

# **Management, Theology and Moral Points of View: Towards an Alternative to the Conventional Materialist-Individualist Ideal-Type of Management\***

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**ABSTRACT** Weber's (1958) argument suggests that there are four ideal-types of management, and that conventional management is underpinned by a moral-point-of-view associated with a secularized Protestant Ethic, which can be characterized by its relatively high emphasis on materialism (e.g. productivity, efficiency and profitability) and individualism (e.g. competitiveness). Weber calls on management scholars and practitioners to become aware of their own moral-points-of-view, and to develop management theory and practice that de-emphasizes materialism and individualism. Our paper responds to this challenge, as we draw from an Anabaptist-Mennonite moral-point-of-view to develop a radical ideal-type of management that is characterized by its emphasis on servant leadership, stakeholding, job crafting and sustaincentrism. Implications for management theory and practice are discussed.

## **INTRODUCTION**

It has been a century since Max Weber noted, and lamented, that materialism and individualism serve as twin hallmarks of the moral-point-of-view that underpins contemporary management thought. In his most-renowned book, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Weber (1958, original 1904–5) provides a rich analysis that helps readers to better understand why management has come to focus on maximizing productivity, efficiency and profitability and on beating the competition. Moreover, Weber (1958, pp. 181–2) points to the folly of this materialist-individualist emphasis, arguing that it renders followers imprisoned in an 'iron cage' – 'Specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart; this nullity imagines that it

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has attained a level of civilization never before reached' – where he fears we may remain captured 'until the last ton of fossilized coal is burnt'. Weber (1958, p. 182) concludes that escaping this 'iron cage' demands articulating a new non-conventional moral-point-of-view of management based on 'entirely new prophets' or 'a great rebirth of old ideas and ideals'.<sup>[1]</sup>

Subsequent scholarship lends some support to Weber's arguments. He is still considered to be a leading moral philosopher of management (Clegg, 1996) and widespread agreement remains that conventional management theory and practice are underpinned by a particular, long-since *secularized*, Judeo-Christian moral-point-of-view (Golembiewski, 1989; Herman, 1997; Hershberger, 1958; Jackall, 1988; Nash, 1994; Naughton and Bausch, 1994; Novak, 1996; Pattison, 1997; Pfeffer, 1982; Redekop et al., 1995). Consistent with his views on the ill effects of living in this iron cage, a growing body of scientific research has found that 'People who are highly focused on materialistic values have lower personal well-being [e.g. satisfaction and happiness] and psychological health [e.g. depression and anxiety] than those who believe that materialistic pursuits are relatively unimportant' (Kasser, 2003, p. 22).<sup>[2]</sup> Moreover, the negative effects of individualism may be even greater (Kasser and Ryan, 2001). Little wonder that an increasing number of people are questioning the materialist-individualist moral-point-of-view. For example, a recent survey (New American Dream, 2004) found that 93 per cent of Americans agree that Americans are too focused on working and making money and not enough on family and community (see also Etzioni, 2001), and that more than half have voluntarily chosen to forgo *maximizing* their material wealth in favour of achieving a better balance with their social, physical, ecological, aesthetic, spiritual or intellectual wellth (see also Burch, 2000). Reflecting Weber's remarks about fossil fuels, the world is already living far beyond the ecological carrying capacity of our planet, due in large part to the so-called 'developed' economies (e.g. Brown, 1998; Thurow, 1996). In sum, building on a bold suggestion from Kasser (2003; see also Muncy and Eastman, 1998), perhaps the time has come to follow the lead of cigarette industry, and begin to advertise 'warnings' on management textbooks and in the general media that a materialist-individualist lifestyle may contribute to lower satisfaction with life (Burroughs and Rindfleisch, 2002), poorer interpersonal relationships (Richins and Dawson, 1992), an increase in mental disorders (Cohen and Cohen, 1996), environmental degradation (McCarty and Shrum, 2001) and social injustice (Rees, 2002).

Of course, this is not to suggest that all is doom and gloom, nor that all social ills are attributable to an over-emphasis on materialism and individualism. Clearly the conventional moral-point-of-view has also brought many benefits to humankind, and we will leave it to others to debate its pros and cons. Rather, the point of this brief introduction is simply to argue that the need to think about management from a less materialistic and less individualistic moral-point-of-view is certainly becoming increasingly *relevant*, if not *inevitable*.

The goal of our paper is deceptively simple. We seek to take up Weber's challenge to describe a non-conventional ideal-type of management that is based on a moral-point-of-view that – unlike conventional management theory and practice – does not place a *primary* emphasis on materialism and individualism. Our study is important for several reasons. First, our study is valuable because it provides conceptual tools for others to reflect more deliberately upon how their own moral-point-of-view influences their management theory and practice. This can facilitate understanding both the status quo and alternative views of management. Even though the importance of making explicit the moral-point-of-view that underpins management thought has been generally accepted since the time of Weber, scholars seldom do so. 'As Weber pointed out, the *value-laden nature* of assumptions can never be eliminated. Yet if a theory is to be used or tested, the theorist's implicit assumptions which form the boundaries of the theory *must* be understood. Unfortunately, theorists rarely state their assumptions' (Bacharach, 1989, p. 498; emphasis added here). This observation is echoed in Calas and Smircich's (1999, p. 666) plea for scholars to 'no longer avoid' making explicit the moral-point-of-view that underpins organizational theory and practice. Failure to do so results in fruitless debates among scholars (Bacharach, 1989), hides organizational stakeholders' interests (Calas and Smircich, 1999; Perrow, 1985), and stifles opportunities for practitioners and scholars to give voice to non-utilitarian, non-conventional, 'moral impulses' (ten Bos and Willmott, 2001).

Second, our paper is important because it explicitly develops a non-conventional ideal-type of management, consistent with Weber's hope that his analysis would – as ten Bos and Willmott (2001, p. 791) note – prompt others to 'struggle to assess, choose and enact a [more desirable alternative] value commitment' rather than 'thoughtlessly' adopt the mainstream moral-point-of-view. More specifically, Weber called readers to escape the 'iron cage' that the secularized Protestant Ethic moral-point-of-view had evolved into. On this point, his influence in the contemporary management literature is perhaps most evident among critical theorists who, beyond simply identifying and criticizing dysfunctional aspects of the status quo, increasingly echo Weber's call for the articulation of *alternative* moral-points-of-view upon which to develop a new paradigm of management (e.g. Alvesson, 1985; Alvesson and Willmott, 1992). Moreover, our study may be of particular interest because our targeted focus on *management* represents a welcome counterbalance to the tendency for 'critical theorists [to] ignore managers' (Clegg and Hardy, 1999, p. 437), even though 'managers are the principal carriers of the bureaucratic ethic' (Gephart, 1996, p. 29). Although critical theorists might be suspicious because our moral-point-of-view happens to be based on a religious tradition, we note that Perrow (1985, p. 282) indicates the possibility of a critical approach based on the values of 'the Man from Galilee and his radical social doctrine'.

The paper is divided into three parts. First, we review Weber's description of the moral-point-of-view underpinning his conventional ideal-type of management and present four Weberian ideal-types of management. In the second part we introduce a non-conventional moral-point-of-view to undergird our development of a radical ideal-type of management, which our presentation links to related concepts in the management literature. Finally, we discuss implications of our study for critical theory, stakeholder theory, and for management scholarship in general.

