

The Management Rush

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Introduction

This paper outlines the main results of recent research into the origins and development of management in Australia. It argues that a 'management rush' occurred during the 1980s, resulting in management being established and accepted as a profession.

The history of management in Australia is often portrayed as a progression of American technologies during the 20th century - car assembly plants, international chemical companies, Taylorism, mass marketing, MBAs, global consortiums. While American management influences were significant during the 20th century, British management practice dominated early Australian practice in the early 19th century and continued to influence the local context during the 20th century.

The rise of management in Australia was the combination of the rise of the salaried manager and the rise of management as a profession. The rise of the salaried manager was a patient process coupled to the rise of the public company and big business, but the widespread acceptance of management as a profession occurred rapidly during the 1980s, amounting to a 'management rush'.

The Rise of the Salaried Manager

Australia had salaried managers employed in companies from at least 1835. In January 1836 the *Commercial Journal and Advertiser* published a notice for the Bank of Australasia in Sydney authorised by 'G Kinnear, Manager'.² By 1840, newspapers published in other states (South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania)³ had similar notices referring to managers of banks. These early references indicate how old the tradition of bank managers is in Australia.

Local banks were important in financing the early industries of the colony during the first half of the 18th century, such as wool, whaling, and shipping. While colonial governments played a large role in financing civic construction, justice and administrative services, the banks became the main source of finance for burgeoning industries. The arrival of the numerous banks and the expansion of their operations, in a sense, reflected the prosperity of various areas and districts.

Another long tradition of managers was in the pastoral industry, where owners often employed a manager to oversee a farm and its operations. For example in 1843 Ben Boyd of Boyd Town appointed managers to administer his whaling and pastoral interests.⁴ The origins of that tradition, in turn, stemmed from rural England.⁵

¹ This paper is drawn from my draft dissertation *The Management Rush: A History of Management in Australia*

² *Commercial Journal and Advertiser*, 1 January, 1836 p 1. This may be the first reference to a manager in Australia.

³ The *Geelong Advertiser*, *Launceston Courier* and the *South Australian Gazette* all carried similar notices in their 1840 editions.

⁴ Diamond, *Ben Boyd of Boyd Town*, p 99. Oswald Brierly was appointed manager of whaling; p 105 WS Moutry was appointed manager of all non-whaling activities of Boyd Town which included pastoral and shipping interests.

⁵ The Oxford English Dictionary contains a citation for a manager of an estate dated 1670.

The gold rush of the 1850s gave the major impetus to a mining industry in Australia. The later introduction of heavy machinery and the formation of mining partnerships, in turn, gave impetus to the formation of public companies, shareholders and the raising of capital. As companies grew to the point where the owners could not directly control operations, the role of the manager gained prominence. The salaried managers to large mining operations were recruited from overseas, often from the United States of America⁶.

By 1875 public companies were powerful in pastoral finance, gold, coal and base metals. Most of the minerals were produced by public companies rather than working owners or small syndicates. By the 1880s most gasworks and many large engineering firms were owned by public companies. The rise of public companies was the vehicle for the ascent of the salaried manager. It was also a pre-requisite for the expansion of the trade union movement. The title of Managing Director became common in such contexts as did the title 'Manager' to describe the full-time salaried administrator of such companies.⁷

The establishment and expansion of the railways to support the burgeoning wool and mining industries during the second half of the 19th century was also significant to the rise of the salaried manager. The railways were the largest organisations in the country, with the scale and scope that might satisfy Chandler's criteria for the modern enterprise.

The rise of the salaried manager during the 20th century was one of the significant events in Australian history. The power of the professional manager increased in big business, government services, government corporations and trade unions. The manager displaced the traditional owner(s) of the business and, as organisations grew in size and became more complex, became indispensable.

