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In the Spirit of Scholarship

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Management scholarship has recently received an increasing amount of criticisms, centered on its alleged lack of relevance and alleged dysfunction associated with publication-based scholarly competition. In defense of the spirit of management scholarship, we make two arguments. First, the criticism that management scholarship is flawed because it is irrelevant may be irrelevant itself. It reflects a lack of awareness of the nature of scholarship. Instead of losing self-confidence, management scholars should be very proud of our scholarship, which has enabled modern business schools to abandon the highly "relevant" but academically bankrupt "trade school" model of the 1950s. Second, we suggest that our scholarly competition resembles the Olympic Games, which captivate the entire human race. Clearly, the ability to win Olympic medals (such as outrunning, outskating, and outshooting competitors) is not that relevant in the modern world. But it is the focus, the discipline, and the dedication that represent every bit of the human spirit in search of excellence—so is the spirit of scholarship that we vigorously advance and support here.

What is the nature of management scholarship?[1] Why do we do research? If prospective or first-year doctoral students, in search of the meaning of management scholarship, scan the pages of our major journals, including the *Academy of Management Learning & Education* (*AMLE*), they would find it difficult not to be discouraged or (at least slightly) depressed. Our scholarship is routinely and severely criticized. Leading criticisms center on (1) its alleged "irrelevance" and its lack of impact on practice (Bennis & O'Toole, 2005; Mintzberg, 2004; Pfeffer, 2007; Pfeffer & Fong, 2002, 2004); and (2) the "nonsense" (Adler & Harzing, 2009), the "amnesia" (Giacalone, 2009), the "fetish" (Hambrick, 2007), and the "gamesmanship" (Macdonald & Kam, 2007) generated by the scholarly competition to publish research in the "A" journals. When *all* the seven articles that presumably *celebrate* the 50th anniversary of the *Academy of Management Journal* (*AMJ*) end up being negative, Sara Rynes, *AMJ*'s then-editor, acknowledges that "this forum risks appearing pessimistic" (2007: 1279). As scholars, we all write to influence and read to be influenced. For inexperienced prospective or first-year doctoral students who struggle with their own sense making about what kind of world they are entering (Mitchell, 2007; Tjosvold, 2008), the impact of such criticisms on the very nature of scholarship can be devastating. Can someone say something positive about our scholarship?

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[1] "Scholarship" can be broadly defined as "a fund of knowledge and learning," according the *Merrian Webster Online Dictionary*. In this article, "management scholarship" refers to scholarly research in the broader management disciplines represented in a typical school of business (often known as a school of management), including accounting, finance, information systems, marketing, and operations. In other words, "management scholarship" does not merely refer to the intellectual domain represented by the Academy of Management (AOM).

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As shown in Table 1, a small number of scholars have stood up to defend management scholarship—both the substance and the "game"—in the pages of *AMLE* (Jain & Golosinski, 2009; Knights, 2008; O'Brien, Drnevich, Crook, & Armstrong, In Press; Worrell, 2009) and elsewhere (AACSB, 2008; DeAngelo, DeAngelo, & Zimmerman, 2005; DeNisi, 2009; Kieser & Leiner, 2009; Lee, 2009; March & Reed, 2000; Mitra & Golder, 2008; Vermeulen, 2007). However, in comparison with the volume and ferociousness of the criticisms, these defenses tend to be shy, indirect, and politically correct. For example, in the face of Adler and Harzing's (2009) criticism that the tools of academic ranking systems based on the publishing "game" to hit "A" journals are deeply flawed, Dan Worrell (2009: 128), dean of the Walton College of Business at the University of Arkansas, responds: "Adler and Harzing do, however, *overstate* the nature of the problem"— merely "overstate"? Similarly, Dipak Jain, dean of the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University, agrees that there is a "design challenge" on what counts as excellent scholarship (Jain & Golosinski, 2009: 101). However, despite the imperfections, we still need to play the game due to a lack of widely acknowledged alternative criteria (Jain & Golosinski, 2009). This defense, thus, boils down to a *methodological* one, instead of a philosophical, historical, and strategic one.

Believing that more direct and more effective advocacy and defense of our scholarship is possible, we make two arguments here. First, as scholars, we do not need to feel ashamed about the alleged irrelevance of our scholarship. We need to have the self-confidence to be very proud of our scholarship, which enables us to make contributions to mankind by engaging in the "sacred pursuit" of knowledge (quoting Susan Ashford, senior associate dean at the Ross School of Business, University of Michigan, as published in Walsh, Tushman, Kimberly, Starbuck, & Ashford, 2007: 148). The postwar success of business schools is largely due to our decisive abandonment of the highly "relevant" but academically bankrupt "trade school" model of the 1950s. It is our theoretically rigorous scholarship that has propelled business schools to new heights (Agarwal & Hoetker, 2007; Colquitt & Zapata-Phelan, 2007).

TABLE 1
Criticisms Against and Defenses for Management Scholarship Since 2000

Criticisms	Defenses
Pfeffer & Fong (2002)	March & Reed (2000)
Mintzberg (2004)	DeAngelo, DeAngelo, & Zimmerman (2005)
Pfeffer & Fong (2004)	Vermeulen (2007)
Bennis & O'Toole (2005)	AACSB (2008)
Ghoshal (2005)	Knights (2008)
Hambrick (2007)	Mitra & Golder (2008)
Macdonald & Kam (2007)	DeNisi (2009)
Pfeffer (2007)	Jain & Golosinski (2009)
Shareef (2007)	Kieser & Leiner (2009)
Adler & Harzing (2009)	Lee (2009)
Giacalone (2009)	Worrell (2009)
Podolny (2009)	O'Brien, Drnevich, Crook, & Armstrong (In Press)

Second, instead of reluctantly participating in (or dropping out of) the scholarly competition with a low level of job satisfaction and self-esteem, we should enthusiastically join the game, aim high, play hard, and play smart. One useful model that can inspire us is that of the Olympic Games. After all, just how relevant are the Olympic Games? Exactly how relevant is the ability to shoot a basketball through a hoop that is 10 feet off the ground? How statistically significant is the 0.01 second difference between the 100-meter sprint gold medalist and the silver medalist? And yet, why is the entire human race captivated by these games? Clearly, the ability to win Olympic medals (such as outrunning, outskating, and outshooting competitors) is not that relevant in the modern world. Yet, we argue, the Olympic Games represent every bit of the human spirit in search of excellence—so is the *spirit* of scholarship that we intend to not only defend, but also advance vigorously here.[2]

Our motivation stems from our fundamental disagreement with the criticisms (1) that our scholarship is flawed because it is irrelevant and (2) that our scholarly competition centered on top journal publications is dysfunctional. Our goal is to strengthen the spirit of management scholarship by articulating its nature. We do not dispute the empirical observations made by critics of the imperfections of our scholarly world. However, we beg to differ from the conclusions (and indictments) they advocate. We also believe that we represent the *silent majority* of scholars who labor so hard, endure so many rejections, and resent the criticisms against the fruits of their labor.