## WEBER, THEOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT

### Weber on Conventional Management, Individualism and Materialism<sup>[3]</sup>

Max Weber identifies two hallmarks that continue to characterize the conventional ideal-type of management theory and practice: individualism and materialism. First, he traces the modern-day secular notion of *individualism* to an idea of *calling* emphasized during the Reformation, where individuals were called by God not only to work hard at their jobs but, moreover, that the 'only way of living acceptably to God was . . . through the fulfillment of the obligations imposed on the *individual* by his [sic] position in the world' (Weber, 1958, p. 80; emphasis added here). According to this view, no one else could help individuals to attain what was the singularly most important thing in their lives during the Reformation, namely, their eternal salvation. No priest (because saved people can understand the word of God only in their heart), no sacraments (although necessary, they did not guarantee salvation), no church (because some of its members were doomed), and not even God (because Christ died only for the elect). Little wonder that such a Protestant Ethic moral-point-of-view gave rise to 'a feeling of unprecedented inner loneliness of the single individual'. Indeed, Weber regards individualism as a defining characteristic of the Protestant Ethic and 'the absolutely decisive difference' from Catholicism (Weber, 1958; pp. 104–5; see also pages 80–1, 160).

Others concur that Weber was 'correct in singling out the doctrine of vocation as the source of the Puritan individualism in the economic realm . . . One could hardly have placed a more radically individualistic doctrine at the center of one's economic ethic . . . The conventional interpretation of the ethic also accurately reflects the Puritan emphasis on material success' (Frey, 1998, p. 1575). The popularized notion of an 'invisible hand', ascribed to Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*,<sup>[4]</sup> is also often identified as an important legitimating event that helped to transform individualism from being 'roundly condemned in the Bible and unheard of in most ancient societies' into a virtue of the highest order:

The theory Smith defended, generally referred to as 'the free enterprise system', is that individual members of society, left alone to pursue their own economic

interests, will ultimately benefit not only themselves but also society as a whole. As Smith imaginatively put it, ‘an invisible hand’ would guide apparently chaotic individualism to collective good. (Solomon and Hanson, 1983, p. 37)

*Materialism.* A second defining feature of the secularized Protestant Ethic moral-point-of-view is its peculiar emphasis on materialism. Weber quotes John Wesley, who describes how the Protestant Ethic gave rise to materialism: ‘religion must necessarily produce both *industry* and *frugality*, and these cannot help but produce *riches*’ (Weber, 1958, p. 175; emphasis added here).<sup>[5]</sup> Put in contemporary terms, the overarching goal of the conventional ideal-type of management is to maximize productivity and efficiency, which in turn will maximize profitability. Weber’s personal dislike for the materialism that characterizes the secularized Protestant Ethic moral-point-of-view is captured in his famous metaphor of the ‘iron cage’:

*the care for external goods* should only lie on the shoulders of the ‘saint like a light cloak, which can be thrown aside at any moment’. But fate has decreed that the cloak should become an *iron cage* . . . material goods have gained an increasing and finally inexorable power over the lives of men [sic] as at no previous period in history. (Weber, 1958, p. 181; emphasis added here)

Solomon and Hanson (1983) echo Weber when they suggest that: ‘The idea that making a profit is a legitimate activity would have horrified most people until very recently’. They go on to suggest that a key part of this legitimation process involved the perception that some Reformation preachers had identified material wealth as a sign of eventual salvation.

*Supporting virtues and practices.* In addition to the two overarching goals of materialism and individualism, Weber describes a series of *supporting* virtues and managerial practices associated with the conventional ‘formal rationality’ of the secularized Protestant Ethic moral-point-of-view. Four important ones include his description of how:

- (1) *Brotherly love* gives rise to *specialization*: ‘[S]pecialized labour in callings [is] justified in terms of brotherly love . . . [which] is expressed in the first place in the fulfilment of the daily tasks . . . in the interest of the rational organization of our social environment . . . [T]he division of labor and occupations in society’ was seen as ‘a direct consequence of the divine scheme of things’ (Weber, 1958, pp. 108–9, 160).
- (2) *Submission* gives rise to *centralization*: The differentiation of people into ‘different classes’ (e.g. employers versus employees) is ‘a direct result of divine will’ and therefore not something to be challenged (Weber, 1958, pp. 160, 178).

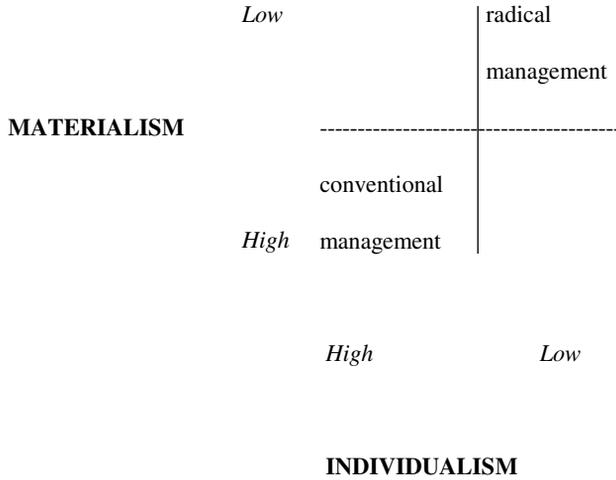


Figure 1. Four Weberian ‘ideal-types’ of management vis-à-vis their relative emphasis on materialism and individualism

- (3) *Obedience* gives rise to *formalization*: ‘[E]mphasis was placed on those parts of the Old Testament which praise formal legality as a sign of conduct pleasing to God’ (Weber, 1958, pp. 165, 123).
- (4) *Conforming-to-non-worldliness* gives rise to *standardization*: ‘[T]he repudiation of all idolatry of the flesh’ serves as an ‘ideal foundation’ to undergird the ‘powerful tendency toward uniformity of life, which to-day so immensely aids the standardization of production’ (Weber, 1958, p. 169).

*Four ideal-types of management.* Figure 1 depicts four Weberian ideal-types of management. We will here call ‘conventional management’ the ideal-type that places a relatively high emphasis on both materialism and on individualism.<sup>[6]</sup> For Weber, the conventional ideal-type of management is manifest in what he calls ‘formal rationality’, but he does not promote this as a noble ideal worth striving for. Rather, Weber uses the term *ideal-type* at an abstract conceptual level to denote a prototypical managerial style or organizational form, and he challenges readers to develop a ‘radical management’<sup>[7]</sup> ideal-type that is relatively low in both materialism and individualism.

Despite repeated voices echoing Weber’s call for the development of non-conventional management models (e.g. Durkheim, 1958; Etzioni, 1988; Golombiewski, 1989; Gorringer, 1994; Reilly and Kyj, 1994; Wuthnow, 1997), such work remains uncommon (e.g. Alvesson and Willmott, 1992; Power, 1995). This paucity can be attributed to a process of secularization and normalization. Regarding secularization, Weber describes how the ‘religious roots’ of conventional management have ‘died out slowly, giving way to utilitarian worldliness’ (Weber, 1958, p. 176). This is evident, for example, in how ‘time’ went from being seen as ‘infinitely valu-

able because every hour lost is lost to labour for the Glory of God' to Benjamin Franklin's secular maxim that 'time is money' (Weber, 1958, p. 158). This process of secularization has been so thorough that the 'capitalist system . . . no longer needs the support of any religious forces, and [instead] feels the attempts of religion to influence economic life, in so far as they can still be felt at all, to be as much an unjustified interference as is regulation by the State' (Weber, 1958, p. 72). Regarding normalization, via a long-term process of a social (re)construction of reality (Berger and Luckman, 1967), the secularized Protestant Ethic – which had initially been a novel and socially-disruptive moral-point-of-view – is today often perceived as an uncontestable, objective, morally-neutral 'reality' (e.g. Roberts, 2002, p. 305). In Garfinkel's (1964, p. 225, emphasis added here) terms, the everyday rules associated with a conventional moral-point-of-view have become wrongly perceived as '*natural* facts of life', because we have forgotten that the materialist-individualist emphases are in fact 'through and through *moral* facts of life'. Building on Weber's metaphor, Roberts (2002, p. 179) likens the conventional view to 'a garment that fits so closely that we may fail to notice its existence'; it has become an integral part of our identity, and its removal is akin to being 'skinned alive'. Indeed, challenging traditional 'American values and ideals' like individualism and profit-maximization may result in being condemned and judged as 'perverse', 'irresponsible', and 'downright subversive' (Hardy and Clegg, 1999, p. 381; Van Maanen, 1995, p. 692).

