so that the greatest advantage of quantity production could be secured; and third that there should be no duplication by the corporation in the price field or steps.¹⁷

The genius of this formulation was that these classes did not reflect any existing market reality. They represented a new way of thinking about the

market, about how customers might respond to variations in price and quality. If Sloan was right, then the market could be shaped to suit the company as it rationalized and marketed its range, under the slogan a car “for every purse and purpose.” He was not so much relating to the external environment; he was completely reshaping it.

The test of the approach would be at the lower end of the market where a revamped Chevrolet, then with barely 4 percent of the market, would be pitched against the mighty Model T. Sloan saw this competition taking place within the price category of \$450–\$600. Ford took pride in the position of the Model T at the bottom end of this price range. Sloan judged it “suicidal” to compete with Ford head on. “The strategy we devised,” he later explained, “was to take a bite from the top of his position, conceived as a price class, and in this way build up Chevrolet volume on a profitable basis.”¹⁸ This meant aiming for higher quality in order to justify a higher price. The intention was to get sales from those prepared to pay a bit more, but also to pick up sales from those looking at the next class up who might prefer to pay a bit less. Ford was left the low-class slot in the knowledge that he would be inclined to stick with his existing strategy and ignore the insurgency. Once Chevrolet was profitable it would have a secure basis from which to mount further and progressively more damaging inroads into Ford’s space.

What were Ford’s options? Essentially, he needed to prevent Chevrolet from reaching profitability. But in the short term all he could do was respond by further lowering the price of the Model T, perhaps hoping that the slump in car sales that marked the start of the decade would continue, and then counterattack with a new model designed to challenge the Chevrolet’s superior design features directly. But as Ford relied on one model, it would take time to develop a new car (although he could have bought another manufacturer to provide a ready-made product). Any new car would also potentially take volume from the Model T. The market picked up, Ford’s sales soared, and so he had no immediate incentive to deal with the Chevrolet threat. But while Ford had no price class below the one he was presently occupying from which to draw new consumers, Chevrolet could make the higher range its own and draw customers from the class above as well as from Ford. When its sales grew, there was no need for Chevrolet to match Ford’s price cuts. As Sloan observed, “The old master had failed to master change.” Ford had not understood “how completely his market had changed from the one in which had made his name and to which he was accustomed.”¹⁹ Within six years, General Motors led the market, selling 1.8 million vehicles in 1927.

In one respect Sloan was of the same mind as Ford. He deeply objected to the Roosevelt administration’s readiness to interfere with business and

campaigned vigorously against the president. This included sponsoring the virulently anti-New Deal Liberty League and campaigning for Roosevelt's defeat in the 1936 election. In the end, as a result of the backlash against Roosevelt followed by the war, the two came to terms. In the short term, it created extra challenges for the company. The most important was the relationship with the unions. Unlike Ford, Sloan never claimed to have answers to all the problems of industrial society and showed little interest in shop floor conditions. His attitude to unions was that they represented an alternative source of authority for the workers on matters of pay, rules, and conditions which the company could well do without. Instead of trying to create a larger and therefore more profitable cake from which all could benefit, the unions just wanted to carve the existing cake, whatever the damage to profitability.

To prevent the workforce being unionized, the company hired spies to inform on any subversive activities. Anybody attempting to organize on the shop floor could be fired and those taking an interest warned off. The knowledge that spies were around also served to create uncertainty and suspicion among the workers and made them harder to organize. This went on despite the passage of laws designed to protect organizers from harassment. By the summer of 1936, only about fifteen hundred of the company's forty-two thousand strong workforce belonged to the United Autoworkers Union. Once Roosevelt had been reelected in November 1936, and with Michigan's governor sympathetic, the situation changed abruptly and dramatically. Under the miners' leader, John Lewis, the newly formed umbrella organization, the Congress for Industrial Organization (CIO), decided to target the automobile industry. Local militants also decided that this was an opportune moment to attack the company. As General Motors struggled to get out of the recession, the workers complained that they were being asked to work harder for less. Jobs had been cut while productivity targets remained the same. Managers relied on the fear of unemployment to discipline workers and keep wages down. All this erupted in November 1936, resulting in one of the most consequential strikes of the decade, critical to the future course of unions in the United States and also to the automobile industry.

By December, sit-down strikes had spread to a number of plants including the crucial Fisher body plant at Flint. To Sloan, this represented a direct challenge. "The real issue," he told his workers, was "will a labor organization run the plants of General Motors Corporation or will the management continue to do so?"²⁰ This all confirmed his fears about the New Deal, as good economic order was being sacrificed to misguided, collectivist notions. Now workers were engaged in an illegal occupation of company property and should be removed. But how? Under the law, force could be used but

what if there was resistance? Was the company prepared to sanction serious violence? Moreover, it was apparent that at the state and federal level, the pressure was to find a negotiated way out of the situation. Though Roosevelt could not condone the workers' actions, there was no doubt where his private sympathies lay. Sloan had not exactly gone out of his way to curry favor with the President.

For the unions, the vital thing was to maintain their position. So long as they stopped the plants operating properly General Motors was hurting. This required not only repelling anybody trying to expel them by force but also ensuring that they had heat and food. In practice, the plants were often occupied by very few men, because the union initially did not have many members to call on and also had to make supplies last. In one of the key plants which employed around seven thousand workers, there were at times no more than ninety in occupation, not all of which were General Motors employees. So in January, when the company first tried to turn the heat off and prevent food being delivered, the "sit-downers" took the offensive to capture the plant gates so they could ensure the supplies kept coming. The crisis escalated as the men fought back against the police's gas canisters with stones and fire hoses. The next round involved guns leading to injuries but not deaths. The union added to the pressure by going after Chevrolet production. A decoy sit-down was staged in a secondary plant diverting the attention of the company police, making it possible to seize a far more important plant where the engines were made.²¹

The company obtained an injunction confirming the illegality of the trespass, but the strikers refused to leave. Attempts were made to get negotiations going, but the company balked at the union's key demand of sole collective bargaining rights for the United Auto Workers (UAW). Sloan claimed to be prepared to consider this but only after the sit-ins had ended. Lewis had no intention of losing his leverage or agreeing to a compromise. Before the strike, General Motors had been producing some 50,000 vehicles per month; by February, this was down to only 125. Politically, Sloan was becoming isolated, the Roosevelt administration was accusing him of going back on his word, and commentators were describing him as out of touch with the times.

The responsibility for the use of force to dislodge the strikers lay with new Michigan governor Richard Murphy. He took the lead in trying to broker a dispute. He was conscious that he had to uphold the law yet was horrified about the possibility of violence and major loss of life and then going down in history as "Bloody Murphy." If he needed to step up the pressure on the union he was more likely to tighten the cordon already ordered when the

Chevrolet engine plant was seized than to order in the National Guard to evacuate the buildings. Such a strategy would require patience, easier for him than for General Motors, which was losing serious money. Even the company was wary about possible violence. They could see how they would be blamed for substantial loss of life when a conciliatory move on union recognition might have brought the dispute to a close.

Toward the end of the confrontation, Murphy issued a formal warning to Lewis about how the law must be enforced. This was followed by some grandstanding by Lewis, who told the governor that he would go into the plants and prepare to be shot with the others. In language that captured exactly Engels's hopes for such a standoff, when there was no doubt about the superior physical force of the authorities but real doubt about whether it could be used, Lewis taunted Murphy. Without a settlement he was not going to withdraw the strikers. "What are you going to do?" he asked.

You can get them out in just one way, by bayonets. You have the bayonets. What kind do you prefer to use—the broad double blade or the four-sided French style? I believe the square style makes a bigger hole and you can turn it around inside a man. What kind of bayonets, Governor Murphy, are you going to turn around inside our boys?

In fact, by this time a settlement was close. It was negotiated by one of Sloan's lieutenants who agreed to direct talks with Lewis, using the request of the president to sort out the conflict as an excuse for going back on the company's previous position. On February 11, 1937, General Motors signed an agreement ending the sit-down strikes. UAW got exclusive collective bargaining and had four hundred thousand members by October.

The administration was not yet finished with the company. In 1938, the Department of Justice secured an antitrust criminal indictment against General Motors, as well as against Ford and Chrysler. The charge, which did not stick, was that the manufacturers had illegally restrained trade by requiring their respective dealers to only use the company-associated finance company. Unlike Chrysler and Ford, Sloan decided to fight, not only because he considered this to be unwarranted interference in business matters, but because he sensed a larger vulnerability—the company was moving toward a 50 percent share in the car market. "Our bogie," he observed in late 1938, "is 45 per cent of each price class... We don't want any more than that." This meant that—against all corporate instincts—he had to keep market share down.

One of the New Deal figures with whom Sloan was tangling was Adolf Berle, who had been a professor at Columbia Law School but was also a key

member of Roosevelt's Brain Trust before the 1932 election and a regular adviser to him in government. In 1932, he published a landmark book with Gardiner Means, entitled *The Modern Corporation and Private Property*, demonstrating the divergence between the ownership and control of large corporations, with the result that the management conducted affairs with little shareholder scrutiny. They also showed how the means of production in the United States had become concentrated in some two hundred large corporations, of which General Motors was a prominent example. Economic power was being concentrated in the hands of a few people who controlled these giant corporations. This was power that could "harm or benefit a multitude of individuals, affect whole districts, shift the currents of trade, bring ruin to one community and prosperity to another." With a social role far beyond anything implied by the term "private enterprise," this was an economic power that could compete on its own terms with the political power of the state. A new form of struggle was developing: "The state seeks in some aspects to regulate the corporation, while the corporation, steadily becoming more powerful, makes every effort to avoid such regulation."²²

In the run-up to the Second World War, the sure touch which Sloan had showed in his handling of the competition with Ford and the internal structure of General Motors had deserted him when dealing with the government and the unions. In key respects, these were the big strategic issues facing large corporations during the 1930s and there was no reason to suppose that they would subside in the future. It was, however, the areas in which Sloan had been successful, rather than those in which he had failed, that led him and his company to provide the vital raw material for the next generation of management theorists.

Most of what we call management consists of making it difficult for people to get their work done.

—Peter Drucker

DISAFFECTED MARXISTS BECAME an important source of management theory as they updated their concepts of class struggle to take account both of their distress at Soviet totalitarianism and new developments in industrial society. The previous section mentioned Burnham's *The Managerial Revolution*, regularly cited because of its title rather than its content, as the neatest description of how emerging structures of power were confounding the expectations of communists and free-marketeers alike. A surprising number of former Trotskyists, including Herbert Solow and John McDonald, joined the business-oriented *Fortune Magazine*. McDonald retained a fascination with conflict and strategy. We have already met him as an important writer on game theory.¹ Another member of the *Fortune* editorial team was William Whyte, author of the *Organization Man*, reflecting the magazine's critical edge at this time. Yet another was liberal economist John Kenneth Galbraith, who observed that the magazine's right-wing owner, Henry Luce, had discovered that "with rare exception, good writers on business were either liberals or socialists."²

Galbraith also became associated with the thesis that power in society now rested with the management class. This challenged neoclassical economics (which assumed highly competitive markets) as much as socialism. Instead of individual firms being small in relation to the total market, and therefore limited in their individual influence, in the most important sectors a few firms enjoyed commanding positions. Instead of being caught between the conflicting interests of owners and customers, the managers had been able to restructure the relationships so that, if anything, owners and customers found themselves geared to managerial interests. They also had discovered ways of preventing potential competitors from mounting effective challenges and of bargaining on almost equal terms with the state. Business success and failure depended less on market conditions and more on the organizational capacity of the large corporations. Arthur Chandler captured the claim neatly when he wrote of the role of management as the “visible hand” as a contrast with Adam Smith’s “invisible hand.”³ There was perhaps also another thought, which had been around since Plato, that there was something to be said for bright, educated people running things.

The most mature formulation of the thesis came in 1967 with Galbraith’s *The New Industrial State*, at almost the last point when it could carry conviction. He had been influenced by Berle and Means and, as acknowledged in later editions of the book, Burnham. Galbraith reported on the declining influence of stockholders and the growing influence of the experts in development, production, and management—which he labeled the “technostructure.” Power no longer resided with “anonymous shareholders or in a board of directors that is now largely subservient to senior management.” It resided with “the association of men of diverse technical knowledge, experience or other talent which modern industrial technology and planning require. It extends from the leadership of the modern industrial enterprise down to just short of the labor force and embraces a large number of people and a large variety of talent.” Yet only a small segment of this new class actually wielded power at the commanding heights of organizations. In doing so they might reflect broader interests and attitudes, but their basic responsibility was to the interests of the organization upon which they depended for their livelihood. The key texts were not always clear on this point. Galbraith’s technostructure covered a large number of people. Burnham seemed to point to chief executives, but his analysis risked tautology as managers became defined essentially as those who wielded power.

In this scheme, planning played a decisive role. It was the means to overcome the laws of supply and demand. Despite suffering through association with Soviet economic organization, the necessity for a forward look and

preparation for coming problems and opportunities was accepted by Western governments and companies. Only by planning could priorities be set and functions coordinated. Size and planning were now essential to ensure continual technological advances. "It is a feature of all planning that, unlike the market, it incorporates within itself no mechanism by which demand is accommodated to supply and vice versa. This must be deliberately accomplished by human agency."⁴ This was a time of fear of unconstrained market forces and optimism about the rational exercise of control over human affairs, informed by the miserable experience of the 1930s.

One of the first academics to explore what it meant to manage a modern corporation was Peter Drucker. His background was cosmopolitan. Born in Austria, he arrived in the United States in 1937, via England, to get away from the Nazis. A 1942 book on *The Future of Industrial Man*, which inclined to managerialism, was noticed by General Motors, and Drucker was invited to undertake what was described as a "political audit" of the company. He was given full access, including to Alfred Sloan. For eighteen months he attended meetings, interviewed employees, and analyzed all the inner workings of the company. He viewed the company as a distinctive sort of power structure, not at all, as had been assumed, like a large army with the chief executive cast as the general, issuing commands. At least as far as Drucker was concerned, *The Concept of the Corporation* was the first book to consider business as an organization and "management" as "a specific organ doing a specific kind of work and having specific responsibilities."⁵ He was later proud to be "credited with having established management as a discipline and as a field of study" and, even more important, "organization as a distinct entity, and its study as a discipline."⁶

In a 1954 book, *The Practice of Management*, he noted how the managers had become "a distinct and leading group in industrial society," displacing capital when it came to a relationship with labor. Nonetheless, it remained "the least known and least understood of our basic institutions." At the time (he later broadened the scope), he linked management specifically to business enterprises, which meant that it would be judged by economic performance—outputs rather than professional inputs. He was skeptical of scientific management, for good results might be achieved by intuition and hunch. Moreover, while he acknowledged Taylor's contribution, Drucker blamed Taylor for separating planning from doing. This reflected a "dubious and dangerous philosophical concept of an elite which has a monopoly on esoteric knowledge entitling it to manipulate the unwashed peasantry." This elitist philosophy led Drucker to class Taylor with "Sorel, Lenin and Pareto." It was wise to plan before doing, but that did not mean that different people

need be involved, with some giving orders and others doing what they are told.⁷ In strategic terms he recognized the limits of managers, unable to “master” the environment as they were “always held within a tight vice of possibilities.” The job of management was “to make what is desirable first possible and then actual.” The keystone of his philosophy was to seek to alter circumstances by “conscious directed action.” To manage a business was to “manage by objectives.” In this respect he understood that whatever the long-term vision, it had to be translated into proximate and credible goals when it came to implementation.⁸ Drucker’s philosophy was therefore rationalist—set ends, find means—but took due account of the complexities of both organizational structures and business environments. From the start he saw the dangers if companies paid insufficient attention to their staff. Later on he became more enthusiastic about the rhetoric of “empowerment,” though he always recognized that management required someone to take decisions and be accountable, and so in that respect had to be top down.

These two books (followed by many more) set Drucker up as the first contemporary management theorist. He became a consultant to leading companies, such as Ford and General Electric. Yet General Motors gave *The Concept of the Corporation*, and thereafter Drucker himself, a frosty reception. In some respects this was surprising: he accepted the virtues of large corporations and the inefficiency of small businesses, and praised General Motors’s decentralized structure to the point of urging it as a model for others to follow. The reason for the reaction, Drucker concluded, was that senior managers disliked even constructive criticism (for example, of their tendency to take short-term profits rather than make long-term investments). They were wedded to a set of successful and durable core principles that had served them well and had been elevated to much more than an expedient response to circumstances. “The GM executives, for all that they saw themselves as practical men, were actually ideologues and dogmatic, and they had for me the ideologue’s contempt for the unprincipled opportunist.” Their differences were also relevant to the two large and contentious issues that had shaped general management thinking during the first half of the century—antitrust and the “labor question.”

It was because of the antitrust issue that General Motors was anxious about Drucker’s notion that big businesses were “affected with the public interest.” He also got embroiled in a critical strategic issue directly linked to antitrust. He shared the view of some managers that Sloan’s decision to keep market share below 50 percent to avoid further antitrust suits had removed the incentive to grow and was draining the company of initiative. One proposal was to accept a split, following the Standard Oil example. A new company

could be created around Chevrolet, the largest division, which could readily survive on its own. Senior management, however, strongly objected to this idea.

With regard to the labor problem, Drucker observed the dire legacy of the sit-down strikes of 1937, including years of “sniping and backbiting,” and how this prevented the management and unions getting together to find common solutions in a spirit of understanding and sympathy. Too many in management were prepared to see workers as an almost subhuman race, while the workers saw management as fiends.⁹ Drucker was unimpressed by the unions, but the company had failed to integrate workers by providing them with more status and opportunities. The dominant assembly-line methods did not make the most of their creativity. The shift to war work had shown how workers could take responsibility, learn, and improve methods and product quality. So he urged that they should be seen as a “resource rather than a cost.” He encouraged the idea of the “responsible worker” with a “managerial aptitude” and a “self-governing plant community.” When Charles Wilson became chief executive of General Motors, he was interested in exploring this idea, but the main union, the UAW, objected on the familiar grounds of blurring the necessary divisions between management and labor.

One result of the company’s irritation with *The Concept of the Corporation*, according to Drucker, was that Alfred Sloan determined to write his own book “to set the record straight.”¹⁰ The actual origins of Sloan’s book, *My Years with General Motors*, which appeared two decades after *Concept*, were actually quite different. Indeed Drucker’s claim so incensed John McDonald, Sloan’s cowriter, that he set down to correct this misrepresentation and to tell of the struggle to get the book published.¹¹ McDonald, a former Trotskyist writing for *Fortune Magazine* and an early publicist for game theory, was specializing in “strategic situations where individuals, institutions, and groups of various kinds interacted independently and thought in ways—both cooperatively and non-cooperatively—that escaped common classical economic and decision theory.” As he worked with Sloan in the early 1950s on an article on these lines about General Motors, the two realized that there was sufficient material for a book.¹² They worked together on this project for the rest of the decade but on completion, publication was blocked by General Motors’ corporate lawyers.¹³ Their concern was that the U.S. Government might use the documents cited in the book as the basis for an antitrust action. It took five years and a civil lawsuit filed by McDonald before *My Years with General Motors* was finally published, to great acclaim in January 1964.

Their research assistant was Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., a young historian who came from a well-connected family, linked to the mighty DuPonts

(who provided his middle name). He was also great-grandson of Henry Poor, of Standard & Poor, whose papers provided the basis of his Ph.D. and stimulated his interest in business organization. As did Drucker, who influenced his thinking, Chandler felt proper attention should be given to how businesses organized themselves. It was necessary to move beyond the opposing stereotypes of “robber barons” or “industrial statesmen” to more rounded and subtle depictions. In 1962, while Sloan’s account was still blocked, Chandler described General Motors’s corporate history in his book *Strategy and Structure*. *Strategy* was not a word used by Drucker, other than a single reference to the distinction between strategic and tactical decisions in *The Practice of Management*. Neither did the word appear in *My Years with General Motors*, despite McDonald being a great aficionado of strategy.

Chandler’s use can be compared with that of Edith Penrose, who was thinking about organizations along very similar lines at the same time. She is now often credited with the creation of “resource-based” business strategy in her 1959 book *The Theory of the Firm*.¹⁴ Yet she did not use the term *strategy* except in a more traditional sense when referring to “successful empire-building entrepreneurs” who were “aggressive and clever in the strategy needed to bargain with and successfully out-maneuver other businessmen.” So it was Chandler who gave the concept of strategy prominence in a business setting. It was, however, a particular sort of strategy that he highlighted. He had picked up the concept when teaching the “basics of national strategy” at the U.S. Naval War College in Rhode Island in the early 1950s.¹⁵ He defined strategy in terms of planning and implementation, as “the determination of the basic long-term goals and objectives of an enterprise and the adoption of courses of action and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these goals.”¹⁶

Thus, from the start, strategy was established as a goal-oriented activity, geared to the long term and closely linked with planning. This approach flowed naturally from Chandler’s particular focus on internal organizational response to market opportunities, and again this had a continuing influence on the way that strategy was understood in its early business incarnations. It was not linked to problem-solving or competitive situations in which a variety of outcomes was possible. This focus was expressed in Chandler’s formula that strategy led to structure, the “design of organization through which the enterprise is administered.” Chandler’s innovation was to see strategy in how management addressed issues of diversification and decentralization. His big theme was the multidivisional structure, also lauded by Drucker and for which Sloan took credit.¹⁷ Management consultants—including

McKinsey, which was advised by Chandler—encouraged other companies to follow this model.

The advantage of the multidivisional structure, the so-called M-form, in Chandler's view lay in the separation of strategic from tactical planning. It "removed the executives responsible for the destiny of the entire enterprise from the more routine operational activities and so gave them the time, information, and even psychological commitment for long-term planning and appraisal."¹⁸ By avoiding the distractions of second-order issues, the corporate headquarters could formulate policy, evaluate performance, and allocate investment, while stopping heads of units from distorting general strategy for parochial reasons.

This was not, however, the whole story. Freeland points to Sloan's appreciation of the importance of retaining the consent of the units of General Motors to the strategy of the center. Crude hierarchies had their dangers. If middle managers were excluded from goal formation they would be less committed to goal implementation. In this way planning would be separated from doing. This had to be balanced against the desire of the DuPonts, who were the majority shareholders, to be closely involved in key decisions and their reluctance to accept any delegation of power to the heads of the divisions. Sloan had got around this tension by finding informal ways of engaging the division heads in long-term strategy and resource allocation. This structure worked well until the Depression, when divisions other than the low-price Chevrolet struggled to stay in the black. The company decided to consolidate the divisions, thereby destroying local autonomy, but without any obvious detriment to company performance. Two conclusions could be drawn from this experience. First, the relationship between structure and strategy was more complex than described by Chandler. Second, order within a company would reflect complex "social and political processes, involving bargaining and negotiation."¹⁹

Chandler paid scant attention to either of the contentious issues of antitrust and labor. Antitrust legislation was clearly on the corporate mind of General Motors (for good reason), which was why it wanted no provocations that might trigger the interest of the Department of Justice. The government opposition to individual firms dominating specific areas of production by expanding sales, reflected in the 1950 Celler-Kefauver Act, had created an incentive to expand instead into distinctive and new product lines. This explained the proliferation of "conglomerates."²⁰ Although Chandler had access to the General Motors archives, he was unable to "use this evidence in his own scholarship because of the overriding fear among executives of anti-trust action."²¹ Chandler generally considered business behavior in isolation

from broader political developments, which is why he also played down the significance of labor issues. His was an “industrial universe in which labor’s position was entirely that of the dependent variable.”²² Louis Galambos, who admired Chandler for his pioneering contributions to business history, complained that he also narrowed its scope, stepping too “daintily around questions of power” and assuming that “transformations of business take place without social friction or a problem of agency.”²³

On the eve of the boom in business strategy, the field was therefore given a narrow focus, shying away from questions of power within the corporation and between the corporation and its external environment. Instead the strategists focused on the many other issues facing senior executives: shaping organizational structures, deciding on products and investment priorities, controlling costs and dealing with outside suppliers, and so on. The focus was on big business, secure in its position, with the sort of hierarchy that seemed natural in all large organizations, including the military and government. The Sloan model also reflected the impact of strong leadership. Jack Welch, who made his name as the successful head of General Electric, later criticized this method for allowing managers to become lazy and for being driven by bureaucracy rather than customers. He described a Sloanist company as one with “its face toward the CEO and its ass toward the customer.”²⁴

Planners

In 1964, when Drucker sent a publisher his draft of a book which concentrated on executive decision-making, he entitled it *Business Strategies*. The publisher found that this elicited little enthusiasm among his potential corporate audience. The word *strategy* was associated with the military and possibly with politics, but not with business. The book was called instead *Managing for Results*.²⁵ “Almost the next day,” Matthew Stewart reports, “strategy became the hottest word in management circles.”²⁶ He explained the surge in interest to two events—the publication of Igor Ansoff’s *Corporate Strategy* and the arrival of the Boston Consulting Group offering a specialist expertise in strategy.

Walter Kiechel III described the “corporate strategy revolution” as starting earlier, in 1960, and then argued that before this there had been no business strategy. The word was barely used and there was no systematic set of ideas that pulled together the key elements that determined corporate fates, in particular what he called the “three Cs”: costs, customers, and competitors. Companies had plans, often no more than extrapolations of what had

gone before and, at the top, an often intuitive “sense of how they wanted to make money.” This was comparable to the claim that there was no military strategy before 1800, when the word began to be used. There was novelty in the specific forms that business strategy developed for the rest of the century, but in the more traditional sense of the word, figures such as Rockefeller and Sloan never lacked for strategy. Given the predilection among “captains of industry” for military metaphors, it would actually be surprising if a number had not reflected on military strategy as they prepared their campaigns. Moreover, even the new forms of strategy that were developing, as Kiechel acknowledged, were building on what had gone before. He used the term “Greater Taylorism,” except that instead of seeking efficiencies in the performance of individual workers, the new strategic focus was on the totality of a firm’s functions and processes.²⁷ The underlying theme was the continuation of the attempt to organize business affairs on a rationalist basis.

The change that did occur can be discerned by considering the key figure at Harvard through the 1950s and 1960s, running the course on “business policy,” Kenneth Andrews. He was an English graduate who had written his Ph.D. on Mark Twain. His own writing could be stodgy, but he had a clear view about strategy. Like Chandler, he was concerned with “the long-term development of the enterprise.”²⁸ It was the product of a leader’s choices and therefore of all the issues that had to be confronted in the business environment and the wider society, including values and organizational structures. With so many variables to take into account, the single-minded pursuit of a single goal at the expense of everything else was impossible or at least usually unwise. The chief executive therefore had to be a generalist and accept that every situation was unique and multidimensional. There could be no sure templates, formulas, or frameworks. The nearest Andrews and his colleagues at Harvard got to a framework was the simple (but still widely used) SWOT analysis (Strengths and Weaknesses of organization in the light of the Opportunities and Threats in the environment). His approach fit the favored Harvard teaching method of the case study, asking students to examine individual examples of business success and failure. This reinforced the view that strategies had to be case specific, working for particular companies in a given environment rather than derived from general theories.

It also fit the established concept of rational action as internally consistent, feasible in the light of available resources, and consonant with the environment. It assumed a sequence of careful thought preceding action, so that once a strategy was formulated then implementation (or as Chandler put it, structure) must follow. Because it involved the production of a single, unique product, Henry Mintzberg has labeled this “the design school” and presented

it as the foundation for much of what followed elsewhere. He criticized it for a command and control mentality, so that a decided and definitive strategy would be handed down. Implementation would be a quite separate process, reducing the possibilities for learning and feedback.²⁹

As the environment in which businesses operated became increasingly complex, sustaining rationality in decision-making required processes to take in all the internal and external information and turn it into a guide for action. This is what Igor Ansoff sought to do in *Corporate Strategy*, a standard text first published in 1965, earning the author the accolade of “father of modern strategic thinking.”³⁰ Ansoff had grown up in Russia, moved to the United States, studied engineering, and—after a spell at the RAND Corporation—gained practical management experience with the defense manufacturer Lockheed. He worked on identifying companies to buy for purposes of diversification before moving in the early 1960s to Carnegie Mellon University. His view of management strategy therefore came from the innards of a large corporation with a focus on getting a mix of products appropriate to the market. In a familiar theme, he sought to transform management strategy from an intuitive art into a science, by incorporating—in the most systematic and comprehensive way possible—every factor of possible relevance.

He brought a very particular view of strategy to this effort. Ansoff noted an “unfortunate coincidence” in definitions of strategy. He sought to distinguish between “strategic decisions, where ‘strategic’ means ‘relating to the firm’s match to its environment,’ and of ‘strategy,’ where the word means ‘rules for decision under partial ignorance.’”³¹ No decisions could take place with perfect knowledge, though the planning model suggested that they might, and that all decisions of consequence had implications for the relationship to the environment. Yet there was certainly a difference between the conduct of a specific campaign, which could have the whiff of battle about it—a sense of urgency and crisis—as efforts had to be geared toward a pressing problem, and deliberations about current challenges and future possibilities that could take place in slower time, providing a general orientation to an environment. The planning model could never be about coping with crisis; it was about avoiding crisis, maintaining a strong position by paying attention to the total environment and ensuring that resources were used to maximum effect.

This holistic approach, with its exhaustive attention to detail and attachment to systematic process, reflected Ansoff’s engineering background. The presentation was marked by lists, boxes, diagrams, matrices, charts, and timelines, with the environment typically appearing as an “irregular blob,” organizational units in boxes, and concepts in circles or ellipses.³² The result

was, as Kiechel put it, “fligreed to an overwrought fault,” with the finale a one-page diagram on which were to be found fifty-seven boxes of objectives and factors, with arrows ensuring that they were each considered in the proper order.³³ The process was so rigorous and demanding that it required that strategy moved from the chief executive to a specialized bureaucracy. It was the demands of planning that led Galbraith to see a shift in power to the technostructure.

This importance of planning, and a sense that this was an arena where the Soviet Union was stealing a march on its capitalist rivals, reinforced the cult of managerialism. Its exemplary figure in this mobilization of management to serve the nation was Robert McNamara. From early in his career he had illustrated how skills might be transferred from the spheres of business to military affairs and back again. McNamara was teaching accounting at the Harvard Business School when the Second World War came. He was recruited with a number of his faculty colleagues into the Army Air Corps to join the Office of Statistical Control, a group led by Charles Bates “Tex” Thornton. Combining a relentless pursuit of hard data with rigorous quantitative analysis, this group imposed order on the chaotic accounting systems in the Air Corps, so that personnel numbers were known and correct spare parts were connected to aircraft in their hangars. They also moved into operations research, showing how resources could be used more efficiently (for example, linking bombs dropped to petrol consumption and aircraft capacity). Their analyses not only saved money but also influenced deployments.³⁴

After the war Thornton offered the services of his group to the Ford Motor Company. It was a perfect fit. When his son and anointed successor, Edsel, succumbed to stomach cancer in 1943, Henry Ford returned to lead the company, but he was ailing and unstable. He soon relinquished control to his grandson, Henry Ford II, who was still only in his late 20s. With considerable drive and energy, young Henry set about modernizing the company. As one of the key problems was a complete lack of financial discipline, he seized on Thornton’s offer. The team’s collective impact on the company was huge, probing systems and accounting methods, asking so many questions that they became known as the “Quiz Kids” (a popular radio program of the time featuring very clever children). As the group’s methods bore fruit, this moniker changed to the “Whiz Kids.” They epitomized rationalism in decision-making, deploring reliance on intuition and tradition, and were unbothered by their lack of industrial experience. For them, the company was about organizational charts and cash flows rather than industrial processes. Over time, the limitations of this approach became apparent: it was too dependent on the quality of the data; tended to ignore what could not be easily measured,

such as customer loyalty; and gave insufficient credit to the long-term benefits of investment when there was no early gain. In the short term, however, the results were impressive. Ford was the first company to introduce a new car after the war. The Whiz Kids got the company on the road to recovery.

McNamara emerged as the leader of the group and on November 9, 1960, the day John F. Kennedy won the presidential election, he was made president of Ford Motor Company. Within two months, however, he resigned to become Kennedy's secretary of defense. We have already noted McNamara's impact on the Pentagon as he imposed forms of centralized, analytically based control. We can now see how this fit in with developments in management theory. It was telling that McNamara's predecessor at the Pentagon, Charles Wilson, who served President Eisenhower, had also come from the same industry. Wilson had been Sloan's successor as president of General Motors and had run the Pentagon on the M-form basis, seeing the individual services as separate divisions and the assistant secretaries in charge of each service as his vice presidents. As Eisenhower was determined to hold down defense expenditure, Wilson's tenure was marked by intensive inter-service rivalry, which he struggled to contain. The individual services worked independently from each other, with much animosity and little coordination, fortified by their friends in Congress and industry.³⁵ McNamara's approach was quite different, more Ansoff than Chandler and Drucker. His aim was to get a grip on the process by strengthening his office, challenging the services to justify their budgets and programs in the face of intensive questioning by his whiz kids, largely brought in from RAND and gathered in the Office of Systems Analysis. This aggressive, analytical approach had a major impact on the management of U.S. military programs and the conduct of operations, particularly Vietnam. Whereas at first McNamara was celebrated as the exemplar of the most modern management methods, by the time he left the Pentagon in 1968 his approach was derided for its relentless focus on what could be measured rather than what actually needed to be understood—criticisms that McNamara in later life accepted.

In corporations as in government, whole departments were established to develop the plans, working out in meticulous detail the steps to be taken and their appropriate sequence. Planning cycles came to dominate corporate life, with everybody waiting for a formal document that would tell them how to behave, setting out budgets and programs with warnings of the danger if they went off plan. Politically, the consequence was to strengthen the center at the expense of alienating those responsible for implementation, who were apt to become cynical in the face of meaningless targets. "The matrix picked the strategy," one executive exclaimed in frustration, "the matrix can

implement it.”³⁶ The long-range forecasts upon which they depended were inherently unreliable, and the organizational information was often dated, collected haphazardly into inappropriate categories and taking little account of cultural factors. Even Ansoff became concerned that the structures he had initially advocated risked paralyzing decision-making and came at the expense of flexibility.

One of the economist Friedrich Hayek’s most famous papers put the central problem of planning for a rational economic order as “the knowledge of the circumstances of which we must make use never exists in concentrated or integrated form but solely as the dispersed bits of incomplete and frequently contradictory knowledge which all the separate individuals possess.” The problem set by knowledge was not one that a single mind could solve in order to allocate resources but rather “how to secure the best use of resources known to any of the members of society, for ends whose relative importance only these individuals know. Or, to put it briefly, it is a problem of the utilization of knowledge which is not given to anyone in its totality.”³⁷ Writing twenty-five years later, Aaron Wildavsky commented on the vogue for planning at both national and company levels. The intensely skeptical Wildavsky noted the lack of evidence that the process had any value. At one level, all decisions were forms of planning as attempts to improve on a future state of affairs. The success of planning depended on “the ability to control the future consequences of present actions.” In a large corporation, let alone a whole nation, this meant “controlling the decisions of many people, with different interests and purposes, so as to secure a premeditated effect.” Some causal theory must connect the planned actions with the desired future results, and then the ability to act on this theory. The more people and types of action involved, the greater the demands on the theory as it had to explain how to get all to act differently than would otherwise be the case.³⁸

By the 1980s, strategic planning was losing its luster. The planning departments had become large and expensive, the next cycle began as soon as the previous one finished, and the outputs were ever more complicated. Evidence of past difficulties and failures were assessed not as symptoms of a flawed system but of too much independent thought in the course of implementation, requiring even more prescription and explicit budgets and targets. The break came when General Electric, a company famed for and apparently proud of its elaborate planning system, decided to abolish it completely. Complaints were reported about an isolated bureaucracy, relying on dubious data instead of market instincts, persisting with incorrect predictions because they lacked the flexibility to change course. The senior executives were at the mercy of the process, with no alternative to the grand plan. Meanwhile, as General

Electric's new chief executive, Jack Welch, observed: "The books got thicker, the printing got more sophisticated, the covers got harder, and the drawings got better."³⁹ Welch was said to have been impressed by a letter in *Fortune* in 1981 that criticized "the endless quest by managers for a paint-by-numbers approach, that would automatically give them answers." Drawing parallels with Clausewitz and von Moltke's senses of battle, he observed that: "Strategy was not a lengthy action plan. It was the evolution of a central idea through continually changing circumstances . . . Any cookbook approach is powerless to cope with the independent will, or with the unfolding situations of the real world." Welch embraced this approach at General Electric, using von Moltke's aphorism about plans not surviving the first contact with the enemy to explain why the company did not need a rigid plan but instead a central idea that could be adapted to circumstances.⁴⁰

In 1984, citing General Electric, *Business Week* pronounced the end of the "reign of the strategic planner," with few achievements to its credit and many disappointments. The coup de grace was delivered by Henry Mintzberg in 1994 with his book *The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning*.⁴¹ In 1991, in response to an earlier article by Mintzberg, Ansoff complained that Mintzberg seemed to commit all prescriptive schools for strategy to the "garbage heap of history," adding sadly that if he was to accept this verdict he had spent "40 years contributing to solutions which are not useful to the practice of strategic management."⁴²

In the business world, as in the military, the loss of confidence in models based on centralized control, quantification, and rational analysis left an opening for alternative approaches to strategy. These centralizing models had fewer shortcomings in theory than they turned out to have in practice. They set out an ideal of how a chief executive might operate, but this was based on heroic assumptions about how optimal decisions could be made and then implemented. In particular, it was a model for the powerful—a superpower country or even a superpower corporation. As the environments became less manageable, the cumbersome processes the model demanded became dysfunctional and unresponsive.

Alternative approaches required a better understanding of how to cope with conflict within and between organizations. By and large, economics helped answer the questions on the horizontal axis regarding developing strategies for competition, while sociology assisted with those on the vertical axis about how to get the best out of an organization. Before we come to these approaches, which developed as the flaws in the planning model became apparent, we shall first consider another type of approach, not least because it provides a further link with military thinking.

Managers have always fancied themselves in the officer class. Strategy is what separates them from the sergeants.

—John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge

AS HAD HAPPENED with the military, the reaction against the business planning models of the 1950s and 1960s led to attempts to rediscover the essence of strategy as practiced. Just as the experiences of Vietnam and a sense of developing Soviet strength encouraged defense reformers in the United States to return to the classics of military thought and insist on addressing the harsh realities of war and battle, a harsher competitive environment also encouraged businesses to think more in terms of victory and defeat, and the need to infuse their strategies with the mental toughness and passion required in battle. Chief executives might imagine themselves as generals, leading their troops into battle, with an appropriate blend of cunning, charisma, and calculation. The resemblances between intense corporate tussles and war were a regular theme in management books, and the language of campaigns, attacks, and maneuvers could seem quite natural.

At the popular end of this tendency were the regular suggestions that lessons for the boardroom could be drawn from the battlefield exploits of such figures as Alexander the Great or Napoleon. Military figures, even some with mixed reputations, were turned into business models from which relevant leadership tips might be taken. In addition to the obvious candidates

(Alexander, Caesar, Napoleon), Albert Madansky has identified books drawing on the strategic wisdom of Attila the Hun, Sitting Bull, Robert E. Lee, Ulysses S. Grant, and George Patton.¹ The bestselling *Leadership Secrets of Attila the Hun* by Wess Roberts, for example, while not quite offering Attila as a role model hailed him as an exemplar of leadership, for he “accomplished difficult tasks and performed challenging feats against ‘seemingly’ insurmountable odds.” This implied for Attila and his Huns “a slightly more positive image than can perhaps be found elsewhere.” Great chieftains adapted rather than compromised, dealt with adversity, learned from mistakes, did not ask questions for which they did not want to hear answers, only engaged in wars they could win, preferred victory to stalemate, and they had tried their best even if they lost. And so on. There was only a vague hint of the sinister when reference was made to the importance of loyalty and how it might be enforced. In general, the chieftains emerged as enlightened and inspirational leaders—taking seriously their responsibility for the welfare of Huns, explaining to them what they were doing and why.²

When examples were picked selectively, and carefully extracted out of their context, historical events and figures could be used to illustrate a variety of business theories. In such books strategy became collections of aphorisms and analogies, often contradictory, trite, and at most pithy restatements of best practice—exactly what the social scientists with their careful methodologies sought to avoid. They were unlikely to lead to much behavioral change among their readership or affect corporate performance and plans. In the back of one such book, for example, there was a list of maxims and quotes. What was the business manager supposed to make of “War is cruelty and you cannot refine it” (General W. T. Sherman), or “Shoot them in the belly and cut out their living guts” (General George C. Patton), or “War, by definition, means a suspension of rules, laws and civilized behavior” (General Robert E. Lee)? This author dismissed “smiley-face, win-win, love-thine-enemy kinds of business thinking.” Business, he insisted, “like war, is basically a zero-sum adversarial game with economic and professional stakes of the highest order.”³ Similarly Douglas Ramsey described modern business as a “brutal battlefield,” sharing the goal of “victory.” His aim was to show how some of the key principles of warfare, such as clarity of objective, unity of command, economy of force, and concentration of strength could be as relevant for chief executives as for generals. He did note that when it came to their strategic decisions, few business leaders drew on wartime analogies. There was, however, a clear inference that they might be better off if they did so.⁴

The influence of most books in this genre was limited, more of an enjoyable read than a manual to be kept at hand. There were occasions when

business rivalry took on the appearance of a fight to the finish, but as often as not the competition was continuous, ebbing and flowing, with many participants. Moments of decisive victory would be few and far between. In fact, the elements of military experience, captured by the concept of “friction” or by examples of stunning incompetence, warned about how campaign plans could go very wrong. In a declining or stagnant market, where the spoils would go to the last firm left standing, a fight to the finish employing ruthless strategies might be encouraged. But in growing markets competition might be less intense, and in those marked by complexity there were opportunities for cooperation and even collusion as well as conflict. The military metaphor, if taken too seriously, could lead to inappropriate and unethical behavior. An enthusiasm for a fight and a reputational fear of losing might lead to “price wars” or “takeover battles” being pursued well beyond the point of possible gain and possibly into substantial losses. As with all metaphors, warfare could be illuminating for business so long as it was not mistaken for the real thing.⁵

Yet some of the standard tropes of military strategy could appear pertinent. As early as the 1960s, in his more conceptual musings about strategy, Bruce Henderson of the Boston Consulting Group⁶ drew explicitly on Liddell Hart, emphasizing concentrating strength against a competitor’s weaknesses. He sensed the drama of competition, which was lost when it was presented as “some kind of impersonal, objective, colorless affair,” and discussed the trickery that might be employed to divert competitors. Strategy would be about exploiting differences in management style, as well as matters such as “overhead rate, distribution channels, market image, or flexibility.” He noted how competitors might become friends when a system needed stabilizing. The fundamental strategic rule was: “Induce your competitors not to invest in those products, markets, and services where you expect to invest the most.”⁷

In a seminal 1981 article, Kotler and Singh argued that the need of businesses “to develop competitor-centered strategies to win market share will lead managers to turn increasingly to the subject of military science.”⁸ *Marketing Warfare*, published by Al Ries and Jack Trout in 1986,⁹ used Clausewitz for inspiration. Marketing strategy was distinct from military strategy because at stake was the mind of the consumer rather than territory (although few military strategists doubted the importance of psychology). Just like the strongest armies, the strongest companies should be able to use their power to stay on top. A company dominating the market had more resources to devote to keep prices down and develop products. Therefore, to have a chance, small companies, like weaker armies, must employ guile and not brute force. Better people, products, or even productivity would not be

enough. A well-entrenched defensive position could only be overwhelmed by a much larger force. Nor, following Clausewitz, was surprise likely to compensate for weaker numbers.

Ries and Trout offered four strategies for a marketing war—defensive, offensive, flanking, and guerrilla—with market share determining which was appropriate. Those with the greatest share were interested in market domination, while those with the smallest could concentrate on survival. In the face of a serious challenge the strongest had to respond: if they failed to do so they would progressively lose market share until their dominant position was threatened. The second in the market could mount an offensive to gain some market share from number one, but this would best be done on a narrow front against a critical weakness in the leader's position. The weakness must be chosen carefully: if it was simply high prices, for example, a firm with sufficient resources would be able to respond by cutting prices. If an offense was too risky, a flanking attack could be mounted with a clearly differentiated product. The risks here involved unfamiliar territory and insufficient signaling to competitors. Small firms were best advised to adopt a guerrilla strategy, in a market segment all of their own, avoiding any serious competition with larger firms and staying nimble, ready to move in and out of an area as circumstances changed. Approaching the enemy indirectly à la Liddell Hart, and then attacking in strength at the enemy's weakest point, à la Clausewitz, were the key principles imported from military theory. The core advice was to avoid a frontal assault against well-established positions.

During the 1980s, there was a shift toward Sun Tzu.¹⁰ Sun Tzu's influence was attested to by two references in popular culture. In the movie *Wall Street*, the villainous Gordon Gekko advises Bud Fox: "I don't throw darts at a board. I bet on sure things. Read Sun Tzu, THE ART OF WAR. Every battle is won before it is ever fought." Fox later used Sun Tzu to prevail over Gekko: "If your enemy is superior, evade him. If angry, irritate him. If equally matched, fight, and if not, split and re-evaluate." *Wall Street* was a morality tale involving junior stockbroker Bud Fox caught between his blue-collar father, a foreman and trade unionist who represented the virtues of hard and honest labor, and the ruthless, cynical Gordon Gekko, a corporate raider whose motto was "greed is good." Bud became wealthy by following Gekko's methods until he realized that a plan to buy the airline where his father worked was all about asset-stripping. The movie appeared in 1987, the year of a Wall Street crash, and seemed to capture the financial mindset that had created both financial mayhem and a loss of moral bearings.

Another villain, Tony Soprano, the eponymous mob boss in *The Sopranos*, was told, somewhat sarcastically, by his psychiatrist Dr. Malfi: "You want to

be a better mob boss, read *The Art of War*.”¹¹ Later Soprano reported back to her: “Been reading that—that book you told me about. You know, *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu. I mean here’s this guy, a Chinese general, wrote this thing 2400 years ago, and most of it still applies today! Balk the enemy’s power. Force him to reveal himself.” Soprano clearly felt that his introduction to Sun Tzu had given him a competitive advantage; “Most of the guys that I know, they read Prince Machiavelli.” Soprano claims to have found Machiavelli, whom he read in a study guide, no more than “okay.” Sun Tzu, however, “is much better about strategy.”¹² As a result of Tony Soprano’s endorsement, Sun Tzu became Amazon’s bestseller in New Jersey.

Sun Tzu’s discovery by business strategists generated a whole library offering insights from the master. Mark McNeilly in *Sun Tzu and the Art of Business* promised explanations of “how to gain market share without inciting competitive retaliation, how to attack a competitor’s weak points, and how to maximize the power of market information for competitive advantage.”¹³ The value of Sun Tzu was seen to spread wider. One book suggested that careful study of *The Art of War* would help “preserve your marriage vows, and attain the marital bliss that you and your partner deserve to help with marriage.”¹⁴ Following *The Art of War* elevated the strategist. Instead of encouraging managers to be mini-Napoleons, it urged them to use their wit and outthink their opponents. It was also far less dependent on the Clausewitzian “business-is-battle” metaphor.

Sun Tzu and Liddell Hart appealed to business strategists for the same reason they appealed to military strategists. They required intelligence, imagination, and nerve. There was no skill in outspending a weak opponent, other than possibly getting round anticompetitive regulation. The real skill was in creating new products and developing new services—even new markets that the most likely competitors had missed. Sun Tzu added a degree of moral complexity, illustrated by his supposed attraction to the fictional rogue trader who used insider information to get rich, and the gangster who got rich through extortion and intimidation. As with the tricksters of classical times, this could prompt admiration about their cunning but a deep unease about how this was used to better those who led more virtuous lives. The ability to deceive and outwit an external foe might be celebrated, but there was still something inappropriate about using these tactics at home to gain an unfair advantage.

Another reason for the fascination with Sun Tzu was that it might provide a clue to Asian thinking. Japan, the country defeated so decisively in the Pacific War, had gained a remorseless competitive advantage by adopting business methods that Americans might once have known but appeared to

have forgotten. *The Art of War* suggested a distinctive philosophical outlook, a reliance on patience and intelligence, gaining advantage through a superior grasp of dynamic situations and an ability to conceal one's own capabilities and intentions while seeing through those of the opponent. By comparison, American managers had become myopic, fixated on finance and the short term, while their opponents thought long term and focused on products. Miyamoto Musashi, a swordsman of the seventeenth century, was a key Japanese figure. When close to death he set down his philosophy for his disciples in *The Book of Five Rings* (*Go Rin No Sho*). Although he did participate in a variety of battles, his main skill was in dueling, an art he practiced constantly after opening his account at the age of 13. Musashi's approach to dueling allowed for a degree of trickery (for example, arriving late to unnerve his opponent or early to catch him by surprise), but there was no doubting his strength and skill. He could fight with a sword in each hand and was still able to throw his short sword. During his life he is said to have fought at least sixty duels without defeat. Although Musashi claimed that his philosophy was relevant to all forms of combat, the duel provided a distinctive perspective, especially when it came to its objective, which was simply to cut down the opponent.