Following World War II, American influences in business and culture became more evident, but British and local influences continued. American managers were influential in steel making and assembly line production, but the influence of British managers continued, as did local management practices established in banking, insurance, the pastoral industry, manufacturing, retail, and government.⁸

During the 1970s, the dominant directors in most of the very large Australian companies were professional salaried managers, having supplanted the old rich shareholders. By 1976, big businesses in the 'private sector' were owned by public companies rather than wealthy individuals and the public company had come to be regarded as the epitome of private enterprise⁹. Established companies in finance, banking, retail, and transport grew bigger. Government services expanded in the arts, culture, health, education and law. Television cemented its position as more influential than radio both in advertising consumer goods and moulding popular opinion. But the Australian economy continued as a service economy based on wealth generated from its natural resources. It retained traditional regulation that protected local industries (notably finance, rural activities, mining and manufacturing) and a centralised industrial system to arbitrate wage rises and award conditions. Government retained a strong presence as an employer as, unlike the United States and Great Britain, it retained ownership of the railways, telecommunications and energy businesses. The rule of law prevailed over market forces.

⁶ Blainey, *The Rush That Never Ended*.

⁷ Blainey, *The Politics of Big Business: A History* p 1

⁸ Blainey, *The Politics of Big Business: A History*.

⁹ *Ibid*.

American business had long had its business schools, its management *gurus*, journals and discourse, dating back to the late 19th Century. These thrived in an environment where business and money-making were an integral part of the culture. As business prospered, management flourished as occupation, profession and discourse. The scientific management movement advanced the notion of systematic analysis of tasks. American business developed and benefited from marketing and advertising techniques linked with radio, television and popular culture. It combined mass production with mass marketing and mass distribution.

In Australia, the embrace of management as profession, discipline and discourse came much later and the rule of management was largely heralded by a government report.

Changing the Economic and Industrial Agenda

During the 1980s, the Australian context saw economic, social, sexual, gender, communications, transport, and information revolutions occurring together. Amongst these a rush occurred – the ‘management rush’.

The Hawke-Keating labor government was elected in 1983. Kelly (1992) argued that its policies overcame the legacies of “Australian Settlement” with its five platforms of ‘White’ Australia - industry protection, wage arbitration, state paternalism and imperial benevolence¹⁰. Proclaiming the importance of competition and productivity, it floated the Australian dollar on the international currency market, shifting regulation from currency to interest rates, and allowed foreign banks to trade in Australia. It convened a series of summits between government, business and the trade unions to arrive at a consensus agreement. The agenda for these meetings canvassed the traditional items of wages and living standards, but extended to future directions, tariffs, protection, and training. In the process, the government established an Accord between the three parties, departing from traditional conflicts and forming a new framework for managing the economy. The government secured the co-operation of both business and the unions, reigning in the extremes of each. The summit shifted the basis for wage rises from cost of living adjustments to productivity. It changed the direction of industrial relations from arbitration to productivity and, in so doing, pointed a spotlight at management. Managers found themselves in a more competitive environment and were forced to adopt new ways of making profit.¹¹ The Hawke-Keating Labor governments continued this agenda into the 1990s.

Similar economic reform doctrines were proclaimed by both President Ronald Regan in the USA and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom. The English speaking allies were again melding assembling around a common cause, this time neoclassical or free-market economics. Kelly (1992) argued that the economic success of the Hawke-Keating government was replicated in New Zealand, France, Italy, Spain and Sweden.¹²

Managers Arrive in Numbers

The rise in the number of white collar workers between 1947 and 1980 was outlined by Lansbury and Spillane (1983) who commented that

“The emergence of the white collar worker as a dominant figure in the labour force has been one of the most significant changes in Australia during the second half of the 20th century ... the combined proportion of the major white collar groups (including

¹⁰ Kelly, *The End of Certainty: the Story of the 1980s*, pp 1-2, p 661

¹¹ Fleming, Merrett and Ville, *The Big End of Town*, p 223.