## A RADICAL IDEAL-TYPE OF MANAGEMENT

As depicted in Table I, the moral-point-of-view undergirding the conventional ideal-type of management can be seen to have three general components: (1) 'overarching goals' (materialism and individualism); (2) a 'general rationale' explaining why these materialist-individualist goals are worthy of pursuit (steeped in notions of 'calling' and 'utilitarian worldliness'); and (3) 'supporting virtues and practices' (e.g. submission gives rise to centralization, etc). We will use these same three components to guide our presentation of the moral-point-of-view that underpins our radical ideal-type of management.<sup>[8]</sup>

As indicated in Table I, once each element of our radical moral-point-of-view has been described, we will begin to draw out its managerial implications by coupling it with related concepts and empirical examples from the mainstream management literature. Note that we are not claiming that the management studies that we highlight here necessarily capture the essence of our radical ideal-type. Rather, we connect our radical moral-point-of-view with existing management concepts in order to provide a helpful glimpse of what radical management can look like, thereby offering a 'plausible "other"' to complement conventional management (Roberts, 2002, p. 20). This follows MacIntyre's (1981, p. 23) dictum that ' . . . we have not yet fully understood the claims of any moral philosophy until we

Table I. Moral-points-of-view of conventional and radical management

|   | <i>Conventional management</i>  |  | <i>Radical management</i>   |   |
|---|---|--|---|---|
|   | <i>Protestant Ethic</i>   | <i>Secular theory of bureaucracy</i>                                 | <i>Anabaptist-Mennonite</i>   | <i>Related concepts from management literature</i>  |
| <i>General rationale</i>                | God calls individuals to their jobs                                     | Utilitarian worldliness<br>Bureaucratic individualism                | Adopt God's character in the way we manage  | Virtue theory   |
| <i>Overarching goals</i>                | Industriousness<br>Frugality/asceticism<br>Wealth<br>Personal salvation | Productivity<br>Efficiency<br>Profitability<br>Competitiveness       | Rule in image of God<br>Foster community<br>Meaningful work<br>Care for creation                  | Servant leadership<br>Stakeholding<br>Job crafting<br>Sustaincentrism   |
| <i>Supporting virtues and practices</i> | Brotherly love<br>Submission<br>Obedience<br>Non-worldliness            | Specialization<br>Centralization<br>Formalization<br>Standardization | Love (mercy/compassion)<br>Submission (yieldedness)<br>Obedience (discernment)<br>Non-worldliness | Sensitive to people ill-served by traditions<br>Respect and expect to learn from others<br>Group problem-solving and decision-making<br>Experiment with non-conventional practice |

have spelled out what its social embodiment would be' (cf. Alvesson and Deetz, 1999).

### **Choosing a Moral-Point-Of-View Upon Which to Develop Our Radical Management Ideal-Type**

A radical ideal-type of management could be developed based on any moral-point-of-view that de-emphasizes materialism and individualism. For example, a radical moral-point-of-view may be religious or not, have a written or an oral tradition, have a long or a brief history, be grounded in practice or in theory, and so on. We will identify several reasons why the radical ideal-type of management that we develop here is based on an Anabaptist-Mennonite moral-point-of-view. However, because it is unusual to present a religious moral-point-of-view in secular management journals, allow us to address some potential misunderstandings up front. First, our goal is not to convert readers to adopt a particular religion or belief in God, or that others should blindly accept our interpretation of the biblical text. Nor is it our intent to argue that all organizations should be religious, or that all people should be religious, or that every moral-point-of-view of management is or should be based on religion. Similarly, we are not advocating that managers should hire people who share an identical theological background. Finally, the contribution that our moral-point-of-view can make towards developing a radical ideal-type of management is not dependent on whether one believes in the authority of the biblical text. The main goal and contribution of our paper is independent of one's religious views, or even whether one believes in a Creator.

*Why an Anabaptist-Mennonite perspective?* Every person brings a moral-point-of-view, whether religious or non-religious, to their choices, work and management style. We concur with those who argue that all moral-points-of-view are ultimately based on assumptions that cannot be proven to be true (see e.g. Daniels et al., 2000, p. 545; Hare, 1961, p. 69; Hartland-Swann, 1960, p. 36; MacIntyre, 1981, pp. 57–9). Our choosing to develop a radical moral-point-of-view of management based on an Anabaptist-Mennonite perspective is appropriate for several reasons. To start, as is evident in the practices of some contemporary managers within the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition, their moral-point-of-view de-emphasizes materialism and individualism. For example, whereas conventional wisdom suggests that firms whose managers fail to maximize profits are destined to suffer in an economic marketplace that emphasizes competition, an intriguing example that suggests otherwise is provided by the Amish entrepreneurs of Pennsylvania and Ohio (Kraybill and Nolt, 1995). Due to decreasing access to farmland, since 1970 an increasing number of Amish have had to give up their agrarian way of life and go into commercial business. Despite all sorts of non-conventional 'constraints' (e.g. taboos on automobiles, electricity, computers and telephones), less than 5 per

cent of their more than 1000 small business start-ups have failed. Indeed, numerous examples suggest that when Amish businesses become *too* financially successful, the community discerns that they are to be sold or sub-divided. One entrepreneur explains that she turned down a good opportunity to expand her business because she already had ‘enough’ and did not want the ‘head-aches’ associated with getting bigger. Another Amish contractor noted: ‘The hardest thing about a small business is staying small’ (Kraybill and Nolt, 1995, p. 143). ‘Few would have the personal fortitude to limit growth, but within the context of church and family, they are able to make such choices’ (Kraybill and Nolt, 1995, p. 150). In another example, a Mennonite manager describes his very non-conventional response to discovering that his family firm would soon gain to enjoy an unexpected monopoly in a particular region:

Sometimes our growth conflicted with principles of the church. I can think of one conflict at least that we had later on when we were [well-established in our industry]. We decided to grow by moving into [another city, where we bought out one of two smaller competitors in our industry]. Then we realized that there just wasn’t room for both of us in that market, and that it wasn’t *fair* to the other company. And so we sold out to him . . . We realized our error, and retreated, and sold out to him. We had wanted to expand, but maybe we hadn’t carefully thought through the effects of what we did. We didn’t want to compete in that way. (Dyck, 2002)

Anabaptists’ renunciation of materialism and individualism is best represented by the notion of *Gelassenheit* (yieldedness), which ‘was the term early Anabaptists used for submission to the will of God and the community, downplaying the *individual* striving and acquisitiveness of *materialism*’ (Redekop et al., 1995, p. 27; emphasis added here). More specifically, in terms of individualism, ‘there is no evidence that Anabaptist-Mennonites considered work to be a calling and hence a means to salvation, either theological or in practice’ (Redekop et al., 1995, p. 88). Rather, Anabaptists argued that the only way people could only be ‘saved from the self-destructive tendencies of selfishness or egotism’ was by yieldedness to God expressed in a community of believers (Redekop et al., 1995, p. 38).