In terms of an overall approach, there was a lot in common with *The Art of War*, which Musashi almost certainly had read.¹⁵ Musashi described strategy as "the craft of the warrior," to be enacted by commanders. He explained the importance of his insights by noting that "there is no warrior in the world today who really understands the Way of Strategy." He urged the development of the sort of intuitive wisdom that comes from hard study of everything that could possibly be relevant ("Know the smallest things and the biggest things, the shallowest things and the deepest things"), stressed staying calm in all circumstances, urged flexibility and a change in tactics (as an evident pattern would enable the opponent to identify vulnerabilities), and was wary of head-on clashes. In order to strike when the enemy was not properly focused, he urged getting to the high ground, checking whether the opponent was left- or right-handed, and trying to push him into difficult terrain. Timing was important, which meant varying pace and staying alert. His preference was to attack first, but attention had to be paid to whether the enemy's strength was waxing or waning.

Whether, as some claimed, a winning Japanese business strategy could be adduced from all of this was less clear. *The Book of Five Rings* was not intended for a general reader but for those being trained in a particular martial arts style and attuned to its distinctive spiritual foundations. One authority described it as being "terse to the point of incomprehensibility" and suggested that

its “unintelligibility” allowed “the text to function as Rorschach inkblots within which modern readers (businessmen, perhaps) can discover many possible meanings.”¹⁶ To the extent that Musashi was taken seriously in Japan it was as likely to be less as a source of strategic insight and more as something of a role model, as a Samurai hero celebrated for his humility, inner peace, courage, strength, and ruthlessness.

George Stalk, who was sent by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) to work in Japan in the late 1970s, was less interested in the softer side of Japanese strategy than in its harder, tougher side. He developed his ideas in a 1988 *Harvard Business Review* article and then a book.¹⁷ This focused on the importance of time as a source of competitive advantage. He picked up on the similarity between his views, which stressed making decisions and implementing them faster than competitors, and those of John Boyd and his OODA loop, encouraging getting inside the decision cycle.¹⁸ This led to a line of argument (and language) familiar to anyone who had been following the military reform debate in the United States. In a competitive situation, he noted, strategic choice was limited to three options: seek peaceful coexistence with competitors, which was unlikely to lead to stability; retreat, which meant getting out of markets or limiting exposure through consolidation and focus; or attack, which was the only option that offered growth. But a direct attack through cutting prices and expanding capacity carried high risk, so the best option would be “indirect attack,” involving surprise, leaving competitors caught by the speed of the attack or by their inability to respond. He described how the Japanese did this by tightening up their “planning loops,” from the start of the development of a new product to getting it to the customer. This not only saved money but also left competitors struggling to catch up.¹⁹

The serious question underlying the “business-as-war” literature was whether the two activities were sufficiently similar for military strategy to work in a business context. In some areas, where companies were competing hard for market share, trying to protect themselves from acquisitive predators, repulsing sneaky insurgents, or going on the offensive against a vulnerable establishment, the similarities could appear compelling. By and large, the case studies in this literature involved companies competing head-on (Coca-Cola versus Pepsi-Cola was a classic). Once companies could be represented as armies in battle they could be subjected to the same principles. American military strategists in the 1970s and 1980s began to explore the relevance of Sun Tzu and Liddell Hart, and contrast the virtues of maneuver warfare with unimaginative and costly attrition. Encouraged by John Boyd, they considered how to get inside the decision cycles of opponents to leave

them disoriented and confused. With a certain lag, these themes were also picked up by business strategists. A number were certainly well aware of Boyd's work.

Military strategies were tested only occasionally in one-off encounters that might not always be as decisive as hoped but could be expected to change the terms of any future encounters. Business strategies were tested daily but did include opportunities that could be quite unique to one company and once exploited could create a durable advantage. It was not true that military strategy only involved states as fixed and unchanging entities. Though rare, states could disappear through takeovers and new ones come into existence through fragmentation. With business this was, however, far more normal and possibly its most important distinguishing feature. Companies could break up, be taken over, or simply go out of existence as new ones formed. This made the interaction of internal organization and external environment much more complex. The strategic literature, however, paid surprisingly little attention to this interaction. Arguably, the disciplinary divisions in the social sciences did not help. By and large, economics addressed questions of the relationship of firms to their markets. Its eventual forays into organizational structures were influential but generally disastrous. To understand organizations, sociology was much more helpful but provided few tools (and a disciplinary lack of interest) for analyzing relationships to operating environments. The division in the literature means that our account must follow the first of these strands, led by economics, before it can return to the second, led by sociology.

The ideas of economists and political philosophers, both when they are right and when they are wrong, are more powerful than is commonly understood. Indeed the world is ruled by little else. Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influence, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist.

—John Maynard Keynes

ECONOMICS CAME TO acquire an almost hegemonic position in strategic management. This was not because it was uniquely fitted for this intellectual purpose but because of deliberate decisions to adopt it as the foundation of a new science of decision-making and the active promotion of this new science by bodies such as the RAND Corporation and the Ford Foundation, both of which encouraged its embrace by business schools. As with Plato's philosophy, a new discipline that offered eternal truths was created in part by disparaging and caricaturing what had gone before for its lack of rigor.

The best place to start this story is with the RAND Corporation, which we identified in the last section as the home of game theory and the belief that a formal science of decision could be developed. This effort gained credibility because of the very special issues posed by nuclear weapons. The effort transformed thinking about not only strategy but also economics because it demonstrated the possibilities opened up by powerful computing capabilities

for modeling all forms of human activity. Philip Mirowski has written of the “Cyborg sciences,” which developed along with computing, reflecting novel interactions between men and machines. They broke down the distinctions between nature and society, as models of one began to resemble the other, and between “reality” and simulacra. The Monte Carlo simulations adopted during the wartime atomic bomb project for dealing with uncertainty in data, for example, opened up a range of possible experiments to explore the logic of complex systems, discerning ways through uncertainty and forms of order in chaos.¹ RAND analysts saw them as supplanting rather than supplementing traditional patterns of thought. Simple forms of cause and effect could be left behind as it became possible to explore the character of dynamic systems, with the constantly changing interaction between components parts. The models of systems, more or less orderly and stable, that had started to become fashionable before the war could take on new meanings. And even in areas where intense computation was not required there was a growing comfort in scientific circles, both natural and social, with models that were formal and abstract, not based just on direct observations of a narrow segment of accessible reality but also on explorations of something that approximated to a much larger and otherwise inaccessible reality. They could be analyzed in ways which the human mind, left on its own, could not begin to manage. As one of the first textbooks on operations research noted, this work required an “impersonal curiosity concerning new subjects,” rejection of “unsupported statements,” and a desire to rest “decisions on some quantitative basis, even if the basis is only a rough estimate.”

In their landmark book of 1957, which gave the field renewed vigor, Duncan Luce and Howard Raiffa noted prematurely the decline of the “naïve bandwagon-feeling that game theory solved innumerable problems of sociology and economics, or at the least, that it made their solution a practical matter of a few years’ work.”² They urged social scientists to recognize that game theory was not descriptive. Instead it was “rather (conditionally) normative. It states neither how people do behave nor how they should behave in an absolute sense, but how they should behave if they wish to achieve certain ends.”³ Their injunction was ignored and game theory came to be adopted as more of a descriptive than normative tool.

One reason for this was the development of the Nash equilibrium, named after the mathematician John Nash (whose struggle with mental illness became the subject of a book and a movie).⁴ This was an approach to non-zero-sum games. The idea was to find a point of equilibrium, comparable to those in physics when forces balance one another. In this case, players sought the optimum way to reach their goals. The equilibrium point was reached

when the players adopted a set of strategies that created no incentive for any individual player to change strategy so long as the others stayed unchanged.⁵ Nash's contribution came to be celebrated within economics as "one of the outstanding intellectual advances of the twentieth century."⁶ But its value to strategy was limited. On the one hand, a lack of points of equilibrium led to chaos; on the other, too many points resulted in an indeterminate situation. As a contrast, Tom Schelling demonstrated the possibilities of using abstract forms of reasoning to illuminate real issues faced by states, organizations, and individuals. He encouraged people to think of strategy as an aid to bargaining, and he explored with great insight the awful paradoxes of the nuclear age. But he explicitly eschewed mathematical solutions and drew on a range of disciplines, thus abandoning any attempt to develop a pure, general theory. Mirowski found Nash's non-cooperative rationalism wanting but also found Schelling's more playful, allusive mode of analysis exasperating because of its lack of rigor. Schelling avoided the restrictive forms of game theory and the challenging mathematics of Nash in order to make paradoxical points about communication without communication and rationality without rationality.⁷ Mirowski understated Schelling's importance as a conceptualizer and his recognition of the limits of formal theories when it came to modeling behavior and expectations. "One cannot, without empirical evidence," Schelling observed, "deduce whatever understandings can be perceived in a non-zero-sum game of maneuver any more than one can prove, by purely formal deduction, that a particular joke is bound to be funny."⁸ Schelling, however, had many more admirers than imitators. In economics Nash became part of the mainstream.

The extraordinary boost from RAND's budget and advances in computing put social science on a new footing. The effect was particularly striking with economics. Orthodox economics had faced a crisis during the great depression of the 1930s. This led to greater empirical rigor backed by improved statistical analysis. Many key figures had learned the analytical techniques in wartime operational research. Even where there were important differences in emphasis and approach, as for example between the Chicago School and the Cowles Commission (which had been set up in 1932 to improve the collection and statistical analysis of economic data), they had much in common. Notably, they were rooted in the neoclassical tradition, going back to Walras and Pareto, and assumed that the safest assumption was of individual rationality. As Milton Friedman, the most prominent Chicago economist, put it: "We shall suppose that the individual in making these decisions acts as if he were pursuing and attempting to maximize a single end."⁹ Friedman considered the debate about whether people really acted so rationally, following

complex statistical rules, irrelevant. It was an approximation that was productive for theory, leading to propositions that could then be tested against the evidence.

Friedman and his colleagues were methodologically pragmatic, although dogmatic in their conviction that the market worked best when left alone by government. In this they were influenced by Friedrich Hayek, an Austrian who had acquired British citizenship in 1938 and had been teaching at the London School of Economics until he was recruited to Chicago, though not by the economics department, in 1950. His most famous book, *The Road to Serfdom*, was published during the war and warned against the inclination to central planning that was gathering momentum under the combined influence of socialism and the wartime experience. Meanwhile, the Cowles Commission, influenced by John von Neumann and sponsored by RAND, was up for new methodological challenges and was more inclined to believe that robust models could support enlightened policy. Either way the assumptions and methods associated with game theory became part of a wider project to develop new forms of social science.

Economics into Business

The Ford Foundation was at the fore in exploring how management within big government and big business could become vital instruments of efficiency and progress. In the late 1940s, the Foundation moved from addressing the needs of the Ford Company's own operations around Detroit to meeting a broader agenda. The deaths of both Henry and Edsel Ford led to a surge of money into the Foundation. The man chosen to head a study committee to set the objectives for the future was H. Rowan Gaither, then chairman of RAND and later to become the Foundation's president. He was convinced that social science could and should be mobilized to serve the nation, and that this required managers who understood this science and could appreciate the possibilities for its application. He spoke to the Stanford Business School in 1958 about how "the Soviet challenge requires that we seek out and utilize the best intelligence of American management—and in turn put on management a national responsibility of unparalleled dimensions."¹⁰

A report for the Foundation in 1959 deplored an "embarrassingly low" standard of acceptability among business schools, one which many schools did not actually meet. The point was illustrated by citing multiple study options on the "principles of baking" at one southern school. At the same time there was optimism that the situation could be rectified by a "management

science" being transmitted to students as a methodology for decision-making. Instead of being taught to rely on judgment (which had been the basis of the Harvard curriculum), students could develop a more analytical competence by being immersed in quantitative methods and decision theory. Under Gaither's influence, Ford directed vast sums into the top business schools to create centers of excellence, raising the intellectual caliber and professionalism of the coming generations of managers and their teachers. Over two decades, the numbers of business schools in the United States tripled and the production of MBAs went up accordingly. By 1980, fifty-seven thousand MBAs were graduating from six hundred programs, accounting for 20 percent of the total number of master's degrees granted. At the same time, there was an equivalent expansion in the number of scholarly academic business journals, from about twenty at the end of the 1950s to two hundred two decades later.¹¹

Harvard was the major beneficiary and the Hawthorne studies held as exemplars of the benefits of serious research, though it was the new Carnegie Institute of Technology's Graduate School of Industrial Organization that led the way in drawing upon the social sciences as a source of intellectual energy. Lee Bach, who led the Carnegie effort, was convinced that the best decisions must emerge out of the best reasoning process. He predicted a change that would involve clarifying and bringing to the surface "the variables and logical models our minds must be using now in decision-making and of persistently improving the logic of these models."¹² One of those he recruited, political-scientist-cum-economist Herbert Simon, recalled a determination to transform business education from a "wasteland of vocationalism" into a "science-based professionalism." By 1965, Ford was reporting "an increased use of quantitative analysis and model building" and more publications in disciplinary journals in economics, psychology, and statistics.

Its original concept had been to integrate the case study method as taught at Harvard with economics, sharpening the case studies while tempering economic theory with a dose of realism. The balance was to be shifted to more research with less description, more theory and less practice. Little balance was found. In what was later admitted to be a "tactical error," Ford's push for academic excellence in the business schools came to be dominated by economists who showed little interest either in adapting to other disciplines or even worrying unduly about real-world applications. In the early 1960s, however, they seemed like a breath of fresh air. The determination to stress the practical and avoid the theoretical had led to an absence of any sort of theory, which left everything to common sense and judgment. In remedying this deficiency, economics had clear advantages over the other, softer social

sciences. It encouraged parsimonious models, simplifying the complex issues of management by focusing on core principles and assuming rational actors (which is just how managers liked to imagine themselves). The clarity of the assumptions would be reflected in the sharpness and testability of the hypotheses. The challenge for management was to achieve the best for their organization. It made sense to look at a theory that assumed that to be the aim of all individuals and organizations.

The change was reflected in Harvard. The business policy course, which treated corporate strategy in the “genteel tradition of those days, not as a set of formulas but as the mission of the company, its distinctive competence, reflecting the values of its managers,” and was not particularly popular, was replaced by one entitled “Competition and Strategy,” from which the material on the general manager and the values of society had been removed.¹³

Competition

It was not just the push on the supply side that created the interest in economic theories of decision-making but also changes in the demands posed by the business environment. The emphasis on planning processes had reflected the supposed interests of a limited number of very large corporations with huge financial and political clout, offering a range of product lines in a steadily growing economy. While for these behemoths internal organization was a major issue, precisely because of their size and strength and the restraint of antitrust legislation, competition was not so important. The word does not even appear in the index of Chandler’s *Strategy and Structure* or Drucker’s *The Practice of Management*.

For smaller firms in new or dying markets with much simpler structures, the challenges were always quite different, and new challenges began to develop even for the big corporations. The large as well as the small became subject to increasing foreign competition, notably from insurgent Japanese corporations with a better eye for new consumer technologies and lower costs. Basic structural shifts were occurring: the move from manufacturing to services, new technologies that were creating new forms of enterprise as well as new types of goods, plus the development of increasingly esoteric financial instruments. Then there were temporary factors with severe effects, such as the hike in oil prices in 1974 and the subsequent combination of stagnation and inflation.

In this first instance, this challenge was picked up not by the business schools but by consultants, who by necessity were tuned to the stresses and

strains of changes in the business environment. The Boston Consulting Group (BCG), founded by Bruce Henderson in 1964, saw strategy as being about making direct comparisons with competitors, especially in relation to cost structures. While the business schools still encouraged the analysis of specific and unique situations, Henderson sought strong theories that would guide the consultant when considering the circumstances of new clients. His approach was more deductive than inductive. The aim was to find a “meaningful, quantitative relationship” between a company and its chosen markets.¹⁴

Like so many figures in business strategy, Henderson's background was in engineering. He was therefore attracted by the idea of systems tending to equilibrium, with the aim of strategy in a system including competitors to be one of first upsetting the equilibrium and then reestablishing it on a more favorable basis. The challenge was to develop the necessary thinking in terms sufficiently explicit to be “executed in a coordinated fashion in complex organizations.”

His approach, in stark contrast to the complexity of Ansoff, was to apply micro-economic methodology, to develop what he called “powerful oversimplifications,” which BCG then sold to companies.¹⁵ The oversimplification that established his reputation was the “experience curve.” Based on early studies of the aircraft industry, the core idea was that the more units produced, the lower the costs and the higher the profits. When plotted on a curve this could show the state of a competitive relationship. The presumption was that for companies making the same product, variations in costs were largely related to market share. Thus the effects of an increased share were calculable. Businesses should expect costs to decline systematically and predictably as a result of their superior productive experience. While the methodology encouraged companies to look at their total costs and recognize economies of scale, it could also be seriously misleading. In a mature industry the experience curve would flatten out. It could also encourage a race to the bottom, as prices were cut in the expectation of higher volumes which might not materialize, and then leave little scope for investment. As Ford's Model T experience demonstrated, even the master of a product with costs kept down to a minimum can still be caught out by a better product.

BCG's second powerful oversimplification was the growth-share matrix. A matrix was drawn with the growth in the market on one axis and share of the market on the other. Companies could then locate their various activities on the matrix. It was best to have a high share of a growing market (the stars) and worst to have a low share of a static or declining market (the dogs). The other two categories were “cash cows” and “question marks.” The images

were powerful and the logic compelling. The cows had to be looked after and the stars backed, while the dogs were candidates for divestment. Once that was sorted, only the question marks required serious thoughts. Again the imagery had a capacity to mislead. As one critic, John Seeger, noted, "The dogs may be friendly, the cows may need a bull now and then to remain productive, and the stars may have burned themselves out." Seeger warned of the dangers of allowing management models to "substitute for analysis and common sense." Just because a theory had elegance and simplicity did not "guarantee sanity in its use."¹⁶

It took until 1980 before a major breakthrough in business strategy came out of a business school. Michael Porter, who had the requisite engineering background and an enthusiasm for competitive sports, entered the Harvard MBA program, where he was taught the holistic, multidimensional "business policy" philosophy. Unusually, he then enrolled for a Ph.D. in business economics. One of the courses he took was on industrial organization. This was the area of economics most conducive to business strategy because it studied situations of imperfect competition. In perfect competition, the postulate through which economic theory largely developed, the choices available to buyers and sellers created the potential for equilibrium around a specific price. By definition, perfect competition allowed no scope for an individual unit to have a special and successful strategy. The most imperfect competition would be a complete monopoly where a single supplier could set the price, also leaving little scope for strategy. The oligopolist had options, neither fully constrained by the market but affected by the moves of its competitors. The oligopolist had to be strategic, because he must anticipate these moves. There was no law to govern this situation, which is why Simon declared oligopoly to be "the permanent and ineradicable scandal of economic theory."¹⁷

For economists, the question raised was why certain markets deviated from standard models of perfect competition. Profits should be more than sufficient to animate the company, but certain industries were extremely profitable. That was because of a lack of competitive pressure, which was the result of the "barriers to entry"—the difficulty faced when trying to establish a new position in a market. The thrust of the economics approach to industrial organization was to find ways to reduce these barriers to make the markets more competitive. With his business school background, Porter saw an opportunity to turn the theory on its head. This was a natural stance for a student of strategy, taking the point of view of the company within the industry rather than the industry as a whole. Instead of asking how the system could be made more competitive, he asked how the unit within the

system could exploit and even intensify uncompetitive elements to gain strategic advantage.

Following Ansoff in defining strategy in terms of “relating a company to its environment,” Porter devised a framework to help companies examine their competitive situation. The focus was still on providing a guide to a deliberative process for a large business, but he was more ambitious than Andrews, more focused than Ansoff, and less formulaic than Henderson.¹⁸ Porter identified two key issues. The first was seller concentration (what percentage of the market was controlled by the top four firms) and barriers to entry. Out of this came the “five forces framework” for analyzing an industry. The forces were competitive rivalry between firms, bargaining power of suppliers and of buyers, threats of new entrants and of substitute offerings. A number of factors were connected with each. The presentation was methodical and rigorous, offering basic principles and some specific tactics about how to maintain and improve a competitive position. To the critics who claimed that his analysis was too static, Porter replied that the five forces all needed to be watched precisely because they changed.

For Porter, strategy was all about positioning. The menu of strategies was small and the choice would depend on the nature of the competitive environment, with the aim of finding a position that could be defended against existing competitors and those trying to enter the market. Porter offered three generic strategies: staying market leader by keeping costs down, having a product that was sufficiently different that it could not be challenged by other competitors (differentiation), and identifying a particular part of the market where there were few challengers (market specialization). He argued that it was important to pick one of these strategies, stick to it, and never get “stuck in the middle,” because that would almost “guarantee low profitability.” Since the best position would be extremely profitable, there would then be sufficient resources to improve the position. The key thing was to find and exploit the imperfections in the market. In terms of the SWOT framework, this was about addressing opportunities and threats rather than strengths and weaknesses. There was very little interest in internal organization and the actual implementation of a strategy.

Porter’s method could be criticized for being deductive. He had plenty of examples of tactics used by companies seeking product differentiation or raising barriers, but these were illustrations of propositions derived from his theory. Some of his central claims about the generic strategies and the greater value to be gained by concentrating on market position as against operational efficiency did not seem to fit the evidence. As with all structural theorists the tendency was to assume that structure had “a strong influence in determining

the competitive rules of the game as well as the strategies potentially available to the firm.”¹⁹ In practice the system was less rigid and certain than the theory assumed, and more susceptible to being transformed by truly imaginative strategies.

One striking feature of Porter’s approach lay in its political implications. This was not something he dealt with explicitly, but as Mitzberg noted: “If profit really does lie in market power, then there are clearly more than economic ways to generate it.”²⁰ The closest Porter came to making the link between competitive position and government assistance was in noting how governments “can limit or even foreclose entry into industries with such controls as licensing requirements and limits on access to raw materials.” The key arena here was that affected by antitrust legislation. Porter was well aware of the issue, noting that companies under antitrust restraints might not feel able to respond to competitors attempting to take a small market share, or how large companies may use a private antitrust suit to harass small competitors.²¹ He warmed to the theme in his second book, *Competitive Advantage*, noting how these suits could put financial pressure on competitors. Here he also discussed how barriers to entry could be raised higher than would naturally occur, by such methods as forming exclusive agreements with outlets to freeze out competitors, tying up suppliers, and even working in coalition with other established firms.²² A number of the activities, he noted, were frowned upon by antitrust law and were the subject of successful suits. Porter insisted that he supported antitrust legislation,²³ and it was also the case that there was a degree of uncertainty surrounding this legislation in terms of the vigor with which it was applied at any time, often depending on economic circumstances. This uncertainty was a major problem for the strategist, as what might seem acceptable behavior at one moment became unacceptable the next.

In the mid-1980s, Porter advised the National Football League (NFL) in its dispute with the United States Football League (USFL). He characterized the dispute as “guerrilla warfare” and suggested aggressive strategies, such as persuading broadcasters to break their contract with the USFL, poaching the USFL’s best players while encouraging the NFL’s worst to go the other way, and co-opting the most powerful USFL owners while bankrupting the weakest USFL teams. This was cited in evidence when the USFL sought damages from the NFL for its anticompetitive practices. Ultimately, it was agreed that the NFL had violated the law, although only derisory damages were awarded. Porter’s assistant acknowledged that legal issues had not been considered in offering advice; the NFL’s defense was that it had ignored the advice.²⁴

A similar problem emerged with Barry Nalebuff and Adam Brandenburger's *Co-Opetition*, an attempt to capture the insights of game theory for a popular audience. The title neatly captured the mixture of cooperation and competition that game theory addressed,²⁵ although the neologism was not actually new.²⁶ Their idea was that it would make sense to cooperate with other players in the industry to expand the business pie while competing over how it was divided up. They noted the complexity of relationships, not only with customers, suppliers, and competitors, but also complements—that is, other players with whom there was a natural cooperative and mutually dependent relationship (for example, hardware and software firms in computing). They discussed the advantages that could be gained by changing the rules of the game or by using tactics to shift perceptions of a position within the game. The influence of game theory was evident, but this was hardly a theoretical work. As with other practical work in the field it took some basic factors and reworked them in a variety of cases, offering readers some insight on how they might approach similar types of problems.

The more explicit recognition of the potential of cooperation, which would be natural in any other area of strategy, always risked appearing anti-competitive and falling foul of antitrust law. Nalebuff and Brandenburger thus celebrated Nintendo's achievements in gaining a competitive advantage in the computer games market, which allowed them to overcharge their customers (eventually requiring them to settle in the face of a suit from the Federal Trade Commission). The way the analysis was structured led the authors to naturally favor the company over the consumer. Stewart sharply commented that they "praise one company after another for cornering markets and duping customers" before acknowledging antitrust concerns. He accused them of developing an approach to strategy which was about "how to arrange a cartel without having to enter a smoke-filled backroom, how to organize a monopoly without going to the trouble of bribing government officials, and, in general, how to make extraordinary profits without having to make extraordinary products." As he noted, while they praised General Motors for its credit card strategy, which offered discounts to those who used it, Toyota, which did not bother with a credit card, was building better cars and eating into the market share of General Motors.²⁷

John Rockefeller did not appear in the index to Porter's *Competitive Strategy*. He might have found the language and concepts unfamiliar but as one ready to try every trick in the book to position Standard Oil, the broad thrust of the argument would have been well understood. The management strategists of the late twentieth century were operating in an environment shaped significantly by the great trusts of the nineteenth century and

the progressive movement's attempts to deal with them. The logic of any attempt to tame markets was to make life difficult for at least some competitors. While the first wave of management strategists ignored this issue, because they were dealing with firms that were in secure positions or close to the limits of their legal growth, this was not the case with the second wave, which—as exemplified by Porter—did not so much embrace competition as seek ways to subdue and circumvent it. The third wave embraced competition with enthusiasm.

Here, you see, it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast.

—The Red Queen in *Alice Through the Looking Glass*

AGAINST THE BACKDROP of intense competitive pressures, the role of the manager was increasingly thrown into relief. The rewards they could make at the top of major companies grew, but so did the risks of being fired. Their performance was being judged against ever more demanding standards, but short-term profitability of the sort that would impress investors increasingly became the most important objective by far. Investing for the long term appeared less attractive than selling off weaker units or taking aggressive action against all perceived inefficiencies.

The challenge to the role of the managers was posed by agency theory, derived from transaction cost economics. It directly addressed the issue of cooperating parties that still had distinctive interests. In particular, it considered situations in which one party, the principal, delegated work to another, the agent. The principal could be in a quandary by not knowing exactly what the agent was up to, and whether their views of risk were truly aligned. This issue went to the heart of relationships between owners and managers. The rise of managerialism reflected the view that the agents were the key

people. In business and politics, the notional principals—the stockholders/board members and the electorate/politicians—were transitory and amateurish compared with the fixed, professional elite. The progressive separation of ownership and control had been charted by Berle and Means in the 1930s. The question posed now was whether and how the principals could reassert control over their agents.¹ If the agents did not wish to be so controlled, they had to take the initiative in demonstrating their value to shareholders or else find ways of releasing themselves from this constraint by becoming the owners as well as the managers.

Agency Theory

Michael Jensen, a Chicago-trained economist at Rochester, was impressed by a 1970 article in the *New York Times* by Milton Friedman that announced his arrival as an outspoken advocate of free-market economics. Friedman's target was activist Ralph Nader's campaign to get three representatives of the "public interest" on the board of General Motors. Friedman countered that the only responsibility of the corporation was to make profits so long as it engaged in "open and free competition without deception or fraud." His arguments challenged the managerialism of the past two decades directly: the leaders of the big corporations should neither expect to act as agents of the state nor expect the state to shield them from competition. This led Jensen and a colleague, William Meckling, to try to turn Friedman's plain speaking into economic theory. They found little to work with. They then made a big leap, taking what had become a contentious hypothesis when applied to finance—that markets were sufficiently efficient to provide a better guide to value than individuals, notably fund managers—and applying it to management. In this way, Justin Fox remarked, "the rational market idea" moved from "theoretical economics into the empirical subdivision of finance." There it "lost in nuance and gained in intensity." It was now seeking to use the "stock market's collective judgment to resolve conflicts of interest that had plagued scholars, executives, and shareholders for generations."² By assuming perfect labor markets, so that employees cost no more than what they were worth to the company and if necessary could move without cost to an alternative job, their analysis concluded that the most important risks were those carried by shareholders.³

By 1983, because of the growing interest shown by economists, Jensen felt able to claim that a "revolution would take place" over the coming decades "in our knowledge about organizations." Though organization science was in

its infancy, the foundation for a powerful theory was in place. This involved departing from the economists' view of the firm as "little more than a black box that behaves in a value- or profit-maximizing way" in an environment in which "all contracts are perfectly and costlessly enforced." Instead he argued that firms could be understood in terms of systems geared to performance evaluation, rewards, and the assignment of decision rights. Relationships within an organization, including those between suppliers and customers, could be understood as contracts. Taken together they formed a complex system made up of maximizing agents with diverse objectives. This system would reach its own equilibrium. "In this sense, the behavior of the organization is like the equilibrium behavior of a market." This insight, he argued, was relevant to all types of organizations. It led to cooperative behavior being viewed "as a contracting problem among self-interested individuals with divergent interests."⁴

The prescriptive implication of this approach was that the owners had every reason to worry that their managers were getting distracted. Getting the interests of owners and managers back into alignment through monitoring and incentives required challenging the claims of managerialism. Deregulated markets were favored because they put at risk the positions of managers who were not delivering value for shareholders. Contrary to the pejorative connotations of hostile takeovers, the argument of Jensen and his colleagues was that these could increase the efficiency of the market. Managers dare not get sidetracked by loose and fashionable talk of multiple "stakeholders" but must keep their focus on the needs of the "shareholders" for profit maximization. While managers might complain about takeovers, they were a way of increasing value, redeploying assets, and protecting companies from mismanagement. "Scientific evidence indicates that the market for corporate control almost uniformly increases efficiency and shareholders' wealth."⁵ Companies were viewed as a bundle of assets, formed and reformed according to the demands of the market. The market was all-knowing, while managers were inclined to myopia. By 1993 *Fortune* could declare: "The Imperial CEO has had his day—long live the shareholders."⁶

Adopting this view reduced the need for strategy and management. Once free-market determinism was adopted, then it was possible to "assume a management" as all other factors might also be assumed. It became just another "substitutable" commodity or, even worse, an opportunistic actor "in need of market discipline."⁷ The manager's obligations were not inward-looking but only outward-looking, toward the shareholders. This was despite the fact that shareholders might be transitory and incoherent as a group and short term in perspective, or that efficient organizations had to be formed and

nurtured if the moves the market demanded were to be implemented. The implications for the standing and vocations of managers were profound. The theory suggested that an organization's history and culture were irrelevant, staffed by people who might as well be strangers to each other. Managers being trained in this theory would offer no loyalty and expect none in return. Their task was to interpret the markets and respond to incentives. Little scope was left for the exercise of judgment and responsibility.

Management: A Dangerous Profession

In the early 1980s, warnings were first heard about the potential consequences of such logic for the running of businesses. The malaise was identified in 1980 by Robert Hayes and William Abernathy, both professors at the Harvard Business School. American managers, they complained, had “abdicated their strategic responsibilities.” Increasingly from marketing, finance, and law rather than production, they sought short-term gains rather than long-term innovation. Particularly pointed, especially in the leading business school journal, was the assertion that the problem lay in an increasing managerial reliance on “principles that prize analytical detachment and methodological elegance over insight, based on experience, into the subtleties and complexities of strategic decisions.” Within both the business community and academia, a “false and shallow concept of the professional manager” had developed. Such people were “pseudoprofessionals” who had no special expertise in any particular industry or technology but were believed to be able to “step into an unfamiliar company and run it successfully through strict application of financial controls, portfolio concepts, and a market-driven strategy.” It had become a form of corporate religion, with its core doctrine that “neither industry experience nor hands-on technological expertise counts for very much,” which helped to salve the conscience of those that lacked these qualities but also led to decisions about technological matters being taken as if they were “adjuncts to finance or marketing decisions” and could therefore be expressed in simplified, quantified forms.⁸

At the end of the decade, an unimpressed Franklin Fisher observed, “Bright young theorists tend to think of every problem in game-theoretic terms, including problems that are easier to think of in other forms.”⁹ Even in oligopoly theory, to which game theory seemed most suited, Fisher argued that it had not made a fundamental difference. It remained the case, after game theory as before, that a “great many outcomes were known to be possible. The context in which the theory was set was important, with

outcomes dependent on what variables the oligopolists used and how they formed conjectures about each other.” The effects of market structure on conduct and performance, he argued, had to take account of context. It was true that game theory could model these contexts, but this would not be in a convenient language. In response, Carl Shapiro argued that game theory had much to show for its efforts. But the prospect he offered was explicitly close to Schelling, suggesting not so much a unified theory but tools to identify a range of situations, ideas of what to look for in particular cases, but still dependent on detailed information to work out the best strategy. He also suspected “diminishing returns in the use of game theory to develop simple models of business strategy.”¹⁰ The subtle and complex reasoning described in the models was rarely replicated by actual decision-makers, who were “far less analytic and perform far less comprehensive analyses than these models posit.”¹¹ Saloner acknowledged the challenge, especially if the models were taken literally and supposed to mirror an actual managerial situation with the aim of coming up with a prescription for action. He argued that “the appropriate role for microeconomic-style modeling in strategic management generally, and for game-theoretical modeling in particular, is not literal but rather is metaphorical.”¹² It was not a distinction that was regularly recognized. It was all very well producing elegant solutions, but they were of little value if they were to problems that practitioners did not recognize and expressed in forms that they could not comprehend, let alone implement.

Although there were available academic theories that might assist in the design of organizations fit for particular purposes or at least explain why apparently rational designs produced dysfunctional results, nobody in business or government seemed to be taking much notice. Despite this growing divergence, the framework for research was difficult to change. Journals put a premium on established theories and methods. The apparently harder, quantitative work inspired by the economists assuming rational actors was dominant. Because modern software made large-scale number crunching possible, there was also a large database mentality. Research students were advised to avoid qualitative studies.¹³ The effects could be seen not only in the research but in the norms for behavior the standard models were suggesting. In 2005, Sumantra Ghoshal observed:

Combine agency theory with transaction costs economics, add in standard versions of game theory and negotiations analysis, and the picture of the manager that emerges is one that is now very familiar in practice: the ruthlessly hard-driving, strictly top-down, command-and

control focused, shareholder-value-obsessed, win-at-any-cost business leader.¹⁴

During the 1990s, theories were developed for this new breed of manager, promising success that could be measured in profit margins, market share, and stock prices. They reinforced the challenge to the idea of manager as the secure and steady, but essentially gray, bureaucrat who knew his place in the large corporation, which in turn knew its place in the larger economy. They offered “a conception of management itself in virtuous, heroic, high status terms.”¹⁵ As James Champy, who was at the heart of the neo-Taylorist push in the 1990s, observed, “Management has joined the ranks of the dangerous professions.”¹⁶ The sense of danger reflected the greater demands being placed on managers, as they had to fear not only absolute but even relative failure. In the world as celebrated by Jensen, stockholders were demanding faster and larger returns, and predators had their eyes open for potential acquisitions. Survival and success required not only attention to customers and products but a readiness to be ruthless, to hack away at the least efficient parts of the business, to push away and overwhelm competitors, and to lobby hard for changes in government policy—especially deregulation—that would open up new markets.

Attitudes toward finance had been transformed. The oil shocks and inflation of the 1970s extended a period of modest returns on equities, combined with a traditional reluctance to carry excessive debt. By the end of that decade, new and imaginative ways of raising capital were found. Companies could grow ambitiously and quickly by issuing bonds. Those investors prepared to take a greater risk could anticipate higher yields. With capital plentiful, many companies grew through mergers and acquisitions rather than by developing new products and processes. Attitudes became increasingly aggressive, with the focus on extracting value from corporate assets that had been missed by others or which current owners were unable to exploit. The logical next step was for the senior executives of companies to challenge the ownership model which saw others get the greatest benefit from their achievements. Management buyouts liberated them from their boards, providing greater scope for initiatives while incidentally generating a lot of money. This surge of activity eventually ran its course as the deals became more expensive and the returns disappointed. The debt still had to be serviced, and if it was too large, bankruptcy followed.

Businesses were now judged by their market value. This should reflect their intrinsic quality and the longer-term prospects for their goods and services, but that was not always easy to assess and all the incentives were for

those who held the stock, including managers, to talk up its current value. This made success tangible and measurable compared with the longer-term development of a business which might require patience and low returns before the rewards became evident. But assessments of market value were vulnerable to sentiment and hype, as well as downright fraud. The energy company Enron was the prize exhibit of the latter possibility. This risk was greatest in areas that were hard to grasp, whether because of the sophistication of the financial instruments or the potential of the new technologies. Within companies, any activities that might be holding down the price, not providing the value that was being extracted elsewhere, came to be targeted. Thus they encouraged remorseless cost cutting.

Business Process Re-engineering

The Japanese success over the postwar decades could be taken as a triumph of a focused, patient, coherent, and consensual culture, a reflection of dedicated operational efficiency or else a combination of the two. Either way, the pace-setter was the car manufacturer, Toyota. Having spent the Second World War building military vehicles, the company struggled after the war to get back into the commercial market. Hampered by a lack of capital and technical capacity and by a strike-prone, radicalized work force, Toyota would probably have gone bankrupt were it not for the Korean War and large orders to supply the American military with vehicles. It then began to put together what became known as the Toyota Production System. The starting point was a solution to labor unrest by a unique deal which promised employees lifetime employment in return for loyalty and commitment. Together they would work to establish a system which would reduce waste. Ideas for improving productivity could be raised and explored in "quality circles." As this was a country where everything was still in short supply, a visit to a Ford plant in Michigan in 1950 left an abiding impression of the wastefulness of American production methods. Toyota aimed to keep down inventories and avoid idle equipment and workers. With excess inventory identified as both a cause of waste and a symptom of waste elsewhere in the system, methods were developed to process material and then move it on "just in time" for the next operation. Within Japan, Toyota's methods were emulated and further developed by other companies. In one industry after another, including motorcycles, shipping, steel, cameras, and electronic goods, Western companies found themselves losing market share to the Japanese. Government policy, the need to start from scratch after the war, and a cheap currency all helped.

In comparison with Japanese super-managers, their American counterparts appeared as a feeble bunch. During the course of the 1970s, the management literature became more introspective as mighty American firms were humbled by the Japanese insurgency, not only losing markets to more nimble opponents but also being caught out by a business culture that was far more innovative. Although the momentum behind the Japanese advance came to a juddering halt after the hubris and boom years of the late 1980s, Western companies were determined to mimic the Japanese by radical approaches to their own operational effectiveness. These came first under the heading of total quality management (TQM) and the second as business process re-engineering (BPR). Of the two, BPR was more significant in its impact and implications. The basic idea behind BPR was to bring together a set of techniques designed to make companies more competitive by enabling them to cut costs and improve products at the same time. The challenge was posed in terms of a fundamental rethink of how the organization set about its business rather than a determined effort to make the established systems run more efficiently. Information technologies were presented as the way to make this happen, by flattening hierarchies and developing networks. A close examination of what the organization was trying to achieve would lead to questions about whether goals were appropriate and whether structures could meet the goals. The idea seemed so attractive that Al Gore sought to re-engineer government while he served as vice president.

The underlying assumption of BPR, as with agency theory, was that an organization could be disaggregated as if it was a piece of machinery into a series of component parts, to be evaluated both individually and in relation to each other. It could then be put back together in an altered and hopefully improved form, with some elements discarded altogether and new ones added where necessary, to produce a new organization that would work far more effectively. Once an organization was viewed in these terms, there was no need for incrementalism. It should be possible to start from scratch and rethink the whole organization.

Re-engineering is about beginning again with a clean sheet of paper. It is about rejecting the conventional wisdom and received assumptions of the past. Re-engineering is about inventing new approaches to process structure that bear little or no resemblance to those of previous eras.¹⁷

Thus, the history of an organization could be ignored and its old culture replaced with a brand new one. Workers would be indifferent and docile, or possibly even enthused by this process.¹⁸

At one level, BPR appeared strategic because it was demanding a fundamental reappraisal of businesses. But the main driver was not an assessment of competitive risks and possibilities or even internal barriers to progress but rather the potential impact of new technologies on efficiency. In this respect there were parallels with the coincident “revolution in military affairs.” There was the same claim that this was the start of a new historical epoch, the same expectation that affairs would be shaped by the available methodologies rather than the competitive challenge, the same presumption that technology would drive and everything else would follow, and the same tendency to take the underlying strategy for granted, assuming that opponents/competitors would accept the same path rather than starting with the strategy and working out what processes were required.

Michael Hammer, one of the figures most associated with BPR, provided the transformational tone when he explained the idea in the *Harvard Business Review*: “Rather than embedding outdated processes in silicon and software, we should obliterate them and start over. We should . . . use the power of modern information technology to radically redesign our business processes in order to achieve dramatic improvements in their performance.”¹⁹ Hammer teamed up with James Champy, chairman of CSC Index, Inc., a consulting firm that specialized in implementing re-engineering projects.²⁰ Their 1993 book, *Reengineering the Corporation*, sold nearly two million copies. The rise of the concept was startling. Prior to 1992, the term “re-engineering” was barely mentioned in the business press; after that it was hard to escape it.²¹ A survey in 1994 found that 78 percent of the *Fortune* 500 Companies and 60 percent of a broader sample of 2,200 U.S. companies were engaged in some form of re-engineering, with several projects apiece on average.²² Initial reports were also positive about success rates. Consulting revenues from re-engineering were an estimated \$2.5 billion by 1995. While Champy expanded CSC Index’s revenues from \$30 million in 1988 to \$150 million in 1993, Hammer gave seminars and speeches for high fees. *Fortune* magazine described him as “re-engineering’s John the Baptist, a tub-thumping preacher who doesn’t perform miracles himself but, through speeches and writings, prepares the way for consultants and companies that do.”²³

There were both practical and rhetorical reasons for the success of the concept. At a time of tumult and uncertainty for industry, Champy and Hammer were able to play on the fear of being left behind, captured by Peter Drucker’s endorsement on the cover of their book: “Reengineering is new, and it must be done.” Hammer, in particular, pushed forward the message that however tough and brutal it all might be, the alternative was

so much worse: “The choice is survival: it’s between redundancies of 50 per cent or 100 per cent.” Senior managers must hold their nerve: “Companies that unfurl the banner and march into battle without collapsing job titles, changing the compensation policy and instilling new attitudes and values get lost in the swamp.” The anxiety generated by such language could be used to press forward: “You must play on the two basic emotions: fear and greed. You must frighten them by demonstrating the serious shortcomings of the current processes, spelling out how drastically these defective processes are hurting the organization.”²⁴

BPR began as a set of techniques. It was soon elevated into the foundation of a transformational moment. So while Hammer claimed that “just as the Industrial Revolution drew peasants into the urban factories and created the new social classes of workers and managers, so will the Reengineering Revolution profoundly rearrange the way people conceive of themselves, their work, their place in society.”²⁵ Champy took this revolutionary theme a step further by arguing: “We are in the grip of the second managerial revolution, one that’s very different from the first. The first was about a transfer of power. This one is about an access of freedom. Slowly, or suddenly, corporate managers all over the world are learning that free enterprise these days really is free.”²⁶ Speaking of the virtues of “radical change,” Champy described to managers the “secret satisfaction” of learning to do “what other managers in your industry thought to be impossible.” They would not only “thrive” but would also “literally redefine the industry.”²⁷

Thomas Davenport, who had been director of research at the Boston-based Index Group, which was eventually turned into the CSC Index, was one of those closely associated with the development of the original concept. He later described how a “modest idea had become a monster” as it created a “Reengineering Industrial Complex.” This was an “iron triangle of powerful interest groups: top managers at big companies, big-time management consultants, and big-league information technology vendors.” It suited them all to make BPR appear not only essential in theory but successful in practice. The result was that specific projects were “repackaged as reengineering success stories.” Managers found that they could get projects approved if they used the BPR label, while consultants repackaged what they had to offer as BPR specialists, discarding the previous set of buzzwords.

Continuous improvement, systems analysis, industrial engineering, cycle time reduction—they all became versions of reengineering. A feeding frenzy was under way. Major consulting firms could

routinely bill clients at \$1 million per month, and keep their strategists, operations experts, and system developers busy for years.

As companies made layoffs, these too were rebranded as “reengineering.” Whatever the actual relationship, staff reductions “gave reengineering a strategic rationale and a financial justification.” Meanwhile the computing industry also had a stake in BPR as it encouraged large expenditure on hardware, software, and communications products.

It did not take too long for the bubble to burst. Too many claims had been made, too much money had been spent, and too much resistance was growing—largely because of the association of re-engineering with layoffs—and it had all been accompanied, according to Davenport, by too much “hype.” “The Reengineering Revolution” took potentially valuable innovation and experimentation but added exaggerated promise and heightened expectation leading to “faddishness and failure.” The “time to trumpet change programs is after results are safely in the can.” Most seriously, the fad treated people as if they were “just so many bits and bytes, interchangeable parts to be reengineered.” Dictums such as “Carry the wounded but shoot the stragglers” were hardly motivating, while young consultants with inflated salaries and even higher billing charges treated veteran employees with disdain. Whether or not this was a moment of historic change, employees were naturally inclined to think about protecting their own positions rather than enthuse about broad and expansive visions for the future of the company that could leave them without a job.

By 1994, the CSC Index “State of Reengineering Report” indicated that half the participating companies were reporting fear and anxiety, which was not surprising as almost three quarters of the companies were seeking to eliminate about a fifth of their jobs, on average. Of the re-engineering initiatives completed, “67% were judged as producing mediocre, marginal, or failed results.” As was often the fate of the examples cited in the bestselling management books, companies hailed as champions of BPR were discovered to have either gotten into serious trouble or abandoned the idea. The CSC Index itself was in jeopardy. Its credibility was not helped by revelations in *Business Week* describing an intricate scheme to promote what Michael Treacy and Fred Wiersema, two of the CSC Index’s consultants, hoped to be the next big book in the field, *The Discipline of Market Leaders*. The aim was to get it on the *New York Times* bestseller list. It was alleged (though denied) that employees of CSC Index had spent at least \$250,000 purchasing more than ten thousand copies of the book, with yet more copies being bought by the company. The basis of the investment lay in the fees that were expected to

come back to the company and consultants through their association with the “next big thing.” Treacy was giving some eighty speeches a year, and his fee had jumped up to \$30,000 per talk from \$25,000. The importance of these books was further illustrated by reports that they were ghostwritten to ensure maximum effect. The allegations backfired on CSC Index. The *New York Times* re-jigged its bestseller list and also took a contract away from CSC Index. The next year Champy, whose book *Re-Engineering Management* was also implicated in the scandal, left the company. The firm, which had six hundred consultants at its peak, was liquidated in 1999. Its rise and fall was a symptom of a business that had become dependent upon staying ahead of the latest fashion.²⁸

Escaping Competition

Was it the case that the road to success meant emulating the methods of those who were already successful? Precisely because their techniques were well known it was likely that following them would result in diminishing returns. Like the military concern with the operational art, it offered little by itself if put in the service of a flawed strategy. This was why Michael Porter questioned whether Japanese firms had any strategy at all—at least as he understood the term, that is, as a means to a unique competitive position. The Japanese advance during the 1970s and 1980s, he argued, was not the result of superior strategy but of superior operations. The Japanese managed to combine lower cost and superior quality and then imitated each other. But that approach, he noted, was bound to be subject to diminishing marginal returns as it became harder to squeeze more productivity out of existing factories and others caught up by improving the efficiency of their operations. Cutting costs and product improvements could be easily emulated and so left the relative competitive position unchanged. In fact, “hypercompetition” left everyone worse off (except perhaps the consumers). For Porter, a sustainable position required relating the company to its competitive environment. Outperformance required a difference that could be preserved.²⁹

The problems facing companies trying to maintain a competitive advantage when everyone was trying to improve along the same metric was described as the “Red Queen effect.” It was named after the line in *Alice Through the Looking Glass* with which this chapter opened. This was originally the name of a hypothesis used by evolutionary biologists to describe an arms race between predators and prey, a zero-sum game between species, none of which could ever win.³⁰ In the business context, it tended to be used

as more of a race between similar entities. So, for example, early and striking gains might be made by saving time on standard processes, but soon others would catch up and gains would become increasingly marginal. The comparison was with a war of attrition. By focusing solely on operational effectiveness the result would be mutual destruction, until somehow the competition was stopped, often by means of consolidation through mergers.³¹

If the main arena was full of increasingly worn and wan warriors desperately trying to land blows on equally exhausted competitors as they dismissed the walking wounded and tripped over company corpses, then the logic was to find a less crowded, less competitive, and much more profitable place. The history of business after all was one of the rise and fall of whole sectors and of companies within them. It was an arena marked by instability. Of the original S&P 500 companies in 1957, for example, only seventy-four were still on the list thirty years later. Much management strategy literature was addressed to those in charge of existing companies, whereas in practice the most important innovations often came with new companies, which grew with new products. As noted by W. Chan Kim and Renee Mauborgne, there were “no permanently excellent companies, just like there are no permanently excellent industries.” For this reason they argued that the hopeless firms were likely to be those competing without end in the “red oceans” instead of moving out to the blue oceans where they might “create new market space that is uncontested.” Those who failed to do so would go the way of many past companies and simply disappear or be swallowed up. They argued that the “strategic move” should be the unit of analysis rather than the company although they did not suggest that blue oceans were only found by new companies.