¹² Kelly, *The End of Certainty: the Story of the 1980s*.

professional, administrative, clerical and sales) increased from approximately one-third to almost half of the total labour force between 1947 and 1980. The major blue-collar groups (including the skilled trades, production workers and labourers) declined by 42 per cent to less than one third of the total labour force during this time. The greatest increase in the white-collar sector was concentrated within the 'professional, technical and related category', which grew by more than 400 per cent. This rise in the number of white collar workers occurred not only in Australia but also in many other advanced societies during the post-war period."¹³

The expansion of the tertiary and quaternary sectors as employers, argued by Jones (1983), is reflected in these statistics.¹⁴

McCloud and Siniakis (1993) undertook a statistical analysis of Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data pertaining to occupational categories. They estimated that the number of managers had increased by 45 per cent between 1979 and 1993 from 615,000 to 890,300 and predicted that the population of managers would increase by 12 per cent over the next 5 years to 977,200 by February 1998. Extrapolating their prediction further suggested around 1,000,000 managers in the workforce by the year 2000.¹⁵

As McCloud and Siniakis explained, there was a clear point of discontinuity in the ABS data for managers and they presented, in fact, a matching of two separate data sets. The reason for the discontinuity was a change of counting procedure introduced by the ABS in June 1986.

Prior to June, the ABS used a two-tier taxonomy where Administrative, Executive and Managerial workers were the broadest classification group and consisted of:

- Administrative, Executive and Government Officials
- Employers, Workers on own Account, Directors, Managers

For June 1986 and subsequently, the ABS used a four-tier taxonomy where Managers and Administrators were the broadest classification group and consisted of:

- General Managers
- Specialist Managers
- Farmers and Farm Managers
- Managing Supervisors (sales and services)
- Managing Supervisors (other business)

The difference between the count in May and the count in June was in excess of 250,000 and one of the tasks of the statisticians was to model the data so as to present a continuous time series. The method adopted was to bring the level of the first data set up to that of the second set. This was a justifiable approach in the sense that the second set reflected a revised and improved method of counting of work participants either called managers or whose function was to manage. (Unfortunately they changed their counting rules again in August 1997.)

These figures demonstrate the increasing popularity of management, affirming the rise of management as a vocation and its increasing prominence.

¹³ Lansbury and Spillane, *Organisational behaviour: the Australian context* pp 17-18.

¹⁴ Jones, *Sleepers, Wake: Technology and the future of work*.

¹⁵ McLeod and Siniakis, 'Trends in numbers of management students and managers 1970s-1990s.'

The increased number of managers contained two further trends of relevance, supported, at this time, substantially by anecdotal evidence. The first was a tendency for the term manager to be applied to less senior roles. Managers in the 1970s (and prior) were senior personnel at the top of companies and organisations. But in the 1980s, staff at less senior levels began to be regarded as managers. Nowadays, people regularly differentiate between executive management, middle management and front line management, but those distinctions were not always in the common parlance.

At one time, the manager had control of staff, finances, stock, machines and products. Nowadays a manager may be responsible for intangibles such as knowledge, information or relationships. A manager may have five or more managers above him/her. There are events managers, program managers, policy managers and project managers in addition to line managers and operations managers. 'Manager' became a common title for a number of roles. This is an argument for the expanded meaning and application of the word 'manager'.

The second and related trend was a change in the language of job titles. The title of 'manager' became more popular and other titles waned in popularity. In the 1970s, it was common for a person to hold the title of 'supervisor', 'overseer', 'foreman', 'officer-in-charge', 'senior ...', 'chief ...', 'co-ordinator', 'head ...' or 'leading ...'. But in the 1980s and following those labels became began to fade in popularity and the title 'manager' gained favour. Changes both in job labelling and description were taking place in a shift to the 'human resource movement'. Prior to the 1980s, that term had little meaning in the Australian workforce, with 'staff and salaries' or 'personnel and payroll' being the predominant labels for functions related to the recruitment, training and remuneration of staff. The philosophical shift from employee to human resource was a profound one. 'Employee' denotes legal relationship (stemming from the master-servant relationship), while 'human resource' implies that humans are one of many resources - capital, assets, materials, knowledge - all part of the business. It is a far more utilitarian concept.