Historically, Anabaptist-Mennonites have often been described as radicals (e.g. Goertz, 1982). Mennonites derive their name from Menno Simons, a former priest who left the Catholic church and gave early leadership to the Anabaptist movement (similarly, modern-day Amish are named after another early Anabaptist leader, Jakob Ammann). The Anabaptist movement can be traced back to the 1520s, when a group of people acted on their belief that the decision to join the church should be made by adults, not via the then-customary mode of infant baptism. At that time adult baptism represented a threat both to the church (early Anabaptists were accused of being heretics for going against the existing church

doctrine) and to the state (because adult baptism essentially separated church and state, thereby weakening the influence of the latter). Compounding the difficulties for Anabaptist-Mennonites was their commitment to non-violence (as a Historic Peace Church, along with Quakers and Brethren in Christ, Mennonite-Anabaptists refuse to use violent force or weapons), which put them further at odds with both the state (which could not trust citizens who refuse to fight for it) and the church (both Protestants and Catholics depended on the state to prosecute heretics) and other religious groups who are prepared to use force to impose 'good' (e.g. Mennonites do not believe in the idea of Just War). One result of their radical views was that Anabaptists, on a per capita basis, have been one of the most martyred groups in history.<sup>[9]</sup>

Finally, our decision to ground our discussion in an Anabaptist-Mennonite perspective is appropriate because this paper's authors are members of the Anabaptist-Mennonite community. An important part of our paper is to challenge readers to consider how their own moral-points-of-view inform their management thinking and practice. According to moral philosophers, if it is to have scholarly integrity and be truly inclusive, it is preferable that a task like ours be rooted in a explicitly specified moral tradition rather than attempt to base it on a generic, ostensibly all-inclusive moral-point-of-view (e.g. Frankena, 1973; Herman, 2001). Weaver and Agle (2002) come to a similar conclusion when they argue that scholars who examine the linkages between religious moral-points-of-view and management practices should go beyond simply measuring the religiosity of managers, but rather should explicitly take into account the *particular* beliefs associated with practitioners' religions.

### **'General Rationale' for Radical Management**

Like others, Anabaptist-Mennonites have found the biblical creation account helpful for developing their moral-point-of-view (e.g. Bauman, 1998; Finger, 1989; Herman, 2001). Notably, the creation accounts have been especially important in the 'theology of work' literature, understandably so because they describe how and why God works (Pope John Paul II, 1981; Bernbaum and Steer, 1986). In much the same way, the first four books of the New Testament – which describe the life and teachings of Jesus – have also been particularly useful for understanding issues related to everyday work (e.g. Pope John Paul II, 1981; Yoder, 1972).

The first chapter of Genesis pictures God as a creator (or craftsman) who works systematically from day to day through a six-day work-week to overcome chaos and to create a world that would support life. The work of God in creation is in keeping with God's character and will (Bernbaum and Steer, 1986). According to the biblical record, God establishes what furthers true life and is good, and also what negates life and is evil and leads to death. In this way, God's character is revealed in creation itself. After establishing these over-arching parameters of

life, God then enlists humans to *collaborate* with God in working them out in detail. God creates humans in the image of God, as God's representatives on earth to manage creation consistent with God's character. God's moral order is to be reflected in human actions, choices and social structures (Kaufman, 1968).

In sum, the 'general rationale' for our moral-point-of-view of radical management is directly related to the actions and character of God. Humans who represent God on earth should work and manage in ways that are consistent with God's character (e.g. as evident in the 'creation mandates' described below).

In terms of the contemporary management literature, aspects of our radical moral-point-of-view of management are evident in several philosophical premises, but our current endeavour may be especially well-linked to aspects of 'virtue theory' (e.g. Huebner, 1993; see also Harder, 1997; Hershberger, 1958). We concur with the view that the creation story represents a 'drama of choice' model, where humans become responsible '*moral* persons – persons to whom things appear as either good or bad and who can pick either of them' (Bauman, 1998, p. 12). This is consistent with our focus on the implications of God's *character* for management, rather than trying to identify specific rules for management. According to Hill (1997), 'the strongest foundation of Christian ethics in business is not rules, but in 'the changeless character of God' and the desire to lead a life, both personal and professional, which seeks to emulate that character' (Harder, 1997, p. 20). Character provides order, but loosed from a need for *legalistic* rules. A character ethic permits someone to do one thing in one situation and a different thing in another situation, and both are an expression of the same ethic, without being a rule (Hershberger, 1958). As Pincoffs (1986) puts it, character focuses attention on answerable questions like: 'What would it be correct for me to do?' rather than unanswerable questions like: 'What is the right thing to do?' (cited in Mintz, 1996, p. 832). Rather than focus on the impossible task of trying to design a perfect management and social structure (all structures are prone to abuse, although some structures are less oppressive than others), the focus is on freely manifesting the character of God within any social structure and thereby improve it.

#### **Four 'Overarching Goals' to Guide Radical Management**

The first four responsibilities given to humankind in the creation account (Genesis 1–3) – which are sometimes referred to as the 'creation mandates' (Chewning, 1989, p. 19) – serve as the basis for our four overarching goals of our Anabaptist-Mennonite radical ideal-type of management. We will describe, in turn, each of these four and connect them to related studies from the management literature. The first, and broadest in scope, is to manage 'in the image of God', which we will link to management literature in the area of servant leadership. The second is to live in community, which we will link to stakeholder theory. The third is to engage in meaningful work, exemplified in 'naming' creation and Sabbath rest,

which we will link to job crafting. The fourth is to care for creation, which we will link with the current interest on care for the natural environment.

*Creation mandate #1: To manage creation in a God-like manner.* The first responsibility given to humankind is to manage creation ‘in the image of God’. This means that humankind is to help sustain the created order, to bring order out of chaos, to work towards life and to overcome what is anti-life. More specifically, people are called to ‘rule over’ or ‘have dominion’ in the world under God (Genesis 1:26,28; note that to ‘have dominion’ is clearly different than ‘to dominate’). These verbs are borrowed from the language associated with royalty.

Every human is called by God, so to speak, to be a little king [sic] over earth. But if we ask what kind of a king, the answer is clear: a king in the image of God; someone who takes care of God’s creation with the love and concern for it that God models when God creates it carefully and calls it ‘very good’. Humans are to be God’s administrators of the earth, in the image of God, i.e. administrating it in imitation of God, not imitation of warrior kings who exploit and destroy. (Janzen, 1999, pp. 5–6)

Put in more contemporary language, humankind’s first responsibility is to manage with God as mentor.<sup>[10]</sup>

Just as royal responsibilities are the first ones given to humankind in the creation account, so also the language of ‘kingship’ serves as a focal point of Jesus’ teachings. Most notably, in the biblical account Jesus teaches more frequently about the *Kingdom* of God than any other topic, and instructs his followers to *seek first* the Kingdom of God (Luke 12:31). Because this ‘Kingdom’ is not primarily territorial or national in nature, a more accurate translation might be the ‘kingly rule’, ‘reign’, or, in more contemporary terms, to seek first the implications of God’s character for management.<sup>[11]</sup> The reign of God is where the will of God is done.

In particular, the hallmark of the God’s character is *service*, which people are called to be manifest here ‘on earth as it is in Heaven’ (Matthew 6:10). The Kingdom of God passages refer to ‘a new social order’ that is to be characterized ‘by an alternative to accepted patterns of leadership. The alternative to how kings of the earth rule is not “spirituality” but *servanthood*’ (Yoder, 1972, p. 46, emphasis added here; see also Cedar, 1987; Moxnes, 1988, pp. 159, 166; Oakman, 1986, p. 207; Steven and Schoberg, 1990; Wink, 1992). Jesus himself ‘did not come to be served, but to serve’ (Matthew 20:28). The classic example occurs when he washes the feet of his disciples: ‘I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you’ (see John 13:1–17). Furthermore, the biblical record shows that his servant leadership style is precisely what followers are called to emulate (Yoder, 1972, p. 97). In taking on ‘the very nature of a servant’ (Philippians 2:7–8)

Jesus models how to transcend, and to inform and transform, organizational structures and systems.

This idea of an all-powerful God taking on the very nature of a servant, a God who wants humankind to make a free choice as to which moral-point-of-view they adopt, is an integral component of Anabaptist-Mennonite theology. People who imitate God's example will not use their power (political, physical, positional) to coercively impose their moral-point-of-view on others. Indeed, '[t]hose identifying with the reign of God . . . will *insist* that power or control *not* be used to move the game in the direction of the goal as they see it' (Harder, 2001, p. 89; emphasis added here). Rather, management is to be an expression of what it means to imitate God, whose character and love deliberately forsakes (conventional) power.