Kim and Mauborgne contrasted business with military strategy. The military was bound to focus in a fight “over a given piece of land that is both limited and constant,” while in the case of industry the “market universe” was never constant. Confusing their metaphors somewhat, they therefore argued that accepting red oceans meant accepting “the key constraining factors of war,” which were “limited terrain and the need to beat an enemy to succeed,” while failing to capitalize on the special advantage the business world offered of being able to “create new market space that is uncontested.”³² If their theory really depended on this idea of military strategy as being solely about battle, then it was off to a poor start. We have charted in this book how the desire to avoid battle except on the most favorable terms animated much military strategy. There was also a similar impulse at work here, the belief that the unimaginative plodders would stick with the most simplistic formulas, creating opportunities for the bold and the visionary to gain the

advantage. Though Kim and Mauborgne acknowledged that red oceans were sometimes unavoidable, and that even blue oceans might eventually turn red, they made it clear that they found red ocean strategy fundamentally uninteresting. And here they fell exactly in line with the tradition in military strategy that sought to escape the brutal logic of battle and urged the application of superior intelligence to achieve political objectives while avoiding slaughter. There was the same infatuation with dichotomy, as if the choice was always to go one way or the other—direct/indirect, annihilation/exhaustion, attrition/maneuver, red ocean/blue ocean.

It was rarely denied that the orthodox route might at times have to be followed, but there was normally a clear implication that this could never satisfy the truly creative. As with so much writing on military strategy, the best way was illustrated by examples of success from companies that had transformed themselves and their industries, whether through meticulous plan, an empowered workforce, lateral thinking, bold re-engineering, or innovative design. The failures tended to be those who had stuck with orthodoxy, drifted in complacency, or moved from one crisis to another without ever getting a grip.

In an appendix to their book, Kim and Mauborgne developed a more analytical distinction between the red and blue oceans, now described as structuralist and the reconstructionist strategies. The structuralist approach derived from industrial organization theory, with Porter its most famous proponent. It was “environmentally determinist” because it took the market structure as given and thus posed the strategic challenge of competing for a known customer base. To succeed meant addressing the supply side. This meant doing whatever competitors did but better, relying on either differentiation or low cost. Sufficient resources might result in a form of victory, but the competition was essentially redistributive in that the share gained by one would be lost by another, which led to an attritional logic. The theory assumed exogenous limits. By contrast, the reconstructionist approach was derived from endogenous growth theory, which claimed that the ideas and actions of individual players could change the economic and industrial landscape. Such a strategy would suit an organization with an innovative bent and sensitivity to the risks of missing future opportunities. This addressed the demand side by using innovative techniques to create new markets. Those following a reconstructionist strategy would not be bound by the existing boundaries of the market. Such boundaries existed “only in managers’ minds,” so with an imaginative leap new markets might be identified. A new market space could be created through a deliberate effort. The wealth was new, and need not be taken from a competitor.³³

In a later article, Kim and Mauborgne developed the distinction further, identifying the importance of not only a value proposition that would attract buyers but also a profit proposition so that money could be made, and lastly a people proposition to motivate those within the organization to work for or with the company. From this they defined strategy as “the development and alignment of the three propositions to either exploit or reconstruct the industrial and economic environment in which an organization operates.” If these propositions were out of alignment—a great value proposition but no way of making a profit or a demotivated staff—then the result would be failure. Only at the top of the organization, with a senior executive able to take a holistic view, could the propositions be developed. On this basis they argued that “strategy can shape structure.” The title marked the shift from Chandler, whose formulation was about the effect of strategy on internal organization, to the new quest to use strategy to change the external environment.³⁴

This takes us back to Ansoff’s distinction between strategy as a relationship to the environment and strategy as decision-making with imperfect information. The broad thrust of business strategy came under the first heading. The second more campaigning form of strategy, which dominated the military literature, was put in a more subordinate position, a challenge of implementation. Porter argued that the environment shaped and limited a business’s strategic options; Kim and Mauborgne claimed that these limits could be transcended through imagination and innovation. Porter claimed that the competition could be beaten by either differentiation or price; Kim and Mauborgne claimed that it was better still to develop products in areas where there was no competition, but they then had to develop a business case and have the staff to make it work.

This view of strategy as a general orientation toward the environment offered a framework for evaluating all other endeavors within the organization. Strategy of this sort had to be long term, and it might have the elements of a plan, with an anticipated sequence of events geared to an ultimate goal. The strategy could be much looser than that, however, setting out a number of goals with some sense of priorities, available resources, and preferred means, maintaining considerable flexibility to allow for changing circumstances. How well either approach would work would depend on the nature of the environment. The more stable the less the freedom to maneuver and so less scope for a strategy of any sort other than one of internal adaption. Even a reconstructionist strategy would still be affected by responses from potential competitors who might appreciate what was going on or other actors who might be able to influence the demand for new products.

Such theories still lacked a formulation as compelling as Clausewitz's portrayal of the dynamic interaction of politics, violence, and chance. There was not even a concept comparable to Clausewitz's friction, although executives were always likely to experience their own versions of the fog of war. There were few incentives to dwell on such matters in a literature increasingly infused with promotions of particular strategic nostrums as the author's unique product. The promise was of success following a true interpretation of these nostrums according to circumstances, and the will to see it through. The tendency therefore was to play down the unforeseeable factors that could frustrate the best laid plans, whether a rogue calculation in product design, a misjudged advertisement, sudden fluctuations in exchange rates, or a terrible accident. Moments could arise in business as in politics when long-term aspirations had to be put to one side in a desperate struggle for survival, as a reliable market evaporated or development process failed to deliver or debts were called in. At such moments, priorities would need to be clarified, help sought wherever it could be found, and exceptional demands made of the organization. Other types of events might require no more than mid-course corrections or a reappraisal of one element of the overall approach. Knowledge of a coming event—such as a presentation to investors, a product launch, or a meeting with customers—could raise issues that had hitherto been neglected or illuminate aspects of the changing environment that had been missed before.

The influence of equilibrium models from classical economics on business strategy remained strong, while alternative concepts of non-linearity, chaos, and complex adaptive systems, though picked up by military strategists, were less in evidence. An article by Eric Beinhocker pointed to the challenge. An open system constantly in flux, shaped and reshaped by many agents acting independently, could seem more relevant to companies than a closed system tending to equilibrium. For example, a characteristic of complex adaptive systems was described as “punctuated equilibrium,” referring to when times of relative calm and stability are interrupted by stormy restructuring periods. At such time, those whose strategies and skills were geared to the stable periods risked sudden obsolescence. Those who survived were likely to have prepared to adapt even if they could not be sure what adaptations would be required. Strategy, therefore, could not be based on a “focused line of attack—a clear statement of where, how and when to compete,” but instead on preparations to perform well in a variety of future environments. Small organizations with relatively few parts were unlikely to adapt as well as those with more parts and a larger repertoire of responses to new situations, but after a certain point the capacity to adapt would fall off as response

times shortened. There was a new balance to be struck, between complete resistance to change on the one hand and oversensitivity to shifts in the environment on the other, between stasis and chaos.³⁵

A strategy could never really be considered a settled product, a fixed reference point for all decision-making, but rather a continuing activity, with important moments of decision. Such moments could not settle matters once and for all but provided the basis for moving on until the next decision. In this respect, strategy was the basis for getting from one state of affairs to another, hopefully better, state of affairs. Economic models might find ways of describing this dynamic but were less helpful when it came to guidance on how to cope.

*I learned a great deal about military history and Confucian metaphors.
But the only practical advice that we were given was that every company
should send teams of people from different disciplines to country hotels
every year to think about the future.*

—Participant in a fifteen-part course on business strategy given
by a leading name in the field, quoted by John Micklethwait
and Adrian Wooldridge.

WE NOW NEED to follow the second strand in management scholarship, drawn more from sociology than economics, which was inclined from the start to consider human beings as social actors and organizations as bundles of social relationships. Although this strand had a separate course, there were overlaps with the economic strand in the challenge to managerialism and in the propensity to follow fashion. It was influenced by the counterculture of the 1960s in two respects. The first was distaste for bureaucratic rigidity and hierarchy. This challenged the processes of rationalization and bureaucratization, arguing that a new and more enriching form of organization needed to be devised. The second was the influence of postmodernism, not only in the critique of the modernist forms of rationalist bureaucracy but also in offering a completely new way of considering human affairs.

The critical anti-managerialist literature of the 1950s presented a monolithic, homogenized dystopian vision, only one step short of George Orwell's *1984*. The elites of large corporations were described as presiding over armies of white-collar workers, formed in their own bland—and obedient—image. During the 1960s and 1970s, however, demographic trends and lifestyle choices worked against conformity. The new businesses based on information and communication technologies often seemed to celebrate relaxed workplace practices and freethinking rather than crude hierarchy. Moreover there was a better anthropological understanding of organizations, the complex social formations that developed within and between individual units, and the incentives for individuals to develop practices that satisfied their needs as much as those of the organization for which they were supposed to be working.

The human relations school provided the foundations for this work, but it moved on after the war and turned into a rich field of organizational studies. Once organizations began to be viewed as social systems in their own right rather than as means to some management goal, questions arose not only about how this insight could lead to greater efficiency—which had been the concern of Elton Mayo and Chester Barnard—but how organizations could be arranged to make for a more fulfilling life for the workforce. This also fit in with a trend for individual pathologies to be explained by reference to their social settings. Structures that encouraged harmony, solidarity, and support should also therefore promote general well-being. An example of this was the book by the influential British social psychologist, James Brown, who after his experiences in the army and industry had concluded that mental illness was more of a social than a biological problem. He argued that organizations should be judged by their social as much as their technical and economic efficiency.¹

Douglas McGregor's *The Human Side of Enterprise* opened with the question, "What are your assumptions (implicit as well explicit) about the most effective way to manage people?"² He offered two alternative theories. Under Theory X, which had developed with the factory shop floor, the presumption was that people disliked work and preferred direction rather than initiative, and so they must be controlled by means of threats and rewards. Under Theory Y, individuals wished for fulfillment and responsibility, and if offered the chance, they would commit themselves more thoroughly to the organization. He developed these ideas while on the staff at MIT and then had a chance to put them into practice as president of Antioch College. While he found support for his theory, the experience of coping with fractious students and faculty convinced him of the need for active leadership. He had believed, he later recalled, "that a leader could operate successfully as a kind of adviser to his organization. I thought I could avoid being a 'boss' . . . I hoped to duck

the unpleasant necessity of making difficult decisions...I finally began to realize that a leader cannot avoid the exercise of authority any more than he can avoid responsibility for what happens to his organization.”³ He did not, however, reject his more humanistic approach to management or embrace authoritarianism. While critics might have worried that the dichotomy between Theory X and Theory Y was too sharp, and that actual practice would be contingent on circumstances, McGregor appeared as a champion of consent against coercion, the democratic against the autocratic, the active against the passive.

Herbert Simon’s ideas of bounded rationality encouraged a realistic assessment of how managers actually went about their business.⁴ Another organizational psychologist, Karl Weick, challenged standard models in his book *The Social Psychology of Organizing* by demonstrating how uncoordinated and apparently chaotic systems could nonetheless prove adaptable when faced with the unexpected—more so than systems geared to assumptions of linearity. Weick drew on a range of disciplines, and introduced into the lexicon concepts such as “loose-coupling” (a distance and lack of responsiveness between individual parts of an organization created a form of adaptability), “enactment” (how structures and events are brought into existence by individual actions), and “sensemaking” (the processes by which people give meaning to experiences). Sensemaking was necessary because individuals must operate in inherently uncertain and unpredictable environments (“equivocality”). There were a variety of ways individuals could make sense of things, and his work focused on the different forms communication could take within an organization, notably in the face of external shocks. Weick’s theories were, however, complex and did not offer the easiest read. His definition of an organization, for example, was “the resolving of equivocality in an enacted environment by means of interlocked behaviors in conditionally related processes.”⁵

Business Revolutionaries

The idea that management should focus on the softer side of organizational life came to be developed and promoted by two McKinsey analysts, Tom Peters and Robert Waterman. The starting point was the pressure felt by McKinsey’s in the late 1970s to come up with a credible response to Henderson’s Boston Consulting Group. Peters, who had recently returned from completing a Ph.D. at Stanford in organization theory, was asked to work on a project out of the San Francisco office that addressed “organization effectiveness” and “implementation issues.” At the time McKinsey’s was

still working largely with Chandler's concept of structure following strategy. At Stanford, Peters had been influenced by the work of Simon and Weick, both of whom challenged simple models of rational strategy formation and decision-making. He was joined by Waterman, who was also heavily influenced by Weick ("mesmerized," according to Peters), and wanted to reshape the way McKinsey's thought about organizations. One weekend with Tony Athos of the Harvard Business School and another McKinsey's consultant, Richard Pascale, who had been working on the success of Japanese firms, they developed what came to be known as the "7-S framework." Athos insisted—correctly, as it turned out—that any model had to be alliterative. A memorable shape was also required, in this case demonstrating, in contrast to the idea that strategy drives structure, that no a priori assumption could be made about which of the seven would make the difference at a particular time. The seven S's were structure, strategy, systems, style, skills, staff, and the somewhat awkward "superordinate goals."

The model was launched in a 1980 article. "At its most powerful and complex," the authors suggested, "the framework forces us to concentrate on interactions and fit. The real energy required to re-direct an institution comes when all the variables in the model are aligned."⁶

Athos and Pascale used the model specifically in a Japanese context. They argued that the Japanese scored on the softer side of management, by developing a sense of common purpose and culture in ways that American management had forgotten, if it had ever known.⁷ A translated book, originally published in 1975, by Kenichi Ohmae, who had been head of McKinsey's Tokyo office, explained how strategy in Japan would not come from a large analytical department, fully formed in terms of rational, structured steps, but as something more ambiguous and intuitive, relying on a key figure with a grasp of the market whose ideas could be grasped in terms of the organization's culture.⁸

The most important book to emerge using the model was Peters and Waterman's *In Search of Excellence*.⁹ Their book was presented as an answer to a straightforward question: what makes an excellent company? Possible candidates were identified by what appeared to be a sophisticated methodology. Sixty-two companies that appeared fairly successful were evaluated according to six performance criteria. The forty-three truly successful companies were those that were above the fiftieth percentile in four of the six performance metrics for twenty consecutive years. These were then studied in more detail, with key executives being interviewed. Out of this they distilled eight shared keys to excellence: a bias for action, customer focus, entrepreneurship, productivity through people, value-oriented CEOs, sticking to the

knitting (that is, do what you know well), keeping things simple and lean, and simultaneously centralized and decentralized (that is, tight centralized control combined with maximum individual autonomy).¹⁰

Twenty years after publication, Peters acknowledged that the research that had gone into the book had been unsystematic though he remained convinced by the message.¹¹ The book was, he claimed, “an inflection point—a punctuation mark—that signaled the end of one era and the beginning of another.” The target was not so much the Japanese as the American management model. Peters described his motivation at the time and since as being “genuinely, deeply, sincerely, and passionately pissed off!” His targets included Peter Drucker, because he encouraged “hierarchy and command-and-control, top-down business operation” and organizations in which everyone knew their place, and Robert McNamara, besotted by systems at the Pentagon which had led to people being “driven out of the equation.” A third target was Xerox Corporation, where he had worked as a consultant, which to Peters demonstrated all that was wrong with the modern corporation: “the bureaucracy, the great strategy that never got implemented, the slavish attention to numbers rather than to people, the reverence for MBAs.” He therefore saw the book as challenging “Management 101” based on Taylorism, reinforced by Drucker, and implemented by McNamara. He objected in particular to the bean-counting mentality focused entirely on numbers and finance. “The numerative, rationalist approach to management is right enough to be dangerously wrong, and it has arguably already led us astray.”¹²

Waterman provided a slightly different, although not contradictory, account. In an article he coauthored, published in 1999, claims were made about the role of the book in translating the key themes in organizational studies, to the point of describing it as an accessible version of Weick.¹³ They addressed the issue of whether it was possible to simplify without being simplistic. Even if the situation demanded complex theories, managers would not find them interesting and so good theory would not affect practice. The article claimed immodestly that *In Search of Excellence* succeeded by saying “pretty much everything there was to say about behavior in organizations and got it right, by virtue of the experts cited.” Ideas of learning organizations, bounded rationality, narratives, and agenda-setting could all be found, with key theorists getting mentioned. Yet a description of the key messages suggested a set of values as much as scholarly findings, for example that “it’s OK for guys to have feelings”; “don’t take yourself too seriously”; it’s “not your fault” if the world does not look neat and tidy; and “people who espouse rational models of decision-making want you to feel responsible for

the disorder in the world, but don't for a moment let them get away with that silliness."

Whether or not this was truly an act of translating academic theory for practitioner consumption, the account of the book's gestation did reveal the effort that went into ensuring its appeal. There were some two hundred briefings to managerial audiences before publication. "During this process it became apparent that if the examples were retold in the form of a story then they compelled attention and promoted retention." Their audiences were averse to "numbers, charts and graphs," and also to "mid-level abstraction." Feedback also suggested that the original twenty-two attributes seemed too many, so they were whittled down to eight. The original number was seen as "too confusing not to mention also antithetical to the basic premise that it isn't as complex as you think if you pay attention to people!"

The book's positive message (America did have excellent companies) and uplifting prescription for success (work closely with your staff and customers and do not get bogged down with committees and reports) was a runaway success. It was the first business book to become a national bestseller, and eventually sold well over six million copies. Neither author stayed long at McKinsey's. Peters, resenting the patronizing attitude of the New York headquarters toward the marginal endeavors at the San Francisco office, had left before the book was published and was soon in demand as an inspirational, though expensive, speaker. His style, in speaking and writing, was dramatic and extravagant. The message and its ebullient communication were more important than the method. Whatever the original sources, *In Search of Excellence* relied on anecdote and secondary material rather than hard research.¹⁴ It had failed to identify a reliable basis for sustainable growth or even survival. The excellent companies often struggled: soon after the book was published, a third were reported to be in financial difficulties.¹⁵

Instead of numbers, bureaucracy, control, and hard metrics, Peters and Waterman argued for people, customers, and relationships, which were much softer but could explain how things actually got done and what was accomplished. Business should be about heart, beauty, and art—not some "disembodied bloodless enterprise" but "the selfless pursuit of an ideal." As with most revolutionaries, the creative and destructive were never too far apart. In *Liberation Management*, an explicitly countercultural title, Peters wrote: "R-I-P. Rip, shred, tear, mutilate, destroy that hierarchy."¹⁶ In 2003 he asserted that "a cool idea is by definition a Direct Frontal Attack on the Holy Authority of Today's Bosses."¹⁷ Peters was undoubtedly a Theory Y man. A constant theme in his many books was to emphasize the positive side of work and argue that companies that cherished and encouraged this

side would do better than those who suppressed their employee's creativity by trapping them in doleful hierarchies and assessing them against soulless metrics. Beyond that there was not a lot of consistency. He made the point himself when opening his 1987 book *Thriving on Chaos* by observing that there were "no excellent companies."

He was hardly alone in pointing to the need for flatter structures; units with more autonomy; and attention to quality, service, and innovation—not just to cost. Nor did he even claim much influence for himself. He opened a 2003 book proclaiming himself "madder than hell." He had "been screaming and yelling and shouting about bankrupt business practices for 25 or 30 years...mostly to no avail." Notably this book began with the army (about to go into Iraq but not yet experiencing real difficulties) as an innovative organization. He had already shown an interest in John Boyd and now he embraced the revolution in military affairs with its combination of "greater battlefield flexibility and greater information intensity," the decentralization and networking, the pursuit of indirection in strategy. He did not note the additional need for an operational environment that would allow the army to play to its strengths, rather than have the irritating "asymmetry" of an opponent playing to different rules.

Peters could express the frustrations of the functionary stuck in a cubicle, as he had been the neglected bright spark in a secondary regional office, too far down the management food chain to be able to exercise influence and put right all those things self-evidently going wrong. Much of his success was in expounding on the need for more humane and "cool" enterprises in countless speeches and seminars "with the exuberance and evangelistic zeal," according to the *Economist*, "of a 19th-century cough-syrup salesman."¹⁸ Others spoke with both awe and alarm at how he turned management theory into something "so personal, so spiritual, so impractical."¹⁹ This quasi-religious theme was the reason why Peters, and other leading management thinkers, came to be known as "gurus" (from the Sanskrit word for a teacher who could introduce light where there was darkness). Drucker, who came to be retrospectively described as the first of this class, disliked the term, observing sniffily that "guru" was used "because 'charlatan' is too long to fit into a headline."²⁰

Gary Hamel had similar targets to Peters and a similar commanding presence at high-priced seminars. He worked in business schools and as a strategic consultant, and was regularly named as one of the top—if not the top—gurus. His focus, at least initially, was much more explicitly on strategy. His starting point was the transformation of the business environment as a result of deregulation, the decline of protectionist pressures, and the impact of information technologies. These opened up markets and

introduced a new fluidity, requiring companies to be very clear about what they were good at but also agile enough to see opportunities for new types of markets and different sorts of business relationships. Those who stuck to the old models were doomed to fail; those who embraced the new had a chance.

Hamel originally gained attention with a series of articles with C. K. Prahalad, a professor at the University of Michigan, where Hamel had been a doctoral student. Together they attacked past strategic constructs, mocking the various qualities adumbrated by the consultancies and the business schools and suggesting that companies were trying to cope with the Japanese challenge by looking at surface features rather than the underlying concepts from which their competitors derived their “resolution, stamina, or inventiveness.” They cited Sun Tzu: “All men can see the tactics whereby I conquer, but what none can see is the strategy out of which great victory is evolved.” From strategic intent, once identified, could be derived a sense of direction, discovery, and destiny.²¹ Their notion of “core competence,” which suggested something more straightforward than turned out to be the case, was described as the “collective learning” in the organization. This was not so much about doing one thing well but about coordinating diverse skills and integrating streams of technology.²² In a 1994 article, they claimed that the discontinuity in business practice was now so great that the various strategic concepts developed during the previous couple of decades—by Porter, for example—were no longer valid. They had assumed stable industrial structures, focused on business units, relied on economic analysis, and separated strategic analysis from its execution, which was presented as an organizational matter. Instead, Hamel and Prahalad argued for an approach that recognized the major transitions in industrial structure then underway, acknowledged the interplay of economics with politics and public policy, and involved those charged with executing strategies in their original design.²³

Hamel’s explicitly revolutionary turn came two years later. Although the medium was the *Harvard Business Review*, Hamel invoked Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, Gandhi, and even Saul Alinsky. Corporations, he argued, were reaching the limits of incrementalism. Everything now was at the margins, so there might only be a bit extra market share and a bit less cost, a bit faster response to customers and a bit more quality.²⁴ Hamel assumed his audience would not be satisfied with just getting by. They were unlikely to be the rule makers, the big companies who were the creators and protectors of industrial orthodoxy, but they would not be satisfied with being mere rule takers, those following behind for whom life was bound to be hard. Better to be among the rule breakers, the “malcontents, the radicals, the industry revolutionaries.” They could overturn the industrial order because

they were shackled “neither by convention nor by respect for precedent.” The various trends that had opened up the international economy, coming under the heading of “globalization,” meant that this was the time for the revolutionary. To those managers clinging to the status quo he raised the specter of being left behind in the revolutionary tide. In this vision, the only role for strategy was to create the revolution. “Strategy is revolution. Everything else is tactics.”

To be revolutionary, it was necessary to rethink the business. In this respect he echoed Mintzberg’s castigation of strategic planning, which took the boundaries for granted and failed to look for the opportunities in new, uncontested space. With an elitism that hampered any capacity for discovery, the planners harnessed “only a small proportion of an organization’s creative potential.” By not engaging the lower reaches of the organization, senior management encouraged reaction, as change became a “synonym for something nasty,” something to be feared, imposed from above. So strategy-making had to be democratic. This was where Hamel quoted Alinsky, who had decried elitist planning as anti-democratic, as “a monumental testament to lack of faith in the ability and intelligence of the masses of people to think their way through to the successful solution of their problems.”²⁵

Hamel did not deviate from his core theme, that the old strategic model was as outdated as the business model it sought to help. His 2000 book, *Leading the Revolution*,²⁶ developed what had become familiar themes but with the motivational, inspirational style expected of a business guru, suggesting that the only limits to what they could accomplish lay in their imaginations. This was not a book, he insisted, about “doing better” or for “people who want to tinker at the margins.” Instead, it was an “impassioned plea to reinvent management as we know it—to rethink the fundamental assumptions we have about capitalism, organizational life, and the meaning of work.”

Unfortunately, he adopted Enron as his company of choice. Enron had transformed itself over the 1990s from a pipeline company to an energy trader, using its expertise and muscle to buy and sell contracts. Hamel celebrated Enron as a company that had “institutionalized a capacity for perpetual innovation” and as “an organization where thousands of people see themselves as potential revolutionaries.” He became chair of the Enron Advisor Council. Enron’s management had a suitably populist rhetoric (“power to the people”) and claimed to have empowered its employees, describing them all as fellow revolutionaries.²⁷ It adopted Hamel-type themes, including likening its quest for free markets with the civil rights campaign of the 1960s, and challenged all conventional assumptions about how businesses should operate. Enron was celebrated as having found a way to extraordinary profits through

forms of integration and agility that had eluded others. But the company collapsed at the end of 2001, taking auditor Arthur Anderson down with it. The source of its major profits was exposed as fraud, helped by deals of such complexity that nobody quite understood what was going on. It had made a political push for deregulation of energy markets, ready to accuse any external analyst who expressed doubts about its claims as being ideologically antagonistic. Hamel expunged Enron from the second edition of his book and could argue that he was by no means alone in being caught out by the elaborate efforts undertaken by Enron's senior management to hide its debt and its vulnerability to a deteriorating trading position.²⁸

In a 2003 book, Hamel complained that companies were being driven by "the theorists and practitioners" who had invented the rules of "modern" management a century earlier. Contemporary managers were still beholden to the ideas of Frederick Taylor and Max Weber (whose ambivalent attitude toward bureaucracy Hamel was apparently unaware of). The old management model had become dysfunctional in a world where the need was for flexibility and creativity. Instead of the "stultifying" focus on the bureaucratic values of "control, precision, stability, discipline and reliability,"²⁹ he sought innovation, adaptability, passion, and ideology. Reflecting the traditional romantic reaction against rationalism he urged organizations to be more like communities, dependent "on norms, values, and the gentle prodding of one's peers," offering emotional rather than financial rewards.³⁰ Martin Luther King's most famous speech was invoked, as Hamel described his own dream in which "the drama of change is not accompanied by the wrenching trauma of a turnaround . . . An electric current of innovation pulses through every activity . . . where the renegades always trump the reactionaries." What he was careful not to do was predict the future of management. His aim, he insisted, was "to help you invent it." A later book, which addressed directly questions of norms and values in business, captured the underlying complaint: "There's nothing wrong with utilitarian values like profit, advantage and efficiency, but they lack nobility." Organizations needed an uplifting sense of purpose and individuals an allegiance to the "sublime and the majestic" and a cause greater than oneself.³¹ Although Hamel began writing about strategy, he had veered into broad social theory. The analysis had become almost a parody of Theory X and Theory Y, pushing dichotomies to their limits, community versus bureaucracy, renegades versus reactionaries, innovation and change versus stability and order, emotional rewards versus financial rewards.

The underlying propositions could be rephrased in terms of classic radical thought, demanding the upending of obsolescent hierarchies so that shackles could be removed, productive energy and imagination could be released, and

all could realize their potential. But this was always a strange revolution, certainly more bourgeois than proletarian. As it was never a real movement, it lacked institutional expression. It reflected the counterculture's revolt against rationalism and bureaucracy, a yearning for passion and the play of imagination, and the urge to trust in feelings and experience, assuming that the best things happened spontaneously. But, as with the counterculture, this was a false prospectus. It exaggerated the democratic possibilities of a business organization. There was also the same presumption that participatory democracy would not lead to reactionary and myopic policies but instead to the most progressive, in this case the sort that a sagacious strategic consultant might advise.

Work could be fun and exciting; full of challenge and innovation; with congenial, stimulating, and supportive colleagues; it could also include essential but boring tasks, pressing deadlines and tight budgets, angry customers and slipshod suppliers, irritating co-workers and myopic bosses. It was one thing to recognize the value of a workforce and regret that too much of it was left untapped; it was quite another to suggest that the inspired subordinate, with drive and imagination, could subvert power structures, recast cultures, and reshape institutional systems. Common sense argued for engaging employees earlier in company decisions and drawing upon the expertise of those actually running the key processes before overhauling them. Only at the top, however, was it possible to take an overview of all aspects of a company's activities, make authoritative decisions, allocate resources, and accept responsibility.

This is why corporate claims of higher purpose were often treated cynically. Occasional transformational change might be exciting, but too much could also be exhausting. Some calm and stability might be welcomed. Structure, discipline, and accountability were necessary for the innovative to make changes and then sustain them. Many employees would assume their senior management should work out the strategy and would prefer not to be badgered for new ideas that were then ignored. The need for an antidote to the soaring rhetoric of the gurus and the exaggerated claims of the consultants was reflected in the popularity of Scott Adams's subversive cartoon strip "Dilbert" with its world of persecuted engineers, fantasizing marketeers, stupid bosses, and greedy consultants. Consultants, Adams observed, "will ultimately recommend that you do whatever you're *not* doing now. Centralize whatever is decentralized. Flatten whatever is vertical. Diversify whatever is concentrated and divest everything that is not 'core' to the business." In Dilbert's world, companies needed strategies "so the employees will know what they don't do." Dilbert explained how he put together a strategy: "I collected

optimistic data, put it in the context of bad analogies, seasoned it with saliency bias...added herd instinct, a pinch of confirmation bias." When his company announced that it would abandon a strategy of making good products in favor of a "desperate strategy of mergers, business spin-offs, fruitless partnerships, and random reorganizations" and an accelerated "program of paying the good employees to leave," the stock price went up by three points.³²

If many remedies are prescribed for an illness, you may be certain that the illness has no cure.

—Anton Chekhov, *The Cherry Orchard*

THE QUESTION OF whether senior management really could give a business strategic direction was turned into one of the more influential dichotomies in the field, that between deliberate or emergent strategies. Henry Mintzberg, who was responsible for the most sustained challenge to the so-called design model of strategy, stressed the possibility of a continuing, intelligent learning response to a changing environment. In a seminal article with James Waters, Mintzberg urged that instead of considering strategy as a single product, handed over to others for implementation, it should be understood as a “pattern in a stream of decisions.” On this basis they distinguished between “intended” and “realized” strategy. If what was realized was intended then this was “deliberate”; patterns that were realized despite of or in the absence of intentions were “emergent.”

A deliberate strategy depended on the intentions disseminated in an organization being precise, so there could be no doubt about what was desired, and realizable. There could be no interference from any external force, whether the market, politics, or technology. Such a totally benign environment, or at least one where the problems could be anticipated and controlled, would be a “tall order.” By contrast, a perfectly emergent strategy would demonstrate

consistency in action in the absence of intention. While a total absence of intention was hard to imagine, the reference was to the idea of the environment imposing a pattern of decision, as if notional decision-takers could not help themselves in the face of the structural constraints and imperatives they faced. Innumerable small decisions taken throughout the organization could move it to an unanticipated place, to the surprise and possible consternation of senior management. In practice, the sharp distinction was between a strategy that involved central direction and control based on an original plan, a model which Mintzberg considered extremely unwise, and one that was about learning and adaption.¹

The idea of organizations being able to stick to an original plan in the face of uncertainty was easy enough to challenge. In some respect, all strategies were bound to be emergent. There was always a previous history, which had shaped the original plan, and even a strategy that had emerged and seemed to be working would at some point have to be addressed, if only because a particular goal had been reached. Mintzberg's main point therefore was about the need for the organization and its leadership to keep on learning. Just like the *mētis* of ancient Greece, this learning, flexibility, and responsiveness would be particularly important when an environment was "too unstable or complex to comprehend, or too imposing to defy." It was likely to require a degree of experimentation, or surrendering some control to those closest to situations who had the best information to develop realistic strategies. This was not to deny the importance of managers at times imposing their intentions and providing a sense of direction.

Mintzberg's careful conclusion was that "strategy formation walks on two feet, one deliberate, the other emergent." His heart, however, was clearly with the emergent, perhaps because it required more of the organization and was a surer test of its structures. An organization capable of benefiting from the experiences and insights of all its members should be in better shape than one where all the running had to be made by senior management. After the 2008 financial crisis, he bemoaned the consequences of "the depreciation in companies of community—people's sense of belonging to and caring for something larger than themselves." Human beings were social animals who could not "function effectively without a social system that is larger than ourselves." Communities were "the social glue that binds us together for the greater good." Admired companies managed to create this sense of community, and to this end he cited an article by the president of Pixar (an animated film production company) who attributed his studio's success to its "vibrant community where talented people are loyal to one another and their collective work, everyone feels that they are part of something extraordinary,

and their passion and accomplishments make the community a magnet for talented people coming out of schools or working at other places.”² Instead of the celebrated form of heroic egocentric leadership, an alternative sort was needed that was “personally engaged in order to engage others, so that anyone and everyone can exercise initiative.” This required shedding “individualist behavior and many of its short-term measures in favor of practices that promote trust, engagement, and spontaneous collaboration aimed at sustainability.”³

Learning Organizations

Mintzberg was by no means unique in celebrating “learning organizations.” One justification was organizational efficiency: those with a commitment to knowledge, mechanisms for renewal, and openness to the outside world should perform more effectively. Another was that organizational life should be an uplifting social and collective experience, “a group of people working together to collectively enhance their capacities to create results that they truly care about.”⁴ As individuals did the learning, a firm which aspired to be a learning organization “must teach its employees how to learn, and it must reward them for success in learning.”⁵ These twin objectives reflected the ambition of the human relations school. If work became a positive experience, a source of personal fulfillment, it could serve the organization by also serving the individual, marrying humanism with bureaucratic efficiency. This was reflected in the rhetoric of Peters and Hamel. Charles Handy, a British management consultant and another enthusiast for this approach, described a learning organization as being about “curiosity, forgiveness, trust, togetherness.”⁶

One book took these ideas to the extreme, advocating *Strategy without Design*. Rational, deliberate, strategy-making directed at specific goals was naïve, failing to grasp how actions reflected “invisible historical and cultural forces,” unaware of the impossibility of comprehending the whole or the foolishness of attempts to move entities around like chessboard pieces (the favorite image from the master strategist). In practice there were “too many contingencies, too many alternative limits, too many system influences, and the pursuit is too debilitating, for such an intellectualized picture ever to emerge fully.”⁷ By contrast Chia and Holt, acknowledging Liddell Hart, pointed to the “surprising efficacy of indirect action.” Action that is “oblique or deemed peripheral in relation to specific ends can often produce more dramatic and lasting effects than direct, focused action.”⁸ This alternative strategy was not

only unintelligible but also discussed without reference to power, deal-making, coercion, or coalition construction. The result was a postmodern version of Tolstoy, with barely perceptible everyday gestures moving big organizations in ways that nobody intended but could still come out right at the end. Rather than success being attributed to "the pre-existence of a deliberately planned strategy," it could be "traced indirectly as the cumulative effect of a whole plethora of coping actions initiated by a multitude of individuals, all seeking merely to respond constructively to the predicaments they find themselves in." The wise strategist was advised to avoid the temptation to control and to go with the organizational flow. Chia and Holt called this "strategic blandness," involving a "will-o'-the-wisp endurance that invites no opposition and assumes no domination; it exists only in the plenitude of as yet unrealized possibilities." The aim should be "to shy away from once fervid ambition and stringently held commitments and, instead, nurture a curiosity whose meandering enquiry moves through infatuation, temperance and indifference with equal passion."⁹ As "sensemaking," this left a lot to be desired. It was also some distance away from the more prosaic reality of organizational life for most people most of the time.

Management as Domination

Theories of strategy that lacked a theory of power were bound to mislead. With enthusiasm for organizations as learning and mutually supportive communities could come reluctance to address issues of power. If anything, organizational politics was deplored for its disruptive effects. Power plays by individuals promoting their own careers or just their pet projects generated bad feeling. This could be detrimental to overall efficiency as well as to morale. Power certainly could become an end in itself, a source of status and opportunities to boss others around. Nonetheless, it was also the case that without power it was hard to move organizations toward particular goals and little of value might be accomplished. With a grasp of power, bad decisions might be implemented too rigorously, but without such a grasp potentially good decisions might not be quite taken or followed through. Power structures within organizations, even more so than in states, would depend on personalities and culture, on social contacts as well as personnel contracts, on the reputation of particular units, and on the way budgets were put together and expenditures monitored. Addressing issues of power was not a strategy in itself but an unavoidable part of strategy. It meant considering how decisions might best be formed and implemented.

Jeffrey Pfeffer, one of the rare writers on organizations to make power his main focus, largely advised on the sources and exercise of power, emphasizing the importance of understanding the main players who need to be brought on board, acquiring positions on key committees, exercising a role over budgets and promotions, gaining allies and supporters, and learning how to frame issues to best advantage.¹⁰ A later book provided guidance on how to succeed with power in organizations, including advice to beware of the leadership literature, with its “prescriptions about following an inner compass, being truthful, letting inner feelings show, being modest and self-effacing, not behaving in a bullying or abusive way,” which explained how people wished the world to be rather than how it was.¹¹

Critics of the more optimistic views of management picked up on their naïveté about power. Helen Armstrong described the “learning organization” as a “Machiavellian subterfuge” to encourage workers in their own exploitation. The “prevalence of insecure job markets, contract and part-time work, outsourcing and downsizing is hardly conducive to feelings of empowerment for most workers.”¹² Even when there was evidence of shared meanings and values these were most likely to reflect the perspectives of senior management. What might be thought of as a benign culture could appear in a different light as a hegemonic project. Issues of power and ideology could not be avoided.¹³

This view formed part of a critical theory, influenced by postmodernism, that considered corporate strategy a natural target because it presented itself as a very modernist project, seeking to manipulate causes to achieve defined effects in a rational way. On this basis, strategy was an example of thinking that concealed more than it revealed in order to support established power structures. Individuals and what they said and did could not be understood outside of their social context, which was in turn reshaped by what they said and did. In one Foucault-inspired critique, reflecting a postmodern insurgency in British management schools, David Knights and Glenn Morgan challenged the idea of strategy as a set of rational techniques for managing complex businesses in a changing environment and instead proposed “focusing upon corporate strategy as a set of discourses and practices which transform managers and employees alike into subjects who secure their sense of purpose and reality by formulating, evaluating and conducting strategy.”¹⁴

In this strategy was not a general approach to the problems of management but a specific corporate ideology. Thus they asked: “If strategy is so important, how did business manage to survive so long without ‘consciously’ having a concept of strategy?” Somewhat oddly, given Foucault’s

own extensive references to strategy, they criticized early writers, such as Chandler, for imputing “strategic intent to the business world as if it existed prior to practitioners having subscribed explicitly to the discipline of strategy.” The crime, apparently, was for the academic to act as legislator, telling people what they really meant in a way which might be quite different from the actors’ “own discursive understanding of their actions.” This meant neglecting the interesting question of what people actually meant when they talked about strategy or whatever other descriptor they used for activity that an observer might consider to be strategic. Knights and Morgan argued that strategy only became important as the corporation had to explain what it was doing and why to internal and external audiences. It was about legitimizing the elite as much as deciding upon a course of action. The “discourse of corporate strategy” constituted “a field of knowledge and power which defines what the ‘real problems’ are within organizations and the parameters of the ‘real solutions’ to them.” It was a “technology of power,” enabling some actors while disabling others, and a source of “the problems it professes to resolve.” As such it might have been challenged by alternative discourses, for example, reflecting more instinctive and or less hierarchical approaches or else the indifference and cynicism prompted by top-down pronouncements. For the discourse of strategic management to have become so embedded was a “triumph.” It sustained and enhanced the prerogatives of management and gave them a sense of security, legitimized their exercise of power, identified those able to contribute to their discourse, and rationalized success and failure.

Stewart Clegg, Chris Carter, and Martin Kornberger, also representing the critical strand in British management theory, took this theme further. They argued that strategy of this type, especially in its manifestation as a corporate strategic plan, could be represented in Cartesian terms as an intelligent mind attempting to lead a dumb and submissive body or as a Nietzschean “will to power,” an attempt to control, predict, and dominate the future.¹⁵ This effort was, however, doomed. Strategic plans were often management fantasies, far exceeding organizational capabilities, with goals defined as if the future could be predicted. The effort was bound to fail because of the inevitable gaps between planning and implementation, means and ends, management and organization, order and disorder. Instead of managing these gaps, strategic planning actively generated and sustained them. The practice of strategic planning created “a system of divisions that constantly undermines and subverts the order that the strategic plan proposes.” It created an illusion of “an ordered and cosy realm, as a controllable inside, confronting a more or less chaotic outside, an exterior that constantly threatens its survival.

Strategic planning reinforces and deepens this gap: it ignores the complexities and potentialities of ‘disorganization.’”

This critique was directed at something of a straw man. Possibly in earlier decades senior managers had really believed in such an orderly and controllable interior world, and had been sustained in this belief by this comforting and ambitious ideology, manifested in a detailed plan, based on ultra-rationalist assumptions, passed down through the hierarchy, and prescribing behavior on almost Taylorist lines. In terms of the grip of economic theory on business schools, the idea that real businesses might try to work this way was not wholly preposterous. It lingered on, in a mild form, with “the balanced scorecard.” Actual management practice, however, suggested a much greater sense of insecurity and uncertainty. Management strategy had become a much more capacious umbrella, including a range of approaches. Some managers might approximate to this caricature but others would be seeking to draw staff into decision-making and were well aware of the distorting effects of attempts at detailed plans with fixed targets.

Fads and Fashions

Mintzberg et al’s influential *Strategy Safari* identified ten different approaches to the challenge of strategy. Elsewhere the concern was that the disagreements had become so numerous and “fractious” that “scholars despaired that [they] could not even come up with a logically coherent definition of the field.”¹⁶ Another described strategy as being in a “pre-paradigmatic state.”¹⁷ Yet another saw the source of confusion as a multiplicity of strategies rather than a single paradigm. The word *strategy* was being attached to every new initiative:

Strategy has become a catchall term used to mean whatever one wants it to mean. Business magazines now have regular sections devoted to strategy, typically discussing how featured firms are dealing with distinct issues, such as customer service, joint ventures, branding or e-commerce. In turn, executives talk about their “service strategy,” their “joint venture strategy,” their “branding strategy” or whatever kind of strategy is on their minds at a particular moment.¹⁸

John Kay observed in a skeptical overview that: “Probably the commonest sense in which the word strategy is employed today is as a synonym for expensive.”¹⁹

The proliferation of strategies had been both vertical, in the range of subsidiary activities given the label, and horizontal, in the range of both procedural and substantive prescriptions for relating to the environment. The 1980s and 1990s involved a dizzying sequence of grand ideas, the appearance of gurus such as Peters and Hamel, and the rise and fall of BPR. As a result, a new field of research developed around the proliferation of management fashions and fads. Their frequency and variety, the surrounding hype, and their short half-life prompted a degree of wonder at why they were taken at all seriously.²⁰ The management consumer was not confronted with a dominant paradigm but instead with cacophony and inconsistency, hints of unique keys to success that could be accessed by buying the book, attending the seminar, or—best of all—signing the consultancy contract. The ideas came thick and fast, tumbling over each other, the banal with the counterintuitive, genuine insights with implausible propositions, telling insights with dubious generalizations.

There were a variety of explanations for the phenomenon. Gurus helped the managers make sense of an uncertain world and provided a degree of predictability. They also offered an external authority to help legitimize what they were up to. Even the skeptics were anxious that they might be missing out on something, or that they might be perceived to be ignoring important developments. The succession of fads and fashions might have suggested something cynical and even random, but there was always the possibility of actual progress, as if some higher stage of management was really at hand. If so, the conscientious manager at least had to pay attention.²¹ Nor was it the case that all products were useless.²² Since Drucker first introduced management by objectives, certain techniques had been introduced that might once have been considered fads but were now considered generally helpful, such as SWOT analysis, the Boston matrix, or quality circles. Even with BPR the problem was in excessive radicalism, demanding too much at once and overstating the benefits. After the 1980s, it was the rare company that would not claim to be aspiring to excellence and quality, looking to encourage local initiative. One legacy was the regular insistence that senior managers were “passionate” about such matters.

The innovations most likely to endure were those that helped senior executives exert influence over the organization. Consider the example of the “balanced scorecard,” first introduced in a 1992 *Harvard Business Review* article by Robert Kaplan and David Norton. Financial returns, they argued, were an inadequate guide to how well a company was doing. A much broader and also realistic view of performance was required. They understood strategy as being a “set of hypotheses about cause and effect” and proposed that

by measuring key effects it should be possible to demonstrate whether or not a strategy was being properly implemented. Goals and appropriate measures should be developed, covering finance, the views of customers, internal organization, and the ability to innovate. This assumed that “people will adopt whatever behaviors and take whatever actions are necessary to arrive at those goals.” The advantages of the balanced scorecard were that it was easy to understand, staff could be involved in its construction, and it improved the information available to management. The key performance indicators (KPIs) would reflect, however, what could be measured—not necessarily what was important—and then become ends in themselves. Staff would meet the goals as measured even if there was no obvious benefit to the organization. Managers who relied solely on monitoring the indicators could be swamped by data that was hard to interpret, fail to understand the complex interactions between the different measures, and still miss vital signs of dysfunction.²³ Without being clear on what needs to be done and why, Stephen Bungay pointed out, “the fetishization of the metrics is a near certainty.” Though the scorecard could be a way of communicating intent, it was still fundamentally a control system.²⁴

A study of sixteen management fashions from over five decades suggested that over time they had become “broader-based but shorter-lived and more difficult for upper management to implement.”²⁵ When a particular management technique was adopted, few effects on organizational performance could be discerned. Nonetheless, adoption did influence corporate reputation and even executive pay. The research strengthened “previous arguments that firms do not necessarily choose the technologically best or most efficient techniques but, instead, seek external legitimacy by adopting widely accepted and approved practices.”²⁶ Other research suggested that the new ideas that seemed to catch on were considered to be capturing “the zeitgeist or ‘spirit of the times.’”²⁷ An analysis of the conceptual development of the word *strategy* gathered ninety-one definitions for the period from 1962 to 2008. Looking at the way nouns were used, the authors observed an abrupt drop in *planning*, a rise and then steady decline in *environment*, with *competition* showing a steady increase. While the verb *achieve* was a constant, over time *formulate* gave way to *relate*.²⁸

This interest in the role of fads and fashions in enterprises reflected awareness that strategy could not be considered as a product, something that in the form of an input might give direction to an organization or as an output that might order relations with the external environment, but as a continuing practice, the everyday work of many people (not just those at the top) within an organization. Strategy was not the property of organizations but

something that people did. This led to the idea of “strategy as practice.” This was a natural continuation of the work of organizational sociologists and psychologists, such as Weick, with their interest in the disparate experiences and aspirations of individuals bound together by the demands of employment and developing social forms that were more or less creative or destructive, both for them and the broader purpose the organization was supposed to serve. It could bring together the macro-level of the institution with the micro-level of the individual with guidelines for observational research.²⁹

One unfortunate consequence of the focus on strategy as practice was to encourage the use of the verb *strategizing*, meaning “to do strategy.” It also encouraged the idea that this was a ubiquitous activity, “to the extent that it is consequential for the strategic outcomes, directions, survival and competitive advantage of the firm.” This therefore involved multiple actors at all levels.³⁰ Strategy “practitioners,” including managers and consultants, would draw on the established strategic “practices” particular to their organizations, turning these into a specific strategic “praxis” as they engaged with others to generate something called strategy, which in turn reshaped the organizational practices.³¹ This challenged the idea of strategy as a deliberate, top-down process that was the purview of senior management. As soon as questions of implementation came in, it was evident that micro-level decisions could influence the macro-level performance. This was at the heart of the familiar critique of the strategic planning model. That was not the same, however, as organizations effectively being managed from the bottom up. The decisions of senior managers, for better or worse, more or less influenced by what they understood to be the character of organizational practices, were still normally much more significant than those further down the hierarchy thanks to their reach and the resources at their disposal. Strategy as practice was important when it came to understanding organizations, but so too was strategy as power.