The fashion of job nomenclature warrants considerable research. Nowadays, it is rare to hear of an 'overseer' or a 'head ...' but, prior to the 1980s, it was common. In recent years, the title of 'Director', previously reserved for company directors, has gained popularity. Arguably, the Head of Finance of the 70s became the Finance Manager of the 80s and the Finance Director of the 2000s. The Chief Personnel Officer of the 70s became the Finance Manager of the 80s and the Finance Director of the 2000s. The Shop Assistant became the Sales Assistant then the Sales Consultant. The Salesman or Sales Representative became the Client Relations Manager and is now often advertised as a Business Development Manager. This is an argument that substantial re-labelling occurred during the 1980s.

During the 1980s, white collar work increased, the number of managers increased, more roles were described as 'manager' and job re-labelling occurred.

The Growth of Management Education

The 1950s marked some significant milestones in the development of management education. In 1950 the Melbourne Technical College was operating its School of Management and by 1957 it had produced 360 graduates (Wright, 1997 p 71). In 1955, the University of Melbourne established its Summer School of Business Administration, the first university course in Australia to specifically focus on management. In 1957 the Australian Administrative Staff College was established near Melbourne providing a residential program.¹⁶

¹⁶ *Inquiry into Management Education* p 35

The growth of MBA programs began during the 1960s and marked a shift towards the American approach, in particular, the Harvard model. The University of New South Wales and the University of Melbourne offered an MBA program in 1963. The University of Adelaide offered a Master of Business Management that same year¹⁷.

However, a number of organisations, which had been established considerably earlier, continued to offer management training and education based on other models and traditions. The Australian Institute of Management (AIM), formed in 1947, offered industrial management and executive training from the 1940s. The Australian Administrative Staff College's residential management program (established in 1957) was modelled on the Administrative Staff College at Henley in England which provided residential short courses¹⁸. The Australian Administrative Staff College has also played a significant role in management education.

In Australia, management education increased at a dramatic rate during the 1980s after a steady increase in the 1970s. In 1970 there were 5 universities offering Masters of Business Administration (MBA) degree programs. In 1980 there were 12, and in 1990 there were 29. From the 1970s, the Universities and Government acted in tandem roles providing and reviewing management education. Government inquiries stimulated the developing management education industry.

The report of the Committee of Inquiry into Post-Graduate Education for Management (March, 1970), known as the Cyert report, was a landmark document. It was commissioned in 1969 and completed in four weeks early the following year. The Chairman of the Committee of Inquiry was Richard M Cyert, from the Carnegie-Mellon University, in the USA. The other three members of the Inquiry were also from the USA. The report related the then availability of post-graduate management education in Australia and proceeded to make recommendations on the action necessary to meet the future needs of Australia for the highest quality education of this kind.¹⁹ It recommended, *inter alia*, an increase in the volume of funds put into management education and the establishment of initially one 'school of excellence' in post-graduate management education to be situated in a well-developed centre of business activity as an integral part of a university. It further recommended the development of the national school in the University of New South Wales proceed along with encouragement of promising programs in other universities. The Master of Business Administration was proposed as the major program and professional degree. It resulted in the foundation of the Australian Graduate School of Management in Sydney (1977).

The Ralph Report was commissioned by the federal Minister for Education in April, 1980 and was headed by John Ralph, a senior executive at CRA Ltd. Its mandate was to:

- examine the availability of management education for middle and top management,
- assess the effectiveness of such courses, examine the issue of self-supporting funding,
- examine the special needs of small business, and
- make recommendations to the Tertiary Education Committee in respect of the general nature and availability of courses in management education.

¹⁷ *Inquiry into Management Education* p 44

¹⁸ Byrt, *Management Education: An International Survey*.

¹⁹ *Inquiry into Management Education* p 1

The report noted the dramatic expansion of management education that had occurred since the Cyert Report. 13 universities and 26 colleges of advanced education offered a total of 49 management programs. It proposed a framework of national schools and regional schools as a way of organising university management education. A second national school to be established at the University of Melbourne was recommended with the MBA offered by Deakin to be scaled back to a post graduate diploma. The Deakin MBA was only external MBA program in Australia at the time. The Ralph report (1982) heralded the Melbourne Business School.