To elaborate on this idea of creating a new social order that is characterized by service-oriented leadership, think of two 'realities' being socially created in parallel (Berger and Luckman, 1967). The first social 'reality' is created when, for example, a group of people accept and act in accordance with a conventional moral-point-of-view. A parallel reality can be created when even just one person in the group embraces and acts in accordance with a radical moral-point-of-view. The meaning and kinds of actions elicited will vary along with which moral-point-of-view actors perceive as 'real'. The challenge from an Anabaptist-Mennonite moral-point-of-view is to articulate and live according to a new reality (e.g. radical management), while living in a world characterized by conventional management (Lehman, 2003). 'Jesus' teaching is designed to be lived out in this world and Christians should adopt it . . . whether the world accepts it or not' (Halteman, 2001, p. 280). Radical managers serve others by living in a way that eschews conventional power.

The contemporary management literature has various theories that can provide insight into what it means to rule in the image of God, but servant leadership is of particular relevance. Though servant leadership has been slow in making inroads in the mainstream management literature, it has its share of high-profile champions, including Peter Senge who claims that 'No one in the past 30 years has had a more profound impact on thinking about leadership than Robert Greenleaf' (quoted in Brumback, 1999, p. 807; see also Block, 1993; Lehman, 2003; Spears, 1998). Greenleaf, a Quaker businessman and thinker, coined the term 'servant leadership' drawing from an idea of servanthood that 'is deep within our Judeo-Christian heritage' (Greenleaf, 1996). He contends that the greatest leader is a servant first, who has subsequently consciously chosen to aspire to lead. This is in sharp contrast to someone who is a leader first, for example, in order to maximize their own power or to acquire material possessions.

Greenleaf's (1977, pp. 13–14) definition of servant leadership has three inter-related components. First, servant leaders facilitate others to 'grow as persons'. From our point of view, this focus on *persons* refers to someone in relation to others – rather than on *individuals* apart or separated from others –

and thus fosters community. Second, servant leadership is said to be evident when others become 'healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, [and] more likely to themselves become servants'. Such managers model service, treat others as moral persons, and encourage them to do likewise. Finally, servant leadership is defined as having a positive effect on, or at least not harming, those stakeholders who are 'the least privileged in society'. Thus, servant leaders have a special concern for facilitating change that improves the lot of people who are particularly disadvantaged by the status quo.

Perhaps the best description of how servant leadership is evident in practice is found in Nielsen (1996), who compares conventional and non-conventional approaches to resolving ethical problems that arise in organizations (e.g. suppose a conventional business practice is perceived to disadvantage 'the least privileged in society'). In contrast to conventional approaches, which might use force (e.g. via top-down punishment/compliance codes, or bottom-up whistle-blowing) or persuasion (win-lose or win-win negotiating) to resolve such problems, Nielsen (1996) describes a non-conventional 'friendly disentangling' method that was utilized by Robert Greenleaf while a senior manager at AT&T to increase the number of women hired and the number of black managers (both were underrepresented at AT&T).

There are four 'steps' to the friendly-disentangling method. First, once a manager becomes aware of an ethical problem, rather than blame individuals for causing the problem, the manager should determine to what extent 'we' have a problem; that is, to determine whether the source of the problematic behaviour is rooted in the 'biases of an embedded tradition' (e.g. a particular moral-point-of-view embedded within the organization) (Nielsen, 1996, p. 107). Thus, for example, perhaps the number of women being hired or the number of blacks being promoted into management positions was part of the unspoken traditional moral-point-of-view evident at AT&T. Second, the manager should consciously and deliberately adopt 'a friendly manner' when approaching the persons who are involved in exhibiting the problematic behaviour. This step manifests a fundamental principle that there is 'that of Go(o)d in everyone', that everyone should be treated with dignity as a moral person. When Greenleaf met with managers, for example, he talked about shared experiences and friendships at AT&T, and how well they had worked together in the past. Third, the manager should ask for the subordinates' help in 'disentangling' the problematic behaviour from the moral-point-of-view that it is associated with. Greenleaf did not use his hierarchical authority to generate or to impose solutions. Rather, Greenleaf invited the managers who reported to him to discuss the moral-point-of-view that gave rise to the problem. And finally, if these discussions result in some organizational members wanting to 'experiment' by acting in accordance with an alternative moral-point-of-view, then the manager should facilitate such experimentation. Greenleaf supported managers who were willing to experimentally implement

new practices that sought to overcome problems associated with the status quo (e.g. changing physical job demands, providing training programmes).

*Creation mandate #2: Fostering community.* We are social beings who need each other. Humans are to live responsibly in communities, creating and re-creating social structures and systems, which are sometimes referred to as ‘principalities and powers’ in the biblical record. More specifically, people are called to strive to build communities that manifest the character of God and fullness of life. Such communities will not be based on coercion; and any sacrifice people make for each other will be voluntary. The biblical narrative has numerous examples of what it means to live in communities (e.g. Leviticus 25)<sup>[12]</sup> and describes how God’s people were sent into exile as a result of having permitted community-disrupting injustice (e.g. Amos).

The ‘keys’ to operationalize the implications of God’s character for management are found in practising ‘loosing’ and ‘binding’ via *community* discernment (Matthew 16:17–19; 18:15–20). Jesus describes how the church as a community is to challenge and loose (or free) its members from chaotic and destructive structures and systems, and to develop and model alternative life-enhancing practices that members can bind themselves to (Schroeder, 1993, p. 149). In our terms, the challenge is to identify and become loosed from problematic practices and ways of thinking that may be associated with the conventional ideal-type of management, and to identify and become bound to theory and practice associated with radical management. Two components are central to achieve this. First, decision-making is to occur in the context of a *community* and thus with consideration of various stakeholders; binding and loosing occurs when ‘two or three are gathered’ (Matthew 18:15–20). Second, decisions have a dual function: to *loose* people from structures and ways that are oppressive, and to have people *bind* themselves to decisions that are life-giving. This duality is a hallmark of biblical teachings, and it suggests that moral managerial life walks on two feet: one stepping away from that which is bad, and the other stepping toward that which is good (e.g. putting off one’s old self, putting on a new self). Loosing and binding demands making the effort to identify and to name socially-constructed structures and systems that are oppressive, in order to be loosed from them, and at the same time to make the effort to identify, socially-construct and become bound to new life-giving structures and systems.

A particularly relevant perspective from the contemporary management literature for our study comes from a stream within stakeholder theory that challenges the ‘morally untenable’ conventional focus on maximizing merely stockholder wealth (Donaldson and Preston, 1995, p. 88). This stream contends that all of an organization’s legitimate stakeholders’ interests should be weighed equally, and has a particular focus on the responsibilities of managers: ‘What are their primary obligations? How do they treat people?’ (Jones and Wicks, 1999, p. 209). In terms

of our radical moral-point-of-view, stakeholding suggests that managers are to be loosed from the conventional primary emphasis on maximizing shareholder wealth, and to become bound to new modes of organizing that foster community.

A glimpse of this sort of radical stakeholding can be seen in Kraybill and Nolt's (1995) description of Amish entrepreneurs, where the church's distinctive moral-point-of-view is evident in the day-to-day operations of businesses. For example, the community-discerned practice of keeping Amish firms small in size illustrates a de-emphasis on materialism and individualism, and facilitates taking into consideration a variety of stakeholders. It limits opportunities for wide socioeconomic variation within the community, provides a safeguard against pride, and allows for a greater proportion of the community to become entrepreneurs. It also can be seen to facilitate meaningful work (see 'creation mandate #3') because it ensures that everyone (including the owner) in the firm is hands-on and has the satisfaction of knowing how their efforts fit into the 'big picture' of the firm and provides greater opportunity for people to shape their own work.

*Creation mandate #3: Meaningful work.* To be human is to be involved in meaningful, purposive work (this includes non-remunerative work). Just as God works, people work. And just as God rested on the seventh day after working for six days, so also humankind should similarly allow for times of re-creation because 'Sabbath rest transforms work' (Janzen, 1999; Meeks, 1989, p. 139). Work is necessary if we are to live. We need to work together in organized community so as to have food to eat, clothing, housing and other necessities. People are created equal, but will play different roles in community. 'Human work is a key, probably the essential key, to the whole social question' (Pope John Paul II, 1981).