All ideas are pregnant with biases. Let us declare ours. Collectively, we have held faculty positions at several universities for a combined 45

[2] Since debate on the business school industry has now become a cottage industry in itself, we will limit our coverage to one important slice, research, and will not branch out to comment on other areas, such as media rankings and MBA programs (see DeAngelo et al. [2005], Gioia and Corley [2002], Pfeffer and Fong [2002], and Mintzberg [2004]).

years. We have widely published in leading academic journals and served in several editorial capacities. It is safe to disclose that we are biased in favor of scholarship. On the other hand, having written leading textbooks, published in practitioner outlets, and engaged in executive training and consulting, we are not totally "irrelevant."

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SCHOLARSHIP AND RELEVANCE

As will be shown by quotes dating back to 1909, the message in this section is nothing new. Clearly, previous scholars have touched on the question of relevance. However, for the spirit of scholarship to thrive, "we have to repeat to ourselves and to others, often and loudly" (Rajan & Zingales, 2003: 3).

Inside the proverbial "ivory tower," scholars, *by definition*, are not supposed to be relevant (Kieser & Leiner, 2009; March & Reed, 2000). Otherwise, they cease to be scholars and they end up becoming practitioners. We repeat: scholars are scholars; scholars are *not* practitioners. In recorded human history, the first generation of scholars emerged in ancient China, Egypt, India, and Mesopotamia when there was sufficient food production surplus to enable talented individuals to engage in nonagricultural (nonrelevant!) scholarly work. In Western civilization, scholars thrived in Greece and Rome when the economy was thriving. In the Dark Ages, scholarly contributions declined, in large part because societies infested with wars, famine, and plagues could not afford to support a large cadre of scholars. Fast forward to our time: The dramatic postwar expansion of higher education—and of scholarship in virtually all disciplines—is largely underwritten by the tremendous economic development around the world. In other words, scholars are blessed by economic surpluses to legitimately engage in intellectual work that most nonscholars would view as not "relevant." The criticism that scholarship is flawed because it is irrelevant may be itself irrelevant. Such criticism reflects a lack of awareness of the nature of scholarship (Kieser & Leiner, 2009; March & Reed, 2000).

That said, we are fully aware of your next question: "What about *management* scholarship? Shouldn't scholars in business schools be interested in enhancing the practical relevance of our scholarship?" Our answer is: Yes, we should try—but no need to be depressed if our scholarship is not as relevant as some of us would have hoped. The quest for relevance is understandable (Dess & Markoczy, 2008). However, evidence suggests that scholars "create the most value by focusing on developing basic research" (AACSB, 2008: 19; see also Baldridge, Floyd, & Markoczy, 2004; March & Reed, 2000). Superb scholarship leads to better institutional prestige, "which makes a school relatively more attractive to better students, yielding a more qualified, as well as a larger, pool of applicants" (Becker, Lindsay, & Grizzle, 2003: 564). Better institutional prestige can translate into higher earnings for graduates. Mitra and Golder (2008) report that publishing three "A" articles a year produced by a school's faculty is associated with an increase of $750 in MBAs' annual starting salary. O'Brien et al. (In Press) find a much larger value premium associated with scholarly research produced by a school's faculty: enhancing MBA salaries by an average of $24,000 per year. In this regard, all research that contributes to institutional prestige and student earnings is relevant.

The 1950s is often cited as the turning point during which business schools abandoned the highly "relevant" "trade school" model and moved toward a more scientific model in their knowledge production (Khurana, 2007).[3] However, the desire to strive for scientific scholarship was there from the very beginning of business schools. In 1909, a year after the founding of Harvard Business School (the second oldest business school), its founding dean, Edwin Gay, wrote to a colleague:

> We believe that there is science in business, and it is the task of studying and developing that science in which we are primarily interested (quoted in Khurana, 2007: 97).

In 1967, Herbert Simon (who later became a Nobel laureate in economics in 1978) wrote:

[3] In the 1950s, a major U.S. business school offered such memorable examples of highly relevant courses: (1) Principles of baking: Bread and rolls; (2) Principles of baking: Cakes and variety products; and (3) Bread and roll production: Practical shop operation (Khurana, 2007: 268).

> The business school does not stand a chance of recruiting first-rate scientists if it insists that all research done in its walls must have direct relevance to business. It will do better to demonstrate its respect for fundamental research by having, and valuing, in its faculty at least some members whose work does *not* have obvious relevance to business . . . The price to be paid for keeping good scientists, if it is a price, is that a certain part of their activity will simply result in good science, not particularly relevant to the specific concerns of business (Simon, 1967: 10, italics original).

Given this well-known history of modern business schools, why are Bennis and O'Toole (2005) surprised that modern management scholarship is driven by scientific research? "Guilty as charged" by Bennis and O'Toole (2005), business schools become what they are by *design* (Simon, 1967). In addition to the focus on scientific scholarship, Bennis and O'Toole (2005) and Pfeffer and Fong (2002) also complain that many business school faculty members have no practical experience, and advise business schools to seek faculty members with management experience. In the same piece quoted above, Simon (1967) addressed this issue head-on more than 40 years ago:

> What might motivate a man to leave a business career, temporarily or permanently, for teaching in a business school? He might have attained only a relatively low level in management, with modest prospects for further rise, so that the business school offers him financial and professional advancement. This man, unless he is quite young when he makes the choice, is unlikely—and experience bears this out—to shine more brightly in academia than he did in business . . . He might be nearing retirement . . . Of course, there is no evidence, and less experience, that low energy and the desire for semi-retirement produces professional excellence. This man is likely to suffer from the further dangerous illusion that good business teaching consists of "telling the boys how I did it" (Simon, 1967: 7).

Simon (1967: 7) pointed out the "innumerable failures and mediocre outcomes" when business schools try to fill faculty ranks with second-class (or exhausted) talents. It is such an "obviously failed strategy of the 1950s" (DeAngelo et al., 2005: 15) in faculty staffing that has pushed business schools to focus on hiring the best and brightest minds who have chosen scholarship as their *first* career.[4]

What about scholars without significant management experience who teach in business schools? Admittedly, both of us initially experienced such anxiety. As *first*-year doctoral students, we started teaching 400-level undergraduate classes at the ages of 23 and 27, respectively, at a top-15 undergraduate business program at the University of Washington. We do not think our own experiences are isolated. The sooner scholars can honestly tell themselves that, through research, they have mastered a body of knowledge in the teaching subject area, the more self-confident and the more effective they will become in their teaching. Our personal experiences aside, education research has documented a strong correlation between research productivity and teaching effectiveness (Morgeson & Nahrgang, 2008: 31).

To the point raised by Bennis and O'Toole (2005), Mintzberg (2004), and Pfeffer and Fong (2002) on whether management experience is necessary in order to be successful management scholars, Vermeulen (2007), in our view, has the best (and the most entertaining!) answer:

> I study managers like a zoologist might study mountain gorillas: you do not have to have been a gorilla yourself to understand them. Similarly, you can be a perfectly good criminologist without ever having stabbed someone, or even without doing any shoplifting on the side! (Vermeulen, 2007: 756).

Vermeulen goes on to recommend that management scholars talk to managers. In his own words, "every now and then, I have to force myself to go into the mountains and smell the beast" (Vermeulen, 2007: 757). He also recommends spending some time writing articles for practitioner audiences. We have done all of the above and would, of course, recommend these tactics to all our colleagues.