Back to the Narrative

What about strategy as “sensemaking”? If there was one persistent theme it was the attraction of a good story to help convey the most important points. This was evident in Taylor’s story of the hard-working Schmidt, Mayo’s of the Hawthorne experiment, or Barnard’s unemployed in New Jersey. It was behind the whole reliance on the case study method, underscoring the view that the best way to understand the challenges of management was to try to tell a tale around a specific set of circumstances. In much of the organizational

literature, as a methodological contrast to rational actor theory, stories were elevated to a vital source of organizational communication and effectiveness.³² This could draw on psychological research which confirmed their importance as ways of explaining the past but also convincing people about future courses of action. With businesses no longer run on military lines and employees expecting to be persuaded rather than just instructed, managers were urged to use stories to help make their case. "Gone are the command-and-control days of executives managing by decree," observed Jay Conger in 1998, for now businesses were run "largely by cross-functional teams of peers and populated by baby boomers and their Generation Y offspring, who show little tolerance for unquestioned authority."³³ "Stories are the latest fad to have hit the corporate communications industry," observed columnist Lucy Kellaway. "Experts everywhere are waking up to the something that any child could tell them: that a story is easier to listen to and much easier to remember than a dry string of facts and propositions."³⁴

Stories made it possible to avoid abstractions, reduce complexity, and make vital points indirectly, stressing the importance of being alert to serendipitous opportunities, discontented staff, or the one small point that might ruin an otherwise brilliant campaign. Stories were to the fore in Weick's account of sensemaking, allowing "the clarity achieved in one small area to be extended to and imposed on an adjacent area that is less orderly."³⁵ Peters and Waterman came to appreciate through successive briefings that their ideas worked with business audiences as stories but not as charts and diagrams. They described how their excellent companies were "unashamed collectors and tellers of stories...rich tapestries of anecdote, myth, and fairy tale." Many business strategy books were essentially collections of stories, each intended to underline some general point.

Stories could come in all shapes and sizes: innocent and unstructured, as well as deliberate and purposeful; about technical specifications or perhaps the antics of a senior manager; elaborate or barely an anecdote; designed for regular re-telling or heard once and then forgotten; intended for a privileged few, and thus sharp and to the point, or knowingly prepared for multiple audiences, and so carefully ambiguous. Narratives could be found in minutes of meetings, presentations to clients, business plans, and even formulaic forms of analysis: in SWOT, analysis "opportunities" represented the "call," whereas "threats" became antagonists. "As strengths are employed and weaknesses transformed, the protagonist becomes a hero."

Eventually academics took notice, influenced by the "narrative turn," so that stories and storytelling came to be identified not only as essential to effective leadership when formulating and implementing its strategy, but at

the heart of all communication in an organization, from low-level grumbles and mid-level pep talks up to the high-level visions. Stories were told about senior managers to show how reasonable or out of touch they might be, of past events to show how the organization was once great or had an enduring culture, of the chance insight that led to an exciting new product or the poor calculation that led to a flop. By studying stories, the development and reinforcement of institutional cultures could be explored as well as the beliefs and assumptions that underpinned them. In the constant conversations that made up any organization, this culture could be changed and even subverted, as individuals on the basis of their own experiences told their own stories that qualified or challenged those of senior management, while senior management picked up cues that led them to reappraise key assumptions.³⁶

The narrative field became a battleground. The political practices that we discussed in the last section, as parties sought to present themselves in the best possible light and their opponents in the worst, were evident in the business world as well. Rockefeller's control of Standard Oil began to unravel as the trust's dubious claims were undermined by a muckraking journalist. Not surprisingly, one of the greatest storytelling organizations of recent times, Walt Disney Studios, was adept at fabricating stories about its own history, "as artfully constructed and as carefully edited as their legendary characters." Disney was acclaimed for the cartoon characters, such as Mickey Mouse, and the animation techniques. But this required denying others the credit they deserved. Disney's creativity was played up and his authoritarianism played down. His studios were organized, not at all uniquely, on Taylorist, paternalistic lines, yet employees were referred to as part of a family, an image that was put under strain as union disputes broke out in the 1940s.³⁷ This opened up the basic paradox of stories: they might have great explanatory power and be the most natural form of communication, but that could be at the expense of reinforcing explanations that suited those best able to control the means of communication while making it difficult to mount a challenge. Even the best and most liberating stories could be wide of the mark or else so ambiguous that the intended message was lost. The accomplished storyteller might derive an inspirational message from the mundane, but the inspiration could soon fade should the reality turn out to be more tedious.

The more academic business strategists tended to use their stories largely for illustration, selecting cases which made their points without always asking whether there were comparable cases where the outcomes had been quite different, or whether the same players would always get the same results by employing the approved strategic practices in slightly different

circumstances. Sometimes the stories were not only selected carefully, but their telling was also highly contrived. We have seen how those of Taylor, Mayo, and Barnard were embellished. Weick's favorite story involved an incident during military maneuvers in Switzerland, when a small unit had got lost in bitterly cold weather and was feared lost. The unit eventually returned and the young lieutenant in charge was asked how they had made their way back. Though they had assumed they would die, they had gotten back by means of a map one of the men had in his pocket by which they were able to get their bearings. When the map was examined, however, it turned out not to be a map of the Alps but of the Pyrenees.³⁸ The strategic lesson was that with a map the unit calmed down and took action, which led to the conclusion that "when you are lost, any map will do!"³⁹ But luck would also have been required, as there are not many routes out of the Alps. Unfortunately, there was also no way of knowing whether the story was true or not. Weick received it via the Czech poet Miroslav Holub based on an anecdote told to him from the Second World War.⁴⁰

Consider another of Mintzberg's favorite stories, as narrated by Richard Pascale, who we last met working for McKinsey's researching Japanese industrial success. Between 1958 and 1974, the American motorcycle market doubled but the British share shrank from 11 percent to 1 percent. Japan gained 87 percent of the new market, with Honda alone accounting for 43 percent. Pascale challenged the established explanation for Honda's successful entry into the American market in 1959, which stressed issues of price and volume. A much more intriguing story that highlighted "miscalculation, serendipity, and organizational learning" had been missed. When Honda sent its marketing team to the United States, the intention had been to compete with mid-sized bikes, but Honda struggled to find dealers and was plagued by technical problems. Then they received inquiries about the small 50cc SuperCubs they were using for their own transport. So they sold them instead. The moral of the story, according to Pascale, was that over-rational explanations, assuming that what happened was intended, could result in missing the most important reasons for a marketing success. Rather than a determined, long-term perspective, he pointed to the ability of an organization to learn from experience and show agility in the face of unexpected opportunities.⁴¹ This lesson was picked up enthusiastically by Mintzberg, who referred to it regularly as he emphasized the importance of emergent strategies. He used it to show that the managers made every mistake in this case, except to learn when the market told them they were going wrong.⁴² He described Pascale's article as the most influential in the management literature. Other writers have developed this "lesson" further to turn it into a story about how lowly employees

can transform a strategy. Out of this single case study, a series of general propositions were developed about learning organizations.

This was not the only use made of the Honda story. This was one of the great Japanese success stories, from the company's formation in 1948 to becoming the world's largest manufacturer of motorcycles and an effective manufacturer of cars by 1964. It fascinated business strategists as a source of lessons for American companies. Andrew Mair warned, however, of the perils of extracting one episode, often imperfectly understood, and drawing large conclusions. For example, Honda had always intended to sell the SuperCub in the United States. This bike made up a quarter of those sent with the American team. The company had, however, supposed that it would first have to prove the worth of its bikes against larger models (which is why they put an emphasis on racing). The error was in not realizing that the American market was actually going to be similar to the Japanese. At any rate, sales collapsed in the late 1960s, and then Honda did have to rely on the larger bikes it had always expected would be the key to its American success. In practice, Honda's strategy followed the experience already successfully followed in Japan—it was not a leap in the dark.⁴³

Its experience up to this point had demonstrated the importance of ruthless management and robust organization. The postwar Japanese market for motorcycles was huge because public transport could barely cope and gasoline supplies were limited. Unlike other industrial sectors, this one was barely regulated, resulting in something of a Darwinian struggle for survival. During the 1950s there were some two hundred companies competing for this market in what was known as the "motorcycle wars." This was a time when "doing business was a turbulent and hazardous pursuit involving all manner of lucrative opportunities and nasty surprises."⁴⁴ When the wars were over, four companies were left (Yamaha, Suzuki, Kawasaki, and Honda). Of these, Honda (formed in 1948) was the most prominent. Its success was due to a number of factors. It began with Soichiro Honda's own engineering genius, combined with the financial acumen of his business manager, Takio Fujisawa. They had some wartime experience of mass production techniques and they understood the Toyota production model and the importance of supply chains. Their internal organization was very strong, with careful financial control and—particularly important—great effort put into developing their dealer network.

In the late 1950s, Honda overtook the previous domestic leader Tohatsu (which soon went bankrupt). As Honda then went on to car production, Yamaha caught up in market share and, believing its rival to be distracted, decided to build a brand new factory with the aim of becoming the market

leader. Instead, Honda mounted a strong defense leading to a fierce battle between the two (known as the “H-Y war”) in 1981. Honda’s response was neither subtle nor indirect. According to Stalk, who made this clash a centerpiece of his analysis of Japanese competitiveness, this was launched with a war cry, “Yamaha wo tsubusu!” which he roughly translated as “We will crush, squash, butcher, slaughter, etc., Yamaha!” Honda cut prices and boosted advertising expenditures, and introduced a number of new products, so that having the most up-to-date motorcycle became a fashion necessity. Yamaha’s bikes were left looking “old, out-of-date, and unattractive” and demand for them dried up, leaving dealers stuck with old stock. Eventually Yamaha surrendered. Honda’s victory had come at a price but had deterred other competitors besides Yamaha. Stalk was most impressed by the way that Honda had accelerated its production cycles to head off the competition and made this the central lesson he drew for Americans. Although this was undoubtedly impressive, this focus played down the extent to which Honda’s strategy had been brutally attritional, with its price cuts and promotions.

Hamel and Prahalad also used Honda in 1994 as an example of exploiting core competence, mocking the experience curve, demonstrating great ambition and creativity in extracting maximum benefit from the mastery of the internal combustion engine (which allowed them to move successfully into a number of related production lines, from lawnmowers to tractors and marine engines), and enabling a challenge to Ferrari and Porsche in the high-end sports car market with the new NSX. They understood the needs of customers without following them slavishly. Yet as Mair reports, the NSX was a costly failure for Honda. This was not the result of only bad luck due to an appreciating currency undermining its competitiveness, but also the choice of market. The interest in sports cars was more a reflection of Honda’s culture than of its core competence and meant that it missed the developing American market in the 1990s for recreational vehicles and minivans. In other areas, a determination to make a technological breakthrough meant that they lacked a follow-on car when it was needed. More generally, the only serious diversity made possible by Honda’s engine technology was from motorcycles to cars. Other products remained a minor part of its portfolio. In fact, its strategy from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s revealed a “narrow self-definition and a technological stubbornness” and so a lack of responsiveness to consumers.

Mair raised a number of basic methodological problems with these stories. They were often based on patchy research and focused on a particular period. All the way through Honda was treated as a great success, yet during the course of its history it had made a number of major errors and at

times faced financial ruin. The failures were never deemed to be of interest. The business theorists who wanted to draw lessons might have asked why it never managed to dent Toyota's dominance of the Japanese car market or explain why companies that followed similar strategies did not do as well. Insufficient attention was paid to the less glamorous but vital aspects of Honda's approach, such as its operations and dealer management, perhaps equivalent to the disinterest in logistics often displayed by military strategists. There was always going to be more interest in sparks of genius than the tedious slog of administration. Mair criticized analysts seeing "only what they want to see" and of "acute one-sided reductionism."⁴⁵ He noted the tendencies toward polarization, as in deliberate/emergent and competence/capabilities, as if it had to be one or the other. The data was aligned to fit the theory, while inconvenient material was ignored or fudged.

Back to Basics

Military strategy had been launched at a time when it was believed that there were basic principles which, if applied properly, could at least increase the probability of success, even if success could not be guaranteed. It then struggled as it became apparent that the application of military force was a more complicated and frustrating business than envisaged by Jomini in the first glow of Napoleon's advances, especially as it proved hard to escape from the norm of decisive battle. Business strategy was the product of a similar bout of optimism of the mid-twentieth century, picking up on a general confidence in the possibilities of long-term planning, not only for nations but also for large companies, including the large American conglomerates. It also struggled as the limitations of the planning model became apparent, but unlike the military the managers did not have an agreed framework to provide coherence. As a result, business strategy lost its way, following many diverse paths and falling prey to temporary enthusiasms. There was a resulting tendency to prescriptive hyperbole. In a cautionary analysis, Phil Rosenzweig dismissed purveyors of business success stories for misleading their readers, sustaining the myth that there were reliable rules for success that once discovered could ensure the success of a business. He offered examples of sloppy thinking, by and large involving the standard muddle between correlation and causation, the tendency to explore explanations of success without worrying whether the same factors might be present in failures, and paying inadequate attention to the competition. The basic muddle he identified was the "halo effect," the tendency to assign factors such as culture,

leadership, and values, responsibility for a strong performance when they are really attributions that resulted from a strong performance.⁴⁶

Skeptical figures, who had seen fads and fashions come and go, urged a return to the basics. John Kay warned that strategies could not be generic because they had to be based on distinctive capabilities. The aim therefore should not be to come up with grand designs that even the most totalitarian institution would struggle to realize. Companies lacked the knowledge to construct the plans and the power to implement them. Instead of the “illusion of control” and the belief that success would result from superior vision and will, he urged a resource-based approach based on the work of Edith Penrose in the 1950s. The task was to find the best fit between the internal capabilities of the firm and its external environment. The place to start was with an understanding of a company’s actual and possible position in the marketplace, as well as the distinctive capabilities it already had rather than those it would like to have.⁴⁷

Positioning documents might describe desirable end points—places to be in five years’ time—but the starting point would have to be the current situation. While there might be a temperamental preference for strategies that outsmarted competitors rather than relied on superior capacity, much would depend on the problem that was to be solved. Thus Stephen Bungay urged avoiding the pathologies of central control, with constant demands for extra information and reduced opportunities for individual initiative. His advice was to concentrate on what mattered, not to attempt to “plan beyond the circumstances you can foresee,” and formulate strategy as intent and with a simple message, encouraging people to adapt their actions to circumstances.⁴⁸ A book based on the successful experience of Alan Laffley in charge of Proctor & Gamble (P&G), written with his chief consultant Roger Martin, considered strategy in terms of “making specific choices to win in the marketplace.” The questions behind a winning strategy, they advised, were about describing a winning aspiration, where to play, how to win, the capabilities and management systems that needed to be in place. The book explained how this was done at P&G, but also commented on the need to avoid “strategic traps.” The basic source of error was failing to set real priorities, traps described as “do-it-all,” “something-for-everyone,” or as Waterloo (starting with multiple competitors on multiple fronts). Other errors were described as Don Quixote, attacking the strongest competitor first; “program of the month,” which meant going for the latest fashion; and last, “dreams that never come true.”⁴⁹

Similarly, Richard Rumelt described good strategy as starting with a diagnosis that defined or explained the nature of the challenge, thus

simplifying the complexity of reality—which could be overwhelming—by identifying the most critical aspects of the current situation. This would facilitate a guiding policy for dealing with the challenge and a set of coherent actions designed to carry out the guiding policy. Rumelt recognized that the problem could be internal as well as external, found in both its routines and bureaucratic interests, and that rather than reaching for the sky the best course at times was to set proximate objectives, close enough at hand to be feasible.

Many writers on strategy seem to suggest that the more dynamic the situation, the farther ahead a leader must look. This is illogical. The more dynamic the situation, the poorer your foresight will be. Therefore, the more uncertain and dynamic the situation, the more proximate a strategic objective must be.⁵⁰

Rumelt also warned of the dangers of bad strategy, especially the quality he described simply as “fluff” or a “form of gibberish masquerading as strategic concepts or arguments,” but also for failing to define the challenge to be addressed, mistaking goals for strategy, stating a desire without a means for achieving it, and setting objectives without considering their practicality.⁵¹ He warned against senior management setting impossible targets and explaining how anything can be achieved with sufficient drive and will (though in practice they were unlikely to be able to manage more than a few challenges at any one time), seeking consensus between incompatible visions instead of making a definitive choice, and attempting to inspire by buzzwords (“charisma in a can”) instead of natural, personal language. “Bad strategy flourishes,” Rumelt suggested, “because it floats above analysis, logic, and choice, held aloft by the hope that one can avoid dealing with these tricky fundamentals and the difficulties of mastering them.”⁵²

Business strategy, like military and revolutionary strategy, could suffer from its own heroic myths. It acquired an unrealistically elevated status as the ingredient that could make all the difference between success and failure. Master strategists with master strategies were regularly identified to be admired and emulated: “captains of industry” keeping their organizations stable and set on a steady course; financial wizards taking aggressive action against all inefficiencies and so extracting the last ounce of shareholder value from a business; hard competitors scouring the marketplace for the most advantageous position; soft revolutionaries recognizing the creative potential of a committed workforce; innovative designers transforming a market with a truly unique product. Management theorists and gurus promoted their own preferred heroes. There were inevitably some managers who matched at

least one of these types, but what worked in one situation could go wrong in another. Too often, the individuals and companies who soared one moment seemed to come crashing down the next. The hype that accompanied the promotion of successive strategic fashions exaggerated the importance of the enlightened manager and played down the importance of chance and circumstances in explaining success.

PART V | Theories of Strategy

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In theory there is no difference between theory and practice. In practice there is.

—Yogi Berra (also attributed to Albert Einstein)

THIS SECTION IS concerned with the possibility of strategic theory based on the insights of contemporary social sciences. We have already seen how apparently detached intellectual activity was the product of wider social forces, whether the effort put in by the RAND Corporation to develop new sciences of decision-making, the foundation grants that encouraged business schools to adopt these—and which the more sociologically inclined organizational theorists sought to resist—or else the impact of the radical thinking of the 1960s on the relationship between discourse and power.

A particularly influential theory was one that stressed the benefits of treating all choices as if they were rational. Adherents were confident that they, almost uniquely, could offer a theory deserving of the accolade “social science” in which all propositions could both be deduced from a strong theory and then validated empirically. Though rational choice theory consistently delivered far less than promised, and its underlying assumptions became vulnerable to a fundamental challenge from cognitive psychology, it was promoted effectively and in a highly strategic manner. In a remarkably short space of time, supporters of the theory became embedded in political science

departments. They were not deterred by the widespread apprehension that the theory depended on an untenable view of human rationality. The claim, they insisted, was no more than that the premise of rationality helped generate good theory.

The Rochester School

As Kuhn observed, the promotion of new schools of thought in academia has rarely depended on reason alone. Successful promotion has also relied on access to the sources of academic power through dispensing grants, editing journals, or appointing acolytes to faculty positions. So it was that economics was given a singular boost after the Second World War with a substantial investment which made it possible to exploit the opportunities for the sophisticated quantitative methods opened up by computers. As it grew in confidence and assertiveness, economics offered itself as the master discipline of the social sciences. There were no obvious boundaries to its imperialism. The “economic approach provides a framework applicable to all human behavior,” observed Gary Becker, “to all types of decisions and to persons from all walks of life.”¹

Before the Ford Foundation began to invest in business schools in the late 1950s, it had already undertaken a major investment in the so-called behavioral sciences. This investment did not create the field, which could be traced back to the 1920s and the work of Charles Merriam and Harold Lasswell at the University of Chicago. There was already a developing interest in analyzing large data sets, such as censuses, election results, and polling data. Ford, followed by other foundations, undoubtedly made a difference, encouraging universities to establish centers for behavioral studies by providing large grants—often unsolicited (so that some universities were unsure what was expected of them)—to the tune of some \$24 million between 1951 and 1957. The RAND Corporation’s influence was evident, with Gaither in charge of the Foundation and Hans Speier, the head of RAND’s social science division, advising. The aim therefore was to move away from earlier forms of social and political theory and encourage an interest in phenomena that could be measured. This new approach was described as “behavioralism” to emphasize the positivist, empirical, and value-free quality of the research. Against the anti-communist backdrop of the time, there was also concern that “social science” smacked too much of a “socialist science” or social reform.² The individualistic assumptions behind this approach fit naturally with theories of markets and democracy and challenged Marxist notions of class struggle. This

encouraged the view that liberal individualism was rational and collectivism irrational.³ The core attraction of the theory, however, was not ideological but that it was elegant, parsimonious, and genuinely innovative. Some of those attracted by its virtues even gamefully sought to demonstrate that it was not incompatible with Marxism. Unfortunately it was often asserted dogmatically and embraced as a project of ambitious model-building.

There was ambiguity about whether this theory was descriptive or prescriptive. Did it explain how actors did behave or how they should behave? If prescriptive, then actors would need to make a deliberate decision to follow the advice. That would be the rational thing to do. "To identify a rational choice is to say that an agent would, in some sense and circumstances, do well to make it. If actual agents do not, they rather than the theory may be at fault."⁴ So if actors chose not to follow rational advice, they therefore were capable of behaving irrationally. If that was generally the case, the theory was going to be limited in any descriptive, let alone predictive, capacity. If, on the other hand, the theory was reliably descriptive, the prescription would be both obvious and irrelevant. Why should actors bother with strategy when the solution was evident in advance?⁵

The starting point for the theory was that individuals made their own choices in order to maximize their utilities, which could be subjectively defined, although there was a tendency to assume that these were quite basic and could be measured in terms of economic rewards or the acquisition of power. The next stage was for actors with their preferences to play a structured game, presuming a certain amount of knowledge about their own position and those of the other players. The following, crucial step would be to identify the equilibrium point. Assuming that all players followed strategies to maximize their utilities, this point would be one from which individual actors had no incentive to deviate. In principle, it would represent the most logical outcome to the strategic game and would set the terms for future empirical work.

A key figure in the development of rational choice theory at RAND was Kenneth Arrow, who developed the "impossibility theorem" that explained why democratic systems do not always produce outcomes that conform to the wishes of the majority. His student Anthony Downs, in his *Economic Theory of Democracy* used the idea of individuals maximizing their self-interest to challenge notions of public interest. The person who turned all this into what he saw as a paradigm shift in political science was William Riker. Riker had followed a relatively mainstream path since graduating from Harvard in the late 1940s, yet was looking for a means to elevate political science to a new level. He found it in game theory.

When he first became aware of game theory in the mid-1950s, Riker was attracted by the presumption of amoral rationality. He was reacting against what he saw as the then dominant paradigm of normative political theory, written as a set of imperatives, about how politics should be conducted rather than as an analysis of how it was actually conducted. Yet he also wanted to move beyond a Machiavelli-like focus on the realities of power. He aspired to something truly scientific, offering testable models that could guide empirical work. This was why he was excited by game theory, with its “uncompromising rationalism.” Asking what sensible people trying to achieve straightforward goals would choose to do was in line with traditional political science. This tradition he judged to have been lost during the first half of the century under the influence of biological, psychological, and metaphysical theories. Game theory left “no role for instinct, for thoughtless habit, for unconscious self-defeating desire, or for some metaphysical and exogenous will.”

The second appeal lay in the emphasis on free choice. Here Riker was reacting to the historical determinism associated with Marxism. Game theory assumed that people consider their own preferences and how alternative strategies might satisfy them in the face of similar calculations by opponents. The outcomes therefore depended on free human choices rather than on “some exogenous plan for the world” or “built-in human irrationality.” There was an obvious tension here, which Riker acknowledged. As a prescriptive theory this was fine. It was all about helping people make better choices. But as a descriptive theory, variations in choices caused all sorts of problems. The value of deterministic assumptions about rational choice was that they should help identify regularity of behavior and so make possible generalizations. Yet truly free choices allowed for quirky and random behavior that defied generalization.⁶ Riker saw game theory as offering a way out of the dilemma by combining the possibilities of generalization with free choice. On the one hand, it could be presumed that all persons with the same goals in the same circumstances would rationally choose the same alternative, so regularities could be observed. That did not, however, remove the role of choice, especially in situations characterized by uncertainty. In the end it was the choices that fascinated Riker most, and this meant that by the time he died he was moving into areas where science was of little help. But by that time he had spawned a whole school determined to prove that politics could be a science and was resolutely disinterested in it as an art.

In 1959, Riker applied for a fellowship at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Palo Alto with the aim of working in a field he described as “formal, positive, political theory.” “Formal” referred to “the expression of the theory in algebraic rather than verbal symbols” and

"positive" to the "expression of descriptive rather than normative propositions." He sought the "growth in political science of a body of theory somewhat similar to...the neo-classical theory of value in economics." In particular he mentioned the potential role of the "mathematical theory of games" for "the construction of political theory."⁷ The result of his fellowship was *The Theory of Political Coalitions*, which served as his manifesto. What made the difference in terms of the spread of his ideas, however, was his appointment to run the political science department at the well-endowed University of Rochester, already committed to forms of social science based on rigorous quantitative analysis. Here he insisted on students capable of statistical analysis and faculty who were signed on to his own vision. Under his leadership, Rochester moved up the rankings, producing graduate students who went forth into other departments to spread the word of rational actor theory. Two of his acolytes have written of "consistent, thorough preparation of students who recognized themselves to be part of a distinct movement to alter political science, the camaraderie and tightknit sense of community among those students, and their impressive scholarly productivity." These students were "unyielding in their efforts to research and advance the theoretical paradigm of rational choice" and determined to "displace other forms of political science."

In 1982, Riker became president of the American Political Science Association. He could observe the dominance of "the rational choice paradigm." Its success was "driving out all others."⁸ He was now arguing against the need to add such modifiers as "positive" or "formal" as this was the only "political theory" deserving of the name because it met scientific standards.⁹ By the 1990s, mathematics was an essential attribute for a political science program, and rational choice articles accounted for some 40 percent of all contributions to the *American Political Science Review*. There were complaints that the growing influence of the paradigm was due to a strong-arm mentality as much as clarity of thought. Rather than criticism being taken seriously, it was dismissed because the critics lacked the training to master the methods and so failed to understand what was going on. Because they supported their own, it was alleged that rational choice scholars would prefer a second-rate member of their own fraternity to anyone else when it came to appointments.¹⁰

Their theory was not a simple imposition of an economics model. The development of economics as a discipline had been served by the assumptions of self-interest, narrowly conceived, so that individuals facing the same constraints and with the same preferences would make the same choices each time. Both goals and the resources used to obtain them could be expressed in

monetary terms and numerous comparable transactions could be observed in everyday economic life: the larger the sample the less important anomalous behavior and the more distinct the observable patterns and relationships. Riker was impressed by the robust market economics of the Chicago School, and this was present in his original Rochester curriculum. But he embraced game theory well before mainstream economists, and he was always careful to distinguish economics—which attributed a mechanical rationality to agents—from politics—in which rationality was deliberate and conscious, often in direct opposition to other actors. This was the basis of game theory, and on its use Riker's school followed rather than led.

As the theorists became more ambitious, they moved from the areas where it might be assumed to be most valuable, with large samples but few variables, into areas of small samples and many variables. This included international relations. When the available options were not naturally constrained, the approach struggled because the identification of both a clear interest and an optimum strategy were hard to discern. Even in areas where findings were expressed with high confidence—for example, election studies—quite subtle variations in underlying conditions might render these findings unreliable. The more stable the environment the more behavior within it should show regularity. The more uncertain the environment the harder for actors to discern a rational way forward. In the textbook he wrote with Peter Ordeshook, Riker observed that when the “range of alternatives is infinite and when the consequences of choosing each alternative are uncertain, it is likely that most choices involve error.”¹¹

If only certain sorts of solutions could be recognized, then only certain sorts of problems could be addressed. The most susceptible were likely to be the most narrow, with the model incorporating as few factors as possible. If any attempt was to be made at empirical validation, data sets were needed which involved a sufficiency of comparable instances that would occur in a measurable form. While the findings might confirm what had been deduced from the model, despite the mathematical trappings, this could rarely be considered a proof. Causation might have something to do with those factors that did not fit easily into the model or could not be readily measured. Even when goals were achieved it was not always possible to be sure whether this was the result of the actions chosen rather than chance, coincidence, or the critical intervention of an extraneous factor.

In the natural sciences, laws could be established. As particles did not have free will, cause and effect would be predictable. This was impossible when dealing with voluntary agents. Threats or inducements that normally produced one response could on occasion produce something quite different.

This might not matter when the aim was to affect numerous small and comparable transactions, as was often the case in economics. By insisting that research into politics must meet standards of formal rigor and mathematical elegance, priority could not be given to the quality of the questions asked or the value of the answers. One critic observed, "Rigor is subject to a conservation law, and the more rigor along mathematical dimensions, the less of it along other, perhaps more important, dimensions."¹² As game theorists addressed these limitations, they either had to move away from the strict confines of the theory or take it to levels of complexity that only the cognoscenti could savor or follow.

In one of the most serious challenges to rational actor theory in political science, Donald Green and Ian Shapiro observed that despite all the effort, what had been learned about politics was "exceedingly little."¹³ They addressed one standard problem for rational choice theory which suggested that it would be irrational for anyone to vote since the time invested in the process would have to be set against the minimal impact that one person could expect to have on the final result. Yet people did vote in large numbers. How could the finding be reconciled without challenging a core precept of the theory? They mocked one response which explained the outcomes by "psychic gratification," which might be an interest, but then why that rather than other interests? And what was the source of this gratification? Was it a concern for a cause, or belief that democracy depends on voting, or the quality of the candidates? The theory offered no good answer. When an interesting finding was obtained, explanations had to be found outside the theory. Stephen Walt concluded after surveying the application of the rational actor model to international relations theory that its "growing technical complexity" had not been matched by any "corresponding increase in insight." The complexity allowed key assumptions to be buried and made the theories difficult to evaluate.¹⁴

One Kuhnian answer to this challenge was that "a theory cannot be rejected because of disconfirming facts." It could "only be supplanted by a superior theory."¹⁵ But this exaggerated the status of what were often no more than speculative hypotheses deduced from suspect models. The fact that they might be discussed mathematically did not put these theories on the same level as those in the natural sciences.

Forming Coalitions

The book announcing Riker's new approach was on coalition formation. The nature of communication between players, and whether this could be

incorporated within the game or involved working outside the confines of the game, was one of the most challenging issues for game theory. If the starting presumption of autonomous, rational individuals devoid of social ties and cultural references meant that there could be no presumption of empathy, cooperation would depend solely on the logic of situations rather than any natural inclinations. Von Neumann and Morgenstern had promised, without quite delivering, advice on how to form coalitions when more than one player came into the game. With three or more players (n-person games), it became harder to make simplifying assumptions. The conflicts of interest were less straightforward. With three players, two acting in concert should win. When such a coalition was formed the calculation was as simple as it would be for a two-person game with a minimax solution. The challenge was on working out whether the rational course for weak players was to gang up against a strong player (balancing) or ally themselves with a strong player (bandwagoning). As many alternative coalitions might be stable, it would be necessary to go methodically through all potential coalitions to work out an optimum strategy.

Just before Riker published his book, William Gamson had sought to develop a formal theory of coalitions. He agreed that the problem had to be reduced to a two-person game. He defined coalitions as “temporary, means oriented, alliances among individuals or groups which differ in goals.” They were likely to come together for the pursuit of power itself, by which he meant the ability to control future decisions. This they would be able to do because their joint resources would be greater than those of other units or coalitions. Some of the goals of the component parts would remain incompatible, but they could concentrate on those that were distinctively their own. But when it came to predicting who would join with whom, which required understanding the resources most relevant for a given decision, their distribution, and what alternative coalitions offered the parties in terms of payoffs, Gamson found that game theory produced too many solutions. His general hypothesis was that participants would expect from a coalition a proportional share of the payoff according to the resources they contributed. This, he suggested, depended on reciprocity and a step-by-step process of pairing until a decision point was reached.¹⁶

Riker took this further and developed a strong proposition, based on a study of coalition formation in legislatures, that complete and winning coalitions were “minimal” in the sense that they were just large enough to win and no larger, with the rider that the less perfect and less complete the participants’ information the larger the winning coalition would be. He found this “sparse model” worked quite well, though it deliberately excluded ideology

and tradition.¹⁷ He also concluded, however, by the end of the 1960s that “much more energy has been expended on the elaboration of the theory of coalitions than on the verification of it.”¹⁸ Once again, the limits of game theory became evident when there were too many potential inputs and many possible outcomes.

In his book on coalitions, Riker asserted, “What the rational political man wants, I believe, is to win, a much more specific and specifiable motive than the desire for power.” This posed the issue in zero-sum terms, which for most political men might be true only in a narrow sense and suggested that attitudes toward coalition formation would at best be grudging. It also allowed him to define rationality without reference to power, giving his rational political man a definite personality: “The man who wants to win also wants to make people do things they would not otherwise do. He wants to exploit each situation to his advantage. And he wants to succeed in a given situation.”¹⁹ This reflected Riker’s own personal interest not so much in the occasional political acts of ordinary voters, to which his reflections on democracy assigned only a limited significance, but on the key players among the political elite. Arguably, just as game theory worked best in economics when looking at oligopoly, where there were few players, this form of political science worked best when looking at oligarchy.

An important attempt to demonstrate how the theory might be applied to a wider range of situations came from Mancur Olson, who was intrigued by the implications of the logic of self-interested rationality when it came to cooperation. Whereas Marx had sought class consciousness as a way of turning a shared interest into a political force, Olson pointed to the difficulties of a large and dispersed group ever acting as a political force. This was because each individual would assess that the marginal benefit from making contributions to a public good (that is one that is shared collectively rather than held by a few alone) was normally below the marginal cost, and also that their own contributions would barely make a difference. It was therefore irrational to cooperate with others, even in great numbers, to achieve collective goals: “Unless there is coercion or some other special device to make individuals act in their common interest, rational, self-interested individuals will not act to achieve their common or group interests.” An individual’s rational self-interest was to shirk on his contributions while continuing to receive benefit from the work of others.²⁰

This problem of the “free rider” was one that could be recognized, for example, in a member of a military alliance who gained protection but put few resources into the pool. This point was made forcefully by Olson while working as a consultant to RAND in the 1960s. He showed how NATO’s smaller

members found that they had “little or no incentive to provide additional amounts of the collective good,” and so burdens were shared in a disproportionate way.²¹ Even though there was a shared interest, there was no point in acting on that interest if it was likely to be achieved whether or not you acted and without you paying any price. By contrast, however, if an individual’s actions really would make a difference and the benefits would exceed the cost, then it was rational to act to secure the shared interest. In some respects, therefore, Olson offered a form of elite theory because he explained how small concentrated groups with resources could retain influence. The majority might hold a contrary interest, but so long as it was diffuse and dispersed its impact was muted.

Part of the explanation lay in a consideration of the social costs and benefits. An individual who did not bother to vote or join a union might escape notice, whereas in a small group engaged in an active campaign this would not be the case. On this basis Olson could explain, for example, why motor manufacturers might be able to lobby together for government measures that would keep car prices up, but the more numerous consumers would not be able to act equivalently to bring prices down. Collective goods affected everyone, but they were more likely to serve the interests of those best placed to lobby for them.

Once social pressures were admitted then the questions of where interests lay became more problematic. Questions of honor and reputation had to be socially validated. They were meaningless outside of a social context, but that also meant that they could vary with context. A theory in which interests were narrowly conceived and pursued, in the form of money and power, might remain elegant and parsimonious but not necessarily very realistic. A variety of types of interests did not in itself damage the theory, which required only that they be pursued efficiently, but it made it less elegant and parsimonious.

The Development of Cooperation

It was not necessarily the case that game theory could not cope with behavior other than the most egotistical. The authors of a popular account of game theory as a strategic tool noted that one difference from the first edition (1991) to the second (2008) was the “full realization of the important part that cooperation plays in strategic situations.”²² One way of providing a game-theoretic understanding of the development of social behavior was through iterated games, a point made most strongly by Robert Axelrod’s *The Evolution*

of Cooperation. The origins of this book are intriguing. It can be traced to Anatol Rapoport, who combined intense interest in game theory with an equally intense anti-militarism. Discovering von Neumann's support for a preemptive war with the Soviet Union while the two were discussing support for mathematical biology was said to have been a turning point in his life. In 1964, he published a polemic against what he considered to be the misuse of game theory by strategists such as Schelling.²³ While at the University of Michigan (before he moved to Toronto in protest at the Vietnam War), he actively promoted experimental games as a means of exploring the validity of theoretical "solutions" to theories of rational cooperation. Among a group who continued this work at Michigan was Robert Axelrod, also with a background as an antiwar activist.

Axelrod saw the possibilities of using computers to experiment with game theory by setting up a tournament. He invited experts to send programs for a game of prisoner's dilemma that could be repeated up to two hundred times to see if it was possible to learn or signal in ways that produced a cooperative outcome. Not surprisingly, perhaps, the winner was a simple program submitted by Rapoport. The requirement was to play continuing games of tit-for-tat, which required that one side replicate what the other did in the previous round. The first command was "cooperate," and a continuing cooperative outcome flowed naturally. The message was that cooperative behavior could "thrive with rules that are nice, provokable, and somewhat forgiving."²⁴ This made a point about the possibilities of cooperation at a time of Cold War tension, and it had the great advantage of not depending on claims about how human goodness could trump amoral rationality. Other than the somewhat critical starting assumptions, the process was then computer dependent and untouched by human hand. Compared to the egotistical presumption of the theory, Axelrod demonstrated that cooperation could be rational.

Did this have any value for strategists? The presumption was that cooperation was a good thing except when it obviously was not (such as cartels). The book was a hymn to the virtues of altruism and reciprocity. Axelrod came up with four rules to establish cooperation. First, do not be envious. Be satisfied with absolute rather than relative gains, so that if you are doing nicely, do not worry if someone is doing even better. Second, do not be the first to defect, because you need to establish the logic of cooperation. Third, if another player defects, reciprocate in order to establish confidence in your retaliation. Last, do not be too clever, as others will not be sure what you are up to. Axelrod also pointed to the importance of a long-term perspective. If you were in a relationship for a long time then it made sense to continue

cooperation, even when there were occasional wobbles, but in short-term encounters there were fewer incentives to do so. Little might then be lost by defecting.

Axelrod's analysis was not irrelevant to the conflicts with which strategy was largely concerned, especially those where there were significant areas of cooperation even against the backdrop of a general antagonism or competition. But the specific form of the tit-for-tat approach, even in situations which approximated to the form of prisoner's dilemma, would be hard to replicate. A symmetry in position between two parties was rare so that the impact of moves, whether cooperation or defection, would not be the same. Cooperation was as likely to be based on exchange of benefits of different types as on things of equivalent value. This was why there were many ways in which cooperation could develop, for example by means of barter, rather than through iterated games of prisoner's dilemma. One important point was reinforced by Axelrod's tournament. Strategies have to be judged over time, in a series of engagements rather than in a single encounter. This is why it was unwise to try to be too clever. Players who used "complex methods of making inferences about the other player" were often wrong. It was difficult to interpret the behavior of another without accounting for the impact of one's own. Otherwise, what might have been assumed to be complex signaling just appeared as random messages.

Using iterated games (though of assurance rather than prisoner's dilemma), Dennis Chong looked hard at the civil rights movement to address the issue raised by Olson of rational participation in what he called "public-spirited collective action." He saw the initial unwillingness to indulge in futile gestures and the later nervousness about taking personal risks when others were carrying the weight of the protest. This form of collective action offered no tangible incentives. Yet there were "social and psychological" benefits. It became a "long-term interest to cooperate in collective endeavors if noncooperation results in damage to one's reputation, ostracism, or repudiation from the community."

Chong noted the difficulty with looking at strategy in terms of the one-off encounters to which game theory seemed to lend itself. The ability to think long term required taking into account the "repeated exchanges and encounters that one will have with other members of the community." The difficulty collective movements faced was getting started. Chong's model could not explain where the leaders came from. They acted "autonomously" and got engaged without being sure of success or followers. Once a start had been made with the acquisition of the first followers but prior to any tangible results, momentum developed as a result of a form of social contagion. This

led to the conclusion, which might have been reached by more straightforward historical observation, that “strong organizations and effective leadership” combined with “symbolic and substantive concessions” from the authorities. In addition, it was wise to be cautious about being able to identify any “combination of objective factors in a society that will predictably set off a chain of events leading up to a collective movement.”²⁵

The problem was not that the methods used in rational choice could not lead to intriguing and significant insights but that so many really interesting questions were begged. Unless preferences were attributed (such as profit or power maximization) because they would work well for most actors in most circumstances, then only the actors themselves could explain what they were trying to achieve and what their expectations were with regard to their own options and the reactions of others. This meant that before the theory could get to work it had to be told a great deal. As Robert Jervis observed, the “actor’s values, preferences, beliefs, and definition of self all are exogenous to the model and must be provided before analysis can begin.”²⁶ Rather than just take utility functions as givens, it was important to understand where they came from and how they might change with different contexts. “We need to understand not only how people reason about alternatives,” observed Herbert Simon, “but where the alternatives come from in the first place. The processes whereby alternatives are generated has been somewhat ignored as an object of research.”²⁷

The point could be illustrated by the intellectual trajectory of William Riker. It was always an important feature of his approach that he did not assume that individuals were motivated by simple measures of self-interest, such as money or prestige, but allowed for other more emotional or ethical considerations. That is, utilities could be subjective, which reinforced the point about the prior determination of the preferences that were brought to the game.²⁸ He also stressed that the structure of the game made a big difference. If the issue at stake was framed one way rather than another, alternative possibilities were opened up even with the same set of players.

In his outgoing address as president of the American Political Science Association in 1983, Riker identified three analytical steps. The first was to identify the constraints imposed “by institutions, culture, ideology and prior events,” that is, the context. Rational choice models came with the next step, which was to identify “partial equilibria from utility maximization within the constraints.” The third step was “the explication of participants’ acts of creative adjustments to improve their opportunities.” Unfortunately, he noted, not very much effort had been devoted to this third step. This was the arena of what he dubbed “heresthetics, the art of political strategy.”

This came from Greek roots for choosing or electing. As areas of comparative ignorance, he listed “the way alternatives are modified in political conflicts” and the “rhetorical content of campaigns which is their principal feature.”²⁹ These means were important because that is how politicians structured the environment and required others to respond to their agenda. They could prevail by creating a situation with its own inexorable logic. It was through these devices that they could persuade others to join them in coalitions and alliances. This led the field away from the position where Riker had previously placed his flag. Simon commented, “I could wish he had not invented the word ‘heresthetics’ to conceal the heresies he is propagating.”³⁰

Heresthetics was about structuring the way the world was viewed so as to create political advantage. Riker identified a number of heresthetic strategies: setting the agenda, strategic voting (supporting a less favored outcome to avoid something even worse), trading votes, altering the sequence of decisions, and redefining a situation. Initially he saw these forms of manipulation as separate from rhetoric, although it was hard to see how many of these strategies could work without persuasive skills. In an unfinished book, published posthumously, he was focusing much more on rhetoric. His disciples claimed that he was returning the discipline to “the science behind persuasion and campaigning,”³¹ but he acknowledged he was moving into terrain where the science would struggle. The point was made in the title of his book on heresthetics, *The Art of Manipulation*. He was clear that this was “not a science. There is no set of scientific laws that can be more or less mechanically applied to generate successful strategies.”³² In his posthumous book he expressed concern that “our knowledge of rhetoric and persuasion is itself minuscule.”³³ Riker certainly did not abandon his conviction that statistical analysis could sharpen his propositions, and he was determinedly avoiding a large body of work that directly addressed exactly the issues of agenda setting, framing, and persuasion that were interesting him, because it was too “belle-lettres” and insufficiently rigorous. However, he still ended up where so many students of strategists found themselves, fascinated by why some players in the political game were smarter and more persuasive than their opponents.

Reason is and ought only to be the slave of the passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them.

—David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, 1740

THE PRESUMPTION OF rationality was the most contentious feature of formal theories. The presumption was that individuals were rational if they behaved in such a way that their goals, which could be obnoxious as well as noble, would be most likely to be achieved. This was the point made by the eighteenth-century philosopher David Hume. He was as convinced of the importance of reason as he was that it could not provide its own motivation. This would come from a great range of possible human desires: “Ambition, avarice, self-love, vanity, friendship, generosity, public spirit,” which would be “mixed in various degrees and distributed through society.”¹ As Downs put it, the rational man “moves towards his goals in a way which to the best of his knowledge uses the least possible input of scarce resources per unit of valued output.” This also required focusing on one aspect of an individual and not his “whole personality.” The theory “did not allow for the rich diversity of ends served by each of his acts, the complexity of his motives, the way in which every part of his life is intimately related to his emotional needs.”² Riker wrote that he was not asserting that all behavior was rational, but only that some behavior was “and that this possibly small amount is crucial for the

construction and operation of economic and political institutions.”³ In addition, the settings in which actors were operating—whether a congressional election, legislative committee, or revolutionary council—were also taken as givens, unless the issues being studied concerned establishing new institutions. The challenge then was to show that collective political outcomes could be explained by individuals ranking “their preferences consistently over a set of possible outcomes, taking risk and uncertainty into consideration and acting to maximize their expected payoffs.” This could easily become tautological because the only way that preferences and priorities could be discerned was by examining the choices made in actual situations.

The main challenge to the presumption that intended egotistical choices was the best basis from which to understand human behavior, was that it was consistently hard to square with reality. To take a rather obvious example, researchers tried to replicate the prisoner’s dilemma in the circumstances in which it was first described.⁴ Could prosecutors gain leverage in cases involving codefendants by exchanging a prospect of a reduced sentence in return for information or testimony against other codefendants? The evidence suggested that it made no difference to the rates of pleas, convictions, and incarcerations in robbery cases with or without codefendants. The surmised reason for this was the threat of extralegal sanctions that offenders could impose on each other. The codefendants might be kept separate during the negotiations, but they could still expect to meet again.⁵ To the proponents of rational choice, such observations were irrelevant. The claim was not that rational choice replicated reality but that as an assumption it was productive for the development of theory.

By the 1990s, the debate on rationality appeared to have reached a stalemate, with all conceivable arguments exhausted on both sides. It was, however, starting to be reshaped by new research, bringing insights from psychology and neuroscience into economics. The standard critique of rational choice theory was that people were just not rational in the way that the theory assumed. Instead, they were subject to mental quirks, ignorance, insensitivity, internal contradictions, incompetence, errors in judgment, overactive or blinkered imaginations, and so on. One response to this criticism was to say that there was no need for absurdly exacting standards of rationality. The theory worked well enough if it assumed people were generally reasonable and sensible, attentive to information, open-minded, and thoughtful about consequences.⁶

As a formal theory, however, rationality was assessed in terms of the ideal of defined utilities, ordered preferences, consistency, and a statistical grasp of probabilities when relating specific moves to desired outcomes. This sort of

hyper-rationality was required in the world of abstract modeling. The modelers knew that human beings were rarely rational in such an extreme form, but their models required simplifying assumptions. The method was deductive rather than inductive, less concerned with observed patterns of behavior than developing hypotheses which could then be subjected to empirical tests. If what was observed deviated from what was predicted, that set a research task that could lead to either a more sophisticated model or specific explanations about why a surprising result occurred in a particular case. Predicted outcomes might well be counterintuitive but then turn out to be more accurate than those suggested by intuition.

One of the clearest expositions of what a truly rational action required was set out in 1986 by Jon Elster. The action should be *optimal*, that is, the best way to satisfy desire, given belief. The belief itself would be the best that could be formed, given the evidence, and the amount of evidence collected would be optimal, given the original desire. Next the action should be *consistent* so that both the belief and the desire were free of internal contradictions. The agent must not act on a desire that, in her own opinion, was less weighty than other desires which might be reasons for not acting. Lastly, there was the test of *causality*. Not only must the action be rationalized by the desire and the belief, but it must also be caused by them. This must also be true for the relation between belief and evidence.⁷

Except in the simplest of situations, meeting such demanding criteria for rational action required a grasp of statistical methods and a capacity for interpretation that could only be acquired through specialist study. In practice, faced with complex data sets, most people were apt to make elementary mistakes.⁸ Even individuals capable of following the logical demands of such an approach were unlikely to be prepared to accept the considerable investment it would involve. Some decisions were simply not worth the time and effort to get them absolutely right. The time might not even be available in some instances. Gathering all the relevant information and evaluating it carefully would use up more resources than the potential gains from getting the correct answer.