In the biblical record, people work within creation and as collaborators with God (Bernbaum and Steer, 1986, p. 57; Pope John Paul II, 1981). This is symbolized in the first work task assigned to humankind, that of naming the animals (Genesis 2:19–20), where humankind imitates God's creative naming activity (e.g. God 'names' day/night, sky/land) and thereby gives 'meaning' to creation (Kline, 1970, p. 84; see also Genesis 3 ff, where humankind 'names' nakedness and shame, division of labour, family and social structures, etc). From this point of view, 'naming' can be seen to symbolize processes associated with the social construction of reality (Berger and Luckman, 1967). Naming our physical and social world orients our position in the world, defines the choices we can make, informs the assumptions that we order our lives by, and acts as a self-fulfilling prophecy by shaping subsequent choices and relationships (Davis et al., 1997; see also 'enactment' as described by Daft and Weick, 1984). This symbolic work is especially important for managers (e.g. Schein, 1985). We would expect a conventional moral-point-of-view to give rise to naming and creating structures and systems that enhance productivity and profit-maximization, whereas a radical moral-point-of-view would focus on naming and creating structures and systems that facilitate

servant leadership and meaningful work. This dimension of 'naming' work is also evident in our discussion of loosing and binding, where people deliberately name what it is that they are to be loosed from and bound to (Lehman, 2003, makes a similar point).

Possibly the closest thing that the New Testament provides by way of a manual specifically for managerial work is found in I. Peter 2:13 ff, which provides a list of guidelines for managing a multi-family secular organizational 'household' or business (Schroeder, 1959). In this passage readers are told to *submit* to one another, but not with the same understanding of submission evident in Weber's secularized Protestant Ethic (i.e. where submission gave rise to centralization). Rather, in contrast to the norms of biblical times, where the moral-point-of-view of the manager was imposed on other members of the household, the point of the passage is that *everyone* is a moral person, regardless of their hierarchical position. The passage is precisely not advocating submission as covering obedience to unjust structures (cf. Colossians 3:18 ff; Ephesians 5:21 ff), but rather describes how exposing exploitive structures can serve to transform them. This may be best illustrated by clarifying what Jesus actually meant when he said: 'If anyone strikes you on the *right* cheek, turn the other also' (Matthew 5:39; drawn from Wink, 1992, p. 176). Jesus' listeners would have known that he was talking about a back-of-right-hand slap landing on someone's right cheek, because a right-handed fist would land on someone's left cheek (and because a left-handed hit was unthinkable in that day since 'the left hand was used only for unclean tasks'). The symbolism of such a back-of-right-hand slap was clear to Jesus' listeners, because this was the usual way of putting subordinates in their place (indeed, to strike a peer in this humiliating back-of-right-hand manner exacted a monetary fine 100 times greater than to inflict physical pain with a full fist). Because it is impossible to hit someone's left cheek with the back of one's right hand, and because in that day it was illegal to strike *subordinates* with an open hand or fist, subordinates who turned their left cheeks to an oppressor were effectively claiming equality, asserting that they too were moral persons (i.e. no longer to be treated as conventional subordinates). As Gandhi taught, 'The first principle of nonviolent action is that of noncooperation with everything humiliating' (Wink, 1992, p. 177).

Yoder (1972, p. 175) characterizes this type of submission as 'revolutionary subordination', which suggests that unjust attributes of a particular social system can change when people within it freely choose to live according to an alternative moral-point-of-view. In our terms, by their modelling and acting according to a radical moral-point-of-view in the workplace, managers can expose shortcomings associated with the status quo and thereby facilitate voluntary change.

In terms of the contemporary management literature, 'job crafting' is of particular relevance to our discussion because of its emphasis on how job-holders socially-construct their own jobs based on their moral-point-of-view and community-building relationships. Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001, p. 179) define job

crafting as 'the physical and cognitive changes individuals make in the task or relational boundaries of their work'. For example, job crafting helps to explain why some hospital cleaning staff see their work as tidying up people's messes, whereas others see themselves as part of an overall team caring for and healing people. Compared to previous studies in the meaning of work, job crafting has three distinctives, each of which draws attention to how jobholders socially construct (name) the work that they do. First, rather than examine how jobs are designed by others (e.g. Hackman and Oldham, 1980), job crafting focuses on how jobholders define their own jobs. Second, instead of emphasizing how a job's design affects jobholders' subsequent attitudes, motivation and interpretation of their work (e.g. Griffin and McMahan, 1994; Ilgen and Hollenbeck, 1992), job crafting is concerned with how employees' values affect how they design their job. And third, whereas most theories of the meaning of work are individually-based (Brief and Nord, 1990), job crafting theory emphasizes how jobholders 'build relationships with others at work to reframe the meaning of work and their work identities' (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001, p. 193). From our moral-point-of-view, consistent with job crafting theory, radical managers should enable others to exercise their moral natures in the ongoing work of naming their jobs. Moreover, our moral-point-of-view suggests that such naming would also serve to draw attention to, and help to change, exploitive aspects of social structures.

*Creation mandate #4: Care for creation.* Humankind is given the responsibility to care for and sustain the God-created order, with a view to the ongoing life on earth and future posterity. All creation, not just humankind, is part of the moral order (e.g. Granberg-Michaelson, 1988; McDonagh, 1986). For example, when people make irresponsible choices, even the natural environment suffers (Hosea 4:1–3).

Contemporary management literature has begun to recognize that conventional management contributes to the degradation of the natural environment (Shrivastava, 1995). Moreover, some contend that 'business is the only institution in the modern world powerful enough to foster the changes necessary for ecological and social sustainability' (Gladwin et al., 1995, p. 899), but it seems unlikely that this can happen under the rubric of conventional management (e.g. Dyck, 1994a).

Gladwin et al.'s (1995) notion of sustaincentrism provides a helpful link to the management literature for this fourth overarching goal. Sustaincentrism, inspired in part by 'the stewardship admonitions common to the major religions', stands in contrast to 'the moral monism' that characterizes both technocentrism (i.e. where productivity dominates the natural environment) and extreme ecocentrism (where concerns for the natural environment dominate the needs of humankind). Rather, sustaincentrism is grounded in 'moral pluralism' that affirms both the importance of the natural environment as well as the needs of humankind, now and over time. Gladwin et al. (1995, p. 893) emphasize the need for people to

'learn to satisfy nonmaterial needs in nonmaterial ways and to reduce preoccupation with material, rather than intellectual or spiritual concerns'.

An example of sustaincentrism-in-practice is presented in Dyck (1994a, 1994b) which describes how an Anabaptist-Mennonite farmer, Dan Wiens, deliberately worked with others to develop and put into practice an environmentally-friendlier way of doing agriculture. Dubbed 'Shared Farming', the idea is compellingly simple: 'a group of city people agrees to purchase, in advance, shares of a farmer's harvest of food that has been grown in an environmentally sustainable manner' (Dyck, 1994b, p. 228). Dyck (1994a) contrasts Shared Farming with a conventional agribusiness paradigm, drawing particular attention to their differing underpinning moral-points-of-view. Dyck (1994b) documents the emergence of the Shared Farming prototype (and subsequent rapid diffusion among other farmers), and contrasts Wiens' eco-developmental leadership style with that of conventional change champions. For example, unlike change champions described in the conventional literature, Wiens: 'exemplifies a form of servant leadership' that deliberately receives counsel from others (e.g. prices to be paid for a 'share' of the farm produce have been set by a committee of people purchasing the shares); *invites* 'copy-cat' competition (e.g. he facilitated the start-up of six additional farms in his trading area after his first year); actively downplays his leadership role in the Shared Farming movement; and views Shared Farming as an 'experiment' rather than being confident of its ultimate viability (Dyck, 1994b, p. 242).