A fair question becomes: "Should scholars aim to conduct high-relevance research and should journals aim to publish such articles?" Daft and Lewin (2008) suggest that there are two types of rele-

[4] Of course, some excellent management scholars have had a previous career in another profession. But the point made by Bennis and O'Toole (2005) and Pfeffer and Fong (2002), with which we are debating, is whether business schools should exclusively recruit such second (or last) career individuals at the expense of scholars who have had no management experience but who nevertheless have chosen scholarship to be their first career.

vance: academic relevance and practical relevance. Let us focus on *practical* relevance, the lack of which frustrates Bennis and O'Toole (2005), Hambrick (2007), Mintzberg (2004), and Pfeffer and Fong (2002, 2004). Editors of two top journals have directly addressed this question. In an editorial commemorating the 50th anniversary of *Administrative Science Quarterly* (*ASQ*), Donald Palmer (2006: 550) reports that *ASQ* "does not give voice to work motivated by the desire to develop knowledge that can improve managerial or other practice." Similarly, founding editors of *Organization Science* (*OS*), Richard Daft and Arie Lewin (2008), concede that "direct practical relevance was a naïve aspiration for OS" (181) that "has not been realized" (177). The upshot? "*OS* should not be concerned with seeking to publish knowledge with immediate practical relevance" (Daft & Lewin, 2008: 181). Instead, "*OS*'s natural mission is to focus on sustaining its role as a source of basic ideas and to publish scientific knowledge of relevance to other organizational scholars" (Daft & Lewin, 2008: 181).

Practically relevant knowledge does emerge (AACSB, 2008; Baldridge et al., 2004). But the mechanisms of how such knowledge emerges to impact practice remain a *mystery*.[5] Specifically,

> Authors and academic journals that act as knowledge sources are uncertain about how knowledge in published articles will be received, interpreted, and used. The possibility is real that basic research intended for an academic audience may be picked up by practitioners . . . But the odds are extremely low (Daft & Lewin, 2008: 180–181).

Given the extremely low odds for success on the relevance dimension, deliberate efforts made by authors and journals to, a priori, write and publish academic articles with a high level of practical relevance in mind will (most likely) be disappointing. On the other hand, some scholars may be pleasantly surprised by the unexpected practical relevance of their research when it is noticed by managers and policy makers.[6] In summary, scholars' and journals' "primary mission should be exploration more than exploitation" (Daft & Lewin, 2008: 182). Our point is that a 1,000-mile journey starts with one step. As a field, there is nothing wrong in pursuing a long-run goal of being relevant and helpful to managers (DeNisi, 2009). However, there is no need to be ashamed of our efforts in the journey if these efforts are not as immediately relevant as some of us would have liked.

Accordingly, many have argued that it is more important to recognize and appreciate the value of a *stream* of research, instead of critiquing a single paper or its lack of impact (Lee, 2009). Angelo DeNisi (2009) noted in his presidential address at the AOM in August 2009:

> Did you ever read an individual study conducted by Kahneman (and Tversky and their colleagues)? A typical study asked 80 undergraduate students to imagine they were managing an investment portfolio for a small college, and they could allocate their money to either one of two investments. One was based on the average return for a bond fund. Students made 12, 25, or 40 allocation decisions, received feedback after each, and then were asked to make one final, long-term allocation decision.
>
> Now this sounds pretty "unrealistic" to me . . . and the paper was published in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics* in 1979. If one were to focus on this study only, it would be easy to see why someone might criticize it . . . This paper has been cited only 72 times as of 2009. But, of course, this is only one study in a larger program of research. The results of this and other similar studies are also discussed in another paper published in the same year: Kahneman and Tversky's "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision Under Risk." That one appeared in *Econometrica* . . . and has been cited 5,292 times.

By setting unrealistic expectations about the need for immediate relevance of our scholarship, we may overlook some of our most valuable contributions to practice. Pfeffer and Fong (2002) take scholarship to task for, among other things, not

[5] As a field, we are also not sure about why certain articles have high *academic* relevance. Even authors of highly cited articles cannot predict their high citation impact when writing and publishing these articles (Peng & Zhou, 2006).

[6] The first author and two colleagues (Seung-Hyun Lee and Yasuhiro Yamakawa) experienced such a pleasant surprise (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2008). An academic article we presented at the Babson College Entrepreneurship Research Conference in Madrid, Spain, in June 2007 (Lee, Yamakawa, & Peng, 2007) received a U.S. Small Business Administration Best Paper Award for the best paper "exploring the importance of small businesses to the U.S. economy or a public policy issue of importance to the entrepreneurial community" (award citation). When working on our paper, we had not even known the existence of such a prestigious award from a Federal government agency for practical and policy relevance.

being highly represented among top-selling business books. However, there are other means for disseminating our work and adding value to managers. For example, we can follow Beyer and Trice's suggestion to "pay more attention to diffusing research to future potential users through textbooks and (our) own teaching activities" (1982: 616). Jim Collins, author of *Built to Last* and *Good to Great*, is hardly the first to assert that effective teaching means "Don't try to come up with the right answers; focus on coming up with good questions" (2009: 27). Similarly, Murray Davis has argued that "interesting" theories are those "which *deny* certain assumptions of their audience" (1971: 309, italics original). In other words, scholarship may not provide prescriptive theory that can be quickly applied (Lee, 2009). But it can help managers frame issues, ask the right questions, and question their underlying assumptions (Bazerman, 2002).

To drive home this point, let us go back in history and see what damage can be done in another profession (medicine) if one fails to rigorously question one's assumptions. Consider Dr. Benjamin Rush, a highly respected physician, professor at the first medical school in America, and one of the signatories of the Declaration of Independence (Davis & Hogarth, 1992). He advocated and practiced phlebotomy as a cure for febrile illnesses in the belief that the cause was excessive stimulation and excitement of the blood. When Rush fell ill with yellow fever, he prescribed plenty of bloodletting for himself. As reported in Eisenberg (1977: 1106):

> From illness and treatment combined, he almost died; his convalescence was prolonged. That he did recover persuaded him that his methods were correct. Neither dedication so great that he risked his life to minister to others, nor willingness to treat himself as he treated others, nor yet the best education to be had in his day was sufficient to prevent Rush from committing grievous harm in the name of good. Convinced of the correctness of his theory of medicine and lacking a means for the systematic study of treatment outcome, he attributed each new instance of improvement to the efficacy of his treatment and each new death that occurred despite it to the severity of the disease.

Admittedly, this is a rather extreme example, but we are sure many of us have encountered practitioners who rely on and reinforce their own private assumptions about how things should get done. Such a bias leads people such as Dr. Rush to selectively seek information that confirms their beliefs and can lead to a myopic view of reality and inhibit learning. According to Whittington (1993):

> Providing the basic grounding for our behavior, Argyris (1977) calls such assumptions "theories of action." The danger of these theories is forgetting we have them. As Keynes (1936) implies, those who boast of their commonsense approach to management are very probably just following the ill-formed, half-forgotten, pseudo-scientific nostrums peddled to them in their early careers. Drawing upon his work with American senior managers, Argyris (1977) warns that nothing is more dangerous than to leave underlying assumptions hidden. Until we surface our implicit "theories of action," we cannot test their accuracy and amend them to the conditions of the day. Those who do not actively confront their underlying assumptions are condemned to be "prisoners of their own theories" (Argyris, 1977: 119).