If rational choices required individuals to absorb and evaluate all available information and analyze probabilities with mathematical precision, it could never capture actual human behavior. As we have seen, the urge to scientific rigor that animated rational choice theory only really got going once actors sorted out their preferences and core beliefs. The actors came to the point where their calculations might be translated into equations and matrices as formed individuals, with built-in values and beliefs. They were then ready to play out their contrived dramas. The formal theorists remained unimpressed by claims

that they should seek out more accurate descriptions of human behavior, for example, by drawing on the rapid advances in understanding the human brain. One economist patiently explained that this had nothing to do with his subject. It was not possible to “refute economic models” by this means because these models make “no assumptions and draw no conclusions about the physiology of the brain.” Rationality was not an assumption but a methodological stance, reflecting a decision to view the individual as the unit of agency.⁹

If rational choice theory was to be challenged on its own terms, the alternative methodological stance had to demonstrate that it not only approximated better to perceived reality but also that it would produce better theories. The challenge was first set out in the early 1950s by Herbert Simon. He had a background in political science and a grasp of how institutions worked. After entering economics through the Cowles Commission, he became something of an iconoclast at RAND. He developed a fascination with artificial intelligence and how computers might replicate and exceed human capacity. This led him to ponder the nature of human consciousness. He concluded that a reliable behavioral theory must acknowledge elements of irrationality and not just view them as sources of awkward anomalies. While at the Carnegie Graduate School of Industrial Administration, he complained that his economist colleagues “made almost a positive virtue of avoiding direct, systematic observations of individual human beings while valuing the casual empiricism of the economist’s armchair introspections.” At Carnegie he went to war against neoclassical economics and lost. The economists grew in numbers and power in the institution and had no interest in his ideas of “bounded rationality.”¹⁰ He gave up on economics and moved into psychology and computer science. This idea of “bounded rationality,” however, came to be recognized as offering a compelling description of how people actually made decisions in the absence of perfect information and computational capacity. It accepted human fallibility without losing the predictability that might still result from a modicum of rationality. Simon showed how people might reasonably accept suboptimal outcomes because of the excessive effort required to get to the optimal. Rather than perform exhaustive searches to get the best solution, they searched until they found one that was satisfactory, a process he described as “satisficing.”¹¹ Social norms were adopted, even when inconvenient, to avoid unwanted conflicts. When the empirical work demonstrated strong and consistent patterns of behavior this might reflect the rational pursuit of egotistical goals, but alternatively these patterns might reflect the influence of powerful conventions that inclined people to follow the pack.

Building upon Simon’s work, Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman introduced further insights from psychology into economics. To gain credibility,

they used sufficient mathematics to demonstrate the seriousness of their methodology and so were able to create a new field of behavioral economics. They demonstrated how individuals used shortcuts to cope with complex situations, relying on processes that were “good enough” and interpreted information superficially using “rules of thumb.” As Kahneman put it, “people rely on a limited number of heuristic principles which reduce the complex tasks of assessing probabilities and predicting values to simpler judgmental operations. In general, these heuristics are quite useful, but sometimes they lead to severe and systematic errors.”¹² *The Economist* summed up what behavioral research suggested about actual decision-making:

[People] fear failure and are prone to cognitive dissonance, sticking with a belief plainly at odds with the evidence, usually because the belief has been held and cherished for a long time. People like to anchor their beliefs so they can claim that they have external support, and are more likely to take risks to support the status quo than to get to a better place. Issues are compartmentalized so that decisions are taken on one matter with little thought about the implications for elsewhere. They see patterns in data where none exist, represent events as an example of a familiar type rather than acknowledge distinctive features and zoom in on fresh facts rather than big pictures. Probabilities are routinely miscalculated, so . . . people . . . assume that outcomes which are very probable are less likely than they really are, that outcomes which are quite unlikely are more likely than they are, and that extremely improbable, but still possible, outcomes have no chance at all of happening. They also tend to view decisions in isolation, rather than as part of a bigger picture.¹³

Of particular importance were “framing effects.” These were mentioned earlier as having been identified by Goffman and used in explanations of how the media helped shape public opinion. Framing helped explain how choices came to be viewed differently by altering the relative salience of certain features. Individuals compared alternative courses of action by focusing on one aspect, often randomly chosen, rather than keep in the frame all key aspects.¹⁴ Another important finding concerned loss aversion. The value of a good to an individual appeared to be higher when viewed as something that could be lost or given up than when evaluated as a potential gain. Richard Thaler, one of the first to incorporate the insights from behavioral economics into mainstream economics, described the “endowment effect,” whereby the selling price for consumption goods was much higher than the buying price.¹⁵

Experiments

Another challenge to the rational choice model came from experiments that tested propositions derived from game theory. These were not the same as experiments in the natural sciences which should not be context dependent. Claims that some universal truths about human cognition and behavior were being illuminated needed qualification. The results could only really be considered at all valid for Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic (WEIRD) societies in which the bulk of the experiments were conducted. Nonetheless, while WEIRD societies were admittedly an unrepresentative subset of the world's population, they were also an important subset.¹⁶

One of the most famous experiments was the ultimatum game. It was first used in an experimental setting during the early 1960s in order to explore bargaining behavior. From the start, and to the frustration of the experimenters, the games showed individuals making apparently suboptimal choices. A person (the proposer) was given a sum of money and then chose what proportion another (the responder) should get. The responder could accept or refuse the offer. If the offer was refused, both got nothing. A Nash equilibrium based on rational self-interest would suggest that the proposer should make a small offer, which the responder should accept. In practice, notions of fairness intervened. Responders regularly refused to accept anything less than a third, while most proposers were inclined to offer something close to half, anticipating that the other party would expect fairness.¹⁷ Faced with this unexpected finding, researchers at first wondered if there was something wrong with the experiments, such as whether there had been insufficient time to think through the options. But giving people more time or raising the stakes to turn the game into something more serious made little difference. In a variation known as the dictator game, the responder was bound to accept whatever the proposer granted. As might be expected, lower offers were made—perhaps about half the average sum offered in the ultimatum game.¹⁸ Yet, at about 20 percent of the total, they were not tiny.

It became clear that the key factor was not faulty calculation but the nature of the social interaction. In the ultimatum game, the responders accepted far less if they were told that the amount had been determined by a computer or the spin of a roulette wheel. If the human interaction was less direct, with complete anonymity, then proposers made smaller grants.¹⁹ A further finding was that there were variations according to ethnicity. The amounts distributed reflected culturally accepted notions of fairness. In some cultures, the proposers would make a point of offering more than half; in others, the responders were reluctant to accept anything. It also made a difference if the transaction

was within a family, especially in the dictator game. Playing these games with children also demonstrated that altruism was something to be learned during childhood.²⁰ As they grew older, most individuals turned away from the self-regarding decisions anticipated by classical economic theory and become more other-regarding. The exceptions were those suffering from neural disorders such as autism. In this way, as Angela Stanton caustically noted, the canonical model of rational decision-making treated the decision-making ability of children and those with emotional disorders as the norm.²¹

The research confirmed the importance of reputation in social interactions.²² The concern with influencing another's beliefs about oneself was evident when there was a need for trust, for example, when there were to be regular exchanges. This sense of fairness and concern about reputation, though it appeared instinctive and impulsive, was hardly irrational. It was important for an individual to have a good reputation to consolidate her social networks, while a social norm that sustained group cohesion was worth upholding. There was further experimental evidence suggesting that when a proposer had been insufficiently altruistic, the responders would not accept their reward in order to ensure that the miserly proposer was punished.²³

Another experiment involved a group of investors. When each made an investment everyone else gained, though they made a small loss. These losses should not have mattered, for they were covered by the gains resulting from the investments of others. Those motivated by a narrow self-interest would see an incentive to become a free rider. They could avoid losses by making no personal investments while benefiting from the investments of others. They would then gain at the expense of the group. Such behavior would soon lead to a breakdown in cooperation. To prevent this would require the imposition of sanctions by the rest of the group, even though this would cost them as individuals. When given a choice which group to join, individuals at first often recoiled from joining one with known sanctions against free riders but eventually would migrate to that group, as they appreciated the importance of ensuring cooperation.

Free riders, or unfair proposers in the ultimatum game, were also stigmatized. In another experiment, individuals who expected to play by the rules were told in advance of the game the identities of other players who would be free riders. Once these individuals had been described as less trustworthy, they were generally seen as less likable and attractive. When the games were underway, this prior profiling influenced behavior. There was a reluctance to take risks with those designated untrustworthy, even when these individuals were acting no differently from others. Little effort was made to check their reputations against actual behavior during the game. In experiments which showed individuals described as either free-riders or cooperators

experiencing pain, far less empathy was shown for the free riders than for the cooperators.²⁴

One response from those committed to the rational actor model was that it was interesting but irrelevant. The experiments involved small groups, often graduate students. It was entirely possible that as these types of situations became better understood, behavior would tend to become more rational as understood by the theory. Indeed, there was evidence that when these games were played with subjects who were either professors or students in economics and business, players acted in a far more selfish way, were more likely to free ride, were half as likely to contribute to a public good, kept more resources for themselves in an ultimatum game, and were more likely to defect in a prisoner's dilemma game. This fit in with studies that showed economists to be more corruptible and less likely to donate to charity.²⁵ One researcher suggested that the "experience of taking a course in microeconomics actually altered students' conceptions of the appropriateness of acting in a self-interested manner, not merely their definition of self-interest."²⁶ In studies of traders in financial markets, it transpired that while the inexperienced might be influenced by Thaler's "endowment effect," for example, the experienced were not.²⁷ This might not be flattering to economists, but it did show that egotistical behavior could also be quite natural. This argument, however, could be played back to the formal theorists. To be sure, it showed the possibility of self-interested and calculating behavior but it also required a degree of socialization. If it could not be shown to occur naturally and if it had to be learned, then that demonstrated the importance of social networks as a source of guidance on how to behave.

When individuals were acting as consumers in a marketplace or in other circumstances that encouraged them to act as egotistical and self-regarding, their behavior could get close to what might be expected from models that assumed such conduct. The experiments employed to explore the degree of actual rationality reflected the preoccupations with a particular sort of choice, a type "with clearly defined probabilities and outcomes, such as choosing between monetary gambles."²⁸ It was almost by accident that as researchers sought to prove the rational actor models through experiments they came to appreciate the importance of social pressures and the value attached to cooperation. Within the complex social networks of everyday life, truly egotistical and self-regarding behavior was, in a basic sense, irrational.

Attempts were made to recast formal theories to reflect the insights of behavioral psychology, in the guise of behavioral economics, but they made limited progress. The most important insight from the new research was that rather than studying individuals as more complex and rounded than

the old models assumed, it was even more important to study them in their social context.

Only a very particular view of rationality considered cooperation irrational and failed to understand why it made sense to make sacrifices to punish the uncooperative and free riders in order to uphold norms and sustain cooperative relationships. Many social and economic transactions would become impossible if at every stage there was suspicion and reason to doubt another's motives. The essence of trust was to knowingly and willingly accept a degree of vulnerability, aware that trustees might intend harm but finding it more profitable to assume that they did not. The evidence suggested that by and large people would prefer to trust others than not to trust. There were formidable normative pressures to honor commitments once made, and a reputation for untrustworthiness could prove to be a hindrance. Life became a lot easier if the people with whom one was dealing trusted and could be trusted in turn, saving the bother of complicated contracts and enforcement issues. Trusting another did not necessarily assume good faith. The calculus could be quite balanced. On occasion there might be no choice but to trust someone, even though there were indicators to prompt suspicion, because the alternative of not trusting was even more likely to lead to a bad result. In other circumstances, with little information one way or another, accepting another's trustworthiness would involve a leap of faith. This was why deception was deplored. It meant taking advantage of another's trust, hiding malicious intent behind a mask of good faith. Trust involved accepting evidence of another's intentions; deception involved faking this evidence.²⁹

So important was trust that even when clues were arriving thick and fast that they were being deceived, individuals could stay in denial for a surprising time. A confidence trickster might be vulnerable to intensive probing and so would rely on those who were inclined to accept his story: the woman yearning for love or the greedy looking for a get-rich-quick proposition. Research showed that people were "poor deception-detectors and yet are overconfident of their ability to detect deception."³⁰ "Cognitive laziness" led to shortcuts that resulted in misapprehending people and situations, failing to explore context, ignoring contradictions, and sticking with an early judgment of another's trustworthiness.³¹

Mentalization

The ability to recognize different traits in people, to distinguish them according to their personalities, is essential to all social interaction. It might be

difficult to predict the responses of people to particular situations, but to the extent that it is possible to anticipate the responses of specific individuals, their behavior might be anticipated or even manipulated.

The process of developing theories about how other minds work has been described as “mentalization.” Instead of assuming that other minds resembled one’s own, by observing the behavior of others it became evident that others had distinctive mental and emotional states. The quality of empathy, of being able to feel as another feels, was drawn from the German *Einfühlung*, which was about the process of feeling one’s way into an art object or another person. Empathy might be a precursor to sympathy, but it was not the same. With empathy one could feel another’s pain; with sympathy one would also pity another for his pain. It could be no more than sharing another’s emotional state in a vicarious way, but also something more deliberative and evaluative, a form of role-playing.

Mentalization involved three distinct sets of activity, working in combination. The first set was an individual’s own mental state and those of others represented in terms of perceptions and feelings, rather than the true features of the stimuli that prompted the perceptions and feelings in the first place. They were beliefs about the state of the world rather than the actual state of the world. When simulating the mental states of others, people would be influenced by what was known of their past behavior and also of those aspects of the wider world relevant to the current situation. The second set of activities introduced information about observed behavior. When combined with what could be recalled from the past, this allowed for inferences about mental states and predictions about the next stage in a sequence of behavior. The third set was activated by language and narrative. Frith and Frith concluded that this drew on past experience to generate “a wider semantic and emotional context for the material currently being processed.”³²

This wider context could be interpreted using a “script.” The concept comes from Robert Abelson, who developed an interest during the 1950s in the factors shaping attitudes and behavior. His work was stimulated by a 1958 RAND workshop with Herbert Simon on computer simulations of human cognition. Out of this came a distinction between “cold” cognition, where new information was incorporated without trouble into general problem-solving, and “hot” cognition, where it posed a challenge to accepted beliefs. Abelson became perplexed by the challenges posed by cognition for rational thinking and in 1972 wrote of a “theoretical despond,” as he “severely questioned whether information has any effect upon attitudes and whether attitudes have any effects upon behaviour.” It was at this point that

he hit upon the idea of scripts. His first thoughts were that they would be comparable to a “role” in psychological theory and a “plan” in computer programming, “except that it would be more occasional, more flexible, and more impulsive in its execution than a role or plan, and more potentially exposed in its formation to affective and ‘ideological’ influences.”³³ This led to his work with Roger Schank. Together they developed the idea of a script as a problem in artificial intelligence to refer to frequently recurring social situations involving strongly stereotyped conduct. When such a situation arose, people resorted to the plans which underlay these scripts.³⁴ Thus, a script involved a coherent sequence of events that an individual could reasonably expect in these circumstances, whether as a participant or as an observer.³⁵

Scripts referred to the particular goals and activities taking place in a particular setting at a particular time. A common example was a visit to a restaurant: the script helped anticipate the likely sequence of events, starting with the menu and its perusal, ordering the food, tasting the wine, and so on. In situations where it became necessary to make sense of the behavior of others, the appropriate script created expectations about possible next steps, a framework for interpretation. As few scripts were followed exactly, the other mentalizing processes allowed them to be adapted to the distinctive features of the new situation. We will explore the potential role of scripts in strategy in the next section.

Individuals varied in their ability to mentalize. Those who were more cooperative, had a higher degree of emotional intelligence, and enjoyed larger social networks tended to be better mentalizers. It might be thought that this would also be an attribute of those of a Machiavellian disposition, who were inclined to deceive and manipulate. This might be expected to depend on an ability to understand another’s mind and its vulnerabilities. While such people might lack empathy or hot cognition, the expectation would be of a degree of cold cognition, an insight into what another knows and believes. Yet studies of individuals described as “Machiavellian”—used in psychological studies to refer to somewhat callous and selfish personalities largely influenced by rewards and punishments—suggested that both their hot and cold cognition were limited. This led to the proposition that these individuals’ limited ability to mentalize meant that they found it easier to exploit and manipulate others because there was little to prompt guilt and remorse.³⁶ There could therefore be individuals who were so naturally manipulative that they were apparently incapable of dealing with other people on any other basis.

Such findings arguably provided more support for the view that the rational actor celebrated in economic theory tended to the psychopathic and

socially maladroit. As Mirowski notes, in an awkward soliloquy, it was striking how many of the theorists who insisted on an egotistical rationality, who claimed to “theorize the very pith and moment of human rationality”—of which Nash was but one example—were not naturally empathetic and lived very close to the mental edge, at times tipping over into depression and even suicide.³⁷

The issue, however, was relevant for two other reasons. First it highlighted an important distinction between traits such as deception or Machiavellianism as affecting instinctive behavior, and strategies involving deception emerging out of a deliberate process of reasoning. Second, it recalled attitudes toward those who relied on tricks and cunning, which was to deplore this when directed inward into one’s own society while often applauding when applied outward against enemies. This pointed to a different sort of challenge, for mentalization should be relatively straightforward and reasonably reliable with the in-group with whom interaction was regular and a culture and background was shared. With an out-group, about whom less was known and suspicions were harbored, mentalization would be much more difficult. It was hard to empathize with those perceived to be remote, unattractive, and bad. So there could be an easy grasp of the likely thinking of fellow members of the in-group, facilitating cooperation. And where there were difficulties, they could be addressed through direct communication. The minds that were most important to fathom and penetrate, however—especially during a conflict—would be those of the out-group. Not only would it be a challenge to address preconceptions and prejudices in order to produce a rounded picture, but there would also be fewer opportunities to communicate to clarify areas of difference.

Systems 1 and 2

From all of this a complex picture of decision-making emerged. It was at all times influenced by the social dimension and emphasized the importance of familiarity; the effort required to understand the distant and menacing; the inclination to frame issues in terms of past experiences, often quite narrowly and with a short-term perspective; and the use of shortcuts (heuristics) to make sense of what was going on. None of this fit easily with descriptions in terms of the systematic evaluation of all options, a readiness to follow an algorithmic process to the correct answer, employing the best evidence and analysis, keeping long-term goals clearly in mind. Yet at the same time, and despite the regular derision directed at decision-making that relied on

hunch and intuition, apparently instinctive decisions were often more than adequate and at times even better than might be managed by intensive deliberation.³⁸ It was even relevant to academics in their choice of theories. As Walt observed, the time spent learning the complex mathematics demanded by some formal theories was time spent not “learning a foreign language, mastering the relevant details of a foreign policy issue, immersing oneself in a new body of theoretical literature, or compiling an accurate body of historical data.”³⁹

As a combination of neuroimaging and experimental games illuminated the areas of the brain activated by different forms of cognition and decision, the sources of the tension between the bottom-up, instinctive processes and the top-down, deliberative processes could be detected. The parts of the brain associated with earlier evolutionary stages, the brain stem and the amygdale, were associated with choices defined by feelings and marked by instincts and mental shortcuts. Dopamine neurons automatically detected patterns in the stimuli coming in from the environment and matched them with stored information derived from experience and learning. These were connected by the orbitofrontal cortex (OFC) to conscious thought. It was the expansion of the frontal cortex during evolution that gave humans their comparative advantage in intelligence. Here could be detected the influence of explicit goals (such as holding on to a good reputation or making money). When trying to understand other people and what they might do, the medial prefrontal cortex and anterior paracingulate cortex became activated. These were not activated when playing a computer game because there was no point in trying to assess a computer’s intentions. Yet compared with the notionally more primitive brain, the prefrontal cortex appeared limited in its computational capacity, barely able to handle seven things at once.

Jonah Lehrer summed up the implications of the research:

The conventional wisdom about decision-making has got it exactly backward. It is the easy problems—the mundane math problems of daily life—that are best suited to the conscious brain. These simple decisions won’t overwhelm the prefrontal cortex. In fact they are so simple that they tend to trip up the emotions, which don’t know how to compare prices or compute the odds of a poker hand. (When people rely on their feelings in such situations, they make avoidable mistakes, like those due to loss aversion and arithmetical errors.) Complex problems, on the other hand, require the processing powers of the emotional brain, the supercomputer of the mind. This doesn’t just mean

you can just blink and know what to do—even the unconscious takes a little time to process information—but it does suggest that there's a better way to make difficult decisions.⁴⁰

When the actual processes of decision-making were considered, there was therefore very little relationship to the formal model of decision-making. Emotion could no longer be seen as something separate from reason and apt to lead reason astray, so that only a dispassionate intellectual discipline, the sort displayed by Plato's philosopher-kings, could ensure rational control. Instead emotion appeared as bound up with all thought processes.⁴¹ Neuroimaging of the brain confirmed the extraordinary activity involved in evaluating situations and options before the conclusions reach human consciousness. The revelation lay in just how much computation and analysis humans were capable of before they were really aware of any serious thought underway at all. Here in the subconscious could be found the various heuristics and biases explored by the behavioral economists, or the repressed feelings that fascinated Freud and the psychoanalysts. It was here that decisions took form, and where people and propositions acquired positive or negative connotations.

Human beings did what felt right, but that did not mean their behavior was uninformed or irrational. Only when the circumstances were unusual did they have to ponder and wonder what to do next. Then thought processes became more conscious and deliberate. The conclusions might be more rational or they might be more rationalized. If the instinctive feelings were trusted, the natural course was to look for arguments to explain why they were correct rather than subject them to truly critical scrutiny. Two distinct processes were therefore identified, both capable of processing information and formulating decisions. Their combined effect was described as a "dual-process model of reasoning." Their least loaded labels were System 1 and System 2.⁴² The distinction between the two may be drawn too sharply, as they clearly feed off each other and interact. The value for our purposes is to allow us to identify two distinctive forms of strategic reasoning which at least have some basis in cognitive psychology.

The intuitive System 1 processes were largely unconscious and implicit. They operated quickly and automatically when needed, managing cognitive tasks of great complexity and evaluating situations and options before they reached consciousness. This referred to not one but a number of processes, perhaps with different evolutionary roots, ranging from simple forms of information retrieval to complex mental representations.⁴³ They all involved the extraordinary computational and storage power of the brain, drawing

on past learning and experiences, picking up on and interpreting cues and signals from the environment, suggesting appropriate and effective behavior, and enabling individuals to cope with the circumstances in which they might find themselves without having to deliberate on every move. Here could be found a grasp of how society worked and individuals operated, what had been internalized about societies and a variety of situations, bringing it together in ways faster and more focused than possible by more explicit and deliberate means. The outcomes were feelings—including strong senses of like and dislike, signals and patterns—with scripts for action that might be difficult to articulate but were followed without always understanding where they came from. What emerged out of System 1 did not need to be contrary to reason and could involve calculations and evaluations far exceeding those that could be accomplished with the more cumbersome and limited processes associated with System 2. In some ways, the modeling associated with game theory captured both the potential and limitations of System 2 thinking. If there was no System 1, that was probably how individuals might think, though without the prompts of System 1 they might find it difficult ever actually to reach a conclusion.

The intuitive System 1 thinking would still at times need to be supplemented by System 2 processes. These were conscious, explicit, analytical, deliberative, more intellectual, and inherently sequential—just what was expected of strategic reasoning. Unfortunately, System 2 processes were also slower and struggled with excessive complexity. They were also more demanding, for exerting self-control could be “depleting and unpleasant,” leading to a loss of motivation.⁴⁴ The features of System 2 involved attributes that were uniquely human. Although the process may have started with chimps, they were assumed to reflect more recent evolutionary development, associated with language and the ability to address hypothetical situations, without immediate context, beyond immediate experience. The move from System 1 did not mean that feelings no longer played a part. For example, when deciding whether to cooperate or defect in the ultimatum game, players’ positive or negative feelings about the options influenced their decisions. When another player was perceived to have acted unfairly, this could arouse strong feelings affecting the severity of the response.⁴⁵

Whether the decisions emerging out of System 1 were good would depend on the quality and relevance of internalized information. As in other areas, instincts could often be reliable guides but a desire to believe could sometimes override best interests. Instinctive choices had features that potentially limited their effectiveness. First, shortcuts were used, turning new situations into something familiar in order to draw on apparently relevant experience

or knowledge. This was the case even when the stakes were high.⁴⁶ Second, though more effort might be invested in high-stakes decisions, this could be to find evidence to support choices that seemed intuitively correct from the start.⁴⁷ Third, thinking was often short term, shaped by immediate challenges. Kahneman observed that “an exclusive concern with the long term may be prescriptively sterile, because the long term is not where life is lived.” During the course of a conflict there would be responses to the “pain of losses and the regret of mistakes.”⁴⁸ In this respect, the first encounters were bound to be more important, as these tested the accuracy of the initial framing and showed how issues were likely to be framed in the future. The next chapter notes the importance of considering strategy as starting from an existing situation rather than a distant goal.

Learning and training could make a difference, as was evident in those who had to work out what to do during the course of a competitive game, an intense battle, or any stressful situation without time for much deliberation. Intuitive decisions could therefore reflect strong biases, limited prior knowledge, narrow framing, and short time scales. With more deliberation decisions did not necessarily improve, especially if the extra deliberation was devoted to rationalizing intuitive conclusions. But deliberation did allow for correcting biases, more abstract conceptualizations, reconstructing the frame, and pushing out the time horizons. The evidence suggested that the more conscious reasoning kicked in when the circumstances had unique features, the information was poor, inconsistencies and anomalies were evident compared with expectations, or there was an awareness of the danger of bias. Individuals with a lack of empathy (psychopathy) were less inclined to cooperate and more likely to defect in games involving trust. When they were asked to act against type, so that the empathetic defected and the psychopathic cooperated, extra activity was observed in the prefrontal cortex because of the effort needed to exert control.⁴⁹ Deliberate System 2 thinking interacted with intuitive System 1 thinking, a potential source of control that was not always controlling.

The tension was evident when evidence challenged strongly held beliefs. Experts who had a considerable stake in a particular proposition could put considerable intellectual effort into discrediting the evidence and those who supported alternative propositions. A study of pundits by Philip Tetlock in the 1980s demonstrated that their predictions were no better than might have been achieved through random choice, and that the most famous and regarded were often the worst. Because of their self-image as being uniquely expert they would convey more certainty than was often justified by the evidence. The best pundits, he noted, were those who were ready to monitor

how well their predictions were going and were not too quick to disregard dissonant findings.⁵⁰

The two processes provided a compelling metaphor for a struggle that was central to the production of strategies. Simply put, strategy as commonly represented was System 2 thinking par excellence, capable of controlling the illogical forms of reasoning—often described as emotional—that emerged out of System 1. The reality turned out to be much more complicated and intriguing, for in many respects System 1 was more powerful and could overwhelm System 2 unless a determined effort was made to counter its impact. A strategy could involve following System 1 as it was posted into consciousness and appeared as the right thing to do, so that conscious effort was directed at finding reasons why it should be done—strategy as rationalization. One way to think of strategy, therefore, was as a System 2 process engaged in a tussle with System 1 thinking, seeking to correct for feelings, prejudices, and stereotypes; recognizing what was unique and unusual about the situation; and seeking to plot a sensible and effective way forward.

A key finding from experiments was that individuals were not naturally strategic. When they understood that they were taking part in a competitive strategic game and were told the rules, the criteria, and the rewards for success, then they acted strategically. They could appreciate, for example, that sticking to an established pattern of behavior just because it worked in the past would probably not work in the future because a clever opponent would know what to expect. They also realized that their opponent's future actions were likely to vary from those observed in the past. This was the essence of strategic reasoning: making choices on the basis of the likely choices of opponents and, in so doing, recognizing that opponents' choices would depend in turn on expectations about what they might choose.⁵¹

Yet when the need for strategy was left unexplained and implicit, individuals often missed cues and opportunities. Nor were they always enthusiastic and competitive when told they were playing a strategic game. Strategies were often inconsistent, clumsy, and unsophisticated; reflected shifting or uncertain preferences; responded to the wrong stimuli; and focused on the wrong factors, misunderstanding partners as well as antagonists. Players often had to be urged to make the effort to get into the minds of their opponents. This is why the next chapter argues that many everyday and routine encounters should not be really considered as "strategic."

David Sally compared what could be learned from experimental games with what might be predicted by game theory. The "explosion of experimental work in the past 20 years," he wrote in 2003, revealed that human beings, "despite their advantages in the areas of reasoning, rationality and

mentalizing, can be the most befuddling and the least consistent game-players." At various times they came over as "cooperative, altruistic, competitive, selfish, generous, equitable, spiteful, communicative, distant, similar, mindreading or mindblind as small elements in the game structure or social setting are altered."⁵² A lot of responses to events were intuitive, undertaken without much hard thought or analysis of alternatives, and produced judgments that were quick and plausible. Individuals were not natural strategists. It required a conscious effort.

There are no endings. If you think so you are deceived as to their nature.

They are all beginnings. Here is one.

—Hilary Mantel

CHAPTER 1 CONCLUDED, after a discussion of primates and the more primitive human societies, by identifying some elemental features of strategic behavior. Such behavior emerged out of social structures that invited conflict, recognized the distinctive attributes of potential opponents or allies, displayed sufficient empathy to find ways to influence their actions, and were able to prevail through deception or coalition as well as brute force. These features have regularly come to the fore as we have considered strategy in both theory and practice. We have also come across a number of definitions of strategy, many of which are perfectly serviceable, although none quite capture all these elements. Some have been quite specific to particular spheres, notably the military, referring to engagements, maps, and deployments. Others have been more general, referring to the interaction of ends, ways and means, combinations of long-term goals and courses of action, systems of expediciencies and forms of domination, dialectics of opposing wills and interdependent decision-making, relationships to environments, advanced problem-solving, and a means of coping with uncertainty. The preface offered “the art of creating power” as my short definition. This has the advantage of allowing the impact

of strategy to be measured as the difference between the outcome anticipated by reference to the prevailing balance of power and the actual outcome after the application of strategy. It helps explain why underdogs find strategy most challenging. It does not, however, provide guidance for practitioners. To this end this chapter explores the value of considering strategy as a story about power told in the future tense from the perspective of a leading character.

Those who want to be sure that their strategy is well done can draw on many forms of advice, from professional manuals to self-help books to specialist consultancies to academic journals. Some prescriptions are exhortatory while others are more analytical; some struggle to rise above banalities while others are couched in terms barely intelligible to lay readers lacking higher mathematics or the ability to penetrate postmodernist codes. Some insist on a paradigm shift. Others suggest nurturing an inspirational personality or urge close attention to detail. Faced with such diverse and often contradictory advice it is hard to avoid the conclusion that while strategy is undoubtedly a good thing to have, it is also a hard thing to get right. The world of strategy is full of disappointment and frustration, of means not working and ends not reached.

The various strands of literature examined in this book all began confidently with a belief that given the right measures demanding objectives could be achieved on a regular basis. The Napoleonic phenomenon led Jomini and Clausewitz to explain to aspiring generals how they might win decisive battles and so decide the fate of nations. The recollection of the French Revolution and gathering social and political unrest encouraged the first professional revolutionaries to imagine equally decisive insurrections from which new forms of social order would emerge. Over a century later, large American corporations—apparently unassailable and enjoying benign market conditions—were encouraged by Chandler, Drucker, and Sloan to look to strategy as a guide to the organizational structures and long-term plans that could sustain this happy state of affairs.

In all three cases, experience undermined the foundations of this confidence. Victory in battle did not necessarily lead to victory in war. The ruling classes found ways to meet popular demands for political and economic rights that diverted revolutionary pressures. The comfortable position of American manufacturers was rocked by international competition, notably—but not solely—from Japan. Yet these setbacks did not lead to the initial frameworks being abandoned. Military strategists continued to yearn for a route to decisive victories even as they were frustrated by grinding campaigns of attrition or popular resistance and guerrilla ambushes. Revolutionaries continued to seek ways to mobilize the broad masses to overthrow governments even as the Western democracies legitimated expressions of discontent and paths to

reform, and as these encouraged quite different and generally more productive types of political strategy. It was only in the business sphere that the flaws in the early strategic models were so evident that they were soon left behind by a frenetic search for alternatives which came to involve a range of competing, often contradictory, and confusing propositions.

The problems experienced with strategy were a natural consequence of its Enlightenment origins. Progressive rationalism, later identified by Weber as an unstoppable secular trend manifest in the rise of bureaucracies, was expected to squeeze out emotions and romance, thereby removing intrusive sources of error and uncertainty. The prospect was one of human affairs ordered on the basis of accumulated knowledge. But relevant knowledge was hard to accumulate or present with sufficient precision to guide practitioners, who were faced with a series of competing demands and uncertainties and often had little real choice but to “muddle through.”¹ The assumption of rationalism, influencing not only the theorizing but expectations of how it would be received and acted upon, turned out to be inadequate.

Strategies were neither designed nor implemented in controlled environments. The longer the sequence of planned moves, the greater the number of human agents who must act in particular ways, the more extensive the ambition of the project, the more likely that something would go wrong. Should the first moves in the planned sequence of events fail to produce the intended effects matters could soon go awry. Situations would become more complex and the actors more numerous and contrary. The chains of causation would become attenuated and then broken altogether. Without going as far as Tolstoy, who dismissed the idea of strategy as presumptuous and naïve, it was evident that successful outcomes would depend on trying to affect a range of institutions, processes, personalities, and perceptions that would often be quite impervious to influence. Warning against the belief that history was full of lessons, Gordon Wood argued that there was but one big one: “Nothing ever works out quite the way its managers intended or expected.” History taught “skepticism about people’s ability to manipulate and control purposely their own destinies.”² Strategies were not so much means of asserting control over situations but ways of coping with situations in which nobody was in total control.

The Limits of Strategy

Did this leave strategy with any value? “Plans are worthless,” observed President Eisenhower, drawing on his military experience, “but planning is

everything.”³ The same could be said about strategy. Without some prior deliberation it might be even harder to cope with the unexpected, pick up the cues of a changing situation, challenge set assumptions, or consider the implications of uncharacteristic behavior. If strategy is a fixed plan that set out a reliable path to an eventual goal, then it is likely to be not only disappointing but also counterproductive, conceding the advantage to others with greater flexibility and imagination. Adding flexibility and imagination, however, offers a better chance of keeping pace with a developing situation, regularly re-evaluating risks and opportunities.

A productive approach to strategy requires recognizing its limits. This applies not only to the benefits of strategy but also to its domain. Boundaries are required. As strategy has become so ubiquitous, so that every forward-looking decision might be worthy of the term, it now risks meaninglessness, lacking any truly distinguishing feature. One obvious boundary is to insist on its irrelevance in situations involving inanimate objects or simple tasks. It only really comes into play when elements of conflict are present. Situations in which this conflict is only latent are rarely approached in a truly strategic frame of mind. Rather than assume trouble people prefer instead to trust others with the expectation of being trusted in turn. Within a familiar environment, working with an “in-group,” overtly strategic behavior can lead to resentment and resistance without commensurate gain. People can be at the wrong end of power relationships without either realizing or caring, because of the way they have been encouraged to think about their life circumstances or because of their habitual reluctance to challenge established hierarchies and conventions. What makes the difference, so that strategy comes to the fore, is the recognition of conflict. Some event, or shift in social attitudes or patterns of behavior, can challenge what had previously been taken for granted. Familiar situations may be seen with fresh eyes and those previously part of the “in-group” come to be viewed with suspicion as defectors to the “out-group.”

If emerging situations of conflict bring strategy into the picture, a desire to play down conflict can take it out. This can even be the case with official documents with strategy in the title which are largely designed to demonstrate a capacity for long-term thought. In these documents strategy is packaged as an authoritative forward look, reflecting the approved views of a government or company. Hew Strachan has complained of how strategy has come to be abused in this way, at the expense of its original role as a link between ends and means. By extending strategy into all governmental endeavors the word is “robbed” of its meaning leaving only “banalities” behind.⁴ Certainly many “strategy” documents deliberately avoid the topic,

lack focus, cover too many dissimilar or only loosely connected issues and themes, address multiple audiences to the satisfaction of none, and reflect nuanced bureaucratic compromises. They are often about issues that might have to be addressed rather than ways of dealing with specific problems. Consequently, their half-lives are often short. To the extent that such documents have any strategic content they are about a broad orientation to the environment, what became known in business strategy as “positioning.” It may well be that in a broadly stable and satisfactory environment, in which goals are being realized with relative ease, there may be little need for anything sharper and bolder. Only at moments of environmental instability, as latent conflict becomes actual, when real choices have to be made does something resembling a true strategy become necessary.

So what turns something that is not quite strategy into strategy is a sense of actual or imminent instability, a changing context that induces a sense of conflict. Strategy therefore starts with an existing state of affairs and only gains meaning by an awareness of how, for better or worse, it could be different. This view is quite different from those that assume strategy must be about reaching some prior objective. It may well be more concerned with coping with some dire crisis or preventing further deterioration in an already stressful situation. So the first requirement might be one of survival. This is why as a practical matter strategy is best understood modestly, as moving to the “next stage” rather than to a definitive and permanent conclusion. The next stage is a place that can be realistically reached from the current stage. That place may not necessarily be better, but it will still be an improvement upon what could have been achieved with a lesser strategy or no strategy at all. It will also be sufficiently stable to be a base from which to prepare to move to the stage after that. This does not mean that it is easy to manage without a view of a desired end state. Without some sense of where the journey should be leading it will be difficult to evaluate alternative outcomes. Like a grandmaster at chess, a gifted strategist will be able to see the future possibilities inherent in the next moves, and think through successive stages. The ability to think ahead is therefore a valuable attribute in a strategist, but the starting point will still be the challenges of the present rather than the promise of the future. With each move from one state of affairs to another, the combination of ends and means will be reappraised. Some means will be discarded and new ones found, while some ends will turn out to be beyond reach even as unexpected opportunities come into view. Even when what had been assumed to be the ultimate goal is reached, strategy will not stop. Victory in a climactic event such as a battle, an insurrection, an election, a sporting final, or a business acquisition

will mean a move to a new and more satisfactory state but not the end of struggle. What has gone before will set the terms for the next set of encounters. The effort required to achieve victory may have left resources depleted. A crushed rebellion may add to the resentment of the oppressed; bruising election campaigns can hamper coalition formation; hostile takeovers make merging two companies more difficult.

One reason why it is so difficult to anticipate how situations might develop over many stages results from the need to address many relationships. Strategy is often presented as being solely about opponents and rivals. In the first instance, however, colleagues and subordinates must agree on the strategy and how it should be implemented. Achieving an internal consensus often requires great strategic skill and must be a priority because of the weaknesses caused by divisions, but the accommodation of different interests and perspectives can result in a compromised product—suboptimal when dealing with a capable opponent. The larger the circle of cooperation required, including third parties who might become allies, the harder it can become to reach agreement. While there can be tensions among supposed friends, there can also be areas of shared interest that provide the basis for a negotiation. Rival states might prefer to avoid all-out war, political parties to maintain standards of civility, and businesses to avoid pushing prices down to unprofitable levels. This interaction between cooperation and conflict is at the heart of all strategy. There is a spectrum marked by complete consensus (absence of any disputes) at one end and complete control (disputes smothered by one party's domination) at the other. Both extremes are rare and almost certainly unstable as circumstances change and new types of interest emerge. In practice, the choice may well be between degrees of conciliation or coercion. As the best way of coping with superior strength is often to put together a coalition or break up that of the opponent, strategy is apt to involve compromises and negotiations. "The pursuit of relative power," Timothy Crawford has observed, "is as much about subtracting and dividing as about adding and multiplying." This can require difficult forms of accommodation to keep a party neutral and away from the enemy camp.⁵ All this explains why strategy is an art and not a science. It comes into play when situations are uncertain, unstable, and thus unpredictable.

System 1 Strategy and System 2 Strategy

Developments in cognitive psychology mean that we now know much more than before about how human beings cope with uncertain situations. They

encourage the view that strategic thinking can and often does start in the subconscious before it breaks into conscious thought. It can originate as apparently intuitive judgments, reflecting what can now be labeled System 1 thinking. System 1 strategies draw on an ability to read situations and see possibilities that less-strategic intelligences would miss. This form of strategic reasoning has been appreciated since classical times. It was manifested as *mētis*, exemplified by Odysseus, who was resourceful, coped with ambiguity, and used artful language to lead the in-group and disorient the out-group. Napoleon spoke of the *coup d'œil* as the “gift of being able to see at a glance the possibilities offered by the terrain.” It was at the heart of Clausewitz’s belief in military genius, a “highly developed mental aptitude” that allowed the great general to pick the right moment and place for attack. Jon Sumida described Clausewitz’s concept of genius as involving “a combination of rational intelligence and subrational intellectual and emotional faculties that make up intuition.” It was the only basis of decision in the “face of difficult circumstances such as inadequate information, great complexity, high levels of contingency, and severe negative consequences in the event of failure.”⁶ Napoleon described this as an inborn talent, but Clausewitz saw that it could also be developed through experience and education.

In one of his last published articles, the philosopher Isaiah Berlin spoke up for instinct and flair, challenging the idea that good judgment in politics could be scientific and founded on “indubitable knowledge”.⁷ “In the realm of political action,” Berlin concluded, “laws are far and few indeed: skills are everything.” The key skill was the ability to grasp what made a situation unique. Great political figures were able to “understand the character of a particular movement, of a particular individual, of a unique state of affairs, of a unique atmosphere, of some particular combination of economic, political, personal factors.” This grasp of the interplay of human beings and impersonal forces, sense of the specific over the general, and capacity to anticipate the consequential “tremors” of actions involved a special sort of judgment. This was, he averred, “semi-instinctive.” He described a form of political intelligence, closely resembling *mētis* and capturing the best of System 1 thinking:

...a capacity for integrating a vast amalgam of constantly changing, multicolored, evanescent, perpetually overlapping data, too many, too swift, too intermingled to be caught and pinned down and labeled like so many individual butterflies. To integrate in this sense is to see the data (those identified by scientific knowledge as well as by direct perception) as elements in a single pattern, with their implications,

to see them as symptoms of past and future possibilities, to see them pragmatically—that is, in terms of what you or others can or will do to them, and what they can or will do to others or to you.

It was a capacity that could be lost by a focus on formal methodologies and a determination to squeeze out the intuition and stress the analytical. “Many of the strategists I have examined,” observed Bruce Kuklick of contributors to postwar American security policy, “were essentially apolitical, in that they lacked what I must call for want of a better phrase *elementary political sense*. It is almost as if they sought to learn in a seminar room or from cogitation what only instinct, experience and savvy could teach.”⁸

The quality that often comes with political judgment is the ability to persuade others to follow a particular course. Indeed, for those who are not Napoleons, who cannot expect orders to be accepted without question, shrewd judgment is of little value unless it is coupled with an ability to express its meaning to those who must follow its imperatives. It is at this point that strategy moves from intuition to deliberation, from knowing that a particular course is the right one to finding the arguments to explain why this must be so. So system 2 thinking is needed for those situations that are too complex and unique for System 1. Such circumstances require that alternative arguments be weighed and measured against each other to identify a credible course of action. Thus, for the most part, strategy must be in the realm of System 2, but that may only be in terms of turning what are essentially System 1 judgments into persuasive arguments.

The reason this book has returned so often to questions of language and communication is because strategy is meaningless without them. Not only does strategy need to be put into words so that others can follow, but it works through affecting the behavior of others. Thus it is always about persuasion, whether convincing others to work with you or explaining to adversaries the consequences if they do not. Pericles gained authority for his ability to make a reasoned case in a democratic setting; Machiavelli urged princes to develop compelling arguments; Churchill’s speeches gave the British people a sense of purpose in war. Brute force or economic inducements may play their part, but their impact may be lost without clarity about what must be done to avoid punishment or gain reward. “Power is actualized only where word and deed have not parted company,” observed Hannah Arendt, “where words are not empty and deeds not brutal, where words are not used to veil intentions but to disclose realities, and deeds are not used to violate and destroy but to establish relations and create new realities.”⁹

The greatest power is that which achieves its effects without notice. This comes about when established structures appear settled and uncontentious, part of the natural and generally benign order of things, even to those who might be supposed to be disadvantaged.¹⁰ The ability of elites to render essentially sectional interests as a general good so that their satisfaction is taken for granted and put beyond challenge has been a source of intense frustration to radicals. The limited revolutionary zeal of the masses has been explained by grand stories—labeled as formulas, myths, ideologies, paradigms, and eventually narratives—which assumed that since people could not grasp objective reality they must depend on interpretative constructs, and those best placed to influence those constructs could acquire enormous power. The radicals sought to develop strategies promoting alternative, healthier forms of consciousness, contradicting any suggestion that the existing scheme of things must be accepted without question as natural and enduring rather than constructed and contingent. This question of how best to affect the attitudes of others has come to be seen to be relevant to all aspects of strategy and not just efforts to turn the existing order upside down. Partisan politicians have worked to set agendas and frame issues, offering damaging stories about opponents while portraying a party's own candidates in the best possible light. This “narrative turn” has also been evident in the military and business arenas, reflected in calls for sensitivity to “hearts and minds” in counterinsurgency, corporate lobbyists challenging regulatory restraints, or managers trying to convince employees that they will benefit from drastic organizational changes. Not only are stories instruments of strategy, they also give form to strategy. Reinforced by cognitive theories and the role of interpretative constructs and scripts in organizing attitudes and behavior, narratives have moved to the fore in the contemporary strategic literature in military, politics, and business. In order to come to terms with recent trends in thinking about strategy we need to come to terms with stories.

The Trouble with Stories

In his essay “The Trouble with Stories,” Charles Tilly considered the persistent human tendency to seek explanations in terms of stories about individuals, along with collectives such as churches or states and even abstractions such as classes or regions. These stories would tell of deliberate, conscious, and often successful acts to achieve definite goals. They satisfied their audience, including social scientists, far too easily. All that seemed to be required was a degree of plausibility, recognition of the constraints of time and circumstance,

and a match with cultural expectations. Yet, Tilly warned, stories had limited explanatory power. The most significant cause-effect relations tended to be “indirect, incremental, interactive, unintended, collective, or mediated by the nonhuman environment rather than being direct, willed consequences of individual action.” The demand for stories encouraged analysis in terms of actors making deliberate choices among well-defined alternatives, when actual decision-making was likely to be far less calculating and deliberate, more improvised, often quite wobbly. Social scientists had a responsibility to seek something better. Tilly was not optimistic. Brains, he noted, would “store, retrieve and manipulate information about social processes” in terms of standard stories, thereby encouraging accounts of complex events in terms of the “interactions of self-motivated objects.” If this was the case, Tilly at least hoped for superior stories, doing justice to the impersonal and collective forces at work as well as the human, and making the appropriate connections with time, places, actors, and actions outside their purview. Better still, we should tell stories about stories, giving stories context and considering how they were generated.¹¹

Business historians have come to warn of accepting at face value narratives, such as Sloan’s *My Life with General Motors*, that suggest that challenging decisions were matters of purely rational choice. Whether or not such narratives exaggerate the role of senior managers they leave the impression of inevitability, understating the possibility of different decisions leading to alternative outcomes.¹² Daniel Raff advocates recreating the choices of the past, looking at historical events as “sequences of challenges to be addressed rather than as initiatives which have already happened.” This would mean recognizing the alternatives that were available in the past and how actors made sense of them.¹³ Kahneman has also observed that although good stories “provide a simple and coherent account of people’s actions and intentions,” this encourages a readiness to “interpret behavior as a manifestation of general propensities and personality traits—causes that you can readily match to effects.” As an example he cites analyses of corporate success. The numerous management books full of these stories “consistently exaggerate the impact of leadership style and management practices.” He suggests that luck is as important a factor if not more so. The result of these biases is that when it comes to “explaining the past and in predicting the future, we focus on the causal role of skill and neglect the role of luck. We are therefore prone to an illusion of control.” He further notes the paradox that it “is easier to construct a coherent story when you know little, when there are fewer pieces to fit into the puzzle.” This reinforces the tendency to neglect factors about which little is known, thereby encouraging overconfidence.¹⁴

These flawed stories of the past shape our predictions of the future. In this he draws attention to the work of Nassim Taleb, who stresses the importance of unexpected and random events (which he calls “black swans”) for which inadequate provision has been made because they are so out of line with past experience. Yet Taleb also acknowledges a contradiction in his method, for although he points to forms of narrative fallacy he also uses stories “to illustrate our gullibility about stories and our preference for the dangerous compression of narratives.” This is because metaphors and stories are “far more potent (alas) than ideas; they are also easier to remember and more fun to read.” As a result: “You need a story to displace a story.”¹⁵

We have seen in this book how familiar stories with a strong message turn out on closer examination to be either fabricated or subject to alternative interpretations offering different lessons. David and Goliath is now understood to be about what an underdog might achieve, but it was originally about the importance of belief in God. Odysseus began as a celebration of a shrewd and crafty intelligence, but as he morphed into the Roman Ulysses he came to exemplify treachery and trickery. Plato outdid the sophists at their own game, making his claim for a pure discipline of philosophy by recasting those who came before him as caring more for money than truth. Milton sought to make sense of the Creation by constructing a Machiavellian Satan who many came to find a more compelling character than his worthy God. Clausewitz looked at Napoleon’s ill-fated Russian campaign as flawed strategy; Tolstoy saw it as proof that there could be no such thing as strategy. Liddell Hart collected stories of battle and then gave them his own twist to validate his indirect approach. John Boyd and his acolytes took the idea of the blitzkrieg—as exemplified by the German success in Europe in 1940—stripped it of context by ignoring its failure in the East, and turned it into a model for future warfare. Marx complained about the persistent influence of the French Revolution but could not quite escape from it himself. As his predictions about the development of capitalism turned out to be flawed, his followers contorted themselves to prove that this was still scientific history and so bound to be vindicated. The traditional teaching of business strategy depended on stories known as case histories. The management gurus, from Frederick Taylor to Tom Peters, knew that they could make their points with a good tale that could illustrate their essential points. The very human temptation to seize on some specific incident to make a general point—demonstrated by the uses of anecdotes about Honda—led invariably to overstated conclusions that were far more contingent than their tellers would allow.