### Supporting Virtues and Practices

The four supporting virtues we will examine in this section parallel the same four Weber (1958) uses to underpin conventional management. Of course, from our radical moral-point-of-view the meaning of these virtues, and the managerial practices that they give rise to will be quite different. In Table I we highlight how these four supporting virtues may be evident in practices associated with Greenleaf's four-step friendly-disentangling method (Nielsen, 1996).

*Brotherly love/mercifulness/compassion.* Our radical understanding of the notion of brotherly love/mercifulness/compassion is very different from Weber's (1958) secularized Protestant Ethic, where brotherly love leads to specialization. We start by observing that compassion means, literally, to suffer alongside those who are suffering. Mercifulness involves living with compassion, acknowledging the intrinsic dignity of others, and treating other people – including subordinates, competitors, and the marginalized – as 'thous' rather than as face-less 'its' (Buber, 1958). Brotherly love is disposed to being helpful and deliberately knowing others' needs. The radical nature of this virtue is highlighted when compared to the Greek philosophers (stoics) who taught that we should *not* love our spouse or our child, because to do so would be to become enslaved to them (and thus no longer free). From the

stoics' point of view, to have sympathy or empathy for others was a vice; the biblical ethic to love others makes us their servants. In short, compassion sensitizes and compels people to replace unjust and oppressive social structures. Contemporary management scholars seldom study compassion (for a notable exception, see Frost, 1999). For us, compassion is not unlike the first step in Greenleaf's friendly-disentangling process, insofar as compassion helps managers to become sensitive to 'the least privileged in society', and compassion prevents managers from the 'easy' response of blaming *individuals* for problems.

*Submission.* In contrast to Weber's secularized Protestant Ethic, where submission is seen to support the centralization of power, an Anabaptist-Mennonite understanding of submission is associated with a *decentralization* of power. Submission leads to mutual support and counsel as people treat one another with dignity in community. Thus, it is similar to the idea of approaching others in a friendly, community-building fashion, as evident in the second step of the friendly-disentangling method.

*Obedience.* Unlike Weber's secularized Protestant Ethic, where obedience is seen to give rise to formalization, from our moral-point-of-view obedience is associated with community discernment and yieldedness, an ongoing process where people identify structures and practices that they should be loosed from and develop alternative structures and systems to become bound to. This is not unlike the third step of Greenleaf's model, where the emphasis is on inviting others to corporately examine the traditions that give rise to problems, and to develop possible alternative behaviours that might help to overcome problems.

*Conformity to non-worldliness.* Whereas Weber describes how conformity-to-non-worldliness is seen to support standardization, from a radical moral-point-of-view it supports experimentally implementing evermore just structures and practices that conform to the example of God, trying to be 'in' this world without being 'of' it. Schroeder (1993, p. 169) describes several such 'experiments' where the church has modelled behaviour that has since been adopted by others: 'Examples of modelling include establishing hospitals and hospices, setting up universities and other educational institutions, and calling for penitentiaries so that people would not be executed without the possibility of repentance and mercy'. Thus, this virtue is somewhat similar to Greenleaf's fourth step, where organizational members act in new ways to resolve problems arising from the status quo.

We conclude this section with the observation that, just as the four practices that we described for the secularized Protestant Ethic moral-point-of-view (i.e. formalization, specialization, centralization and standardization) are not the only ways to achieve conventional goals (e.g. profitability and competitiveness), so also the four practices described here (related to Greenleaf's four-step model) are not

the only way of achieving servant leadership, stakeholding, job crafting and sustaincentrism.

## DISCUSSION

We have provided a foundation and begun to develop a general framework of a radical ideal-type of management. Of course, if it is done well, a study like ours will raise far more questions than it can possibly answer. In the remainder of this paper we discuss implications of our paper for critical theory, stakeholder theory, and management scholarship more generally.

### Critical Theory

We expect critical theorists will welcome our description of a radical ideal-type of management because, by not ‘unthinkingly perpetuating’ the status quo, it facilitates ‘a mode of consciousness and cognition that breaks the identity of reality and rationality, viewing social facts [such as the conventional moral-point-of-view of management] not as inevitable constraints on human freedom . . . but as pieces of history that can be changed’ (Agger, 1991, p. 109).

Perhaps one of the more intriguing contributions of our paper is that it describes how managers can simultaneously work within their existing organizations but according to a non-conventional moral-point-of-view. As evident in Greenleaf’s four-step model, our moral-point-of-view inherently permits implementing a radical way of managing on an on-going basis. Each of the four steps can be put into everyday practice; managers *can*: (1) identify shortcomings of the conventional structures and systems (compassion); (2) approach others in a friendly and community-building manner (submission); (3) invite others to identify where loosening and binding may be appropriate (discernment); and (4) experimentally implement practices consistent with a non-conventional moral-point-of-view (conform to non-worldliness). Here, the biblical imagery of being ‘like yeast’ is particularly appropriate, with its implicit notion that even a tiny change can start a process that gives rise to a loaf of bread (cf. Alvesson and Willmott, 1992, on microemancipation). While adding yeast constitutes a transformational change (a *kairos* moment; Bartunek and Necochea, 2000), the results of adopting a radical moral-point-of-view may pervade more slowly and incrementally (*chronos*). In this way, then, the radical ideal-type can be seen as both ‘at hand’ and yet ‘to come’; glimpses of it are all around us, but it is not yet fully practised.

We would be remiss, and inconsistent with critical theory as well as our multiple moral-points-of-view framework, if we failed to note that not all behaviours that appear to be environmentally-friendly or empowering, for example, are necessarily consistent with a radical moral-point-of-view. Rather, as critical theorists are quick to point out, it is important to distinguish managerial practices that are

genuinely emancipatory from those that are 'counterfeit'. In these terms, when champions of counterfeit servant leadership embrace it as a tool to achieve competitive advantage in the global marketplace by yielding 'quality at low cost' (Covey, 1998, p. ix), they are still working within a conventional moral-point-of-view. Similarly, champions of counterfeit community discernment may promote participative decision-making primarily to improve productivity, making it a more subtle and insidious form of management control (e.g. Barker, 1993; Sinclair, 1992). Finally, champions of counterfeit sustainability and meaningful work adopt sustainable practices on a piecemeal basis as a means to maximize profit (Dyck, 1994a). These examples illustrate how the four overarching goals from our radical ideal-type have a qualitatively different meaning when interpreted via a conventional moral-point-of-view, where they are adopted as a means to maximize productivity and competitiveness. If these practices subsequently fail to maximize profits, conventional managers will discard them as yesterday's management fad.<sup>[13]</sup> Moreover, Quinn and Jones (1995) argue that ethical policies and behaviours that are justified in instrumental terms (e.g. conventional profit-maximization) are essentially self-defeating, as they are less likely to benefit the firm economically than if they were justified in non-instrumental (e.g. radical) terms.

### Stakeholding

Our paper offers at least three contributions to stakeholder theory. First, we address each of the three issues Wijnberg (2000) identifies as necessary for the further development of normative stakeholder theory: (a) we explicitly identify overarching goals of radical management (servant leadership, stakeholding, job crafting, and sustaincentrism, thereby rendering productivity/efficiency/profitability/competitiveness as 'means' to these 'ends'); (b) our discussion of the four-step friendly-disentangling method provides a tangible mechanism to be used in organizations; and (c) our discussion of moral-points-of-view and their associated practices serves to link persons and organizational practices.

Second, whereas stakeholder theorists generally use the political language of 'rights' and 'interests' to describe a stakeholder's relationship to a firm, we make the contribution of using the moral language of 'duties' and 'obligations' to characterize a manager's relationships to stakeholders (cf. Collins, 2000). Building on Gibson's (2000, p. 250) observation that 'not all rights imply duties', we add that not all duties imply rights. For example, from our point of view, a radical manager has a duty to provide work that respects the dignity of others, even (especially?) when they are themselves unable to articulate their interests or work in countries where their legal rights are minimal.