As we all know, one of the requirements to publish in top journals such as *AMJ* is to make a contribution to theory. Thus, our theory base must be continuously questioned, reassessed, and updated. Such rigor is often in contrast to many practitioner-oriented journals, which in many cases may continue to espouse normative theory that has been subject to neither empirical nor theoretical test—in other words, they often use inductive theorizing with a sample of one. A question to Pfeffer and Fong (2002) thus becomes: Does what managers read the most necessarily provide the most prescriptive value? Or, for scholars, isn't it the lesser of two evils to be "irrelevant" rather than superficial?

As experienced students in executive education often tell us, exposure to rigorous theoretical arguments helps managers examine their assumptions and, consequently, enhances their ability to develop what Weick (1979) terms "complicated understanding" in the absence of a single "right answer." Consider, for example, the use of decision-making techniques, such as dialectical inquiry (Schweiger, Sandberg, & Rechner, 1989). In this technique a problem is approached from two alternative points of view. The objective is to critique each of the opposing perspectives—a thesis and an antithesis—and arrive at a creative synthesis. Such insightful decision techniques would probably have little value if managers are beholden to simplistic assumptions and have not taken the trouble to develop a "complicated understanding."

Thus, when assessing the potential value of our scholarship to practitioners, we must go beyond such notions as "what is popular in the popular press." The objective of the popular press is simply to sell books and magazines and add to the publisher's bottom line. We are all familiar with the so-called airport books that can be read on a short flight and give the reader the proverbial quick fix—*The One Minute Manager* comes to mind. On the other hand, as scholars our role is to develop and test sound theory and *not* to compete with *The One Minute Manager*. At the end of the day, according to Baldridge et al. (2004) and Daft and Lewin (2008), if our *descriptive* theory is sound, perhaps useful *normative* theory may eventually evolve (!).

Finally, be careful what we wish for: We may not necessarily be in an enviable position if our scholarship is indeed relevant. For example, the socially "harmful" nature of certain "bad" theories have allegedly "destroyed" good management practices (Ghoshal, 2005) in times such as the recent economic crisis. Rightly or wrongly, agency theory has attracted such criticisms. While the dust is hardly settled on whether agency theory is indeed that relevant, let us end this section with an example of a theory that truly has tremendous relevance but disastrous impact—the Marxist theory of capitalism, socialism, and communism, which brought immeasurable misery and suffering to mankind. Boris Yeltsin, a former practitioner of this theory (as a high-ranking Soviet official) and the first president in the post-Soviet Russia, commented on the impact of this highly relevant, widely practiced, but devastatingly harmful theory in 1991 (as quoted in Peng, 2000: 26):

> I think the experiment which was conducted on our soil was a tragedy for our people and it was too bad that it happened on our territory. It would have been better if the experiment had been conducted in some small country so as to make it clear that it was a utopian idea, although a beautiful one.

SCHOLARSHIP AND SCHOLARLY COMPETITION

In addition to the alleged "irrelevance," another major set of criticisms targets our scholarly competition and publication-based rankings. Pointing out (quite accurately) a series of imperfections, Adler and Harzing (2009: 72) label publication-based rankings "dysfunctional" and "nonsense;" Giacalone (2009) argues these rankings represent "professional amnesia;" and Macdonald and Kam (2007) ridicule their "gamesmanship." Having won publication-based scholarly contests, Hambrick (2007: 1346) labels our quest for theoretical rigor "fetish," and Pfeffer (2007: 1341) judges our scholarly competition as "depressing." Specifically, there are three criticisms, each of which is worth refuting:

1. the arbitrary nature of journal selected for the "A" list,
2. the lack of stability of research rankings, and
3. the competitive behaviors such rankings encourage.

Criticism 1: The Arbitrary Nature of Journals Selected for the "A" List

The list of certain top journals is always arbitrarily *short* by excluding certain other outlets with presumed lower quality and selectivity. The top-40 journals counted by *Financial Times* (*FT*), the top-24 journals tracked by the University of Texas at Dallas (UTD), and the top-6 international business journals analyzed by Xu, Yalcinkaya, and Seggie (2008b) can all be criticized along this dimension (Harzing, 2008; Xu, Yalcinkaya, & Seggie, 2008a). Adler and Harzing (2009) suggest more outlets (books, proceedings, on-line publications, and *additional* journals) as measures for high-quality scholarship. The question is where to draw the line. The UK-based Association of Business Schools currently maintains a list of 1,040 journals. One survey reports 1,008 outlets on the lists compiled by 35 management departments (Van Fleet, McWilliams, & Siegel, 2000: 851). Note these lists only include academic journals and do not include nonjournal outlets advocated by Adler and Harzing (2009). The sheer information-processing demands for tracking and interpreting information contained in such a wide variety of outlets make these long lists impractical.

While journals on the "A" list are notoriously hard to get into, the list is simple to implement by any school, As pointed out in a joke recently shared by Dean Worrell (2009: 127) at the University of Arkansas: "The dean may not know much about research, but at least she or he can count." Critics argue that such simple (bean) counting is indicative of an unhealthy trend in evaluating faculty research because deans and senior colleagues no longer need to carefully read the candidate's work (Adler & Harzing, 2009; Giacalone, 2009). However, given the low level of paradigmatic development in management disciplines and the frequent reviewer disagreements on a single paper, asking deans and senior colleagues to read and evaluate every piece of a candidate's work for tenure and promotion purposes, which often entail *multiple* publications, will not only be time-consuming and labor-intensive, but also will ensure endless disagreements and political arguments (Van Fleet et al., 2000).[7] In short, this suggestion is hardly practical. Not surprisingly, a relatively short but widely adopted "A" list is viewed as a best solution to the intractable problem of defining scholarly excellence by deans, senior colleagues, and university administrators. Although not perfect, such a list would typically suppress certain political behavior, turf battles, and gamesmanship. Thus, in a sense, the blind-review process—as opposed to the process of collective reading by deans and senior colleagues—serves as a protection mechanism for tenure-track faculty, not only in terms of the quality of the scholarship itself, but also in terms of the quality of the evaluations and judgments rendered on such scholarship.

To continue our analogy of scholarship to the Olympic Games, critics may criticize the Olympics' exclusion of certain popular sports, such as American football, bungee jumping, golf, horseshoes, kung fu, and motorcycling. Why can't the Olympics be more inclusive? To the same extent that there are information-processing limits on tracking and monitoring journal articles, there are financial, physical, and infrastructural limits constraining how many events can be packed into a 2-week period in a major city that is already very crowded without the games. A total of 28 sports competed in Beijing in August 2008 and 15 sports competed in Vancouver in February 2010. Isn't London already very crowded without the 2012 Games? Advocates arguing for the need to read the work instead of counting hits on an "A" list are, in effect, advising sports officials in many countries who hand out cash awards and advertising executives who sign lucrative contracts to hire star Olympians to watch *every* game (on site or on video) in order to evaluate which athletes are truly world-class, instead of relying on a simple count of the medals they win. No doubt some officials and executives would do that—who doesn't enjoy watching an Olympic Game or two? However, it is simply not practical to expect these busy individuals to watch every Olympic Game. Likewise, we suspect that deans and senior colleagues do selectively read some pieces of a tenure and promotion candidate's work (because copies are always attached), but they are not likely to read all the pieces.