“Research suggests that power comes less from knowing the right stories than from knowing how and [how] well to tell them: what to leave out,

what to fill in, when to revise and when to challenge, and whom to tell or not to tell.”¹⁶ In terms of everyday human interaction, persuasion through storytelling can be an important skill, especially when engaging those with similar backgrounds and interests. When engaging those who might be skeptical or suspicious, with separate frames of reference, they may be of less value. Moreover, narratives deliberately manufactured to achieve some desired effect risk appearing forced and contrived. They suffer from all the problems once associated with propaganda, which lost credibility precisely because of its blatant attempt to influence how others thought and behaved.

Indeed, the current enthusiasm for “strategic narratives” might fade with greater appreciation of their roots in what was once unashamedly and positively called propaganda, before it acquired totalitarian connotations. These narratives have to work within all the previously described constraints. With sufficient ambiguity, the same strategic story might hold a group together or advance a political project but then fall apart as soon as clarity is required, empirical tests present themselves, or contradictory messages emerge. When it comes to “battles of narratives,” what matters is not only their inherent quality but the resources behind them, reflected in the capacity for an organization to propagate its own myths and censor or counter contrary claims. Narratives are neither “fundamentally subversive nor hegemonic.” They can be told effectively—and ineffectually—by authorities and their opponents. They are not precise strategic instruments because they can convey a range of messages, not all of which may be understood, and narrative devices such as metaphors and irony can cause confusion. The meaning of stories can be ambiguous and some interpretations may undercut the storyteller. Audiences may focus on minor features or impose their own experiences on the narrative. Familiar stories which apparently convey one message can be given a mischievous twist by groups promoting an apparently contrary cause.¹⁷ We can recall the classicist Francis Cornford’s definition of propaganda: “That branch of the art of lying which consists in very nearly deceiving your friends without quite deceiving your enemies.”¹⁸

Scripts

These ambiguous aspects of narratives explain their limitations as strategic instruments. Are there ways of thinking about them that might help give them more value? We can assume that it is much easier to control for problems of meaning and interpretation when the audience is quite small and already sharing much by way of culture and purposes. Reference was made in

the last chapter to the concept of an internalized script as a source of orientation to a new situation. This concept has been influential in the psychology and artificial intelligence communities but less so in the strategic. Strictly speaking, the concept refers to stereotypical situations which set expectations for appropriate behavior. Scripts can be either weak, for example, deciding that somebody fits a certain personality type, or strong, in anticipating a whole sequence of events. In the original concept, scripts were about drawing on stored knowledge that led to almost automatic responses—which might turn out to be wholly inappropriate. Scripts can, however, be taken as starting points for deliberate action and even be developed and internalized by groups as they consider together a developing situation. Studies of scripts have therefore considered how individuals respond to organizational routines, such as appraisals, or to events which they are unlikely to have experienced ever before, such as fires in a public place. This work has demonstrated the hold scripts can have and the difficulty of persuading people who have committed to a particular script to abandon it. Scripts may be a natural way of responding to new situations, but they can also be seriously misleading. Thus, if people need to behave abnormally, they need to know that they are in an abnormal situation.¹⁹

The advantages of scripts for our purposes are twofold. First, the concept provides a way of addressing the problem about how individuals enter into new situations, give them meaning, and decide how to behave. Second, it has a natural link with performance and narrative. Indeed, Abelson discussed scripts in terms of being composed of a series of scenes made up of linked vignettes that are as likely to originate in reading, including fiction, as experience.²⁰

One use of the idea in a wider context comes from Avner Offer's account of the origins of the Great War, in which he describes the importance of "honor" as a motivation and asks why it took precedence over survival. It was not as if the German High Command was confident of victory. They knew that the planned offensive was something of a gamble, even though they could think of no other way to wage the war. In the war counsels of Berlin in 1914, the view was that Germany dared not hold back. It had done so with the last crisis, and if it did so again its reputation would be lost. The only prospect would be an ignominious and decadent decline. The consequences were uncertain, but a fine intention would provide its own vindication. The German decision to go to war—and those equally belligerent decisions it provoked—was, Offer asserts, an "expressive rather than instrumental act." In this respect war was the outcome of a sequence of insults, a "chain of honorable reactions" which none felt able to ignore. Offer explains the emphasis on honor in deciding on war and then the military mobilization of whole

societies on the basis of scripts. The honor script was not “overt” but was influential, sanctioning a “reckless attitude” and creating “a powerful social pressure to subordinate prudential considerations and to conform.” This script, he suggests, was derivative of an even more implicit dueling script, which had its own sequence. When honor was challenged or questioned in some episode, the remedy was violence “in the case of nation-states, preceded by the polite maneuvers and language of diplomacy.” If “satisfaction” was denied, there would be a “loss of reputation, status, [and] honor,” which would lead to “humiliation and shame.” This script proved to be powerful. It “provided a narrative in which decisions could be communicated, a justification and legitimation for sacrifice that everyone could understand and accept.” So what started as an emotion among the few at the top could be transmitted through the culture. So powerful was this script that those in its grip were blinded to alternative scripts based on “other forms of courage and risk taking; to those of timely concession, of conciliation, cooperation, and trust.”²¹

In this respect, a strategic script in a System 1 sense can be considered a largely internalized foundation for attempts to give situations meaning and suggest appropriate responses. These scripts may be implicit or just taken for granted, as in the assumptions that the logic of war is a battle of annihilation leading to enemy capitulation, that sea power must be about command of the sea, that the best form of counterinsurgency addresses hearts and minds, that appeasement always leads to an impression of weakness, or that an arms race always escalates into war. These are stereotypes that can often serve as substitutes for original thought or consideration of the particularities of situations. While they may be validated if acted upon, they may turn out to be wrong. At a less elevated level, scripts may be about the correct sequence of operations in a military campaign, the effect of state violence on popular movements, forming community organizations, securing a presidential nomination, managing organizational change, identifying the optimum time and place for a new product launch, or making the first move in a hostile takeover.

The point about these scripts is that if not challenged they may result in predictable behavior and miss variations in the context that should demand original responses. As I argued earlier, strategy really kicks in when there is something different and unfamiliar about the situation. System 1 scripts may be a natural starting point, but they may benefit from a System 2 appraisal that considers why the normal script might not work this time. In this respect, following established scripts risks strategic failure.

System 2 scripts should be more deserving of the adjective “strategic.” For dramatists, a compelling narrative is something to be worked on and refined

rather than merely a way of dignifying the inchoate mutterings of ordinary folk. Instead of being a subconscious set of internalized scripts, these scripts may be seen as acts of conscious communication. They do not need to take the form of screenplays in which each actor speaks in turn, but they should have a composed quality indicating the expected interaction between the main actors. They may be rooted in the past or draw on well-known events, but they have to take the present as a starting point and project forward. These strategies are stories about the future, starting with imaginative fiction but with an aspiration to nonfiction.

Jerome Bruner's discussion of narratives also illustrates the possibilities and limitations of strategic scripts. He suggested the following requirements. First, though they may not present reality accurately, they must meet the standard of verisimilitude, that is, the appearance of being true. Second, they will predispose an audience to a particular interpretation of events and an anticipation of what is to come. They do not involve empirical verification or steps in a logical sequence, but they create their own imperatives. "Narrative necessity" is the counterpart of "logical necessity." They can use devices such as suspense, foreshadowing, and flashbacks, and be allowed more ambiguity and uncertainty than formal analyses. Third, while they cannot be constituted as a formal proof of any general theory, they can be used to demonstrate a principle, uphold a norm, or offer guidance for the future. These, however, must arise naturally out of the narrative and not necessarily be stated explicitly in conclusion. It is often impossible to know where a good story is leading until the destination is reached. The audience must be taken to the required point by the "narrative imperative." According to Bruner, an "innovative story teller goes beyond the obvious." To get the audience's attention, the story must breach the expectations created by an "implicit canonical script" to contain an element of the unusual and unexpected.²²

The purpose of such a strategic story is not solely to predict events but to convince others to act in such a way that the story will follow its proposed course. If it fails to convince, the inherent prediction will certainly be wrong. As with other stories, these must relate to the audience's culture, experience, beliefs, and aspirations. To engage, they must ring true and survive examination in terms of their internal coherence and consistency ("narrative probability"). They must also resonate with the historical and cultural understandings of their intended audience ("narrative fidelity").²³ The main challenges for strategic narratives lie in their potentially brutal encounter with reality, which may require early adjustment, and the need to address multiple audiences, which risks incoherence.²⁴ It might be possible to reconcile apparently incompatible demands through a rhetorical trick or to combine

optimistic assumptions on top of each other, but such devices can soon be exposed. There needs to be candor and little make-believe.

What about the criticisms of Tilly and Kahneman that our dependence on stories leads us to exaggerate the importance of human agency, to assume that effects flow from the deliberate acts of the central characters in our stories (often ourselves) rather than large impersonal forces or chance events or questions of timing and happenstance that could never be part of the starting narrative? The answer is that ignoring these factors certainly makes for bad history but not necessarily bad strategy. When we seek to understand the present it is unwise to assume that things are the way they are solely because strong actors wished them to be thus, but when we look forward to the future we have little choice but to identify a way forward dependent upon human agency which might lead to a good outcome. It is as well to avoid illusions of control, but in the end all we can do is act as if we can influence events. To do otherwise is to succumb to fatalism.

Moreover, the unexpected and the accidental can be managed if provision is made from the start to accommodate them. A strategic plan, relating available means to desired ends through a series of steps which if followed carefully and in sequence produces the desired outcome, suggests a predictable world, with cause and effect known in advance. One large conclusion of this book is that such plans struggle to survive their encounters with an awkward reality. A script may share with a plan an anticipated sequence of events, but as it moves from System 1 to System 2, from a subconscious assumption to a deliberate composition, it can incorporate the possibility of chance events and anticipate the interaction of a number of players over an extended period of time. This requires an unfinished quality. The script must leave considerable scope for improvisation. There is only one action that can be anticipated with any degree of certainty, and that is the first move of the central player for whom the strategy has been devised. Whether the plot will unfold as intended will then depend on not only the acuity of the starting assumptions but also whether other players follow the script or deviate significantly from it.

Scripts: Strategic and Dramatic

Once strategies are considered as narratives a close relationship with drama becomes evident. David Barry and Michael Elmes consider strategy, “one of the most prominent, influential and costly stories told in organizations.” It carries elements of “theatrical drama, the historical novel, futurist fantasy,

and autobiography,” with “parts” prescribed for different characters. “Its traditional emphasis on forecasting aligns it with visionary novels having a prospective, forward-looking focus.”²⁵ If this is the case then there might be guidance for strategists in the methods by which dramatists work out their plots and write their scripts.

A good place to begin is Robert McKee’s guide to the art of storytelling for movies.²⁶ The starting point is exactly the same as with strategy. The story, like the strategy, moves forward with conflict. Scripts fail, he warns, when they are marked by “either a glut of meaningless and absurdly violent conflict, or a vacancy of meaningful and honestly expressed conflict.” This means recognizing that even within an apparently harmonious organization there is always some conflict. There is never enough space, time, or resources to go round, leaving aside the forms of conflict that result from discordant personalities and a clash of egos (which a successful organizational politician will also need to understand). Conflict does not necessarily lead to violence and mayhem. The conflict may be within the main character, which is reflected in the strategist’s need to choose. As McKee observes, the interesting and challenging choices are not those between good and evil but those between irreconcilable goods or two evils. The challenge of choice, however, is to know what can be done to achieve the preferred outcome, so that aiming for one does not lead to the other. This is the role of the plot, so that when “confronted by a dozen branching possibilities” the correct path is chosen. The plot will contain its own internal laws of probability. The choices faced by the protagonists must emerge naturally out of the world as described. The plot represents the dramatist’s “choice of events and their design in time.” The strategist must also stick closely to what McKee calls the “archplot,” in which “motivated actions cause effects that in turn become the causes of yet other effects, thereby interlinking the various levels of conflict in a chain reaction of episodes to the story climax, expressing the interconnectedness of reality.”

In drama, plots provide the structure that holds stories together and gives meaning to particular events. Aristotle in his *Poetics* described a plot as an “arrangement of incidents” that should have an inner unity. The story should not contain anything of irrelevance and it must maintain its credibility throughout. This required that the key players stay in character. Aristotle insisted that cause and effect should be explicable within the terms of the story rather than as the result of some artificial, external intervention. The “function of the poet” was in relating not what had happened but what could happen, to show what was possible “according to the law of probability or necessity.”²⁷

The features of a good plot are therefore shared between drama and strategy: conflict, convincing characters and credible interactions, sensitivity to the impact of chance, and a whole set of factors that no plan can anticipate or accommodate in advance. In both, the line between fiction and nonfiction can be blurred. A dramatist may attempt to reconstruct real events by showing what might have happened, while the strategist opens with a current reality but must then imagine how it could be changed. In neither case is there value in a wonderful and compelling narrative that falls flat and fails to engage its intended audience. A story that is too clever, convoluted, experimental, or shocking may fail to connect, produce an appalled counterreaction, or convey the wrong set of messages. In strategy as in drama, a poor plot can result from incredible characters, too much disparate activity, too many discordant points of view, events moving too slowly or too fast, confusing links, or obvious gaps.

There are, however, important differences between the dramatist and strategist. These can be illustrated by an example. In 1921, secretary of the interior Albert Fall took bribes from oil executives to hand over leases to drill for oil under the Teapot Dome rock formation in Wyoming. The press picked up the story because of rumblings from those within the oil industry denied the opportunity to bid for the reserves, although one newspaper used evidence to blackmail rather than reveal. Fall refused to answer any questions, and the government tried to prevent progress. Ultimately, a Congressional panel concluded that the leases “were executed under circumstances indicating fraud and corruption.” This was determined through tedious investigations, depending on a keen understanding of institutional processes.²⁸ One anti-corruption fighter in the Senate was Burton Wheeler of Montana, a lawyer who had made his name fighting for workers’ rights and against corruption and had acted as prosecutor for another Congressional investigation into corruption at the Department of Justice. An unsuccessful attempt was made to discredit him through allegations that he had accepted a fee from a client to help secure government oil concessions.²⁹

Wheeler was said to be the model for Jefferson Smith, the hero of Frank Capra’s movie, *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*. In the movie, Smith, the head of the state’s Boy Rangers, is naïve and idealistic. He is sent by the boss of the local political machine (James Taylor), to go to Washington as a replacement for a recently deceased Senator in the mistaken belief that he will be easy to manipulate. The state’s other Senator, Joseph Paine—once a good friend of Smith’s father and a fellow idealist—has been corrupted by power. Smith proposes a bill to create a boys’ camp in his home state, but the chosen site

is one Taylor has found for a corrupt dam-building scheme. Taylor, therefore, forces a reluctant Paine to denounce Smith as planning to profit from the bill at the expense of the boys he claims to champion. The plan almost works. A disconsolate Smith almost gives up until his previously skeptical aide, Clarissa Saunders, persuades him to take a stand. As Paine is about to call for a vote to expel Smith from the Senate, Smith begins to filibuster, hoping to get the message about corruption to the people of his state. Though Smith stays on his feet, Taylor is able to use strong-arm tactics to prevent the message getting out. Paine prepares the final blow by bringing in to the Senate hundreds of letters and telegrams demanding Smith's expulsion. Before collapsing exhausted, Smith insists that he will continue fighting "even if this room gets filled with lies like these, and the Taylors and all their armies come marching into this place. Somebody'll listen to me." Paine is shocked. He tries to shoot himself and then exclaims that he is the one who should be expelled. He confesses all. Smith is now a hero and his Senate career is assured.

The movie contrasted the manipulative business trusts who put themselves beyond democratic accountability, through their control of party machines and a supine media, with the decent aspirations of ordinary folk. It conveyed distaste for Machiavellian political methods, wiles and ruses, pretense and deception, while applauding those who were straightforward, principled, and brave. It demonstrated how a good man could defeat evil lurking in the body politic. Although Capra was a Republican, the script was written by a communist, Sidney Buchman. Capra had found it expedient to play down Buchman's role, and he appears to have been happy with the movie as a simple morality tale, with the good rewarded and the bad punished. Buchman believed that his script was a challenge to dictatorship and emphasized "the spirit of vigilance which is necessary if one believes in democracy the refusal to surrender even before small things."³⁰

Joseph Breen, the enforcer of the movie industry's Production Code Administration,³¹ was at first hostile to the Senate's portrayal as "if not deliberately crooked . . . completely controlled by lobbyists with special interests." Aware that he needed to avoid the impression of political censorship, Breen accepted it as a "grand yarn" so long as most Senators were shown to be "fine, upstanding, citizens who labor long and tirelessly for the best interests of the nation."³² Nonetheless, when first screened, senators (including Wheeler) and journalists were outraged. State Department officials feared that U.S. institutions were made to look ridiculous. The public—abroad as well as in the United States—was caught up in the brilliance of Capra's storytelling and accepted his claim that the movie idealized American democracy.³³ Ronald

Reagan almost modeled himself on Jefferson Smith, even as president quoting the line about fighting for lost causes.³⁴

For Capra's purposes, Smith appeared as idealistic and a-strategic. His strategic advice came from Saunders, first mischievously and then lovingly. In a key scene, she finds Smith alone at the Lincoln Memorial, bemoaning the discrepancy between the "fancy words . . . carved in stone" and the lies he faced. She urges him not to quit. All the "good in the world" comes from "fools with faith." In the original screenplay she appeals to "a little fellow called David [who] walked out with only a sling-shot—but he had the *truth* on his side."³⁵ In the final version she has a strategy: "A forty foot dive into a tub of water, but I think you can do it." This strategy works for an underdog who must survive the stronger side's push for a quick victory. Paine, a master of the rulebook, is surprised by the filibuster. Smith knows enough not to yield the floor and so was not caught by Paine's request for him to do just that. The second part of Saunders's plan fails. As Smith speaks to encourage people in his state to "kick Mister Taylor's machine to kingdom come," Taylor observes: "He won't get started! I'll make public opinion out there in five hours. I've done it all my life!" He is even able to suppress the brave effort by the Boy Rangers to distribute their own paper. What actually makes the difference is the comparative fragility of the coalitions. That between Taylor and Paine breaks as the senator is reminded of his lost idealism. For his part, Smith is helped by a kindly vice president, who lets Smith get started on his filibuster and offers friendly smiles as he becomes weary.³⁶ The features of a strategy are therefore all present, even if not always explicit. They have to be to give the plot some credibility and to show that Smith was able, to a degree, to shape his own success. Where the drama takes over is in the compression of events, the lack of boring processes (such as the painstaking investigations of the Teapot Dome scandal), and a satisfactory conclusion dependent upon a sudden change of heart coming at the very last moment when it might have made a difference.

The dramatist controls the plot, manipulating the behavior of all parties and introducing elements of chance and coincidence to move the story to a predetermined conclusion. She sets boundaries to reduce the numbers of tangents and loose ends. All the main characters are under her control. She can decide how they meet and their interactions, which can be complicated through misunderstanding at crucial moments and then transformed by freak accidents or serendipitous encounters. She knows when there is going to be a surprising twist, a shocking revelation that presents a character in a completely new light, an accident that interferes with an apparently perfect plan, or an extraordinary opportunity that allows the hero to escape a terrible

fate in the nick of time. She can introduce minor characters to make a point with complete confidence that they need never be seen again. She can hint at things to come, knowing that an attentive reader will pick up the clues or appreciate their relevance. By sustaining suspense to the end, she can ensure a thrilling denouement. Audiences expect a proper conclusion, which pulls together the distinct strands of the story, explains puzzles, and brings the suspense to an end. There may be a moral lesson, as evil characters get their comeuppance while the good are rewarded, or else deliberate moral ambiguity, confirming a sense of disappointment and injustice.

The strategist faces quite different challenges. The most important is that the stakes are for real. The dramatist may allow the “baddies” to win as a statement about the human condition; the strategist knows this will have real and possibly dire consequences. The dramatist can ensure that the plot unfolds as intended; the strategist has to cope with the choices of others while remaining relatively ignorant of what they might be. The dramatist can use these choices to reveal the true character of key players; the strategist must make a starting assumption about character when anticipating what choices may be made under intense forms of pressure. The strategist must avoid the standard plot lines of literature shaping expectations. It is unlikely that everything will come together in some sudden, thrilling climax. In drama, the most satisfactory foes appear as truly monstrous, malign, and egocentric. It might be tempting to denounce actual opponents in these terms but it is also dangerous if taken too seriously. An otherwise resolvable conflict might turn into a confrontation between the forces of light and darkness. Caricature depictions of opponents, along with glowing portrayals of friends, add to the risks of being caught by surprise by actual behavior. It must be understood that strategies that depend on others to act out of character, beyond their competence, or against their declared interests and preferences, are gambles. Rather than play out assigned roles that will leave them frustrated, contained, ambushed, or suppressed, they will write their own scripts. The challenge for the strategist—indeed, the essence of strategy—is to force or persuade those who are hostile or unsympathetic to act differently than their current intentions. The risk is always that the conclusions will be messier and less satisfactory than anticipated. There may not even be a proper conclusion. The plot may just peter out. The original story line may lead nowhere and be overtaken by a different story.

Both the dramatist and strategist must think about their audiences, but the problem of multiple audiences is more challenging for the strategist. If those who need to follow the plot are confused, they will be unable to play their parts. At the same time there may be others who are best kept

in the dark, following false trails and deliberately ambiguous signals. The dramatist can reduce the demands on her audience. There is no need to show results being eked out through hard grind and close attention to detail over an expanded period. She also has the option of a thrilling climax. Here there can be complete closure, with absolute and irreversible change achieved. The strategist may face similar temptations: anxiety to bring matters to a swift conclusion, impatience at the thought of wearing opponents down over time or engaging potential allies in extended negotiations. A determination to seek a quick and decisive result is a frequent cause of failure. Unlike the dramatist, the strategist cannot rely on last-minute escapes from certain doom, in which chance, a sharp eye, a sudden revelation, or a uniquely cool head makes all the difference. The challenge is to identify moves that will require other players to follow the script out of the logic of the developing situation. The opening bid in negotiations, a feint on a battlefield, and a bellicose statement at a time of crisis may all assume a likely response by the other side. If that is not forthcoming, the improvisation will start early.

The strategist has to accept that even when there is an obvious climax (a battle or an election), the story line will still be open-ended—what McKee calls a “miniplot”—leaving a number of issues to be resolved later. Even when the desired endpoint is reached, it is not really the end. The enemy may have surrendered, the election won, the target company taken over, the revolutionary opportunity seized, but that just means that there is now an occupied country to run, a new government to be formed, a whole new revolutionary order to be established, or distinctive sets of corporate activity to be merged. Here the dramatist can leave the next stage to the reader’s imagination or pick up the story again after the passage of time, perhaps even with many new characters. Strategists have no such luxury. The transition is immediate and may well be conditional on how the original endpoint was reached. This takes us back to the observation that much strategy is about getting to the next stage rather than some ultimate destination. Rather than think of strategy as a three-act play, it is better to think of it as a soap opera with a continuing cast of characters and plot lines that unfold over a series of episodes. Each of these episodes will be self-contained and set up the subsequent episode. Unlike a play with a definite ending, there is no need for a soap opera to ever reach a conclusion, even though the central characters and their circumstances change.

The dramatist can use coincidences to move the plot along, to ensure that the main protagonist faces the hard choices at the right time. The strategist knows that there will be events which were never part of the plot and which disrupt its logic but cannot be sure when, where, and how. Boundaries will

be hard to maintain, and apparently irrelevant issues will intrude and complicate matters. The plot must therefore build in a certain freedom of action. The earlier definitive choices must be made, the greater the commitment to a particular course and the harder the adjustment when the actions of others or chance events deflect the protagonist from this course. The strategist cannot rely on the device of the *deus ex machina*, by which classical plays used divine intervention to sort out desperate situations at the last moment. Writers can allow a coincidence to turn an ending, acknowledges McKee, but this is the “writer’s greatest sin” for it negates the value of the plot and allows the central characters to duck responsibility for their own actions. Aristotle also deplored the regular recourse to this device.

In ancient Greece, the most important distinction in plots was between comedy and tragedy. This was not a distinction between happy/sad or funny/miserable but between alternative ways of resolving conflicts.³⁷ It may be that the conflict is not between opposing characters but between individuals and society. Comedy ends with a satisfactory resolution and the main characters looking forward positively to the future; tragedy ends with a negative prospect—especially for the main character, who is probably largely responsible for his own misfortune—even if society as a whole is restored to some sort of equilibrium. When a new and positive relationship has been forged between society and the main character that is comedy; when the main character’s attempt to change the status quo has been defeated that is tragedy. The dramatist knows from the start whether she is writing comedy or a tragedy: the strategist aims for comedy but risks tragedy.

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NOTES

Preface

1. *Matthew Parris*, "What if the Turkeys Don't Vote for Christmas?", *The Times*, May 12, 2012.
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4. This can be tracked using Google's Ngram facility: <http://books.google.com/ngrams/>.
5. Raymond Aron, "The Evolution of Modern Strategic Thought," in Alastair Buchan, ed., *Problems of Modern Strategy* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1970), 25.
6. George Orwell, "Perfidy Albion" (review, Liddell Hart's *British Way of Warfare*), *New Statesman and Nation*, November 21, 1942, 342–343.

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8. Richard Wrangham, "Evolution of Coalitionary Killing," *Yearbook of Physical Anthropology* 42, 1999, 12, 14, 2, 3.
9. Goodall, *The Chimpanzees of Gombe*, p. 176, fn 101.
10. Robert Bigelow, *Dawn Warriors* (New York: Little Brown, 1969).
11. Lawrence H. Keeley, *War Before Civilization: The Myth of the Peaceful Savage* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 48.
12. Azar Gat, *War in Human Civilization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 115–117.
13. Keeping in mind that these societies were relatively simple and social moves within them, including deception, would be less demanding than those in more complex human societies. Kim Sterelny, "Social Intelligence, Human Intelligence and Niche Construction," *Philosophical Transactions of The Royal Society* 362, no. 1480 (2007): 719–730.

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2. *Ibid.*, 12.
3. Genesis 2:22, 23. All biblical references use the King James Version.
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10. Marcel Detienne and Jean-Pierre Vernant, *Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society*, translated from French by Janet Lloyd (Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1978), 13–14, 44–45.
11. Barbara Tuchman, *The March of Folly: From Troy to Vietnam* (London: Michael Joseph, 1984), 46–49.
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17. Ibid., 1.23.5–6.
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30. Thucydides, 3.43.
31. Gerald Mara, “Thucydides and Political Thought,” *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Greek Political Thought*, edited by Stephen Salkever (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 116–118. Thucydides, 3.35–50.
32. Thucydides, 3.82.
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34. Andrea Wilson Nightingale, *Genres in Dialogue: Plato and the Construct of Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 14. See also Håkan Tell, *Plato’s Counterfeit Sophists* (Harvard University: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2011); Nathan Crick, “The Sophistical Attitude and the Invention of Rhetoric,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 96:1 (2010), 25–45; Robert Wallace, “Plato’s Sophists, Intellectual History after 450, and Sokrates,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Pericles*, edited by

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 36. Book 3 of *The Republic*, 141b–c. Malcolm Schofield, “The Noble Lie,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Plato’s Republic*, edited by G. R. Ferrari (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 138–164.

4 *Sun Tzu and Machiavelli*

1. Cited in Everett L. Wheeler, *Stratagem and the Vocabulary of Military Trickery. Mnemosyne supplement 108* (New York: Brill, 1988), 24.
2. *Ibid.*, 14–15.
3. <http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Frontinus/Strategemata/home.html>.
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6. Jan Willem Honig, Introduction to *Sun Tzu, The Art of War*, translation and commentary by Frank Giles (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2012), xxi.
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11. Michael D. Reeve, ed., *Epitoma rei militaris*, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). An earlier translation is found in *Roots of Strategy: The Five Greatest Military Classics of All Time* (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1985).

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15. Jan Willem Honig, "Reappraising Late Medieval Strategy: The Example of the 1415 Agincourt Campaign," *War in History* 19, no. 2 (2012): 123–151.
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19. Niccolo Machiavelli, *Art of War*, edited by Christopher Lynch (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 97–98. See also Lynch's interpretative essay in this volume and Felix Gilbert, "Machiavelli: The Renaissance of the Art of War," in Peter Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986).
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21. *Ibid.*, 99–101.
22. *Ibid.*, 66.

5 *Satan's Strategy*

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2. John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, edited by Gordon Tesket (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2005), III, 98–99.
3. Job 1:7.
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5. Revelation 12:7–9.
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13. *Ibid.*, I, 124, 258–259, 263, 159–160.
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15. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, II, 60–62, 129–130, 190–91, 208–211, 239–244, 269–273, 296–298, 284–286, 379–380, 345–348, 354–358.
16. *Ibid.*, IX, 465–475, 375–378, 1149–1152.
17. *Ibid.*, XII, 537–551, 569–570.
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2. R. R. Palmer, “Frederick the Great, Guibert, Bulow: From Dynastic to National War,” in Peter Paret, Gordon A. Craig, and Felix Gilbert, eds., *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 91.
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7. Heuser, *The Strategy Makers*, 3; Hew Strachan, "The Lost Meaning of Strategy," *Survival* 47, no. 3 (August 2005): 35; J.-P. Charnay in André Corvisier, ed., *A Dictionary of Military History and the Art of War*, English edition edited by John Childs (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 769.
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10. Peter Paret, *Clausewitz and the State: The Man, His Theories and His Times* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983), 91.
11. Whitman, *The Verdict of Battle*, 155. "The Instruction of Fredrick the Great for His Generals, 1747," is found in *Roots of Strategy: The Five Greatest Military Classics of All Time* (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1985).
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14. Lieven, *Russia Against Napoleon*, 198.
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7 Clausewitz

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3. Gat, *The Origins of Military Thought* (see chap. 6, n. 5).
4. John Shy, "Jomini," in Paret et al., *Makers of Modern Strategy*, 143–185 (see chap. 6, n. 2).
5. Antoine Henri de Jomini, *The Art of War* (London: Greenhill Books, 1992).
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7. Jomini, *The Art of War*, 69.
8. Shy, "Jomini," 152, 157, 160, 146.
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12. Hew Strachan, "Strategy and Contingency," *International Affairs* 87, no. 6 (2011): 1289.

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15. Jan Willem Honig, "Clausewitz's *On War*: Problems of Text and Translation," in Hew Strachan and Andrews Herberg-Rothe, eds., *Clausewitz in the Twenty-First Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 57–73. For biography, see Paret, *Clausewitz and the State* (see chap. 6, n. 10); Michael Howard, *Clausewitz* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983); Hew Strachan, *Clausewitz's On War: A Biography* (New York: Grove/Atlantic Press, 2008). On historical context, see Azar Gat, *A History of Military Thought* (see chap. 6, n. 5). On influence, see Beatrice Heuser, *Reading Clausewitz* (London: Pimlico, 2002).
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18. Antulio Echevarria, *Clausewitz and Contemporary War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 96.
19. *On War*, Book 1, Chapter 7, 119–120.
20. *Ibid.*, Book 3, Chapter 7, 177.
21. Terence Holmes uses this stress on planning to challenge the view that Clausewitz was preoccupied only with the chaotic and unpredictable. The point is that the potential chaos and unpredictability set the challenge for the general. This is why Clausewitz argued for cautious strategies. Holmes notes the reasons why plans may go awry, of which the most important would be a failure to anticipate the enemy's moves correctly, and that when the original plans do not work new ones will be needed. It is setting up a straw man to counter a claim that Clausewitz opposed all planning, because clearly the logistical and command issues posed by the great armies of the time demanded planning. Better to view the strategic challenge as drawing up plans that took account of the problems of friction and unpredictable enemies but would not necessarily solve them. Terence Holmes, "Planning versus Chaos in Clausewitz's *On War*," *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 30, no. 1 (2007): 129–151.
22. *On War*, Book 2, Chapter 1, 128, Book 3, Chapter 1, 177.
23. *Ibid.*, Book 1, Chapter 6, 117–118.

24. Paret, "Clausewitz," in *Makers of Modern Strategy*, 203.
25. *On War*, Book 1, Chapter 7, 120.
26. *Ibid.*, Book 5, Chapter 3, 282; Book 3, Chapter 8, 195; Chapter 10, 202–203; Book 7, Chapter 22, 566, 572.
27. *Ibid.*, Book 6, Chapter 1, 357; Chapter 2, 360; Chapter 5, 370.
28. Clausewitz, *On War*, 596, 485. Antulio J. Echevarria II, "Clausewitz's Center of Gravity: It's Not What We Thought," *Naval War College Review* LVI, no. 1 (Winter 2003): 108–123.
29. Clausewitz, *On War*, Book 8, Chapter 6, 603. See Hugh Smith, "The Womb of War."
30. Clausewitz, *On War*, Book 8, Chapter 8, 617–637.
31. Strachan, *Clausewitz's On War*, 163.
32. "Clausewitz, unfinished note, presumably written in 1830," in *On War*, 31. Note this date is now put at 1827. See also Clifford J. Rogers, "Clausewitz, Genius, and the Rules," *The Journal of Military History* 66 (October 2002): 1167–1176.
33. Clausewitz, *On War*, Book 1, Chapter 1, 87.
34. *Ibid.*, Book 1, Chapter 1, 81.
35. Strachan, *Clausewitz's On War*, 179.
36. Brian Bond, *The Pursuit of Victory: From Napoleon to Saddam Hussein* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 47.

8 *The False Science*

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2. Cited in *Ibid.*, 48–49.
3. Clausewitz, *On War*, Book 1, Chapter 2, 90. See Thomas Waldman, *War, Clausewitz and the Trinity* (London: Ashgate, 2012), Chapter 6.
4. Leo Tolstoy, *War and Peace*, translated by Louise and Aylmer Maude (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 829.
5. Isaiah Berlin, *The Hedgehog and the Fox* (Chicago: Ivan Dee, 1978). The title, which is now the best remembered aspect of the book, comes from a quote from the Greek poet Archilocus: "The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing."
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7. Tolstoy, *War and Peace*, 1285.
8. *Ibid.*, 688.
9. Lieven, *Russia Against Napoleon*, 527.
10. Berlin, *The Hedgehog and the Fox*, 20.

11. Gary Saul Morson, "War and Peace," in Donna Tussing Orwin, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Tolstoy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 65–79.
12. Michael D. Krause, "Moltke and the Origins of the Operational Level of War," in Michael D. Krause and R. Cody Phillip, eds., *Historical Perspectives of the Operational Art* (Center of Military History, United States Army, Washington, DC, 2005), 118, 130.
13. Gunther E. Rothenberg, "Moltke, Schlieffen, and the Doctrine of Strategic Envelopment," in Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy*, 298 (see chap. 6, n. 2).
14. See Helmuth von Moltke, "Doctrines of War," in Lawrence Freedman, ed., *War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 220–221.
15. Echevarria, *Clausewitz and Contemporary War*, p.142 (see chap. 7, n. 18).
16. Hajo Holborn, "The Prusso-German School: Moltke and the Rise of the General Staff," in Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy*, 288.
17. Rothenberg, "Moltke, Schlieffen, and the Doctrine of Strategic Envelopment," 305.
18. John Stone, *Military Strategy: The Politics and Technique of War* (London: Continuum, 2011), 43–47.
19. Krause, "Moltke and the Origins of the Operational Level of War," 142.
20. Walter Goerlitz, *The German General Staff* (New York: Praeger, 1953), 92.
Cited by Justin Kelly and Mike Brennan, *Alien: How Operational Art Devoured Strategy* (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, 2009), 24.

9 Annihilation or Exhaustion

1. Gordon Craig, "Delbrück: The Military Historian," in Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy*, 326–353 (see chap. 6, n. 2).
2. Azar Gat, *The Development of Military Thought: The Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 106–107.
3. Quote from Mahan in Russell F. Weigley, "American Strategy from Its Beginnings through the First World War," in Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy*, 415.
4. Donald Stoker, *The Grand Design: Strategy and the U.S. Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 78–79.
5. David Herbert Donald, *Lincoln* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995), 389, 499; Stoker, *The Grand Design*, 229–230.
6. Stoker, *The Grand Design*, 405.
7. Weigley, "American Strategy," 432–433.
8. Stoker, *The Grand Design*, 232.
9. Azar Gat, *The Development of Military Thought*, 144–145.
10. Ardant du Picq, "Battle Studies," in Curtis Brown, ed., *Roots of Strategy, Book 2* (Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1987), 153; Robert A. Nye, *The Origins*

of Crowd Psychology: Gustave Le Bon and the Crisis of Mass Democracy in the Third Republic (London: Sage, 1974).

11. Craig, "Delbrück: The Military Historian," 312.
12. The debate has largely been conducted in the pages of the journal *War in History*. Terence Zuber has been conducting a lonely but vigorous campaign, against the deep skepticism of other historians, to assert that there was no Schlieffen Plan. Terence Zuber, "The Schlieffen Plan Reconsidered," *War in History* VI (1999): 262–305. The argument is developed fully in his *Inventing the Schlieffen Plan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). For some responses, see Terence Holmes, "The Reluctant March on Paris: A Reply to Terence Zuber's 'The Schlieffen Plan Reconsidered,'" *War in History* VIII (2001): 208–232. A. Mombauer, "Of War Plan and War Guilt: The Debate Surrounding the Schlieffen Plan," *Journal of Strategic Studies* XXVIII (2005): 857–858; R. T. Foley, "The Real Schlieffen Plan," *War in History* XIII (2006): 91–115; Gerhard P. Groß, "There Was a Schlieffen Plan: New Sources on the History of German Military Planning," *War in History* XV (2008): 389–431.
13. Cited by Foley, "The Real Schlieffen Plan," 109.
14. Hew Strachan, "Strategy and Contingency," *International Affairs* 87, no. 6 (2011): 1290.
15. He did not start seriously publishing until he was 50, after which he published almost twenty books and numerous essays. The most important works are *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660–1783* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1890) and *The Influence of Sea Power Upon the French Revolution and Empire, 1793–1812* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1892).
16. Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon the French Revolution and Empire*, 400–402.
17. Jon Tetsuro Sumida, *Inventing Grand Strategy and Teaching Command: The Classic Works of Alfred Thayer Mahan Reconsidered* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1999).
18. Robert Seager, *Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Man and His Letters* (Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 1977). See also Dirk Böker, *Militarism in a Global Age: Naval Ambitions in Germany and the United States Before World War I* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), 103–104.
19. Alfred Mahan, *Naval Strategy Compared and Contrasted with the Principles and Practice of Military Operations on Land: Lectures Delivered at U.S. Naval War College, Newport, R.I., Between the Years 1887 and 1911* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1911), 6–8.
20. Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon the French Revolution*, v–vi.
21. Seager, *Alfred Thayer Mahan*, 546. This was referring to *Naval Strategy Compared and Contrasted*.
22. Böker, *Militarism in a Global Age*, 104–107.

23. Cited in Liam Cleaver, "The Pen Behind the Fleet: The Influence of Sir Julian Stafford Corbett on British Naval Development, 1898–1918," *Comparative Strategy* 14 (January 1995), 52–53.
24. Barry M. Gough, "Maritime Strategy: The Legacies of Mahan and Corbett as Philosophers of Sea Power," *The RUSI Journal* 133, no. 4 (December 1988): 55–62.
25. Donald M. Schurman, *Julian S. Corbett, 1854–1922* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1981), 54. See also Eric Grove, "Introduction," in Julian Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy* (Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 1988). This book was first published in 1911. The annotated 1988 publication also contains "The Green Pamphlet" of 1909. See also Azar Gat, *The Development of Military Thought: The Nineteenth Century*.
26. On the relationship between Corbett and Clausewitz, see Chapter 18 of Michael Handel, *Masters of War: Classical Strategic Thought* (London: Frank Cass, 2001).
27. Corbett, *Some Principles*, 62–63.
28. *Ibid.*, 16, 91, 25, 152, 160.
29. H. J. Mackinder, "The Geographical Pivot of History," *The Geographical Journal* 23 (1904): 421–444.
30. H. J. Mackinder, "Manpower as a Measure of National and Imperial Strength," *National and English Review* 45 (1905): 136–143, cited in Lucian Ashworth, "Realism and the Spirit of 1919: Halford Mackinder, Geopolitics and the Reality of the League of Nations," *European Journal of International Relations* 17, no. 2 (June 2011): 279–301. Also on Mackinder, see B. W. Blouet, *Halford Mackinder: A Biography* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1987).
31. H. J. Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals and Reality: A Study in the Politics of Reconstruction* (Suffolk: Penguin Books, 1919), 86; Geoffrey Sloan, "Sir Halford J. Mackinder: The Heartland Theory Then and Now," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 22, 2–3 (1999): 15–38.
32. *Ibid.*, 194.
33. Mackinder, "The Geographical Pivot," 437.
34. Ola Tunander, "Swedish-German Geopolitics for a New Century—Rudolf Kjellén's 'The State as a Living Organism,'" *Review of International Studies* 27, 3 (2001): 451–463.
35. The consequential discrediting of an approach that encouraged consideration of the strategic implications of the physical environment has been regretted by, among others, Colin Gray, *The Geopolitics of Super Power* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1988). See also Colin Gray, "In Defence of the Heartland: Sir Halford Mackinder and His Critics a Hundred Years On," *Comparative Strategy* 23, no. 1 (2004): 9–25.

10 Brain and Brawn

1. Isabel Hull argues that this behavior was the result of a reckless and insensitive military culture that had developed during the course of colonial wars. Isabel V. Hull, *Absolute Destruction: Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005).
2. Craig, "Delbrück: The Military Historian," 348 (see chap. 9, n. 1).
3. See Mark Clodfelter, *Beneficial Bombing: The Progressive Foundations of American Air Power 1917–1945* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010).
4. Curiously, given his later role as an enthusiastic proponent of mass bombing, his first thoughts were to deplore even thinking about attacks on defenseless cities and to argue for an international convention to ban such a thing. See Thomas Hippler, "Democracy and War in the Strategic Thought of Giulio Douhet," in Hew Strachan and Sibylle Scheipers, eds., *The Changing Character of War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 170.
5. Giulio Douhet, *The Command of the Air*, translated by Dino Ferrari (Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1983). Reprint of 1942 original. This was published by the War Department in Italy. Though judged a troublemaker during the war, he was now celebrated as something of a seer and became briefly commissioner of aviation under the Fascists. Mitchell's major statement is found in William Mitchell, *Winged Defense: The Development and Possibilities of Modern Air Power—Economic and Military* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1925). Caproni's views were captured by a journalist Nino Salvaneschi who wrote a pamphlet in 1917 entitled *Let Us Kill the War, Let Us Aim at the Heart of the Enemy*, which advocated attacking manufacturing capacity. David MacIsaac, "Voices from the Central Blue: The Airpower Theorists," in Peter Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy*, 624–647 (see chap. 6, n. 2).
6. Azar Gat, *Fascist and Liberal Visions of War: Fuller, Liddell Hart, Douhet, and Other Modernists* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).
7. Sir Charles Webster and Noble Frankland, *The Strategic Air Offensive Against Germany*, 4 vols. (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1961), Vol. 4, pp. 2, 74.
8. Sir Hugh Dowding, "Employment of the Fighter Command in Home Defence," *Naval War College Review* 45 (Spring 1992): 36. Reprint of 1937 lecture to the RAF Staff College.
9. David S. Fadok, "John Boyd and John Warden: Airpower's Quest for Strategic Paralysis," in Col. Phillip S. Meilinger, ed., *Paths of Heaven* (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 1997), 382.
10. Douhet, *Command of the Air*.
11. Phillip S. Meilinger, "Giulio Douhet and the Origins of Airpower Theory," in Phillip S. Meilinger, ed., *Paths of Heaven*, 27; Bernard Brodie, "The

- Heritage of Douhet," *Air University Quarterly Review* 6 (Summer 1963): 120–126.
12. Wells's scenario involved a preemptive German attack on the United States using dirigibles before the Americans had a chance to take full advantage of the Wright Brothers' new invention.
 13. Brian Holden Reid, *J. F. C. Fuller: Military Thinker* (London: Macmillan, 1987), 55, 51, 73.
 14. Ibid.; Anthony Trythell, *'Boney' Fuller: The Intellectual General* (London: Cassell, 1977); Gat, *Fascist and Liberal Visions of War*.
 15. Gat, *Fascist and Liberal Visions of War*, 40–41.
 16. J. F. C. Fuller, *The Foundations of the Science of War* (London: Hutchinson, 1925), 47.
 17. Ibid., 35.
 18. Ibid., 141.

11 *The Indirect Approach*

1. On the influence of the Somme on Liddell Hart, see Hew Strachan, "The Real War": Liddell Hart, Crutwell, and Falls," in Brian Bond, ed., *The First World War and British Military History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).
2. John Mearsheimer, *Liddell Hart and the Weight of History* (London: Brassey's, 1988). Gat, without denying Liddell Hart's vanity and self-aggrandizement, has challenged Mearsheimer's critique. Azar Gat, "Liddell Hart's Theory of Armoured Warfare: Revising the Revisionists," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 19 (1996): 1–30.
3. Gat, *Fascist and Liberal Visions of War*, 146–160 (see chap. 7, n. 5).
4. Basil Liddell Hart, *The Ghost of Napoleon* (London: Faber and Faber, 1933), 125–126.
5. Christopher Bassford, *Clausewitz in English: The Reception of Clausewitz in Britain and America, 1815–1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), Chapter 15.
6. Griffiths, *Sun Tzu*, vii (see chap. 4, n. 5).
7. Alex Danchev, *Alchemist of War: The Life of Basil Liddell Hart* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1998).
8. Reid, *J. F. C. Fuller*, 159 (see chap. 10, n. 13).
9. Basil Liddell Hart, *Strategy: The Indirect Approach* (London: Faber and Faber, 1954), 335, 339, 341, 344.
10. Brian Bond, *Liddell Hart: A Study of his Military Thought*. (London: Cassell, 1977), 56.
11. Basil Liddell Hart, *Paris, or the Future of War* (London: Kegan Paul, 1925), 12. Liddell Hart, like Fuller, was impressed by the impact of German bombing attacks on Britain in World War I: "Witnesses of the

earlier air attacks before our defence was organized, will not be disposed to underestimate the panic and disturbance that would result from a concentrated blow dealt by a superior air fleet. Who that saw it will ever forget the nightly sight of the population of a great industrial and shipping town, such as Hull, streaming out into the fields on the first sound of the alarm signals? Women, children, babies in arms, spending night after night huddled in sodden fields, shivering under a bitter winter sky." Basil Liddell Hart, *Paris, or the Future of War* (New York: Dutton, 1925), 39.

12. Richard K. Betts, "Is Strategy an Illusion?" *International Security* 25, 2 (Autumn 2000): 11.
13. Ian Kershaw, *Fateful Choices: Ten Decisions That Changed the World: 1940–1941* (New York: Penguin Press, 2007), 47.
14. Churchill's memoir of the war, written in its aftermath, denied that there was any consideration of whether or not to fight on. Resistance was "taken for granted and as a matter of course." It would have been a waste of time to worry about "such unreal, academic issues" as a negotiated settlement. Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War, Their Finest Hour*, vol. 2 (London: Penguin, 1949), 157. Reynolds explains the cover-up by a desire to protect Halifax, who was still a colleague in the higher ranks of the Conservative Party when the book was written in 1948, yet who later acquired the mantle of a would-be appeaser held back by Churchill's bellicosity. The record, however, shows that Churchill was aware that negotiations with Germany might at some point be necessary. He knew that the next stage might turn out very badly, and that a settlement that compromised British independence might have to be accepted, but his task was to make invasion as hard as possible for the Germans, and his vivid language and steely demeanor ("We shall fight on the beaches . . . We shall never surrender") were in that respect vital parts of his weaponry. The story he told in 1940 was of inevitable victory and he had no desire to correct it when he got the chance to rewrite it in 1948. David Reynolds, *In Command of History: Churchill Fighting and Writing the Second World War* (New York: Random House, 2005), 172–173.
15. Eliot Cohen, "Churchill and Coalition Strategy," in Paul Kennedy, ed., *Grand Strategies in War and Peace* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), 66.
16. Max Hastings, *Finest Years: Churchill as Warlord 1940–45* (London: Harper-Collins, 2010), Chapter 1.
17. The estimated 35,000 purged represented half the officer corps, 90 percent of all generals, and 80 percent of all colonels.
18. Winston Churchill, *The Second World War, The Grand Alliance*, vol. 3 (London: Penguin, 1949), 607–608.