By way of international comparison, it is worth remembering that the first business school, Wharton, was established at the University of Pennsylvania in 1881, offering courses such as commercial accounting and law, while the Tuck School of Business and Administration was established in 1900 at Dartmouth.²⁰ The University of Chicago and the University of California (Berkeley) followed in 1898.²¹ The Harvard school of business administration school opened on 1st October 1908, while the first case study was taught in an MBA course in 1912.

Canada established an MBA degree at the University of Western Ontario in 1948. Its first doctoral program commenced in 1961 and by the late 1970s, every major provincial urban centre in Canada had at least one institution offering an MBA degree.²²

In 1958, INSEAD business school was established at Fontainebleau, in France. A few years later, IMD was established in Lausanne, Switzerland.²³

In the United Kingdom, management education and development had been offered at Cranfield University and others since at least the 1940s, though the Cranfield School of Management was formally founded in 1967²⁴. The London Business School and the Manchester Business School were founded in 1965. The former began its first executive program and then its first full-time degree the following year. But it was another 21 years before it awarded its first MBA, in 1987. From 1966 to 1979, Britain maintained a monopoly of the London and the Manchester Business Schools.²⁵

Germany began to offer Masters level courses in business administration in 1998.²⁶ Until that time, the traditional qualification was a diploma.

While private sector providers like the Australian Institute of Management and the Australian Administrative Staff College had played a significant role in management education, the universities established their role as the prime movers in this area with their flagship national business schools at the Universities of New South Wales and Melbourne. As traditional institutions of research and knowledge, the universities provided managers with intellectual tools and academic credibility. They contributed to the professionalization of management in both real and symbolic senses. The extensive programs, like the MBA, provided students

²⁰ <http://www.tuck.dartmouth.edu/about/history/index.html>

²¹ Wren and Van Fleet, 'History in Business Schools' p 29.

²² http://www.canadian-universities.net/MBA/MBA_History_Canada.html

²³ Latreuille, *Growth of the MBA Education*.

²⁴ <http://www.som.cranfield.ac.uk/som/about>

²⁵ Latreuille, *Op. cit.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

with analytical tools, case studies and methods of problem solving from local and overseas sources.

McCloud and Siniakis also undertook an examination of business course higher education data to determine existing enrolment trends and make forecasts about future levels of management education. The higher education data also presented some problems of discontinuity. They found that between 1979 and 1993, the number of higher degree business students increased by 403 per cent from 2,504 to 12,590. The growth in enrolments was steady during the 1980s but sharply increased in the early 1990s. Females accounted for 25 per cent of the total masters by coursework students in 1988 and 29 per cent 1993.

The data for (other than higher degree) business student numbers and bachelor degree business student numbers showed similar growth between 1979 and 1993. In the case of the former, business student enrolments increased from 47,583 in 1979 to 107,490 in 1993. The growth slowed after 1991. In the case of the latter, between 1979 and 1993 the number of bachelor business students increased from 38,940 to 95,678. Growth was spectacular between 1987 and 1991, tapering thereafter.²⁷

During the 1980s, the universities embraced the management rush, establishing programs and increasing enrolments.

The Growth of Management Consulting

According to Wright (2000) a viable management consulting industry was established in Australia prior to the 1980s. Some firms like WD Scott & Co, the Bedaux Company and Personnel Administration (PA) were established in the 1930s. While WD Scott & Co began with an emphasis on management accounting, by the late 1940s all three firms specialized in scientific management applications in industrial engineering.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the major international accounting houses such as Arthur Andersen, Coopers & Lybrand, Ernst & Winney, Price Waterhouse, Arthur Young and Peat Marwick established management consulting arms to their businesses. During the 1980s the management consulting industry grew dramatically. This was partly because of the fundamental economic changes such as deregulation, partly because of the advance of information technology and, importantly, because of the need for advice as to how to survive the various environmental changes occurring for businesses. The large consulting firms marketed themselves, justifiably or otherwise, as experienced change managers. Their overseas connections and reputations were particularly valuable as Australian businesses were forced to become more competitive, both nationally and internationally. The management consulting industry of the United States was established earlier than its Australian counterpart, so were the business schools and the management education industry. Consequently, there was a body of knowledge, practice and discourse available and ready to be disseminated in the Australian context.