Criticism 2: The Lack of Stability of Research Rankings

Research rankings report unstable results. Over time, some scholars and schools rise, and others fall. According to Adler and Harzing (2009: 79), "such dramatic instability forces us to question the extent to which such rankings are meaningful." Since a single world-class scholar can catapult a school into top ranks, and such scholars often move, Adler and Harzing (2009: 82) label "institutional rankings unstable at best and meaningless at worst." We argue that, just as the Fortune 500 list always has new entrants and drop-outs every year, the instability of research rankings is an indication of a vibrant field. Industrial organization research has long reported "considerable turbulence in market shares even among leading firms" (Davies & Geroski, 1997: 389). Strategy research has documented "hypercompetition" characterized by the rapid erosion of competitive advantage (D'Aveni, 2002). As competition among business schools heats up around the globe (Leung, 2007; Mudambi, Peng, & Weng, 2008), is it surprising that research rankings report instability?

We argue that, just as the Fortune 500 list always has new entrants and drop-outs every year, the instability of research rankings is an indication of a vibrant field.

Publication-based research rankings, of course, are not everything. But over time, they offer "directional guidance" on the trends (Jain & Golosinski, 2008: 100). Drawing on data from the UTD database, Table 2 shows the top 100 rankings on the earliest year available (1990), the most recent 5-year period (2005–2009), and the longest span (1990–2009). Clearly, there are some significant changes. Precisely because of these changes, scholars, schools, funding agencies, state governments, and national educational authorities pay so much attention to such rankings. Even schools that have done well need to be more competitive, for fear that other schools may catch up in the next year.[8] Resting on

[7] Some deans whose area of expertise is not in the candidates' area may not be fully *qualified* to judge the scholarly merits of these colleagues' work. If a strategy professor becomes the dean and if he/she is willing to read and judge all the work published by a faculty member in finance going up for tenure and promotion (but the dean has previously never read a paper in finance), how much weight do we place on the dean's evaluation based on his/her reading?

[8] An interesting issue is the relevance of research on coevolutionary processes to support the desire/need for schools to improve each year or potentially lose ground. In a business context, the Red Queen effect can be seen as a contest in which

historical laurels will be a dangerous strategy in today's transparent and flat world of academic marketplace—UTD updates its rankings *continuously*, in real time, as soon as each new issue of the 24-top journals is published.

Again, our scholarly competition has some striking similarities with the Olympic medal count. Longitudinal tracking of the medal count not only reveals sports prowess, but also overall national ambitions and capabilities. These include the longtime U.S. dominance, the Soviet and East German challenge during the Cold War, the rise of South Korea since the 1988 Seoul Games (including a top-7 performance in Vancouver), and most recently, the emergence of China (winning the largest number of gold medals and the second largest number of all medals in Beijing and finishing as a top-8 medal winning country in Vancouver). In contrast to Adler and Harzing's (2009) criticism that research rankings are meaningless because of their instability, we argue that rankings—in both academia and Olympics—are informative and important precisely because of their instability. If research rankings indeed were stable, who would care about new rankings? But, they are not.[9]

If research rankings indeed were stable, who would care about new rankings? But, they are not.

Criticism 3: The Competitive Behaviors Encouraged by Research Rankings

According to critics, research rankings inhibit good scholarship by fostering behaviors that focus exclusively on scoring the "A" hits at the expense of addressing important questions. Extending Adler and Harzing (2009), Giacalone (2009) comments:

> It is a mind-set that centers on things such as winning, status, power, and money. It is a mind-set of supremacy, where what matters most is that one person can demonstrate being better than another. It is competitiveness in its saddest manifestation (122) . . . Faculty and administrators alike are all just trying to be successful—all trying to have a flourishing career, to feel good about themselves, and to feel a sense of pride and accomplishment (123).

Other than the disagreeable word "saddest," we believe that this is a reasonably accurate description of scholars competing in the publishing game. Yet, we are truly puzzled: What is wrong "trying to be successful"? What is wrong "trying to have a flourishing career"? What is wrong "to feel a sense of pride and accomplishment"? Giacalone (2009) probably is not aware that his words are also a fairly accurate description of Olympians (and other athletes) striving for excellence.

Instead of being ashamed of our competitive behaviors, we should be very proud of our *spirit* of scholarship in search of excellence.

Paraphrasing President Kennedy, we choose to compete in the scholarly game to publish our work in "A" journals, not because it is easy, but because it is hard.[10]

We all suffer from rejections. But don't forget: Of the 11,028 Olympians competing in Beijing, only 958 medals (302 gold, 303 silver, and 353 bronze) were awarded (including both individual and team events; see results.beijing2008.cn). Likewise, of the 2,622 athletes competing in Vancouver, only 258 medals (86 gold, 87 silver, and 85 bronze) were awarded (see vancouver2010.com). The vast majority of the Olympians went home without a medal. Did they feel depressed and unhappy, or excited and joyful? Win or lose, they cried, they screamed, they kicked. We speculate that deep in their hearts, regardless of whether they earned a medal, the Olympians were grateful for being chosen to compete at the highest level. Having shed so much sweat and tears, these athletes deserved all the applause and cheer the on-site audiences and global TV viewers could lavish on them. Bear in mind that all Olympians, including *non*-medalists, represented the best of their countries' athletes, having typically been chosen from national competitions involving a much larger number of athletes. Therefore, the Games not only inspire the Olympians themselves, but also inspire numerous

each firm's performance depends on matching or exceeding the actions of rivals (Derfus, Maggitti, Grimm, & Smith, 2008). Baumol (2004) suggests the Red Queen effect is the most powerful mechanism driving economic development.

[9] Note we refer to research rankings that are often based on real performance (similar to the Olympic medal count). In comparison, MBA rankings are often based on perceptions and are relatively stable (Moregeson & Nahrgang, 2008).

[10] In the early 1960s, after President Kennedy announced the goal to land a man on the moon by the end of the decade, critics similarly debated how "relevant" and "meaningful" the endeavor was.

athletes and would-be athletes (as well as non-athletes in business and in academia) around the world.

Clearly, the ability to shoot a basketball through a hoop, to outskate each other in a speed skating race, or to use the (literally) ancient sword to stab each other in fencing is not that relevant in the modern world. But the focus, the discipline, and the quest for excellence that is embodied in the Olympic spirit are an honorable (and awe-inspiring) end in itself. It is for this reason that the entire human race—regardless of age, culture, and political persuasion—is captivated by these every 2 years (the summer and winter games now alternate every 2 years).

It is not far-fetched to suggest that scholars are academic Olympians. Olympians are chosen from a larger pool of athletes due to athletic excellence. Scholars are selected to enter PhD programs due to academic excellence. PhD students indeed represent a few "chosen ones." In the United States, there are 350 undergraduate and master's graduates for every PhD degree awarded in management (AACSB, 2008: 9). Scholars have been appointed to faculty positions at schools that appreciate research largely due to our commitment to scholarship and potential to score "A" hits—similar to Olympians' medal potential. To deserve tenure and promotion, we have to bring home some medals (journal articles).