12 Nuclear Games

1. Walter Lippmann, *The Cold War* (Boston: Little Brown, 1947).
2. Ronald Steel, *Walter Lippmann and the American Century* (London: Bodley Head, 1980), 445. In a subsequent correspondence, another journalist, Herbert Swope, claimed paternity in a speech he wrote for Bernard Baruch, a high-profile financier. He also claimed to have been thinking back to the late 1930s when he had been asked whether America would get involved in a “shooting war” in Europe. He was struck by the oddity of the phrase: “It was like saying a death murder—rather tautological, verbose, and redundant.” He thought the opposite of a “hot war” was a “cold war” and he began to use the phrase. William Safire, *Safire’s New Political Dictionary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 134–135.
3. Lippmann’s analysis came in response to an article in *Foreign Affairs* written from Moscow by the American diplomat George Kennan, under the pseudonym “X,” warning of Soviet ambitions and urging the new doctrine of containment. X, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct,” *Foreign Affairs* 7 (1947): 566–582.
4. George Orwell, “You and the Atomic Bomb,” *Tribune*, October 19, 1945. Reprinted in Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus, eds., *The Collected Essays; Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*, vol. 4 (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1968), 8–10.
5. Barry Scott Zellen, *State of Doom: Bernard Brodie, the Bomb and the Birth of the Bipolar World* (New York: Continuum, 2012), 27.
6. Bernard Brodie, ed., *The Absolute Weapon* (New York: Harcourt, 1946), 52.
7. Bernard Brodie, “Strategy as a Science,” *World Politics* 1, no. 4 (July 1949): 476.
8. Patrick Blackett, *Studies of War, Nuclear and Conventional* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1962), 177.
9. Paul Kennedy, *Engineers of Victory: The Problem Solvers Who Turned the Tide in the Second World War* (London: Allen Lane, 2013).
10. Sharon Ghamari-Tabrizi, “Simulating the Unthinkable: Gaming Future War in the 1950s and 1960s,” *Social Studies of Science* 30, no. 2 (April 2000): 169, 170.
11. Philip Mirowski, *Machine Dreams: Economics Becomes Cyborg Science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 12–17.
12. Hedley Bull, *The Control of the Arms Race* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1961), 48.
13. Hedley Bull, “Strategic Studies and Its Critics,” *World Politics* 20, no. 4 (July 1968): 593–605.
14. Charles Hitch and Roland N. McKean, *The Economics of Defense in the Nuclear Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960).
15. Deborah Shapley, *Promise and Power: The Life and Times of Robert McNamara* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1993), 102–103.

16. Thomas D. White, "Strategy and the Defense Intellectuals," *The Saturday Evening Post*, May 4, 1963, cited by Alain Enthoven and Wayne Smith, *How Much Is Enough?* (New York; London: Harper & Row, 1971), 78. For a critique of the role of systems analysis, see Stephen Rosen, "Systems Analysis and the Quest for Rational Defense," *The Public Interest* 76 (Summer 1984): 121–159.
17. Bernard Brodie, *War and Politics* (London: Cassell, 1974), 474–475.
18. Cited in William Poundstone, *Prisoner's Dilemma* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 6.
19. Oskar Morgenstern, "The Collaboration between Oskar Morgenstern and John von Neumann," *Journal of Economic Literature* 14, no. 3 (September 1976): 805–816. E. Roy Weintraub, *Toward a History of Game Theory* (London: Duke University Press, 1992); R. Duncan Luce and Howard Raiffa, *Games and Decisions; Introduction and Critical Survey* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1957).
20. Poundstone, *Prisoner's Dilemma*, 8.
21. Philip Mirowski, "Mid-Century Cyborg Agonistes: Economics Meets Operations Research," *Social Studies of Science* 29 (1999): 694.
22. John McDonald, *Strategy in Poker, Business & War* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1950), 14, 69, 126.
23. Jessie Bernard, "The Theory of Games of Strategy as a Modern Sociology of Conflict," *American Journal of Sociology* 59 (1954): 411–424.

13 *The Rationality of Irrationality*

1. This is discussed in Lawrence Freedman, *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy*, 3rd ed. (London: Palgrave, 2005).
2. Colin Gray, *Strategic Studies: A Critical Assessment* (New York: The Greenwood Press, 1982).
3. R. J. Overy, "Air Power and the Origins of Deterrence Theory Before 1939," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 15, no. 1 (March 1992): 73–101. See also George Quester, *Deterrence Before Hiroshima* (New York: Wiley, 1966).
4. Stanley Hoffmann, "The Acceptability of Military Force," in Francois Duchene, ed., *Force in Modern Societies: Its Place in International Politics* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1973), 6.
5. Glenn Snyder, *Deterrence and Defense: Toward a Theory of National Security* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961).
6. Herman Kahn, *On Thermonuclear War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961), 126 ff. and 282 ff. It was originally going to be known as "Three Lectures on Thermonuclear War."
7. Barry Bruce-Briggs, *Supergenius: The Megaworlds of Herman Kahn* (North American Policy Press, 2000), 97.
8. *Ibid.*, 98. Noting the appalling style, Bruce-Briggs concludes that: "The artlessness imparts authenticity; were the author a hustler, he would have been slicker and ingratiating."

9. Jonathan Stevenson, *Thinking Beyond the Unthinkable* (New York: Viking, 2008), 76.
10. http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/economics/laureates/2005/#.
11. Schelling's major books were *The Strategy of Conflict* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960); *Arms and Influence* (New York: Yale University Press, 1966); *Choice and Consequence* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984); and, with Morton Halperin, *Strategy and Arms Control* (New York: Twentieth Century Fund, 1961).
12. Robin Rider, "Operations Research and Game Theory," in Roy Weintraub, ed., *Toward a History of Game Theory* (see chap. 12, n. 19).
13. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict*, 10.
14. Jean-Paul Carvalho, "An Interview with Thomas Schelling," *Oxonomics* 2 (2007): 1–8.
15. Brodie, "Strategy as a Science," 479 (see chap. 12, n. 7). One possible reason was the skepticism of Jacob Viner, professor of economics at Chicago and Brodie's mentor. Viner's 1946 essay on the implications of nuclear weapons was one of the foundation texts of the theory of deterrence and clearly influenced Brodie.
16. Bernard Brodie, "The American Scientific Strategists," *The Defense Technical Information Center* (October 1964): 294.
17. Oskar Morgenstern, *The Question of National Defense* (New York: Random House, 1959).
18. Bruce-Briggs, *Supergenius*, 120–122; Irving Louis Horowitz, *The War Game: Studies of the New Civilian Militarists* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1963).
19. Cited in Bruce-Biggs, *Supergenius*, 120.
20. Schelling, in the *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, then edited by Kenneth Boulding, in 1957.
21. Carvalho, "An Interview with Thomas Schelling."
22. Robert Ayson, *Thomas Schelling and the Nuclear Age: Strategy as a Social Science* (London: Frank Cass, 2004); Phil Williams, "Thomas Schelling," in J. Baylis and J. Garnett, eds., *Makers of Nuclear Strategy* (London: Pinter, 1991), 120–135; A. Dixit, "Thomas Schelling's Contributions to Game Theory," *Scandinavian Journal of Economics* 108, no. 2 (2006): 213–229; Esther-Mirjam Sent, "Some Like It Cold: Thomas Schelling as a Cold Warrior," *Journal of Economic Methodology* 14, no. 4 (2007): 455–471.
23. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict*, 15.
24. Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, 1.
25. Ibid., 2–3, 79–80, 82, 80.
26. Ibid., 194.
27. Schelling, *Strategy of Conflict*, 188 (emphasis in the original).
28. Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, 93.

29. Schelling, *Strategy of Conflict*, 193.
30. Dixit, "Thomas Schelling's Contributions to Game Theory," argues that many of Schelling's formulations anticipate later developments in more formal game theory.
31. Schelling, *Strategy of Conflict*, 57, 77.
32. Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, 137.
33. Schelling, *Strategy of Conflict*, 100–101.
34. Cited by Robert Ayson, *Hedley Bull and the Accommodation of Power* (London: Palgrave, 2012).
35. Wohlstetter was one of the most influential RAND analysts. See Robert Zarate and Henry Sokolski, eds., *Nuclear Heuristics: Selected Writings of Albert and Roberta Wohlstetter* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2009).
36. Wohlstetter letter to Michael Howard, 1968, quoted in Stevenson, *Thinking Beyond the Unthinkable*, 71.
37. Bernard Brodie, *The Reporter*, November 18, 1954.
38. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict*, 233. This essay on "Surprise Attack and Disarmament" first appeared in Klaus Knorr, ed., *NATO and American Security* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1959).
39. Schelling, *Strategy and Conflict*, 236.
40. Donald Brennan, ed., *Arms Control, Disarmament and National Security* (New York: George Braziller, 1961); Hedley Bull, *The Control of the Arms Race* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1961).
41. Schelling and Halperin, *Strategy and Arms Control*, 1–2.
42. *Ibid.*, 5.
43. Schelling, *Strategy of Conflict*, 239–240.
44. Henry Kissinger, *The Necessity for Choice* (New York: Harper & Row, 1961). This particular essay first appeared in *Daedalus* 89, no. 4 (1960). The first reference that I (and the OED) can find is an article by the English writer Wayland Young, an active proponent of disarmament, who referred to "the danger of what strategists call escalation, the danger that the size of the weapons used would mount up and up in retaliation until civilization is destroyed as surely as it would have been by an initial exchange of thermonuclear weapons." In his glossary, we find the following: "Escalation-Escalator: The uncontrolled exchange of ever larger weapons in war, leading to the destruction of civilization." Wayland Young, *Strategy for Survival: First Steps in Nuclear Disarmament* (London: Penguin Books, 1959).
45. Schelling, *Strategy of Conflict*.
46. Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, 182.
47. Schelling, "Nuclear Strategy in the Berlin Crisis," *Foreign Relations of the United States* XIV, 170–172; Marc Trachtenberg, *History and Strategy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 224.

48. I deal with this in my *Kennedy's Wars* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).
49. Fred Kaplan, *Wizards of Armageddon* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 302.
50. Kaysen to Kennedy, September 22, 1961, *Foreign Relations in the United States* XIV-VI, supplement, Document 182.
51. Robert Kennedy, *Thirteen Days: The Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962* (London: Macmillan, 1969), 69–71, 80, 89, 182.
52. Ernest May and Philip Zelikow, *The Kennedy Tapes: Inside the White House During the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2002).
53. Albert and Roberta Wohlstetter, *Controlling the Risks in Cuba*, Adelphi Paper No. 17 (London ISS, February 1965).
54. Kahn, *On Thermonuclear War*, 226, 139.
55. Herman Kahn, *On Escalation* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1965).
56. Cited in Fred Iklé, "When the Fighting Has to Stop: The Arguments About Escalation," *World Politics* 19, no. 4 (July 1967): 693.
57. McGeorge Bundy, "To Cap the Volcano," *Foreign Affairs* 1 (October 1969): 1–20. See also McGeorge Bundy, *Danger and Survival: Choices About the Bomb in the First Fifty Years* (New York: Random House, 1988).
58. McGeorge Bundy, "The Bishops and the Bomb," *The New York Review*, June 16, 1983. For a discussion of "existentialist" literature, see Lawrence Freedman, "I Exist; Therefore I Deter," *International Security* 13, no. 1 (Summer 1988): 177–195.

14 Guerrilla Warfare

1. Werner Hahlweg, "Clausewitz and Guerrilla Warfare," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 9, nos. 2–3 (1986): 127–133; Sebastian Kaempf, "Lost Through Non-Translation: Bringing Clausewitz's Writings on 'New Wars' Back In," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 22, no. 4 (October 2011): 548–573.
2. Jomini, *The Art of War*, 34–35 (see chap. 7, n. 5).
3. Karl Marx, "Revolutionary Spain," 1854, available at <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1854/revolutionary-spain/ch05.htm>.
4. Vladimir Lenin, "Guerrilla Warfare," originally published in PROLETARY, No. 5, September 30, 1906, *Lenin Collected Works* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1965), Vol. II, 213–223, available at <http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1906/gw/index.htm>.
5. Leon Trotsky, "Guerrilla-ism and the Regular Army," *The Military Writings of Leon Trotsky*, Vol. 2, 1919, available at <http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1919/military/ch08.htm>.
6. Leon Trotsky, "Do We Need Guerrillas?" *The Military Writings of Leon Trotsky*, Vol. 2, 1919, available at <http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1919/military/ch95.htm>.

7. C. E. Callwell, *Small Wars: Their Theory and Practice*, reprint of the 1906 3rd edition (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996).
8. T. E. Lawrence, "The Evolution of a Revolt," in Malcolm Brown, ed., *T. E. Lawrence in War & Peace: An Anthology of the Military Writings of Lawrence of Arabia* (London: Greenhill Books, 2005), 260–273. It was first published in the *Army Quarterly*, October 1920. It forms the basis of Chapter 35 of *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (London: Castle Hill Press, 1997).
9. Basil Liddell Hart, *Colonel Lawrence: The Man Behind the Legend* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1934).
10. "T. E. Lawrence and Liddell Hart," in Brian Holden Reid, *Studies in British Military Thought: Debates with Fuller & Liddell Hart* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 150–167.
11. Brantly Womack, "From Urban Radical to Rural Revolutionary: Mao from the 1920s to 1937," in Timothy Cheek, ed., *A Critical Introduction to Mao* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 61–86.
12. Jung Chang and Jon Halliday, *Mao: The Unknown Story* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005).
13. Andrew Bingham Kennedy, "Can the Weak Defeat the Strong? Mao's Evolving Approach to Asymmetric Warfare in Yan'an," *China Quarterly* 196 (December 2008): 884–899.
14. Most of the key texts—"Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War" (December 1936), "Problems of Strategy in Guerrilla War Against Japan" (May 1938), and "On Protracted War" (May 1938)—are found in *Selected Works of Mao Tse-Tung*, Vol. II. "On Guerrilla War" is in Vol. VI. They can be found at <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/index.htm>.
15. Mao Tse-Tung, "On Protracted War."
16. Beatrice Heuser, *Reading Clausewitz* (London: Pimlico, 2002), 138–139.
17. John Shy and Thomas W. Collier, "Revolutionary War," in Paret, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy*, p. 844 (see chap. 6, n. 2). On Maoist strategy, see also Edward L. Katzenback, Jr., and Gene Z. Hanrahan, "The Revolutionary Strategy of Mao Tse-Tung," *Political Science Quarterly* 70, no. 3 (September 1955): 321–340. In "On Protracted War" he made the classic distinction between strategies of attrition and annihilation, which began with Delbrück, but Mao probably got it through Lenin (see below pp. 289).
18. Mao Tse-Tung, "Problems of Strategy in Guerrilla War Against Japan."
19. Mao Tse-Tung, "On Protracted War."
20. Mao Tse-Tung, "On Guerrilla War."
21. "People's War, People's Army" (1961), in Russell Stetler, ed., *The Military Art of People's War: Selected Writings of General Vo Nguyen Giap* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970), 104–106.
22. Graham Greene, *The Quiet American* (London: Penguin, 1969), 61. The contemporary importance of Greene's critique of American naïveté in

- Vietnam and the debates this prompted comes over in Frederik Logevall, *Embers of War: The Fall of an Empire and the Making of America's Vietnam* (New York: Random House, 2012). William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick, *The Ugly American* (New York: Fawcett House, 1958), 233. Hillendale was not the "Ugly American" of the title. Cecil B. Currey, *Edward Lansdale: The Unquiet American* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1988). Edward G. Lansdale, "Viet Nam: Do We Understand Revolution?" *Foreign Affairs* (October 1964), 75–86. For an appreciation of Lansdale, see Max Boot, *Invisible Armies: An Epic History of Guerrilla Warfare from Ancient Times to the Present* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2012), 409–414.
23. On counterinsurgency thinking and its development during the Kennedy administration, see Douglas Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era: US Doctrine and Performance* (New York: The Free Press, 1977); D. Michael Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms: The Failure of US Counterinsurgency Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988); and Larry Cable, *Conflict of Myths: The Development of American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and the Vietnam War* (New York: New York University Press, 1986). Apart from some work undertaken on the stresses and strains in newly independent states in the third world, there was very little academic work on the requirements of a counterinsurgency strategy prior to President Kennedy's embrace of the concept at the start of his administration. The early development of the doctrine within the administration is normally credited to Walt Rostow and Roger Hilsman. For the flavor of the doctrine, see W. W. Rostow, "Guerrilla Warfare in Underdeveloped Areas," address to the graduating class at the U.S. Army Special Warfare School, Fort Bragg, June 1961. Reprinted in Marcus Raskin and Bernard Fall, *The Viet-Nam Reader* (New York: Vintage Books, 1965). See also Roger Hilsman, *To Move a Nation: The Politics of Foreign Policy in the Administration of John F. Kennedy* (New York: Dell, 1967).
 24. Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: Experiences in Malaya and Vietnam* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1966).
 25. Boot, *Invisible Armies*, 386–387.
 26. David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Wesport, CT: Praeger, 1964).
 27. Gregor Mathias, *Galula in Algeria: Counterinsurgency Practice versus Theory* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Security International, 2011).
 28. M. L. R. Smith, "Guerrillas in the Mist: Reassessing Strategy and Low Intensity Warfare," *Review of International Studies* 29, no. 1 (2003): 19–37; Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria, 1954–1962* (London: Macmillan, 1977), 480–504.
 29. Charles Maechling, Jr., "Insurgency and Counterinsurgency: The Role of Strategic Theory," *Parameters* 14, no. 3 (Autumn 1984): 34. Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 113.

30. Paul Kattenburg, *The Vietnam Trauma in American Foreign Policy, 1945–75* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1980), 111–112.
31. Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era*, 62–66.
32. Jeffery H. Michaels, “Managing Global Counterinsurgency: The Special Group (CI) 1962–1966,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 35, no. 1 (2012): 33–61.
33. See, for example, Alexander George et al., *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, 1st edition (Boston: Little Brown, 1971). John Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Post War American Security Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 243.
34. See in particular an address at University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, December 19, 1962, discussed at length in William Kaufmann, *The McNamara Strategy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), 138–147.
35. Schelling reported that the response was that “Schelling’s games demonstrate how unrealistic this Cuban crisis is.” Ghamari-Tabrizi, 213 (see chap. 12, n. 10).
36. William Bundy, cited in William Conrad Gibbons, *The U.S. Government and the Vietnam War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), Vol. II, p. 349.
37. *The Pentagon Papers, Senator Gravel Edition: The Defense Department History of the U.S. Decision-Making on Vietnam*, Vol. 3 (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), 212.
38. Gibbons, *The U.S. Government and the Vietnam War: 1961–1964*, 254.
39. Ibid., 256–259. See Chapter 4 of *Arms and Influence*.
40. See Freedman, *Kennedy’s Wars* (see chap. 13, n. 48).
41. Fred Kaplan, *The Wizards of Armageddon* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 332–336.
42. *Arms and Influence*, vii, 84, 85, 166, 171–172. Given this analysis, Page “Coercive Air Power in the Vietnam War,” is unfair to Schelling in assuming that he would have advocated only attacks on civilian targets as part of Rolling Thunder.
43. Richard Betts, “Should Strategic Studies Survive?” *World Politics* 50, no. 1 (October 1997): 16.
44. Colin Gray, “What RAND Hath Wrought,” *Foreign Policy* 4 (Autumn 1971): 111–129; see also Stephen Peter Rosen, “Vietnam and the American Theory of Limited War,” *International Security* 7, no. 2 (Autumn 1982): 83–113.
45. Zellen, *State of Doom*, 196–197 (see chap. 12, n. 5); Bernard Brodie, “Why Were We So (Strategically) Wrong?” *Foreign Policy* 4 (Autumn 1971): 151–162.

15 *Observation and Orientation*

1. Beaufre’s two key works were published in French as *Introduction à la Stratégie* (1963) and *Dissuasion et Stratégie* (1964). Both were published

- with English translations by Major-General R. H. Barry in 1965 as *Introduction to Strategy* and *Dissuasion and Strategy*, respectively, by Faber & Faber in London. This quote comes from *Introduction*, p. 22. Beaufre is discussed in Beatrice Heuser, *The Evolution of Strategy*, 460–463. See Chapter 6, n. 4.
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 7. On the importance of the distinction, see Lukas Milewski, “Revisiting J. C. Wylie’s Dichotomy of Strategy: The Effects of Sequential and Cumulative Patterns of Operations,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 35, no. 2 (April 2012): 223–242. Twenty years after the first publication, Wylie believed that cumulative strategies were more important. *Military Strategy*, 1989 edition, p. 101.
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16 *The Revolution in Military Affairs*

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18 *Marx and a Strategy for the Working Class*

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19 Herzen and Bakunin

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7. *Ibid.*, 171, 176; Herzen, *My Past & Thoughts*, 1309–1310.
8. Stoppard, *Salvage*, 7–8.
9. Engels, "The Program of the Blanquist Fugitives from the Paris Commune," June 26, 1874, available at <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1874/06/26.htm>.
10. Henry Eaton, "Marx and the Russians," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 41, no. 1 (January/ March 1980): 89–112.
11. Cited in Mark Leier, *Bakunin: A Biography* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2006), 119.
12. Herzen, *My Past & Thoughts*, 573.
13. *Ibid.*, 571.
14. Aileen Kelly, *Mikhail Bakunin: A Study in the Psychology and Politics of Utopianism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982). For a critique, see Robert M. Cutler, "Bakunin and the Psychobiographers: The Anarchist as Mythical

- and Historical Object," KLIO (St. Petersburg), [Abstract of English original of article] in press [in Russian translation], available at <http://www.robertcutler.org/bakunin/ar09klio.htm>.
15. In his later confessions, cited by Peter Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism* (London: Harper Perennial, 2008), 269.
 16. Paul Thomas, *Karl Marx and the Anarchists* (London: Routledge, 1990), 261–262.
 17. Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible*, 244–245, 258–259.
 18. Proudhon, quoted in K. Steven Vincent, *Pierre-Joseph Proudhon and the Rise of French Republican Socialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 148.
 19. Thomas, *Marx and the Anarchists*, 250.
 20. Alvin W. Gouldner, "Marx's Last Battle: Bakunin and the First International," *Theory and Society* 11, no. 6 (November 1982): 861. Special issue in memory of Alvin W. Gouldner.
 21. Cited in Hunt, *The Frock-Coated Communist*, 259 (see chap. 18, n. 25).
 22. Leier, *Bakunin: A Biography*, 191; Paul McClaughlin, *Bakunin: The Philosophical Basis of his Anarchism* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2002).
 23. Mikhail A. Bakunin, *Statism and Anarchy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 159.
 24. Saul Newman, *From Bakunin to Lacan: Anti-authoritarianism and the Dislocation of Power* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2001), 37.
 25. Leier, *Bakunin: A Biography*, 194–195.
 26. *Ibid.*, 184, 210, 241–242.
 27. Proudhon's own *War and Peace* is extremely muddled, not least in its apparent glorification of war. A more literary inspiration for Tolstoy was Victor Hugo, whose *Les Misérables* demonstrated a way of writing about historical events.
 28. Leier, *Bakunin: A Biography*, 196.
 29. Carr, *The Romantic Exiles*.
 30. Available at www.marxists.org/subject/anarchism/nechayev/catechism.htm.
 31. Cited by Marshall, *Demanding the Impossible*, 346.
 32. Carl Levy, "Errico Malatesta and Charismatic Leadership," in Jan Willem Stutje, ed., *Charismatic Leadership and Social Movements* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 89–90. Levy suggests that Malatesta's barnstorming around Italy from December 1919 to October 1920 meant that opportunities were missed to organize the workers.
 33. *Ibid.*, 94.
 34. Joseph Conrad, *Under Western Eyes* (London: Everyman's Library, 1991).
 35. Joseph Conrad, *The Secret Agent* (London: Penguin, 2007).
 36. Stanley G. Payne, *The Spanish Civil War, the Soviet Union and Communism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004).
 37. Levy, "Errico Malatesta," 94.

20 Revisionists and Vanguards

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2. Engels to Kautsky, April 1, 1895, available at http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1895/letters/95_04_01.htm.
3. Engels, Reply to the Honorable Giovanni Bovio, *Critica Sociale* No. 4, February 16, 1892, available at <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1892/02/critica-sociale.htm>.
4. Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, May 1875, available at <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1875/gotha/index.htm>. McLellan, *Karl Marx* see Chapter 20, n. 19, 437.
5. Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism: The Founders, the Golden Age, the Breakdown* (New York: Norton, 2005), 391.
6. Stephen Eric Bronner, "Karl Kautsky and the Twilight of Orthodoxy," *Political Theory* 10, no. 4 (November 1982): 580–605.
7. Elzbieta Ettinger, *Rosa Luxemburg: A Life* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1986), xii, 87.
8. Rosa Luxemburg, *Reform or Revolution* (London: Bookmarks Publications, 1989).
9. Rosa Luxembourg, *The Mass Strike, the Political Party, and the Trade Unions*, 1906, available at <http://www.marxists.org/archive/luxemburg/1906/mass-strike/index.htm>.
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11. Rosa Luxemburg, *The Mass Strike*.
12. Leon Trotsky, *My Life: The Rise and Fall of a Dictator* (London: T. Butterworth, 1930).
13. Karl Kautsky, "The Mass Strike," 1910, cited in Stephen D'Arcy, "Strategy, Meta-strategy and Anti-capitalist Activism: Rethinking Leninism by Re-reading Lenin," *Socialist Studies: The Journal of the Society for Socialist Studies* 5, no. 2 (2009): 64–89.
14. Lenin, "The Historical Meaning of the Inner-Party Struggle," 1910, available at <http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1910/hmipsir/index.htm>.
15. Vladimir Lenin, *What Is to Be Done?*, 35, available at <http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1901/witbd/index.htm>.
16. Nadezhda Krupskaya, *Memories of Lenin* (London: Lawrence, 1930), 1: 102–103, citing *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*.
17. Beryl Williams, *Lenin* (Harlow, Essex: Pearson Education, 2000), 46.
18. Hew Strachan, *The First World War, Volume One: To Arms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 113.

19. Robert Service, *Comrades: A World History of Communism* (London: Macmillan, 2007), 1427, 1448.

21 *Bureaucrats, Democrats, and Elites*

1. At the same time, Mauss also records Durkheim's concern that his students' interest in Marxism was leading them away from liberalism, his distrust of the "shallow philosophy of the radicals," and his "reluctance to submit himself to party discipline." Marcel Mauss's preface to Emile Durkheim, *Socialism* (New York: Collier Books, 1958).
2. David Beetham, "Mosca, Pareto, and Weber: A Historical Comparison," in Wolfgang Mommsen and Jürgen Osterhammel, eds., *Max Weber and His Contemporaries* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1987), 140–141.
3. See Joachim Radkau, *Max Weber: A Biography* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2009).
4. Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, translated by Henderson and Parsons (New York: The Free Press, 1947), 337.
5. Peter Lassman, "The Rule of Man over Man: Politics, Power and Legitimacy," in Stephen Turner, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Weber* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 84–88.
6. Sheldon Wolin, "Legitimation, Method, and the Politics of Theory," *Political Theory* 9, no. 3 (August 1981): 405.
7. Radkau, *Max Weber*, 487.
8. *Ibid.*, 488.
9. Nicholas Gane, *Max Weber and Postmodern Theory: Rationalisation versus Re-enchantment* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 60.
10. Max Weber, "Science as a Vocation," available at <http://mail.www.anthropos-lab.net/wp/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Weber-Science-as-a-Vocation.pdf>.
11. Radkau, *Max Weber*, 463.
12. Wolfgang Mommsen, *Max Weber and German Politics, 1890–1920*, translated by Michael Steinberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 310.
13. *Ibid.*, 296.
14. Max Weber, "Politics as Vocation," available at <http://anthropos-lab.net/wp/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Weber-Politics-as-a-Vocation.pdf>.
15. Reinhard Bendix and Guenther Roth, *Scholarship and Partisanship: Essays on Max Weber* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 28–29.
16. Isaiah Berlin, "Tolstoy and Enlightenment," in Harold Bloom, ed., *Leo Tolstoy* (New York: Chelsea Books, 2003), 30–31.
17. *Philosophers of Peace and War*, see Chapter 8, n. 6, 129.

18. Rosamund Bartlett, *Tolstoy: A Russian Life* (London: Profile Books, 2010), 309.
19. Leo Tolstoy, *The Kingdom of God and Peace Essays* (The World's Classics), 347–348. Cited by Gallie, *Philosophers of Peace*, 122.
20. The essay appears as the introduction to Lyof N. Tolstoi, *What to Do? Thoughts Evoked by the Census of Moscow*, translated by Isabel F. Hapgood (New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell, 1887).
21. *Ibid.*, 1.
22. *Ibid.*, 4–5, 10.
23. *Ibid.*, 77–78.
24. Mikhail A. Bakunin, *Bakunin on Anarchy* (New York: Knopf, 1972).
25. Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House* (New York: Macmillan, 1910).
26. *Ibid.*, 56.
27. Jan C. Behrends, “Visions of Civility: Lev Tolstoy and Jane Addams on the Urban Condition in *Fin de Siècle* Moscow and Chicago,” *European Review of History: Revue Européenne d'Histoire* 18, no. 3 (June 2011): 335–357.
28. Martin, *The Chicago School of Sociology: Institutionalization, Diversity and the Rise of Sociological Research* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 13–14.
29. Lincoln Steffens, *The Shame of the Cities* (New York: Peter Smith, 1948, first published 1904), 234.
30. Lawrence A. Schaff, *Max Weber in America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), 41–43.
31. *Ibid.*, 45. Schaff suggests that the descriptions of violence may have been overdrawn.
32. *Ibid.*, 43–44.
33. James Weber Linn, *Jane Addams: A Biography* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 196.
34. Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, 171–172. Her approach is set out in Jane Addams, “A Function of the Social Settlement” in Louis Menand, ed., *Pragmatism: A Reader* (New York: Vintage Books, 1997), 273–286.
35. *Ibid.*, 98–99.
36. Lear was also Tolstoy’s favorite Shakespeare play. The king’s character at the end of the play was “English literature’s nearest equivalent to the holy fool (yurodivy)—that peculiarly Russian form of sainthood to which Tolstoy aspired, and which is not encountered in any other religious culture.” Bartlett, *Tolstoy*, 332.
37. Jane Addams, “A Modern Lear.” This 1896 speech was not published until 1912. Available at http://womenshistory.about.com/cs/addamsjane/a/mod_lear_10003b.htm.
38. Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Jane Addams and the Dream of American Democracy* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 202, 218–219.

39. The quality of the Hull House research has led to suggestions that were it not for the misogynist male sociologists at the University of Chicago, Addams and her colleagues would be properly appreciated as important figures in the history of American sociology. Mary Jo Deegan, *Jane Addams and the Men of the Chicago School* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1988).
40. Don Martindale, "American Sociology Before World War II," *Annual Review of Sociology* 2 (1976): 121; Anthony J. Cortese, "The Rise, Hegemony, and Decline of the Chicago School of Sociology, 1892–1945," *The Social Science Journal*, July 1995, 235; Fred H. Matthews, *Quest for an American Sociology: Robert E. Park and the Chicago School* (Montreal: McGill Queens University Press, 1977), 10; Martin Bulmer, *The Chicago School of Sociology*.
41. Small, cited by Lawrence J. Engel, "Saul D. Alinsky and the Chicago School," *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 16, no. 1 (2002): 50–66. In addition to a mass of case studies in its neighborhood, the university had the added advantage of John D. Rockefeller's generous endowment, a free intellectual atmosphere, and a lack of the social elitism and discrimination associated with the Ivy League universities.
42. Albion Small, "Scholarship and Social Agitation," *American Journal of Sociology* 1 (1895–1896): 581–582, 605.
43. Robert Westbrook, "The Making of a Democratic Philosopher: The Intellectual Development of John Dewey," in Molly Cochran, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Dewey* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 13–33.
44. Among the most important titles are *Democracy and Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1916); *Human Nature and Conduct* (New York: Henry Holt, 1922); *Experience and Nature* (New York: Norton, 1929); *The Quest for Certainty* (New York: Minton, 1929); *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* (New York: Henry Holt, 1938).
45. Small, "Scholarship and Social Agitation," 362, 237.
46. Andrew Feffer, *The Chicago Pragmatists and American Progressivism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 168.
47. *Ibid.*, 237.
48. William James, "Pragmatism," in Louis Menand, ed., *Pragmatism*, 98.
49. Louis Menand, *The Metaphysical Club* (London: HarperCollins, 2001), 353–354.
50. *Ibid.*, 350.
51. Dewey came "perilously close to reconciling desire with deed." John Patrick Duggan, *The Promise of Pragmatism: Modernism and the Crisis of Knowledge and Authority* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 48.
52. Dewey, *Human Nature and Conflict*, 230.
53. Menand, *The Metaphysical Club*, 374.

54. Robert K. Merton, "The Unanticipated Consequences of Purposive Social Action," *American Sociological Review* 1, no. 6 (December 1936): 894–904.

22 *Formulas, Myths, and Propaganda*

1. H. Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society: The Reorientation of European Social Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958).
2. Robert Michels, *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy* (New York: The Free Press, 1962), 46. First published in 1900.
3. Wolfgang Mommsen, "Robert Michels and Max Weber: Moral Conviction versus the Politics of Responsibility," in Wolfgang and Jürgen Osterhammel, 126.
4. Michels, *Political Parties*, 338.
5. Gaetano Mosca, *The Ruling Class* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1939), 50. First published in 1900.
6. *Ibid.*, 451.
7. David Beetham, "Mosca, Pareto, and Weber: A Historical Comparison," in Wolfgang Mommsen and Jürgen Osterhammel, eds., *Max Weber and His Contemporaries* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1987), 139–158.
8. Vilfredo Pareto, *The Mind and Society*, edited by Arthur Livingston, 4 volumes (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1935).
9. Geraint Parry, *Political Elites* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1969).
10. Gustave Le Bon, *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1896), 13, available at <http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/BonCrow.html>.
11. Hughes, *Consciousness and Society*, 161.
12. Irving Louis Horowitz, *Radicalism and the Revolt Against Reason: The Social Theories of George Sorel* (Abingdon: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 2009). He notes, however, Sorel's "poverty of formal organization . . . indiscriminate shifting of the basis of an argument from fact to hypothesis to free speculation . . . tendentious style" (p. 9).
13. Jeremy Jennings, ed., *Sorel: Reflections on Violence* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), viii. First published 1906 in *Le Mouvement Sociale*.
14. Antonio Gramsci, *The Modern Prince & Other Writings* (New York: International Publishers, 1957), 143.
15. Thomas R. Bates, "Gramsci and the Theory of Hegemony," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 36, no. 2 (April–June 1975): 352.
16. Joseph Femia, "Hegemony and Consciousness in the Thought of Antonio Gramsci," *Political Studies* 23, no. 1 (1975): 37.
17. *Ibid.*, 33.
18. Gramsci, *The Modern Prince*, 137.

19. Walter L. Adamson, *Hegemony and Revolution: A Study of Antonio Gramsci's Political and Cultural Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 223, 209.
20. *Ibid.*, 223.
21. T. K. Jackson Lears, "The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities," *The American Historical Review* 90, no. 1 (June 1985): 578.
22. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, vol. I, ch. X. First published in 1925.
23. James Burnham, *The Managerial Revolution* (London: Putnam, 1941). See also Kevin J. Smant, *How Great the Triumph: James Burnham, Anti-Communism, and the Conservative Movement* (New York: University Press of America, 1991).
24. Bruno Rizzi, *The Bureaucratization of the World*, translated by Adam Westoby (New York: The Free Press, 1985).
25. *Ibid.*, 223–225, 269.
26. See, for example, C. Wright Mills, "A Marx for the Managers," in Irving Horowitz, ed., *Power, Politics and People: The Collected Essays of C. Wright Mills* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), 53–71. George Orwell voiced many misgivings, noting Burnham's earlier presumption of German victory in the war, yet he nonetheless used Burnham's geopolitical analysis, predicting a world divided into three strategic centers for world control, each similar to the other yet engaged in a constant struggle, as the basis for his dystopian novel, *1984*. As always, Orwell's analysis makes for fascinating reading. See his "James Burnham and the Managerial Revolution," *New English Weekly*, May 1946, available at <http://www.k-1.com/Orwell/site/work/essays/burnham.html>.
27. This was not fully published in English until 1972, although it was reflected in other writings of Park.
28. Stuart Ewen, *PR! A Social History of Spin* (New York: Basic Books, 1996), 69.
29. *Ibid.*, 68.
30. Robert Park, *the Mass and the Public, and Other Essays* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 80. First published in 1904.
31. Cited by Ewen, *PR!*, 48.
32. Ronald Steel, *Walter Lippmann and the American Century* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1999).
33. W. I. Thomas and Dorothy Swaine Thomas, *The Child in America: Behavior Problems and Programs* (New York: Knopf, 1928). Robert Merton, who turned Thomas's aphorism into a theorem, described it as "probably the single most consequential sentence ever put in print by an American sociologist." "Social Knowledge and Public Policy," in *Sociological Ambivalence* (New York: Free Press, 1976), 174. See also Robert Merton, "The Thomas Theorem and the Matthew Effect," *Social Forces* 74, no. 2 (December 1995): 379–424.
34. Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Co, 1922), 59, available at <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~Hyper2/CDFinal/Lippman/cover.html>.

35. Michael Schudson, "The 'Lippmann-Dewey Debate' and the Invention of Walter Lippmann as an Anti-Democrat 1986–1996," *International Journal of Communication* 2 (2008): 140.
36. Harold D. Lasswell, "The Theory of Political Propaganda," *The American Political Science Review* 21, no. 3 (August 1927): 627–631.
37. Sigmund Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1949). First published 1922, available at http://archive.org/stream/grouppsychologya00freu/grouppsychologya00freu_djvu.txt.
38. Wilfred Trotter, *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War* (New York: Macmillan, 1916); Harvey C. Greisman, "Herd Instinct and the Foundations of Biosociology," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 15 (1979): 357–369.
39. Edward Bernays, *Crystallizing Public Opinion* (New York: Liveright, 1923), 35.
40. Edward Bernays, *Propaganda* (New York: H. Liveright, 1936), 71.
41. The title of a 1947 article, Edward L. Bernays, "The Engineering of Consent," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 250 (1947): 113.
42. There remains debate about whether or not this really made a difference to women's smoking habits. See Larry Tye, *The Father of Spin: Edward L. Bernays and the Birth of Public Relations* (New York: Holt, 1998), 27–35.
43. "Are We Victims of Propaganda? A Debate. Everett Dean Martin and Edward L. Bernays," *Forum Magazine*, March 1929.

23 *The Power of Nonviolence*

1. Laura E. Nym Mayhall, *The Militant Suffrage Movement: Citizenship and Resistance in Britain, 1860–1930* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 45, 79, 107, 115.
2. Donna M. Kowal, "One Cause, Two Paths: Militant vs. Adjustive Strategies in the British and American Women's Suffrage Movements," *Communication Quarterly* 48, no. 3 (2000): 240–255.
3. Henry David Thoreau, *Civil Disobedience*, originally published as *Resistance to Civil Government* (1849). Available at <http://thoreau.eserver.org/civil.html>.
4. Writing in 1942 "To American Friends," he wrote how, "You have given me a teacher in Thoreau, who furnished me through his essay on the 'Duty of Civil Disobedience' scientific confirmation of what I was doing in South Africa." For evidence on Thoreau's influence, see George Hendrick, "The Influence of Thoreau's 'Civil Disobedience' on Gandhi's Satyagraha," *The New England Quarterly* 29, no. 4 (December 1956): 462–471.
5. Leo Tolstoy, *A Letter to a Hindu*, introduction by M. K. Gandhi (1909), available at <http://www.online-literature.com/tolstoy/2733>.

6. These paragraphs draw on Judith M. Brown, "Gandhi and Civil Resistance in India, 1917–47: Key Issues," in Adam Roberts and Timothy Garton Ash, eds., *Civil Resistance & Power Politics: The Experience of Non-Violent Action from Gandhi to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 43–57.
7. Sean Scalmer, *Gandhi in the West: The Mahatma and the Rise of Radical Protest* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 54, 57.
8. "To the American Negro: A Message from Mahatma Gandhi," *The Crisis*, July 1929, 225.
9. Vijay Prashad, "Black Gandhi," *Social Scientist* 37, no. 1/2 (January/February 2009): 4–7, 45.
10. Leonard A. Gordon, "Mahatma Gandhi's Dialogues with Americans," *Economic and Political Weekly* 37, no. 4 (January–February 2002): 337–352.
11. Joseph Kip Kosek, "Richard Gregg, Mohandas Gandhi, and the Strategy of Nonviolence," *The Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (March 2005): 1318–1348. Gregg published a number of books on nonviolence. The most influential was *The Power of Non-Violence* (London: James Clarke & Co., 1960). First published in 1934.
12. Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (New York: Scribner, 1934).
13. Described in James Farmer, *Lay Bare the Arms: An Autobiography of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Arbor House, 1985), 106–107.
14. On Muste's conversion from Marxism to Christian Pacifism, see Chapter 9 of Ira Chernus, *American Nonviolence: The History of an Idea* (New York: Orbis, 2004). Both Gregg and Niebuhr were members of FOR, although the latter's intellectual journey led him to leave.
15. August Meier and Elliott Rudwick, *CORE: A Study in the Civil Rights Movement, 1942–1968* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 102–103.
16. *Ibid.*, 111.
17. Krishnalal Shridharani, *War Without Violence: A Study of Gandhi's Method and Its Accomplishments* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1939). See James Farmer, *Lay Bare the Heart: An Autobiography of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Arbor Books, 1985), 93–95, 112–113.
18. Paula F. Pfeffer, *A. Philip Randolph. Pioneer of the Civil Rights Movement* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990).
19. Jervis Anderson, *Bayard Rustin: Troubles I've Seen* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997), 17.
20. Adam Fairclough, "The Preachers and the People: The Origins and Early Years of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, 1955–1959," *The Journal of Southern History* 52, no. 3 (August 1986), 403–440.
21. In his history of the movement, Garrow notes the comparison to Gandhi being made by a sympathetic white lady in a letter to a newspaper. David

- Garrow, *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, 1955–1968* (New York: W. Morrow, 1986), 28.
22. Ibid., 43. Bo Wirmark, “Nonviolent Methods and the American Civil Rights Movement 1955–1965,” *Journal of Peace Research* 11, no. 2 (1974): 115–132; Akinyele Umoja, “1964: The Beginning of the End of Nonviolence in the Mississippi Freedom Movement,” *Radical History Review* 85 (Winter 2003): 201–226.
 23. Scalmer, *Gandhi in the West*, 180.
 24. The books referred to by King were: M. K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography; or, The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, translated by Mahadev Desai (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1927); Louis Fischer, *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1951); Henry David Thoreau, “Civil Disobedience,” 1849; Walter Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (New York: Macmillan Press, 1908); Richard B. Gregg, *The Power of Non-Violence*; Ira Chernus, *American Nonviolence: The History of an Idea* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004), 169–171. See James P. Hanigan, *Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Foundations of Nonviolence* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984), 1–18.
 25. Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters. America in the King Years, 1954–63* (New York: Touchstone, 1988), 55.
 26. Martin Luther King, “Our Struggle,” *Liberation*, April 1956, available at http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/primarydocuments/Vol3/Apr-1956_OurStruggle.pdf.
 27. Branch, *Parting the Waters*, 195.
 28. Garrow, *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, 1955–1968*, 111. One example: Gregg had written of the nonviolent resister: “Toward his opponent he is not aggressive physically, but his mind and emotions are active, wrestling constantly with the problem of persuading the latter that he is mistaken.” King wrote: “For while the nonviolent resister is passive in the sense that he is not physically aggressive toward his opponent, his mind and emotions are always active, constantly seeking to persuade his opponent that he is wrong.” Martin Luther King, Jr., “Pilgrimage to Nonviolence,” in *Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1958), 102; Gregg, *The Power of Non-Violence*, 93.
 29. Daniel Levine, *Bayard Rustin and the Civil Rights Movement* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2000), 95.
 30. Cited by Anderson, *Bayard Rustin*, 192.
 31. Aldon Morris, “Black Southern Student Sit-in Movement: An Analysis of Internal Organization,” *American Sociological Review* 46, no. 6 (December 1981): 744–767.
 32. For a balanced assessment of the relationship between Baker and King, see Barbara Ransby, *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical*

Democratic Vision (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 189–192.

33. Alan Fairclough, “The Preachers and the People,” 424.
34. Morris, “Black Southern Student Sit-In Movement,” 755.
35. Doug McAdam, “Tactical Innovation and the Pace of Insurgency,” *American Sociological Review* 48, no. 6 (December 1983): 748.
36. Bayard Rustin, *Strategies for Freedom: The Changing Patterns of Black Protest* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 24.
37. Aldon D. Morris, “Birmingham Confrontation Reconsidered: An Analysis of the Dynamics and Tactics of Mobilization,” *American Sociological Review* 58, no. 5 (October 1993): 621–636.
38. *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, April 16, 1963, available at http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/resources/article/annotated_letter_from_birmingham/
39. Rustin, *Strategies for Freedom*, 45.
40. Quoted in Branch, *Parting the Waters*, 775.
41. Martin Luther King, Jr., *Why We Can't Wait* (New York: New American Library, 1963), 104–105; Douglas McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930–1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983); David J. Garrow, *Protest at Selma: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Voting Rights Act of 1965* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1978); Branch, *Parting the Waters*; Thomas Brooks, *Walls Come Tumbling Down: A History of the Civil Rights Movement* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1974).

24 *Existential Strategy*

1. Tom Hayden, *Reunion: A Memoir* (New York: Collier, 1989), 87. For a history of SDS, see Kirkpatrick Sale, *The Rise and Development of the Students for a Democratic Society* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973).
2. Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam Books, 1993), 286.
3. William H. Whyte, *The Organization Man* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002). First published 1956.
4. David Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd* (New York: Anchor Books, 1950).
5. Erich Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom* (London: Routledge, 1942).
6. Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counter-Culture* (London: Faber & Faber, 1970), 10–11.
7. See Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology* (New York: Citadel Press, 2001), first published in 1943; *Existentialism and Humanism* (London: Methuen, 2007), first published in 1946.

8. Albert Camus, *The Plague* (New York: Vintage Books, 1961). First published in 1949.
9. The ambiguity toward Mills is evident in Irving Horowitz, *C. Wright Mills: An American Utopian* (New York: The Free Press, 1983). This is explored in John H. Summers, "The Epigone's Embrace: Irving Louis Horowitz on C. Wright Mills," *Minnesota Review* 68 (Spring 2007): 107–124.
10. C. Wright Mills, *Sociology and Pragmatism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), 423. Published posthumously.
11. In *Listen Yankee* (New York: Ballantine, 1960), he defended the Cuban Revolution in the imagined words of a Cuban revolutionary.
12. Robert Dahl, *Who Governs: Democracy and Power in an American City* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1962).
13. David Baldwin, "Power Analysis and World Politics: New Trends versus Old Tendencies," *World Politics* 31, no. 2 (January 1979): 161–194. He is drawing here on Klaus Knorr, *The Power of Nations: The Political Economy of International Relations* (New York: Basic Books, 1975).
14. Robert Dahl, "The Concept of Power," *Behavioral Science* 2 (1957): 201–215.
15. Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz, "Two Faces of Power," *The American Political Science Review* 56, no. 4 (December 1962): 947–952. Also see Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz, "Decisions and Non-Decisions: An Analytical Framework," *The American Political Science Review* 57, no. 3 (September 1963): 632–642.
16. C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956).
17. Theodore Roszak, *The Making of Counter-Culture*, 25.
18. C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959).
19. Tom Hayden and Dick Flacks, "The Port Huron Statement at 40," *The Nation*, July 18, 2002. The statement was produced as a mimeographed pamphlet in 20,000 copies and sold for 35 cents. Note the use of the word *rebels*.
20. Hayden, *Reunion: A Memoir*, 80. On the impact of Mills, see John Summers, "The Epigone's Embrace: Part II, C. Wright Mills and the New Left," *Left History* 13.2 (Fall/Winter 2008).
21. The Port Huron Manifesto can be found at <http://coursesa.matrix.msu.edu/~hst306/documents/huron.html>.
22. Hayden, *Reunion: A Memoir*, 75.
23. Port Huron Manifesto.
24. Richard Flacks, "Some Problems, Issues, Proposals," July 1965, reprinted in Paul Jacobs and Saul Landau, *The New Radicals* (New York: Vintage Books, 1966), 167–169.