The range of services offered by large and small management consultants diversified.

As happened overseas, Australian management consulting became increasingly segmented between the consulting divisions of the large accounting firms, executive and strategy consultants such as McKinseys, and a diverse range of smaller specialist consultants in areas such as human resource management and organizational change. Given their larger client bases, as well as the significant overseas resources of their parent companies, the consulting divisions of the accounting majors became increasingly dominant not only in information

²⁷ McLeod and Siniakis, 'Trends in numbers of management students and managers 1970s-1990s.'

technology and computers, but also in 'general' consulting areas such as production and financial control, organizational efficiency, marketing and personnel. The accounting firms also made in-roads into the public sector, providing advice on a growing range of public policy areas. In a series of take-overs and mergers during the early and mid-1980s, the 'Big Nine' became the 'Big Eight'. W.D. Scott merged with Coopers & Lybrand, and Price Waterhouse added Urwick International to its growing management services division (see Table 2). By the late 1980s, the 'Big Eight' had become the 'Big Six' and were estimated to account for 20 per cent of an Australian management consulting market with an annual turnover of \$1.3 billion. Wright (2000) summarizes:

“While the management consulting industry continued to undergo major structural change through the arrival of new entrants and the merger of existing companies, in general the contemporary structure of the industry had been established based around a small core of large global consulting firms, and a growing periphery of small, specialist providers.”

Prior to the 1980s, a number of local and international management consulting companies were established including Andersen Consulting, Coopers & Lybrand, Ernst & Whinney, Arthur Young, KPMG, McKinsey & Company, PA Consulting, Price Waterhouse, WD Scott & Co. During the 1970's their role began to shift from a shop floor and labour management issues to a broader range of boardroom concerns. While some of those companies had clear links to the United States, others, like Price Waterhouse, had clear links to Britain.²⁸ KPMG had origins in The Netherlands, Great Britain, Germany as well as the United States.²⁹

During the 1980s the management consulting industry expanded dramatically³⁰. Wright (2000) estimated that its revenues grew from <\$90 million to in excess of \$1.3 billion. He argued that its growth was fuelled by economic, regulatory and technological changes as well as the industry's ability to promote itself as 'change managers'. The basic structure of the industry established in the 1980s remains to this day.

The Rise of Management Discourse

Management consultants not only played a significant role in transforming the shape and performance of businesses, but were also instrumental in promoting and expanding the language of business. As the management consulting industry grew in the 1980s, its influence increased.

The prevalence of management discourse followed increased interest of economics, finance and business, a trend evident during the 1980s in a number of advanced countries including the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, New Zealand, France, Italy, Spain and Sweden.³¹ Government and business increasingly promoted management discourse in the public arena.

In one sense, the rise of management discourse was initially a slow process. Overseas trade journals and publications were imported to Australia during the early 20th century. The 1940s saw the publication of *Manufacturing and Management* in 1946 and *Management News* in 1949, *Management News* and *Manufacturing and Management* were the two mastheads for

²⁸ McKenna, 'The Origins of Modern Management Consulting' p 52

²⁹ <http://www.kpmg.com.au/default.aspx?tabid=167>

³⁰ Wright, 'From Shop Floor to Boardroom: The Historical Evolution of Australian Management Consulting, 1940s to 1980s.'

³¹ Kelly, *Op cit.*

the proliferation of management concepts after the war. Some other publications to commence after the war included *The Australian Financial Review* in 1951, *Australian Factory* in 1957, *Industrial Engineer* in 1958 and *Australian Manager* in 1961. The *Australian Journal of Management* was first published in 1976 by the new Australian Graduate School of Management.

Arguably, the most significant publication for Australian business was “Rydge’s: the business management monthly” which began in 1928 and was published each month until 1987 when it was transformed into *Business Review Weekly*. The timing of that transformation from monthly to weekly in 1987 lends weight to the ‘management rush’ argument.