It is true that, relative to the global TV coverage of the Olympics, we operate in the relatively obscure world of academia. After all, far more people watch Olympic events than attend academic conferences or read scholarly journals.[11] However, we disagree with Giacalone (2009: 124) that "publishing in journals that are read mostly by a scholarly audience, even an esteemed one like the Academy of Management and its over 18,000 members, hardly makes anyone famous." Personally, we will enjoy our small token of fame associated with this article in *AMLE*, which will reach over 18,000 AOM members in over 100 countries and thousands of libraries and databases. Our suggestion to fellow academic Olympians is this: Don't be discouraged. Join the game. Play hard. Play smart. Enjoy whatever (little) fame you may attain—each publication is like a precious medal!

In this context, Adler and Harzing's (2009) proposed moratorium on scholarly rankings is unrealistic. Arbitrarily changing rules of the game will not be fair to scholars who dedicate their careers to know the rules and train hard to excel. Shying away from scholarly competition, while teaching students to vigorously compete in business, will undermine our professional credibility and indeed make us look more *irrelevant* (!). If we strive for excellence in our own endeavors, perhaps we would be more likely to demand excellence from our students. With relatively transparent outcomes (similar to the medal count), scholarly competition thus strengthens the meritocracy in academia (Miller, Glick, & Cardinal, 2005). Otherwise, academia will be infested with politics, mediocrity, and protectionism. "It is difficult to meet the strict peer-review standards of the top academic journals, and life is surely easier if one does not need to meet those standards" (DeAngelo et al., 2005: 14).

We will end this section with a discussion on faculty career interest, which represents a target for repeated criticisms (Adler & Harzing, 2009; Bennis & O'Toole, 2005; Ghoshal, 2005; Giacalone, 2009; McGrath, 2007; Pfeffer, 2007). According to critics such as Giacalone (2009), faculty career interest—in search of more top journal publications that would ultimately translate into more power, money, and prestige—is a *bad* thing. Out of pure interest in scholarship, perhaps some of us would volunteer (with no pay) to do our kind of research with rejection rates now exceeding 90% at major journals. In addition to our intrinsic scholarly interest, we suspect that most of us (including your two authors) are willing to do what we do in response to the incentives provided by our schools that reward success and that allow us to support our families. Institutional scholars have long argued that individuals (and organizations) respond to the rules of the game such as incentive structures (Peng, Sun, Pinkham, & Chen, 2009). What is wrong with that? Didn't Adam Smith tell us, back in 1776, that the alignment of legitimate self-interest and societal interest promotes social progress and economic development? Didn't Simon, March, and Cyert teach us, in the 1950s and 1960s, that the alignment of individual career interest and organizational interest helps advance organizational goals? Better scholarship leads to greater institutional prestige, which attracts better students and serves our schools and other stakeholders better (AACSB, 2008; Becker et al., 2003). Estimates on research's direct impact on MBA salaries range between $750 (Mitra & Golder, 2008) and $24,000 (O'Brien et al., in press) a year. Beyond the more measurable MBA salaries, we are confi-

[11] We should note that in addition to some high-profile sports, there are some relatively obscure Olympic sports (such as synchronized swimming, equestrian, and sailing in the summer Games as well as curling and skeleton in the winter Games). These sports entail a rather small community—but a still significant audience that is interested in tracking the top performers.

dent that scholarly research adds value in numerous other areas.

Just as individual Olympians' focus on their bid for medals not only brings honor and glory to themselves but also to their countries, our career interest in scoring more "A" publications helps both our careers and our schools, as well as other stakeholders. Thus, such interest needs to be supported, advocated, and celebrated, not something we are ashamed of. Do critics really want to see a large number of management scholars with *no* career interest in advancing scholarship?

DISCUSSION

Most management scholars either have a PhD or are working on one. But we often fail to realize that the PhD is the highest degree in philosophy. Thus, we should be *philosophical*, especially when dealing with crucial issues such as the nature and meaning of management scholarship, which are so central to our professional identity and individual self-esteem (Mitchell, 2007; Tjosvold, 2008). Thomas Lee, 2008 AOM president, commented in his presidential address that "it's fair to say that most Academy members believe that our research is valuable" (Lee, 2009: 196). Angelo DeNisi, 2009 AOM president, put it more bluntly in his presidential address: "I am sick and tired of listening to these attacks and claims that our research is not relevant" (DeNisi, 2009: 26).[12] However, in the face of relentless criticisms on our scholarship, few members of the silent majority have stood up. Inspired by Rajan and Zingales' (2003) defense of capitalism and Peng's (2004) defense of international business research, we contribute to the literature here by using the most unambiguous language to defend and advance the spirit of scholarship. "Unquestionably, business schools and their faculties play a crucial role in business and society by creating value through high-quality scholarship and research" (AACSB, 2008: 8).

Overall, the criticism that management scholarship is flawed because it is irrelevant may reflect a general lack of awareness of the nature of scholarship (Kieser & Leiner, 2009; March & Reed, 2000). Having distanced themselves from agricultural work, the first generation of scholars several thousand years ago started the proud tradition of scholarship, and scholars have been criticized for being irrelevant *ever since*. Management scholars, who emerged in the 20th century, are simply the newest breed of scholars receiving such criticisms.[13] There is no guarantee that socially relevant scholarship will be better scholarship—again, consider Marxism, period.

Two "practical" implications are very relevant to scholars. First, instead of apologizing for the alleged irrelevance of our scholarship, we should be very proud of our scholarship that is characterized by its scientific rigor and objectivity. We have no aspiration to transform business schools into glorified vocational training schools, which represent a bankrupt model jettisoned since the 1950s (DeAngelo et al., 2005). "Enslavement to relevance is in danger of reducing our independence" (Knights, 2008: 537). This does not mean that we deliberately want to be irrelevant. Few management scholars care nothing for practice (Walsh et al., 2007: 148). Our teaching, consulting, and executive training dictate that we devote significant efforts to being relevant. All we are arguing here is that we do not need to lose self-confidence when our scholarship is criticized as being irrelevant. Competing with practitioners and consultants on short-run managerial solutions is neither our strong sport, nor our cup of tea (Kieser & Leiner, 2009; Lee, 2009; March & Reed, 2000).

We management scholars also do not need to develop an inferiority complex. Social sciences often suffer from "physics envy." Within social sciences, "economics envy" is rampant. Now Pfeffer and Fong (2004: 1515) would like business schools to envy other professional schools, such as engineering, law, medicine, and education schools. The source of this inferiority complex is puzzling. At many universities, the business school is the *envy* of the rest of the campus. Undergraduate students often quit their original majors to join us. MBA enrollments soar—before, after, and during recessions. The best social sciences students flock to our PhD programs. We have been personally contacted by numerous PhD students in other departments (such as economics) and schools (such as engineering) on campus who harbor secret intentions to defect from their original programs. Engineering faculty often want to establish joint programs with us to make them look "relevant" (!). Faculty members from other social sciences consider themselves very lucky if they are offered a business school appointment. For example, the Booth School of Business at the University of Chicago currently boasts six Nobel laureates in eco-

[12] In the same speech, DeNisi (2009) also noted that our colleagues in liberal arts often criticize management scholarship to be *too relevant* (!). We refrain from commenting on that criticism.

[13] In a humorous or cynical way, we can say that such criticisms are a hallmark of acknowledging that we are now *real* scholars and that management has become a mature academic discipline that has come of age.

nomics on its faculty, and they outnumber the four remaining Nobel laureates still staying in the Chicago economics department (who probably are plotting such a move as you read this *sentence*). We can go on, but the point is obvious: Let us have some self-confidence, be proud of our scholarship (Markoczy & Deeds, 2009), and let others have "business school envy."