25. Tom Hayden and Carl Wittman, "Summer Report, Newark Community Union, 1964," in Massimio Teodori, *The New Left: A Documentary History* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1970), 133.
26. Tom Hayden, "The Politics of the Movement," *Dissent*, Jan/Feb 1966, 208.
27. Tom Hayden, "Up from Irrelevance," *Studies on the Left*, Spring 1965.
28. Francesca Polletta, *"Freedom Is an Endless Meeting": Democracy in American Social Movements* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).
29. Lawrence J. Engel, "Saul D. Alinsky and the Chicago School," *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* 16, no. 1 (2002).
30. Robert Park, "The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behavior in the City Environment," *The American Journal of Sociology* 20, no. 5 (March 1915): 577–612.
31. Engel, "Saul D. Alinsky and the Chicago School," 54–57. One of Burgess's courses taken by Alinsky was on the "pathological conditions and processes in modern society," which included "alcoholism, prostitution, poverty, vagrancy, juvenile and adult delinquency." This would be done through "inspection trips, survey assignments, and attendance at clinics."
32. He got to know Capone's number two, Frank Nitti, and through him the mob's operations, from "gin mills and whorehouses and bookie joints to the legitimate businesses they were beginning to take over." Given that they had much of the local political class and police force in their pockets, he argued that there was not much he could do with the information he gathered. As he later noted, "the only real opposition to the mob came from other gangsters, like Bugs Moran or Roger Touhy." He claimed to have learned "a hell of a lot about the uses and abuses of power from the mob, lessons that stood me in good stead later on, when I was organizing." "Empowering People, Not Elites," interview with Saul Alinsky, *Playboy Magazine*, March 1972.
33. Engel, "Saul D. Alinsky and the Chicago School," 60.
34. "Empowering People, Not Elites," interview with Saul Alinsky.
35. Saul D. Alinsky, "Community Analysis and Organization," *The American Journal of Sociology* 46, no. 6 (May 1941): 797–808.
36. Sanford D. Horwitt, *"Let Them Call Me Rebel": Saul Alinsky, His Life and Legacy* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989), 39.
37. Saul D. Alinsky, *John Lewis: An Unauthorized Biography* (New York: Vintage Books, 1970), 104, 219.
38. Saul D. Alinsky, *Reveille for Radicals* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946), 22.
39. Horwitt, *"Let Them Call Me Rebel,"* 174.
40. Charles Silberman, *Crisis in Black and White* (New York: Random House, 1964), 335.
41. "This did not work out," he recorded in a notebook. See Horwitt, *"Let Them Call Me Rebel,"* 530.

42. Nicholas von Hoffman, *Radical: A Portrait of Saul Alinsky* (New York: Nation Books, 2010), 75, 36.
43. The two rival organizations had reunited in 1955.
44. El Malcriado, no. 14, July 9, 1965, cited by Marshall Ganz, *Why David Sometimes Wins: Leadership, Organization and Strategy in the California Farm Worker Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 93.
45. Randy Shaw, *Beyond the Fields: Cesar Chávez, the UFW, and the Struggle for Justice in the 21st Century* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2009), 87–91.
46. Von Hoffman, *Radical*, 163.
47. Ganz, *Why David Sometimes Wins*.
48. Miriam Pawel, *The Union of Their Dreams: Power, Hope, and Struggle in Cesar Chávez's Farm Worker Movement* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2009).
49. Von Hoffman, *Radical*, 51–52.
50. Horwitt, "Let Them Call Me Rebel," 524–526.
51. "Empowering People, Not Elites," interview with Saul Alinsky.
52. Von Hoffman, *Radical*, 69.
53. David J. Garrow, *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference* (New York: Quill, 1999), 455.

25 *Black Power and White Anger*

1. Malcolm X made no strategic statement. The key themes come over in his autobiography, written with Arthur Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1992).
2. David Macey, *Frantz Fanon: A Biography* (New York: Picador Press, 2000).
3. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (London: Macgibbon and Kee, 1965), 28; Jean-Paul Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew* (New York: Schocken Books, 1995), 152, first published 1948. See Sebastian Kaempf, "Violence and Victory: Guerrilla Warfare, 'Authentic Self-Affirmation' and the Overthrow of the Colonial State," *Third World Quarterly* 30, no. 1 (2009): 129–146.
4. Preface to Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, 18.
5. Hannah Arendt, "Reflections on Violence," *The New York Review of Books*, February 27, 1969. An extended version appeared in *Crises of the Republic* (New York: Harcourt, 1972).
6. Paul Jacobs and Saul Landau, *The New Radicals: A Report with Documents* (New York: Random House, 1966), 25.
7. Taylor Branch, *At Canaan's Edge: America in the King Years 1965–68* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), 486.
8. SNCC, "The Basis of Black Power," *New York Times*, August 5, 1966.
9. Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America* (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), 12–13, 58, 66–67.
10. Garrow, *Bearing the Cross*, 488 (see chap. 23, n. 21).

11. Martin Luther King, Jr., *Chaos or Community* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1968), 56.
12. Bobby Seale, *Seize the Time: The Story of the Black Panther Party and Huey P. Newton* (New York: Random House, 1970), 79–81.
13. Stokely Carmichael, "A Declaration of War, February 1968," in Teodori, ed., *The New Left*, 258.
14. John D'Emilio, *Lost Prophet: The Life and Times of Bayard Rustin* (New York: The Free Press, 2003), 450–451.
15. Bayard Rustin, "From Protest to Politics," *Commentary* (February 1965).
16. Staughton Lynd, "Coalition Politics or Nonviolent Revolution?" *Liberation*, June/July 1965, 197–198.
17. Carmichael and Hamilton, *Black Power*, 72.
18. *Ibid.*, 92–93.
19. Paul Potter, in a speech on April 17, 1965, available at <http://www.sdsrebels.com/potter.htm>.
20. Jeffrey Drury, "Paul Potter, 'The Incredible War,'" *Voices of Democracy* 4 (2009): 23–40. Also Sean McCann and Michael Szalay, "Introduction: Paul Potter and the Cultural Turn," *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 18, no. 2 (Fall 2005): 209–220.
21. Gitlin, *The Sixties*, 265–267 (see chap. 24, n. 2).
22. Mark Rudd, *Underground, My Life with SDS and the Weathermen* (New York: Harper Collins, 2009), 65–66.
23. Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man* (London: Sphere Books, 1964); "Repressive Tolerance" in Robert Paul Wolff, Barrington Moore, Jr., and Herbert Marcuse, eds., *A Critique of Pure Tolerance* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), 95–137; *An Essay on Liberation* (London: Penguin, 1969).
24. Che Guevara, "Message to the Tricontinental," first published: Havana, April 16, 1967, available at <http://www.marxists.org/archive/guevara/1967/04/16.htm>.
25. Boot, *Invisible Armies*, 438 (see chap. 14, n. 22). On Snow, see 341.
26. Matt D. Childs, "An Historical Critique of the Emergence and Evolution of Ernesto Che Guevara's Foco Theory," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 27, no. 3 (October 1995): 593–624.
27. Che Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare* (London: Penguin, 1967). See also Che Guevara, *The Bolivian Diaries* (London: Penguin, 1968).
28. Childs, "An Historical Critique," 617.
29. Paul Dosal, *Commandante Cbe: Guerrilla Soldier, Commander, and Strategist, 1956–1967* (University Park: Pennsylvania University Press, 2003), 313.
30. Regis Debray, *Revolution in the Revolution* (London: Pelican, 1967).
31. *Ibid.*, 51. Jon Lee Anderson, *Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life* (New York: Bantam Books, 1997), suggests a more positive view of the book

- by Che but not of Debray. Debray eventually decided that Castro and Che were not so admirable.
32. It was originally circulated in the *Tricontinental Bimonthly* (January–February 1970). It is available at <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marighella-carlos/1969/06/minimanual-urban-guerrilla/index.htm>. On Marighella and his influence, see John W. Williams, “Carlos Marighella: The Father of Urban Guerrilla Warfare,” *Terrorism* 12, no. 1 (1989): 1–20.
 33. The episode is covered in Branch, *At Canaan's Edge*, 662–664. Henry Raymond, “Violence as a Weapon of Dissent Is Debated at Forum in ‘Village,’” *New York Times*, December 17, 1967. The proceedings are found in Alexander Klein, ed., *Dissent, Power, and Confrontation* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1971).
 34. Arendt, *Reflections on Violence*.
 35. Eldridge Cleaver, *Soul on Fire* (New York: Dell, 1968), 108. Cited by Childs, “An Historical Critique,” 198.
 36. Hayden, despite his denunciations of liberal corporatism, had maintained a conversation with Kennedy, and was pictured weeping by his coffin.
 37. Tom Hayden, “Two, Three, Many Columbias,” *Ramparts*, June 15, 1968, 346.
 38. Rudd, *Underground*, 132.
 39. *Ibid.*, 144.
 40. Daniel Bell, “Columbia and the New Left,” *National Affairs* 13 (1968): 100.
 41. Letter of December 3, 1966. Bill Morgan, ed., *The Letters of Allen Ginsberg* (Philadelphia: Da Capo Press, 2008), 324.
 42. Interview with Ginsberg, August 11, 1996, available at http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/poets/g_l/ginsberg/interviews.htm.
 43. Amy Hungerford, “Postmodern Supernaturalism: Ginsberg and the Search for a Supernatural Language,” *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 18, no. 2 (2005): 269–298.
 44. On the origins of the Yippies, see David Farber, *Chicago '68* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988). The name had the advantage of fitting in with hippie (which came from being “hip”) and sounding like a happy cry. To give it some jokey credibility, it was turned into an acronym through reference to a youth international party.
 45. Gitlin, *The Sixties*, 289.
 46. Farber, *Chicago '68*, 20–21.
 47. Harry Oldmeadow, “To a Buddhist Beat: Allen Ginsberg on Politics, Poetics and Spirituality,” *Beyond the Divide* 2, no. 1 (Winter 1999): 6.
 48. *Ibid.*, 27. By the mid-1970s, he was looking back with a rather conventional observation: “All of our activity in the late sixties may have prolonged the Vietnam war.” Because the Left refused to vote for

- Humphrey, they got Nixon. He had actually voted for Humphrey. Peter Barry Chowka, "Interview with Allen Ginsberg," *New Age Journal*, April 1976, available at http://www.english.illinois.edu/maps/poets/g_l/ginsberg/interviews.htm.
49. After it was all over, Hayden, along with seven of the more notorious leaders of the New Left, including Bobby Seale of the Black Panthers, were arrested for inciting the mayhem. Their trial rapidly turned into farce.
 50. Scalmer, *Gandhi in the West*, 218 (see chap. 23, n. 7).
 51. Michael Kazin, *American Dreamers: How the Left Changed a Nation* (New York: Vintage Books, 2011), 213.
 52. Betty Friedan, *The Feminist Mystique* (New York: Dell, 1963).
 53. Casey Hayden and Mary King, "Feminism and the Civil Rights Movement," 1965, available at http://www.wvnorton.com/college/history/archive/resources/documents/ch34_02.htm. On Casey Hayden, see Davis W. Houck and David E. Dixon, eds., *Women and the Civil Rights Movement, 1954–1965* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2009), 135–137.
 54. Jo Freeman, "The Origins of the Women's Liberation Movement," *American Journal of Sociology* 78, no. 4 (1973): 792–811; Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Penguin, 2000).
 55. Carol Hanish, "The Personal Is Political," in Shulamith Firestone and Anne Koedt, eds., *Notes from the Second Year: Women's Liberation*, 1970, available at <http://web.archive.org/web/20080515014413/http://scholar.alexanderstreet.com/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=2259>.
 56. Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open*.
 57. Robert O. Self, *All in the Family: The Realignment of American Democracy since the 1960s* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2012), Chapter 3.
 58. Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, 3 vols. (Manchester, NH: Extending Horizons Books, Porter Sargent Publishers, 1973).
 59. A list of 198 tactics appears in vol. 2 of Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*. The list can be found at <http://www.aeinstein.org/organizations103a.html>.
 60. Sheryl Gay Stolberg, "Shy U.S. Intellectual Created Playbook Used in a Revolution," *New York Times*, February 16, 2011.
 61. Todd Gitlin, *Letters to a Young Activist* (New York: Basic Books, 2003), 84, 53.

26 *Frames, Paradigms, Discourses, and Narratives*

1. Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (London: Routledge, 1947).
2. Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1966).

3. Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis* (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), 10–11, 2–3. William James, *Principles of Psychology*, vol. 2 (New York: Cosimo, 2007). The relevant chapter first appeared in the journal *Mind*. James observed the importance of selective attention, intimate involvement, and non-contradiction by what is otherwise known, and how there can be a variety of sub-worlds, each “real after its own fashion” before, according to Goffman, coping out.
4. Peter Simonson, “The Serendipity of Merton’s Communications Research,” *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 17, no. 1 (January 2005): 277–297. One side effect of this collaboration was that Merton brought C. Wright Mills (the “outstanding sociologist of his age”) to join the research, but Mills struggled with the statistical analyses of his project and was eventually fired by Lazarsfeld, which helps explain his appearance in *The Sociological Imagination* under the heading of “Abstracted Empiricism,” that produce details that “no matter how numerous, do not convince us having anything worth having convictions about.” The viciousness of the attacks led to Mills being virtually excommunicated by mainstream sociologists. John H. Summers, “Perpetual Revelations: C. Wright Mills and Paul Lazarsfeld,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 608, no. 25 (November 2006): 25–40.
5. Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Robert K. Merton, “Mass Communication, Popular Taste, and Organized Social Action,” in L. Bryson, ed., *The Communication of Ideas* (New York: Harper, 1948), 95–188.
6. M. E. McCombs and D. L. Shaw, “The Agenda-setting Function of Mass Media,” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 36 (1972): 176–187; Dietram A. Scheufele and David Tewksbury, “Framing, Agenda Setting, and Priming: The Evolution of the Media Effects Models,” *Journal of Communication* 57 (2007): 9–20.
7. McCabe, “Agenda-setting Research: A Bibliographic Essay,” *Political Communication Review* 1 (1976): 3; E. M. Rogers and J. W. Dearing, “Agenda-setting Research: Where Has It Been? Where Is It Going?” in J. A. Anderson, ed., *Communication Yearbook* 11 (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1988), 555–594.
8. Todd Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 2003), xvi.
9. *Ibid.*, 6.
10. J. K. Galbraith, *The Affluent Society* (London: Pelican, 1962), 16–27.
11. Sal Restivo, “The Myth of the Kuhnian Revolution,” in Randall Collins, ed., *Sociological Theory* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1983), 293–305.
12. Aristides Baltas, Kostas Gavroglu, and Vassiliki Kindi, “A Discussion with Thomas S. Kuhn,” in James Conant and John Haugeland, eds., *The Road Since Structure* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 308.

13. Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd edn. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 5, 16–17. For an accessible intellectual biography see Alexander Bird, “Thomas S. Kuhn (18 July 1922–17 June 1996),” *Social Studies of Science* 27, no. 3 (1997): 483–502. See also Alexander Bird, *Thomas Kuhn* (Chesham, UK: Acumen and Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).
14. Kuhn, *Scientific Revolutions*, 77.
15. E. Garfield, “A Different Sort of Great Books List: The 50 Twentieth-century Works Most Cited in the *Arts & Humanities Citation Index*, 1976–1983,” *Current Contents* 16 (April 20, 1987): 3–7.
16. Sheldon Wolin, “Paradigms and Political Theory,” in Preston King and B. C. Parekh, eds., *Politics and Experience* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 134–135.
17. The Wedge Project, The Center for the Renewal of Science and Culture, <http://www.antievolution.org/features/wedge.pdf>.
18. Intelligent Design and Evolution Awareness Center, <http://www.ideacenter.org/contentmgr/showdetails.php/id/1160>. To add to the mix, some of Kuhn’s critics were also critical of evolutionary theory, notably Steven Fuller, the author of both *Thomas Kuhn: A Philosophical History for Our Times* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000) and *Dissent Over Descent: Intelligent Design’s Challenge to Darwinism* (London: Icon Books, 2008). See also Jerry Fodor with Massimo Piattelli-Palmarini, *What Darwin Got Wrong* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2010).
19. A survey of high school teachers of biology showed about one in eight U.S. high school biology teachers did present creationism or intelligent design in a positive light in the classroom, and about the same number raised it at some point for discussion, <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,357181,00.html>. While it might be surprising that so many biology teachers are out of tune with the dominant scientific paradigm of the time, the important point is that they are still far more in tune with this paradigm than with the general public support for creationism and/or intelligent design. A 2008 Gallup poll suggests 44 percent of Americans believe that “God created man in present form” and another 36 percent believe that God guided man’s development. Only 14 percent did not think that God played any part in the process. Gallup, *Evolution, Creationism, Intelligent Design*, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/21814/evolution-creationism-intelligent-design.aspx> polling for id (2008).
20. A useful guide to these various positions, and the controversies surrounding evolution, is found on the TalkOrigins Archive (www.talkorigins.org).
21. Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*, edited by C. Gordon (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980), 197.
22. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archeology of the Human Science* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1970).

23. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (London: Penguin, 1991).
24. Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power," *Critical Inquiry* 8, no. 4 (Summer 1982): 777–795.
25. Julian Reid, "Life Struggles: War, Discipline, and Biopolitics in the Thought of Michel Foucault," *Social Text* 86, 24:1, Spring 2006.
26. Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, translated by David Macey (London: Allen Lane, 2003), 49–53, 179.
27. Michel Foucault, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1977), 27.
28. Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, 145.
29. In J. G. Merquior's critique, *Foucault* (London: Fontana Press, 1985), he is described as being in a French tradition of philosophical glamour, combining brilliant literary gifts with a "theorizing wantonly free of academic discipline."
30. Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, *The Nature of Narrative* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968).
31. Roland Barthes and Lionel Duisit, "An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative," *New Literary History* 6, no. 2 (Winter 1975): 237–272. Originally published in *Communications* 8, 1966, as "Introduction à l'analyse structurale des récits." This journal set in motion the structuralist study of narrative in 1966 with a special issue on the topic.
32. Editor's Note, *Critical Inquiry*, Autumn 1980. The volume was published as W. T. J. Mitchell, *On Narrative* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).
33. Francesca Polletta, Pang Ching, Bobby Chen, Beth Gharritty Gardner, and Alice Motes, "The Sociology of Storytelling," *Annual Review of Sociology* 37 (2011): 109–130.
34. Mark Turner, *The Literary Mind* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 14–20.
35. William Colvin, "The Emergence of Intelligence," *Scientific American* 9, no. 4 (November 1998): 44–51.
36. Molly Patterson and Kristen Renwick Monroe, "Narrative in Political Science," *Annual Review of Political Science* 1 (June 1998): 320.
37. Jane O'Reilly, "The Housewife's Moment of Truth," *Ms.*, Spring 1972, 54. Cited by Francesca Polletta, *It Was Like a Fever: Storytelling in Protest and Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 48–50.
38. John Arquilla and David Ronfeldt, eds., *Networks and Netwars: The Future of Terror, Crime and Militancy* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001).
39. See, for example Jay Rosen, "Press Think Basics: The Master Narrative in Journalism," September 8, 2003, available at http://journalism.nyu.edu/pubzone/weblogs/pressthink/2003/09/08/basics_master.html.

27 Race, Religion, and Elections

1. William Safire, "On Language: Narrative," *New York Times*, December 5, 2004. By the same token, Al Gore had been criticized during the 2000 presidential debates for telling "tall tales." The problem, as Francesca Polletta noted, was Gore lacked a gift for "persuasive storytelling," and that intellectual policy wonks were less able to make appeals to emotions. Francesca Polletta, *It Was Like a Fever: Storytelling in Protest and Politics* (see chap. 26, n. 37).
2. Frank Lutz, *Words that Work: It's Not What You Say, It's What People Hear* (New York: Hyperion, 1997), 149–157.
3. <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article4443.htm>.
4. George Lakoff, *Don't Think of an Elephant!: Know Your Values and Frame the Debate* (White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green Publishing Company, 2004).
5. George Lakoff, *Whose Freedom? The Battle Over America's Most Important Idea* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2006).
6. Drew Westen, *The Political Brain* (New York: Public Affairs, 2007), 99–100, 138, 147, 346.
7. Steven Pinker, "Block That Metaphor!," *The New Republic*, October 9, 2006.
8. Lutz, *Words that Work*, 3. As with many other effective political communicators, he went back to Orwell's famous 1946 essay on "Politics and the English Language," which stressed the importance of plain English; brevity; avoiding pretentious, meaningless, and foreign words; and jargon. See http://www.orwell.ru/library/essays/politics/english/e_polit/.
9. Donald R. Kinder, "Communication and Politics in the Age of Information," in David O. Sears, Leonie Huddy, and Robert Jervis, eds., *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 372, 374–375.
10. Norman Mailer, *Miami and the Siege of Chicago: An Informal History of the Republican and Democratic Conventions of 1968* (New York: World Publishing Company, 1968), 51.
11. Jill Lepore, "The Lie Factory: How Politics Became a Business," *The New Yorker*, September 24, 2012.
12. Joseph Napolitan, *The Election Game and How to Win It* (New York: Doubleday, 1972); Larry Sabato, *The Rise of Political Consultants: New Ways of Winning Elections* (New York: Basic Books, 1981).
13. Dennis Johnson, *No Place for Amateurs: How Political Consultants Are Reshaping American Democracy* (New York: Routledge, 2011), xiii.
14. James Thurber, "Introduction to the Study of Campaign Consultants," in James Thurber, ed., *Campaign Warriors: The Role of Political Consultants in Elections* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2000), 2.
15. Dan Nimmo, *The Political Persuaders: The Techniques of Modern Election Campaigns* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1970), 41.

16. James Perry, *The New Politics: The Expanding Technology of Political Manipulation* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1968).
17. The origins of the ad and its impact are discussed in Robert Mann, *Daisy Petals and Mushroom Clouds: LBJ, Barry Goldwater, and the Ad That Changed American Politics* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011).
18. Joe McGinniss, *Selling of the President* (London: Penguin, 1970), 76; Kerwin Swint, *Dark Genius: The Influential Career of Legendary Political Operative and Fox News Founder Roger Ailes* (New York: Union Square Press, 2008).
19. Richard Whalen, *Catch the Falling Flag* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1972), 135.
20. James Boyd, "Nixon's Southern Strategy: It's All in the Charts," *New York Times*, May 17, 1970.
21. Phillips eventually came to object to the conservative politics he had helped to promote and wrote of an "Erring Republican Majority." He moved to the left, for example, Kevin Phillips, *American Theocracy: The Peril and Politics of Radical Religion, Oil, and Borrowed Money in the 21st Century* (New York: Viking, 2006).
22. Nelson Polsby, "An Emerging Republican Majority?" *National Affairs*, Fall 1969.
23. Richard M. Scammon and Ben J. Wattenberg, *The Real Majority* (New York: Coward McCann, 1970).
24. Lou Cannon, *President Reagan: The Role of a Lifetime* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2000), 21; Ewen, *PR! A Social History of Spin* (see chap. 2, n. 28), 396.
25. Perry, *The New Politics*, 16, 21–31. He employed Spencer and Roberts, who had worked for Nelson Rockefeller against Barry Goldwater in 1966, and said afterwards that he would always in the future use "professional managers."
26. William Rusher, *Making of the New Majority Party* (Lanham, MD: Sheed and Ward, 1975). Rusher was making a case for a new conservative party, but his argument worked for an insurgency within the Republican Party.
27. Kiron K. Skinner, Serhiy Kudelia, Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, and Condoleezza Rice, *The Strategy of Campaigning: Lessons from Ronald Reagan and Boris Yeltsin* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007), 132–133.
28. David Domke and Kevin Coe, *The God Strategy: How Religion Became a Political Weapon in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 16–17, 101.
29. John Brady, *Bad Boy: The Life and Politics of Lee Atwater* (New York: Addison-Wesley, 1996), 34–35, 70.
30. Richard Fly, "The Guerrilla Fighter in Bush's War Room," *Business Week*, June 6, 1988.
31. By the time of Atwater's death, only the first volume, *The Years of Lyndon Johnson: The Path to Power* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1982), had been

- published. Caro is now up to volume 4. In his admiration for Caro, Atwater was by no means unique among political strategists.
32. John Pitney, Jr., *The Art of Political Warfare* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000), 12–15.
 33. Mary Matalin, James Carville, and Peter Knobler, *All's Fair: Love, War and Running for President* (New York: Random House, 1995), 54.
 34. Brady, *Bad Boy*, 56.
 35. Matalin, Carville, and Knobler, *All's Fair*, 48.
 36. Brady, *Bad Boy*, 117–118.
 37. *Ibid.*, 136.
 38. Sidney Blumenthal, *Pledging Allegiance: The Last Campaign of the Cold War* (New York: Harper Collins, 1990), 307–308.
 39. Eric Benson, “Dukakis’s Regret,” *New York Times*, June 17, 2012.
 40. Domke and Coe, *The God Strategy*, 29.
 41. Sidney Blumenthal, *The Permanent Campaign: Inside the World of Elite Political Operatives* (New York: Beacon Press, 1980).
 42. Matalin, Carville, and Knobler, *All's Fair*, 186, 263, 242, 208, 225.
 43. The document was from Quintus Tullius Cicero to his brother Marcus, running for Consul in 64 BCE. “Campaign Tips from Cicero: The Art of Politics from the Tiber to the Potomac,” commentary by James Carville, *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2012.
 44. James Carville and Paul Begala, *Buck Up, Suck Up . . . And Come Back When You Foul Up* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002), 50.
 45. *Ibid.*, 108, 65.
 46. For a defense of negative campaigning, see Frank Rich, “Nuke ‘Em,” *New York Times*, June 17, 2012.
 47. Kim Leslie Fridkin and Patrick J. Kenney, “Do Negative Messages Work?: The Impact of Negativity on Citizens’ Evaluations of Candidates,” *American Politics Research* 32 (2004): 570.
 48. A complicating factor in 1992 was the independent candidacy of Ross Perot. Although his campaign was somewhat chaotic, he managed to gain almost 20 percent of the popular vote. Although he seems to have taken equally from both Bush and Clinton, on balance he hurt Bush more.
 49. Domke and Coe, *The God Strategy*, 117.
 50. Leading to headline: “Pat Robertson Says Feminists Want to Kill Kids, Be Witches,” *Ibid.*, 133.
 51. James McLeod, “The Sociodrama of Presidential Politics: Rhetoric, Ritual, and Power in the Era of Teledemocracy,” *American Anthropologist*, New Series 10, no. 2 (June 1999): 359–373. Quayle was not helped by an incident in June 1992 when he erroneously corrected an elementary school student’s spelling of “potato” to “potatoe.”

52. David Paul Kuhn, "Obama Models Campaign on Reagan Revolt," *Politico*, July 24, 2007.
53. David Plouffe, *The Audacity to Win: The Inside Story and Lessons of Barack Obama's Historic Victory* (New York: Viking, 2009), 236–238, 378–379. For a full account of the campaign, see John Heilemann and Mark Halperin, *Game Change* (New York: Harper Collins, 2010).
54. John B. Judis and Ruy Teixeira, *The Emerging Democratic Majority* (New York: Lisa Drew, 2002).
55. Peter Slevin, "For Clinton and Obama, a Common Ideological Touchstone," *Washington Post*, March 25, 2007.
56. She was quoting *The Economist*: "Plato on the Barricades," *The Economist*, May 13–19, 1967, 14. The thesis, entitled "THERE IS ONLY THE FIGHT . . . An Analysis of the Alinsky Model," was circulated by largely right-wing bloggers during 2008. See <http://www.gopublius.com/HCT/HillaryClintonThesis.pdf>.

28 *The Rise of the Management Class*

1. Paul Uselding, "Management Thought and Education in America: A Centenary Appraisal," in Jeremy Atack, ed., *Business and Economic History*, Second Series 10 (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1981), 16.
2. Matthew Stewart, *The Management Myth: Why the Experts Keep Getting It Wrong* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2009), 41. See also Jill Lepore, "Not So Fast: Scientific Management Started as a Way to Work. How Did It Become a Way of Life?" *The New Yorker*, October 12, 2009.
3. Frederick W Taylor, *Principles of Scientific Management* (Digireads.com: 2008), 14. First published 1911.
4. Charles D. Wrege and Amadeo G. Perroni, "Taylor's Pig-Tale: A Historical Analysis of Frederick W. Taylor's Pig-Iron Experiments," *Academy of Management Journal* 17, no. 1 (1974): 26.
5. Jill R. Hough and Margaret A. White, "Using Stories to Create Change: The Object Lesson of Frederick Taylor's 'Pig-Tale,'" *Journal of Management* 27 (2001): 585–601.
6. Robert Kanigel, *The One Best Way: Frederick Winslow Taylor and the Enigma of Efficiency* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1999); Daniel Nelson, "Scientific Management, Systematic Management, and Labor, 1880–1915," *The Business History Review* 48, no. 4 (Winter 1974): 479–500. See chapter on Taylor in A. Tillet, T. Kempner, and G. Wills, eds., *Management Thinkers* (London: Penguin, 1970).
7. Judith A. Merkle, *Management and Ideology: The Legacy of the International Scientific Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 44–45.

8. Peter Drucker, *The Concept of the Corporation*, 3rd edn. (New York: Transaction Books, 1993), 242.
9. Oscar Kraines, "Brandeis' Philosophy of Scientific Management," *The Western Political Quarterly* 13, no. 1 (March 1960): 201.
10. Kanigel, *The One Best Way*, 505.
11. V. I. Lenin, "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government," *Pravda*, April 28, 1918. Available at <http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1918/mar/x03.htm>.
12. Merkle, *Management and Ideology*, 132. See also Daniel A. Wren and Arthur G. Bedeian, "The Taylorization of Lenin: Rhetoric or Reality?" *International Journal of Social Economics* 31, no. 3 (2004): 287–299.
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14. Peter Miller and Ted O'Leary, "Hierarchies and American Ideals, 1900–1940," *Academy of Management Review* 14, no. 2 (April 1989): 250–265.
15. Pauline Graham, ed., *Mary Parker Follett: Prophet of Management* (Washington, DC: Beard Books, 2003).
16. Mary Parker Follett, *The New State: Group Organization—The Solution of Popular Government* (New York: Longmans Green, 1918), 3.
17. Irving L. Janis, *Groupthink: Psychological Studies of Policy Decisions and Fiascos* (Andover, UK: Cengage Learning, 1982).
18. This is drawn from Ellen S. O'Connor, "The Politics of Management Thought: A Case Study of the Harvard Business School and the Human Relations School," *Academy of Management Review* 24, no. 1 (1999): 125–128.
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22. Barbara Heyl, "The Harvard 'Pareto Circle,'" *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 4 (1968): 316–334; Robert T. Keller, "The Harvard 'Pareto

- Circle' and the Historical Development of Organization Theory," *Journal of Management* 10 (1984): 193.
23. Chester Irving Barnard, *The Functions of the Executive* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1938), 294–295.
 24. Peter Miller and Ted O'Leary, "Hierarchies and American Ideals, 1900–1940," *Academy of Management Review* 14, no. 2 (April 1989): 250–265; William G. Scott, "Barnard on the Nature of Elitist Responsibility," *Public Administration Review* 42, no. 3 (May–June 1982): 197–201.
 25. Scott, "Barnard on the Nature of Elitist Responsibility," 279.
 26. Barnard, *The Functions of the Executive*, 71.
 27. James Hoopes, "Managing a Riot: Chester Barnard and Social Unrest," *Management Decision* 40 (2002): 10.

29 *The Business of Business*

1. I have drawn particularly on Ron Chernow, *Titan: The Life of John D. Rockefeller, Sr.* (New York: Little, Brown & Co., 1998) and Daniel Yergin, *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money & Power* (New York: The Free Press, 1992).
2. Chernow, *Titan*, 148–150.
3. Allan Nevins, *John D. Rockefeller: The Heroic Age of American Enterprise*, 2 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940).
4. *Ibid.*, 433.
5. Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform* (New York: Vintage, 1955), 216–217.
6. The book made up of her articles is still in print: Ida Tarbell, *The History of the Standard Oil Company* (New York: Buccaneer Books, 1987); Steven Weinberg, *Taking on the Trust: The Epic Battle of Ida Tarbell and John D. Rockefeller* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2008).
7. Yergin, *The Prize*, 93.
8. *Ibid.*, 26.
9. Chernow, *Titan*, 230.
10. Steve Watts, *The People's Tycoon: Henry Ford and the American Century* (New York: Vintage Books, 2006), 16; Henry Ford, *My Life and Work* (New York: Classic Books, 2009; first published 1922).
11. Cited in Watts, *The People's Tycoon*, 190.
12. Richard Tedlow, "The Struggle for Dominance in the Automobile Market: The Early Years of Ford and General Motors," *Business and Economic History* Second Series, 17 (1988): 49–62.
13. Watts, *The People's Tycoon*, 456, 480.
14. David Farber, *Alfred P. Sloan and the Triumph of General Motors* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 41.
15. Alfred Sloan, *My Years with General Motors* (New York: Crown Publishing, 1990), 47, 52, 53–54.

16. Farber, *Alfred P. Sloan*, 50.
17. Sloan, *My Years with General Motors*, 71.
18. Ibid., 76. See also John MacDonald, *The Game of Business* (New York: Doubleday: 1975), Chapter 3.
19. Sloan, *My Years with General Motors*, 186–187.
20. Ibid., 195–196.
21. Sidney Fine, “The General Motors Sit-Down Strike: A Re-examination,” *The American Historical Review* 70, no. 3, April 1965, 691–713.
22. Adolf Berle and Gardiner Means, *The Modern Corporation and Private Property* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1967), 46, 313.

30 Management Strategy

1. Solow had the distinction of inspiring two novels, *The Unpossessed*, by his ex-wife Tess Slesinger, and James T. Farrell’s posthumously published *Sam Holman*, which has a theme of intellectual brilliance transformed into mediocrity through the political journey of the 1930s. McDonald appears as Holman’s (Solow’s) closest friend, a source of skepticism and conscience.
2. Amitabh Pal, interview with John Kenneth Galbraith, *The Progressive*, October 2000, available at http://www.progressive.org/mag_amitpalgalbraith.
3. Alfred Chandler, *The Visible Hand* (Harvard, MA: Belknap Press, 1977), 1.
4. Galbraith, *The New Industrial State*, 2nd edn. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 59, 42.
5. Drucker, *The Concept of the Corporation*, see Chapter 28, n. 8.
6. Ibid., Introduction.
7. Peter Drucker, *The Practice of Management* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1954), 3, 245–247.
8. Ibid., 11.
9. Ibid., 177. See his observations in his autobiography, Peter Drucker, *Adventures of a Bystander* (New York: Transaction Publishers, 1994).
10. This account appeared in an appendix to the book’s 1983 edition, and was repeated in an introduction he wrote to a 1990 edition of Sloan’s *My Years with General Motors*. It also appears in his autobiography.
11. Christopher D. McKenna, “Writing the Ghost-Writer Back In: Alfred Sloan, Alfred Chandler, John McDonald and the Intellectual Origins of Corporate Strategy,” *Management & Organizational History* 1, no. 2 (May 2006): 107–126.
12. Jon McDonald and Dan Seligman, *A Ghost’s Memoir: The Making of Alfred P. Sloan’s My Years with General Motors* (Boston: MIT Press, 2003), 16.

13. The lawyers were worried about references to Sloan's early plan to take on Ford. A phrase in the original plan, stating that the company was not after a monopoly, might concede the point that a monopoly was an option.
14. Edith Penrose, *The Theory of the Growth of the Firm* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959). In 1995, she described Chandler's "analytical structure congruent with my own" (Foreword to the third edition). John Kay, *Foundations of Corporate Success: How Business Strategies Add Value* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) stresses Penrose's foundational role, 335.
15. Alfred Chandler, "Introduction," in 1990 edition of *Strategy and Structure* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), v. In 1956, when he had first published on the topic, Chandler had described as long-range policy what he now called strategy.
16. Chandler, "Introduction," *Strategy and Structure*, 13.
17. Chandler saw other examples of the same theme, for example with DuPont. Alfred D. Chandler and Stephen Salisbury, *Pierre S. du Pont and the Making of the Modern Corporation* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971).
18. Chandler, *Strategy and Structure*, 309. Robert F. Freeland, "The Myth of the M-Form? Governance, Consent, and Organizational Change," *The American Journal of Sociology* 102 (1996): 483–526; Robert F. Freeland, "When Organizational Messiness Works," *Harvard Business Review* 80 (May 2002): 24–25.
19. Freeland, "The Myth of the M-Form," 516.
20. Neil Fligstein, "The Spread of the Multidivisional Form Among Large Firms, 1919–1979," *American Sociological Review* 50 (1985): 380.
21. McKenna, "Writing the Ghost-Writer Back In." Other large firms studied by Chandler, such as IBM and AT&T, would also have discouraged too much exploration of the impact of antitrust legislation on corporate structure.
22. Edward D. Berkowitz and Kim McQuaid, *Creating the Welfare State: The Political Economy of Twentieth Century Reform* (Lawrence, KS: Praeger, 1992), 233–234. Cited by Richard R. John, "Elaborations, Revisions, Dissents: Alfred D. Chandler, Jr.'s, 'The Visible Hand' after Twenty Years," *The Business History Review* 71, no. 2 (Summer 1997): 190. Sanford M. Jacoby, *Employing Bureaucracy: Managers, Unions, and the Transformation of Work in American Industry, 1900–1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 8. John, "Elaborations, Revisions, Dissents," 190.
23. Louis Galambos, "What Makes Us Think We Can Put Business Back into American History?" *Business and Economic History* 21 (1992): 1–11.
24. John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge, *The Witch Doctors: Making Sense of the Management Gurus* (New York: Random House, 1968), 106.
25. See foreword to the 1986 edition of *Managing for Results*.
26. Stewart, *The Management Myth*, see Chapter 28, n. 2, 153.

27. Walter Kiechel III, *The Lords of Strategy: The Secret Intellectual History of the New Corporate World* (Boston: The Harvard Business Press, 2010), xi–xii, 4.
28. Kenneth Andrews, *The Concept of Corporate Strategy* (Homewood, IL: R. D. Irwin, 1971), 29.
29. Henry Mintzberg, Bruce Ahlstrand, and Joseph Lampel, *Strategy Safari: The Complete Guide Through the Wilds of Strategic Management* (New York: The Free Press, 1998). See also the companion volume of readings, *Strategy Bites Back: It Is Far More, and Less, Than You Ever Imagined* (New York: Prentice Hall, 2005).
30. “The Guru: Igor Ansoff,” *The Economist*, July 18, 2008; Igor Ansoff, *Corporate Strategy: An Analytic Approach to Business Policy for Growth and Expansion* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965).
31. Igor Ansoff, *Corporate Strategy* (London: McGraw-Hill, 1965), 120.
32. Stewart, *The Management Myth*, 157–158.
33. Kiechel, *The Lords of Strategy*, 26–27.
34. John A. Byrne, *The Whiz Kids: Ten Founding Fathers of American Business—And the Legacy They Left Us* (New York: Doubleday, 1993).
35. Samuel Huntington, *The Common Defense: Strategic Programs in National Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961).
36. Mintzberg et al., *Strategy Safari*, 65.
37. Friedrich Hayek, “The Use of Knowledge in Society,” *American Economic Review* 35, no. 4 (1945): 519–530.
38. Aaron Wildavsky, “Does Planning Work?” *The National Interest*, Summer 1971, No. 24, 101. See also his “If Planning Is Everything Maybe It’s Nothing,” *Policy Sciences* 4 (1973): 127–153.
39. Cited in Mintzberg et al., *Strategy Safari*, 65.
40. Jack Welch, with John Byrne, *Jack: Straight from the Gut* (New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2003), 448. The letter was by Kevin Peppard. It appeared in *Fortune Magazine*, November 30, 1981, p. 17. See also Chapter 3 of Thomas O’Boyle, *At Any Cost: Jack Welch, General Electric, and the Pursuit of Profit* (New York: Vintage, 1999).
41. Henry Mintzberg, *The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning* (London: Prentice-Hall, 1994).
42. Igor Ansoff, “Critique of Henry Mintzberg’s ‘The Design School: Reconsidering the Basic Premises of Strategic Management,’” *Strategic Management Journal* 12, no. 6 (September 1991): 449–461.

31 *Business as War*

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2. Wess Roberts, *Leadership Secrets of Attila the Hun* (New York: Grand Central Publishing, 1989).

3. Dennis Laurie, *From Battlefield to Boardroom: Winning Management Strategies in Today's Global Business* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 235.
4. Douglas Ramsey, *Corporate Warriors* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1987).
5. Aric Rindfleisch, "Marketing as Warfare: Reassessing a Dominant Metaphor—Questioning Military Metaphors' Centrality in Marketing Parlance," *Business Horizons*, September–October, 1996. For a skeptical look, although with a concluding endorsement of Sun Tzu, see John Kay, "Managers from Mars," *Financial Times*, August 4, 1999.
6. On BCG see pp. 519.
7. Bruce Henderson, *Henderson on Corporate Strategy* (New York: HarperCollins, 1979), 9–10, 27.
8. Philip Kotler and Ravi Singh, "Marketing Warfare in the 1980s," *Journal of Business Strategy* (Winter 1981): 30–41. The start of this line of work has been attributed to Alfred R. Oxenfeldt and William L. Moore, "Customer or Competitor: Which Guideline for Marketing?" *Management Review* (August 1978): 43–38.
9. Al Ries and Jack Trout, *Marketing Warfare* (New York: Plume, 1986); Robert Duro and Bjorn Sandstrom, *The Basic Principles of Marketing Warfare* (Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1987); Gerald A. Michaelson, *Winning the Marketing War* (Lanham, MD: Abt Books, 1987).
10. In addition to editions of *The Art of War* and other Chinese masters, see, for example, the titles collected by Madansky, including Foo Check Teck and Peter Hugh Grinyer, *Organizing Strategy: Sun Tzu Business Warcraft* (Butterworth: Heinemann Asia, 1994); Donald Krause, *The Art of War for Executives* (New York: Berkley Publishing Group, 1995); Gary Gagliardi, *The Art of War Plus The Art of Sales* (Shoreline, WA: Clearbridge Publishing, 1999); Gerald A Michaelson, *Sun Tzu: The Art of War for Managers: 50 Strategic Rules* (Avon, MA: Adams Media Corporation, 2001).
11. Episodes: "Big Girls Don't Cry"; "He Is Risen." See <http://www.hbo.com/the-sopranos/episodes/index.html>.
12. Richard Greene and Peter Vernezze, eds., *The Sopranos and Philosophy: I Kill Therefore I Am* (Chicago: Open Court, 2004). In one episode, one of Soprano's lieutenants, Paulie 'Walnuts' Gualtieri, reports that "Sun-Tuh-Zoo" says: "A good leader is benevolent and unconcerned with fame." He explains that "Sun-Tuh-Zoo" is the "Chinese Prince Machiavelli," at which point his colleague Silvio Dante corrects him: "Tzu, Tzu! Sun Tzu, you fucking ass-kiss!" In the next episode, Paulie, trying to reestablish himself after a spell in prison, is listening to a tape of Sun Tzu while driving to his aunt's neighborhood. At an appropriate moment, as the tape refers to catching an enemy by surprise, he comes across two brothers pruning trees in an area which they have just taken from one of Gualtieri's friends. His tactics are similar to those used by the brothers: intimidation based on brute force. When they refuse to give the area back, Gualtieri hits one brother

over the head with a shovel causing him to let go of the rope holding the other brother in the tree, who then plunges down. Not really Sun Tzu! (Series 5).

13. Marc R. McNeilly, *Sun Tzu and the Art of Business* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).
14. Khoo Kheng-Ho, *Applying Sun Tzu's Art of War in Managing Your Marriage* (Malaysia: Pelanduk, 2002).
15. William Scott Wilson, *The Lone Samurai: The Life of Miyamoto Musashi* (New York: Kodansha International, 2004), 220; Miyamoto Musashi, *The Book of Five Rings: A Classic Text on the Japanese Way of the Sword*, translated by Thomas Cleary (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 2005).
16. Thomas A. Green, ed., *Martial Arts of the World: An Encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2001).
17. George Stalk, Jr., "Time—The Next Source of Competitive Advantage," *Harvard Business Review* 1 (August 1988): 41–51; George Stalk and Tom Hout, *Competing Against Time: How Time-Based Competition Is Reshaping Global Markets* (New York: The Free Press, 1990).
18. The two are also brought together in Chet Richards, *Certain to Win: The Strategy of John Boyd as Applied to Business* (Philadelphia: Xlibris, 2004).
19. A later book spoke about crushing more than outsmarting competitors, by such means as unleashing "massive and overwhelming force," threatening their "profit sanctuaries," and enticing them into retreat. This was not for the soft-hearted. "The common theme" in his ideas, he later observed, was that they were "about taking advantage to the point where competitors are left astounded by what's happened." George Stalk and Rob Lachenauer *Hardball, Are You Playing to Play or Playing to Win?* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2004); Jennifer Reingold, "The 10 Lives of George Stalk," *Fast Company.com*, December 19, 2007, http://www.fastcompany.com/magazine/91/open_stalk.html.

32 *The Rise of Economics*

1. Mirowski, *Machine Dreams*, 12–17 (see chap. 12, n. 11). The term *Cyborg* only came into use in the 1960s to refer to humans with artificial, technological enhancements.
2. Duncan Luce and Howard Raiffa, *Games and Decisions: Introduction and Critical Survey* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1957), 10.
3. *Ibid.*, 18.
4. Sylvia Nasar, *A Beautiful Mind* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1988).
5. John F. Nash, Jr., *Essays on Game Theory*, with an introduction by K. Binmore (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 1996).
6. Roger B. Myerson, "Nash Equilibrium and the History of Economic Theory," *Journal of Economic Literature* 37 (1999): 1067.

7. Mirowski, *Machine Dreams*, 369.
8. Richard Zeckhauser, "Distinguished Fellow: Reflections on Thomas Schelling," *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 3, no. 2 (Spring 1989): 159.
9. Milton Friedman, *Price Theory: A Provisional Text*, revised edn. (Chicago: Aldine, 1966), 37. (cited by Mirowski)
10. Cited in Rakesh Khurana, *From Higher Aims to Higher Hands: The Social Transformation of American Business Schools and the Unfulfilled Promise of Management as a Profession* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 239–240.
11. *Ibid.*, 292, 307.
12. Cited by *Ibid.*, 272.
13. *Ibid.*, 253–254, 275, 268–269, 331.
14. Pankat Ghemawat, "Competition and Business Strategy in Historical Perspective," *The Business History Review* 76, no. 1 (Spring 2002): 37–74, 44–45.
15. Interview with Seymour Tilles, October 24, 1996.
16. John A. Seeger, "Reversing the Images of BCG's Growth/Share Matrix," *Strategic Management Journal* 5 (1984): 93–97.
17. Herbert A. Simon. "From Substantive to Procedural Rationality," in Spiro J. Latsis, ed., *Method and Appraisal in Economics* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 140.
18. Michael Porter, *Competitive Strategy Techniques for Analyzing Industries and Competitors* (New York: The Free Press, 1980).
19. Porter, *Competitive Strategy*, 3.
20. Mitzberg et al., *Strategy Safari*, 113 (see chap. 30, n. 29).
21. Porter, *Competitive Strategy*, 53, 86.
22. Porter, *Competitive Advantage*.
23. Michael Porter, Nicholas Argyres, and Anita M. McGahan, "An Interview with Michael Porter," *The Academy of Management Executive* (1993–2005) 16, no. 2 (May 2002): 43–52.
24. Vance H. Fried and Benjamin M. Oviatt, "Michael Porter's Missing Chapter: The Risk of Antitrust Violations," *Academy of Management Executive* 3, no. 1 (1989): 49–56.
25. Adam J. Brandenburger and Barry J. Nalebuff, *Co-Opetition* (New York: Doubleday, 1996).
26. As demonstrated by Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coopetition>.
27. Stewart, *The Management Myth*, 214–215.

33 *Red Queens and Blue Oceans*

1. Kathleen Eisenhardt, "Agency Theory: An Assessment and Review," *Academy of Management Review* 14, no. 1 (1989): 57–74.
2. Justin Fox, *The Myth of the Rational Market: A History of Risk, Reward, and Delusion on Wall Street* (New York: Harper, 2009), 159–162.

3. Michael C. Jensen and William H. Meckling, "Theory of the Firm: Managerial Behavior, Agency Costs and Ownership Structure," *Journal of Financial Economics* 3 (1976): 302–360.
4. Michael C. Jensen, "Organization Theory and Methodology," *The Accounting Review* 58, no. 2 (April 1983): 319–339.
5. Jensen, "Takeovers: Folklore and Science," *Harvard Business Review* (November–December 1984), 109–121.
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36 *The Limits of Rational Choice*

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37 *Beyond Rational Choice*

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6. For example, Nalebuff and Brandenburger granted that the "simple textbooks present a view of 'rational man' that doesn't apply very well to the mixed-up, real world of business. But that's a problem with the textbooks." For Nalebuff and Brandenburger, a rational person "does the best he can" depending on his perception, which is affected by the amount of information available and how he evaluates the various outcomes. This argued for remembering to look at a game from multiple perspectives. "To us," they concluded, "the issue of whether people are rational or irrational is largely beside the point." There is something refreshing about a book purporting to represent game theory to a wider business audience ducking so brazenly the fundamental conceptual issue that had shaped its methodology and potentially limited its application. Nalebuff and Brandenburger, *Co-Opetition*, 56–58.
7. Introduction in Jon Elster, ed., *Rational Choice* (New York: New York University Press, 1986), 16. Green and Shapiro, *Pathologies of Rational Choice Theory*, 20 (see chap. 36, n. 13) cite Elster to demonstrate the burdens strict criteria place on researchers. Elster was an early advocate for rational choice theory who later became disenchanted.
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