The rise of management education and the rapid growth of management consulting in the 1980s did much to change the language of business. At a time when the old economy was passing away and a new economy was emerging, there were significant conceptual and language changes in business. Much of it was *talk*; *talk* that was very important in re-defining experience. The 1980s was rife with *talk* - about competition, productivity, efficiency, sustainability and effectiveness. Economic rationalism became the prevailing *ethos* for government policy, resulting in the beginning of an overlap of political and business language that became a permanent merger. The Hawke Labor government seemingly abandoned the traditional union fight against corporations and embraced business leaders as friends. As economics became the main game, the language of economics and business began to permeate public discourse³². The language of management followed the language of economics.

Management was abuzz with talk. The leading business schools had 20 or more subjects to teach. They ranged from marketing to economics to finance to marketing to accounting to human resource management. Each of these subjects set forth its doctrines, its key concepts, its jargon. The subjects borrowed heavily from overseas studies and from other disciplines such as economics, psychology and sociology. Local case studies and text books followed.

With the advent of nationally networked mass media, both in printed and electronic forms, image management became increasingly important to public figures. As the power of these vehicles to dictate agenda and influence public opinion was realised, media relations became more important for business. Company spokespersons, as much as politicians and lobbyists, were sought for statements and interviews.

The media became the forum for both news and community debate. In the 1980’s, economic debate gained prominence in the public forum as did industries, companies and their representatives. Australia had its prominent companies and its established wealthy families who were the object of an evergreen public interest. But following the expected parade of film and social celebrities came the peak body spokespersons eg the President of the ACTU, the President of the (then) National Farmers Federation, the (then) Australian Council of Business, etc and prominent business people such as the Chairman of BHP, the Managing Directors of the major Banks, the Governor of the Reserve Bank, etc. The ability to handle the media became a key competency when recruiting a new Managing Director or Chief Executive Officer.

In the March 1991 Economic Statement, Prime Minister Hawke announced the development of a management skills strategy. As a consequence, in 1992 the Industry Task Force on Leadership and Management Skills was established to consider the needs of Australian industry and commerce to be competitive internationally and to produce recommendations to

³² Watson, *Death Sentence*, p 24.

strengthen skills and develop leadership qualities. In February 1995 the report of the Task Force entitled *Enterprising Nation: Renewing Australia's Managers to Meet the Challenges of the Asia-Pacific Century* (known as the Karpin Report) was tabled in the Commonwealth Parliament of Australia. This Task Force followed the 1988 report of the Employment and Skills Formation Council and *The Australian Mission on Management Skills* which, in 1991, visited a number of European countries, the United States and Japan. Management was clearly on the Prime Minister's agenda and proclaimed as a major platform essential to Australia's commercial competitiveness in the Asia-Pacific century.

The report was three years in the making and cost the Australian taxpayers over \$6 million to produce.³³ It was the most comprehensive and public single study of Australian managers ever undertaken, consisting of 27 research projects undertaken by management consultants, academics and combinations of the two. Only five research projects were undertaken by universities with the vast majority being completed by research and consulting companies including Coopers & Lybrand, Rand Corporation and Boston Consulting Group.

Management had arrived as profession, discipline and rhetoric. Management became both the *techne* and the rhetoric of business. *Techne* is the method, skill, craft or practice. Management or business administration education was clearly focused on the methods of administering businesses in various industries. Rhetoric was practiced in the public forum of the media.

Conclusion

While the public company with its Managing Director had risen to the pinnacle of private enterprise by 1960, the profession of management remained relatively small and insignificant in Australia. The acceptance of management as a profession was the combination of the rise of the salaried manager, increased numbers of managers in the workforce, the rise of management education, management consulting and management discourse. While the roots of those forces were evident prior to the 1980s, it was during that decade that those streams converged to form one broad river. It was a 'management rush', like a wool rush or a gold rush, which established management in Australia as a profession and as a discipline. When the Karpin report was finally tabled in 1995, management had arrived.

Australia's first managers were in banking and the pastoral industry. British management practice dominated early Australian practice in the early 19th century and continued to influence the local context during the 20th century. American management influences were significant during the 20th century, particularly, but not exclusively, in management education and the management consulting industry.

³³ Ashenden and Milligan, 'Standards scrutinised and as courses grow.'

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