Engineering faculty often want to establish joint programs with us to make them look "relevant" (!).

Second, instead of criticizing scholarly competition, we need to defend, support, and strengthen it. Despite the imperfections, the "game" has diffused globally. Australia, Britain, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, South Africa, and Taiwan are some examples of countries whose business schools are in the process of voluntarily giving up locally defined standards of excellence and converting to the global standards defined by the "A" list, such as the *FT* and UTD sets. Critics may not like the "A" list, but its diffusion is indisputable—just like the global diffusion of the Olympic sports. With more athletes and countries competing, winning Olympic medals is harder than before. Likewise, with submissions from many countries now, achieving publication in our "A" journals is qualitatively harder than before (Certo, Sirmon, & Brymer, In Press). Under these circumstances, excellence is transparent for all to see, success is global, and reward is justified.

Just as athletes often retire, some scholars at some point in their career may choose not to play the publishing game. Nevertheless, when dealing with new scholarship being produced, they should "support it, celebrate it, and be a spokesperson for it" (Walsh et al., 2007: 148), instead of joining the crowd of uninformed nonscholars to question the value and relevance of scholarship. Many retired Olympians continue to cheer for the current generation of Olympians. While some former Olympians have criticized the politics of the Olympic Games, none, to the best of our knowledge, has publicly accused the Olympic sports themselves of being "irrelevant" or "nonsense." Imagine how demoralizing and devastating such remarks would have impacted the current generation of hard-working Olympians, had retired Olympians been so critical of the sports they once loved.

After *BusinessWeek (BW)* launched the first media rankings of business schools in 1988, many scholars and schools complained about *BW*'s "vulgar" methodology that *totally* ignored research (DeAngelo et al., 2005). Trieschmann, Dennis, Northcraft, and Niemi (2000) find little correlation between media rankings and research rankings. Although *BW* more recently has taken research into account, the weight is so insignificant that it is still effectively ignored (Morgeson & Nahrgang, 2008: 35). Scholars frustrated by the media rankings have called for the emergence of rankings dedicated to research (DeAngelo et al., 2005; Gioia & Corley, 2002; Morgeson & Nahrgang, 2008).[14]

In response to such calls, the UTD rankings (http://top100.utdallas.edu) began in 2005. Highly interactive, the UTD rankings allow for searches for any combination of years (since 1990), journals, schools, and authors (see Table 2 for three search results). It is plausible to suggest that the UTD rankings have filled the gap of the lack of concrete, evidence-based research rankings. The UTD list has now been widely adopted (and used in recruitment materials by schools that have done very well on the UTD rankings). It is unfortunate that management scholarship has received increasingly ferocious criticisms when such transparent, real-time, evidence-based research rankings called for by earlier scholars as a scholarly response to deal with "vulgar" media rankings are finally available.

Last, let us clarify that we are not advocating a "research only" (or "'A' list only") mission for management scholars. We agree with O'Brien et al. (in press) that "excessive" research activity, at the expense of teaching and, may lead to diminishing or even negative returns. Most AOM members work at schools that do not claim to be "research schools." Nevertheless, we believe the spirit of scholarship is also relevant and important for management scholars at these schools. To the same extent that the Olympic Games are global games and are not just games for the small number of sports powers and medal hopefuls, our scholarly competition is certainly not reserved for research schools and top scholars. It is for every management scholar to do his or her personal best.

CONCLUSION

What is the nature of management scholarship? It is about creating and disseminating scholarly

[14] One could posit that rankings are largely for potential students. Like all organizations, business schools serve a variety of constituencies. In the case of rankings, what undergraduate and MBA students care about is not only research. PhDs would care about such research rankings. Thus, it is reasonable to accept that a variety of rankings could have value and should not be looked down upon. We thank our reviewer for this point.

TABLE 2
UTD Top 100 Business School Research Worldwide Rankings™

1990	2005–2009	1990–2009
1 U. of Pennsylvania	1 U. of Pennsylvania	1 U. of Pennsylvania
2 U. of Texas at Austin	2 Duke U.	2 New York U.
3 U. of Michigan	3 New York U.	3 U. of Michigan
4 U. of Chicago	4 U. of Chicago	4 Columbia U.
5 New York U.	5 Harvard U.	5 Harvard U.
6 Harvard U.	6 U. of Michigan	6 U. of Chicago
6 Duke U.	7 U. of Maryland	7 MIT
8 Stanford U.	8 Columbia U.	8 U. of Texas at Austin
9 Northwestern U.	9 Stanford U.	9 Stanford U.
10 MIT	10 U. of Texas at Austin	10 Duke U.
11 Columbia U.	11 U. of Southern California	11 Northwestern U.
12 U. of Minnesota, Twin Cities	12 INSEAD	12 U. of California, Los Angeles
13 U. of California, Los Angeles	13 MIT	13 U. of Southern California
14 Ohio State U.	14 U. of Minnesota, Twin Cities	14 U. of Minnesota, Twin Cities
15 U. of Washington	15 Northwestern U.	15 U. of Maryland
16 Arizona State U.	16 Pennsylvania State U.	16 Pennsylvania State U.
16 U. of Wisconsin—Madison	17 U. of Texas at Dallas	17 U. of Washington
18 U. of British Columbia	18 Hong Kong U. of Sci. & Tech.	18 INSEAD
19 U. of Southern California	19 London Business School	19 U. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
20 U. of Rochester	20 U. of California, Los Angeles	20 Carnegie Mellon U.
21 U. of Arizona	21 U. of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	21 U. of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
22 Purdue U.	22 U. of California, Berkeley	22 Ohio State U.
23 U. of California, Berkeley	23 Arizona State U.	23 U. of California, Berkeley
24 Texas A&M U.	24 Indiana U.	24 Indiana U.
24 U. of Florida	25 U. of Washington	25 Arizona State U.
24 U. of Houston	26 U. of Florida	26 Washington U. in St. Louis
24 Cornell U.	27 Michigan State U.	27 Michigan State U.
28 Dartmouth College	28 Carnegie Mellon U.	28 U. of Florida
29 U. of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	29 U. of Toronto	29 Cornell U.
29 Pennsylvania State U.	30 Washington U. at St. Louis	30 Purdue U.
31 U. of Colorado at Boulder	31 U. of British Columbia	31 U. of Wisconsin—Madison
32 U. of Pittsburgh	32 Cornell U.	32 London Business School
33 Indiana U.	33 Ohio State U.	33 Hong Kong U. of Sci. & Tech
34 Rutgers U.	34 U. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	34 U. of California, Irvine
34 Southern Methodist U.	35 Emory U.	35 Emory U.
36 Louisiana State U.	36 Texas A&M U.	36 U. of British Columbia
36 Virginia Tech	37 Georgia Inst. of Tech.	37 Texas A&M U.
36 U. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	38 Yale U.	38 U. of Texas at Dallas
36 McGill U.	39 U. of Wisconsin—Madison	39 U. of Rochester
40 U. of South Carolina	40 U. of Pittsburgh	40 Rutgers U.
41 Carnegie Mellon U.	41 U. of Iowa	41 U. of South Carolina
42 U. of Iowa	42 U. of California, Irvine	42 U. of Pittsburgh
43 Baruch College—CUNY	43 Boston College	43 Yale U.
44 Yale U.	44 Tilburg U.	44 Dartmouth College
45 U. of Maryland	45 Purdue U.	45 U. of Arizona
46 U. of Utah	46 Dartmouth College	46 U. of Toronto
47 Tel-Aviv U.	47 U. of South Carolina	47 Boston College
47 U. of Georgia	47 Baruch College—CUNY	48 U. of Notre Dame
47 London Business School	49 U. of Miami	49 U. of Iowa
47 Case Western Reserve U.	49 Erasmus U.	50 U. of Western Ontario
51 Vanderbilt U.	51 U. of Utah	51 U. of Utah
51 U. of California, Irvine	52 National U. of Singapore	52 Georgia State U.
53 State U. of New York at Buffalo	53 Rice U.	53 Southern Methodist U.
54 Florida State U.	54 U. of Notre Dame	54 U. of Connecticut
55 Northeastern U.	55 U. of Western Ontario	55 U. of Colorado at Boulder
56 North Carolina State U.	56 Rutgers U.	56 Vanderbilt U.
57 U. of Oklahoma	57 Georgia State U.	57 U. of Georgia
58 U. of Connecticut	58 U. of Connecticut	58 Case Western Reserve U.
59 U. of Notre Dame	59 U. of Arizona	59 Georgia Tech
59 U. of Texas at Arlington	60 Southern Methodist U.	60 U. of Houston

(*table continues*)

TABLE 2
(Continued)

1990	2005–2009	1990–2009
59 Boston U.	61 McGill U.	61 Baruch College—CUNY
59 U. of New South Wales	62 Boston U.	62 Boston U.
63 U. of Toronto	63 U. of Rochester	63 Georgetown U.
64 Boston College	64 U. of Houston	64 U. of Miami
64 INSEAD	65 Singapore Management U.	65 Tilburg U.
66 U. of Alberta	66 U. of Alberta	66 McGill U.
66 U. of Tennessee, Knoxville	67 Brigham Young U.	67 National U. of Singapore
66 American U.	68 York U.	68 Rice U.
66 Universite Laval	69 U. of California, Davis	69 U. of Cincinnati
66 Washington U. in St. Louis	70 Hong Kong Polytechnic U.	70 U. of Oregon
71 Oklahoma State U.	71 Vanderbilt U.	71 Erasmus U.
71 U. of Texas at Dallas	72 U. of Georgia	72 Virginia Tech
71 York U.	73 Tulane U.	73 U. of Alberta
71 Emory U.	74 U. of Colorado, Boulder	74 Tulane U.
71 U. of Missouri—Columbia	75 Chinese U. of Hong Kong	75 Brigham Young U.
76 Texas Tech U.	76 HEC Montreal	76 Louisiana State U.
76 Santa Clara U.	77 Nanyang Tech. U.	77 U. of California, Davis
76 Georgia State U.	78 INSEAD, Singapore	78 State U. of New York at Buffalo
79 San Jose State U.	79 U. of New South Wales	79 U. of Oklahoma
79 U. of Baltimore	80 U. of Oklahoma	80 Temple U.
81 Baylor U.	81 Georgetown U.	81 York U.
82 U. of Delaware	82 HEC Paris	82 U. of Virginia
82 U. of Warwick	83 U. of Arkansas,	83 Florida State U.
82 Wayne State U.	84 Case Western Reserve U.	84 U. of New South Wales
82 Hebrew U. of Jerusalem	85 Simon Fraser U.	85 U. of Wisconsin—Milwaukee
82 U. of Cincinnati	86 U. of California, Riverside	86 U. of Missouri—Columbia
82 U. of Massachusetts, Amherst	87 Temple U.	87 Chinese U. of Hong Kong
82 U. of Wisconsin—Milwaukee	88 U. of Calgary	88 Tel-Aviv U.
89 Marquette U.	89 U. of Missouri—Columbia	89 Santa Clara U.
90 U. of Oregon	90 City U. of Hong Kong	90 U. of Delaware
91 Texas Christian U.	91 U. of Melbourne	91 Nanyang Technological U.
92 U. of Virginia	92 U. of Virginia	92 U. of Kentucky
92 HEC Paris	93 U. of Oregon	93 HEC Montreal
92 Temple U.	94 Copenhagen Business School	94 U. of Arkansas
95 Drexel U.	95 U. of Hong Kong	95 U. of Calgary
95 U. of Manchester	96 George Washington U.	96 Iowa State U.
95 U. of Illinois at Chicago	97 U. of Texas at Arlington	97 Hong Kong Polytechnic U.
95 Concordia U.	98 U. of Mannheim	98 Simon Fraser U.
95 U. of Memphis	99 Maastricht U.	99 Syracuse U.
95 U. of Western Ontario	100 State U. of New York at Buffalo	100 Florida International U.
95 Miami U.		

Note. Adapted from three search results (for 1990, 2005–2009, and 1990–2009) from http://top100.utdallas.edu (on February 1, 2010). Used with permission from Dean Hasan Pirkul, School of Management, University of Texas at Dallas. Comprised of publications in 24 top journals, the rankings are based on total number of adjusted author appearances. The interactive website can search by university, author, and article. To get the second search result (the second column): Go to "Rankings for journals," and select "all journals" (any single journal or any combination of the journals can be selected). Select "from 2005" and "to 2009" (it is possible to select any year or any combination of certain years since 1990). Click "Worldwide" (the other alternative is "North America").

knowledge about management and organizations. It is propelled by scholarly competition in which we aspire to publish research in scientific journals. Although the first university-based business school (Wharton) started in 1881, research-based business schools are largely a modern organizational innovation that emerged in the 1950s. Khurana (2007) meticulously documents how earlier generations of management scholars have laid the foundation—in the face of criticisms during their time (such as the lack of legitimacy and relevance)—from which we, as members of a later generation, all benefit. Lest we forget the struggles the trailblazers have gone through, we believe that we all share the sacred responsibility to "continuously enhance the value and visibility of scholarship" (AACSB, 2008: 29). We believe that being continuously negative is counterproductive and potentially dangerous. Imagine what will happen if some critics' devastating attacks on management scholarship land on the desk of some politicians and legislators who are eager to cut university budgets?

The newest round of criticisms of management scholarship is neither the first round, nor the last. But these criticisms seem to take on a lot more heat lately. Every new batch of criticisms needs to be met by those of us who value our scholarship and endeavor to advance, strengthen, and advocate its spirit. We note that all the critics with whose views we disagree are management scholars, so we are confident that they and we share the same fundamental interest in advancing management scholarship. Finally, we point out that a key element of business school's value proposition is *evidence-based* scholarship and teaching (Briner, Denyer, & Rousseau, 2009). Clearly, this is no panacea. But perhaps most of us would agree that such an approach, driven by the spirit of scholarship, is better than managers prescribing, by analogy, phlebotomy as Dr. Rush did, to every challenge they face.

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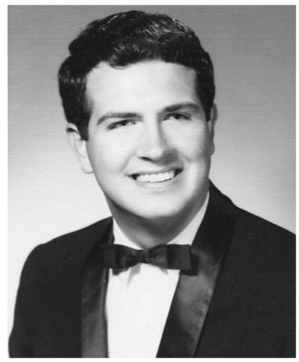

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