Finally, and building of these first two points, we believe much of the current debate concerning the 'instrumentality' of stakeholder theory (e.g. Evan and Freeman, 1988; Gibson, 2000; Jones and Wicks, 1999, p. 621; Trevino and Weaver,

1999) might be clarified if the moral-point-of-view undergirding the various positions were more clearly articulated. From a conventional moral-point-of-view, in order for stakeholder theory to make a meaningful contribution, it must improve organizational productivity/efficiency/profitability/competitiveness, simply because these are the overarching goals of conventional management. From this perspective, catering to stakeholders is advisable only when and as long as this improves an organization's financial returns (Freeman, 1999; Wicks et al., 1999). In contrast, from a radical stakeholder theory perspective, instrumentality is not measured primarily by maximizing financial returns or competitiveness, but rather by improvements in ecological care and meaningful work, and so on, because *these* are the overarching goals of management. Radical stakeholder theorists strive for the 'enactment and social construction of reality' (Jones and Wicks, 1999, p. 209) of theories and practices that do not place *primary* emphasis on maximizing shareholder wealth. From a radical perspective (e.g. Donaldson, 1999, p. 238; Donaldson and Preston, 1995, p. 67; Freeman, 1999, p. 235; Gioia, 1999, p. 231; Trevino and Weaver 1999, p. 225), conventional stakeholder theorists commit 'normative surrender' when they explicitly link the instrumental value of stakeholder theory to maximizing productivity/efficiency/profitability. This is not to suggest that radical stakeholder theorists think that an organization's economic viability is not also important; indeed, managing implies that there is an organization to be managed. However, financial viability does not out-trump the radical overarching goals. Thus, from a non-conventional moral-point-of-view, some organizations *should* be shut down (e.g. organizations based on the slave labor of children, or whose pollution endangers lives regardless of the local laws, or who treat its employees as chattel). 'The charter of incorporation is a revocable dispensation that was supposed to ensure accountability of the corporation to society as a whole' (Hawken, 1993, p. 56).

### **General Implications for Management**

We would like to conclude by highlighting three aspects of our discussion. First, we should not expect to find empirically either 'perfect' conventional or radical ideal-type managers. For example, real-world managers who work according to a conventional moral-point-of-view will occasionally act contrary to their character when, for instance, they show compassion to an ailing employee, refuse to drive a competitor into bankruptcy, curtail their pollution even if not legally required to do so, and so on. Indeed, everyday managers may be surprisingly radical, given studies that show that practicing managers: (a) consider it unethical to focus solely on the interests of shareowners (Baumhart, 1968; Donaldson and Preston, 1995; see also Dunlap and Van Liere, 1978); (b) make strategic choices that value other considerations more highly than maximizing financial performance (Child, 1972); (c) rely on an 'emotional balance of forces' to temper rational cut-throat survival-

of-the-fittest competition (Henderson, 1979, p. 24); and (d) increasingly make personal decisions that reflect an emphasis on 'voluntary simplicity' (Etzioni, 2001).

Second, although we cannot judge one managerial ideal-type as more 'moral' than another, we can examine the actual and expected outcomes associated with each. For example, while it could be argued that the corrupt systems and networks (Nielsen, 2003) that led to managerial actions like those at Enron and WorldCom are related to a conventional shareholder value maximization view, it is also plausible that self-interested managers could theoretically rationalize such behaviour by saying that it benefited other stakeholders such as providing jobs for employees (Carson, 2003). In any case, even if we acknowledge that champions of a conventional moral-point-of-view believe themselves to have the best interests of humankind at heart, and that the conventional paradigm has made important contributions to the development of humankind, we must also conclude that this unprecedented emphasis on individualism and materialism has come with significant ecological and social costs. Put simply, the time seems ripe for us to (re)learn how to meet our non-material needs in nonmaterial ways, and for management theorists to take up the challenge to focus on 'what is worth pursuing' rather than develop theory that merely emphasizes efficiency and 'what works' (Gladwin et al., 1995, p. 898). 'Or must theorists confine their thinking to what was practicable under turn-of-the-century capitalism?' (Trevino and Weaver, 1999, p. 624).

Finally, we hope to challenge readers to examine more closely their own traditions and moral-points-of-view, echoing Socrates' observation that 'the unexamined life is not worth living'. Failing to articulate our moral-point-of-view leaves us vulnerable to wrongly believing that how we manage has nothing to do with our nature as moral persons (Naughton and Bausch, 1994; Weber, 1958). If we do not spell out our moral-point-of-view, and by default unthinkingly accept a status quo moral-point-of-view, then we deny our fundamental nature as moral persons and we render a disservice to those around us. Similarly, if we impose our moral-point-of-view on others, then we deny *their* fundamental nature as moral persons, and thus render a fundamental disservice to the institution of management. Insofar as our presentation facilitates others to explicitly examine, articulate and (re)consider their own moral-point-of-view – and especially if it yields outcomes like more meaningful work and a healthier environment – then our efforts, and also Weber's, will have been aptly rewarded.

## NOTES

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- [1] More recently MacIntyre (1981, p. 263), a leading moral philosopher, arrives at a similar conclusion when he argues that overcoming the 'bureaucratic individualism' associated with the pervasive competitive and efficiency-minded character of management demands developing 'local forms of community' via new and 'doubtless very different' prophets. Subsequent research has supported Weber's contention that appealing to value-based rationality is the best way to displace self-interested or efficiency-rational behaviour (e.g. Dyck, 1997). This insight is reflected in change leaders and management gurus who often draw on religious imagery and techniques, for example, as they 'preach' their 'message' to 'convert' their 'followers'.
- [2] The only exception seems to be for the poorest among us; their quality of life improves if they become more materialistic.
- [3] Our brief review of Weber's (1958) argument provides the basis for introducing the four Weberian 'ideal-types' of management and for his call for others to develop a less materialist-individualist moral-point-of-view of management. We recognize that some of the details in Weber's original analysis are not always historically accurate, particularly in his depiction of specific religions and their leaders. However, for the purpose of this paper, it is sufficient to say that Weber argues that materialist-individualist conventional management was grounded in the moral-point-of-view *perceived* to be associated with the religious Reformation, and that developing non-conventional management may be enhanced if it is similarly grounded in a non-conventional moral-point-of-view.
- [4] Of course, as a reviewer reminded us, this common portrait of Smith's work does not do justice to his much richer overarching argument, especially as evident in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*.
- [5] Wesley adds that 'as riches increase, so will pride, anger, and love of the world in all its branches' (Weber, 1958, p. 175), and exhorts people 'to gain all they can, and to save all they can; that is, in effect, to grow rich', and then to give away all that they can.
- [6] By 'conventional management' we do not mean to imply that there are not competing schools of thought within organization and management theory, nor that the meaning of management has not changed since Weber's analysis (e.g. the advent of the Behavioural School can be seen to have softened the iron cage, the need for flexibility has caused formalization to go out of favour, and so on). Rather, we use the term conventional management to refer generally to theory and practice steeped in materialism (e.g. maximizing profits) and individualism (e.g. maximizing competitiveness).
- [7] Note that our naming this the 'radical' ideal-type of management is not intended to link it to any larger political or economic Radical movement (although there may be some affinity between the two). Further note that Figure 1 also gives rise to two additional 'ideal-types' that are beyond the scope of the current paper: the one that is high on individualism but low in materialism we might call 'voluntary simplicity' management; the ideal-type that is low in individualism but high in materialism we might call 'participative' management.
- [8] Our intent here is not to engage in the ongoing debate among philosophers as to precisely what constitutes a moral-point-of-view. We find the three-part framework we use to serve our purposes, and to be in keeping with arguments presented by leading moral philosophers (e.g. Frankena, 1973; MacIntyre, 1981).
- [9] A classic example is that of Dirk Willems (1569) who was fleeing his persecutors when one of them fell through the ice crossing a pond. Rather than escape to freedom, Willems turned around to rescue his pursuer, only to be captured and martyred the next day for failing to renounce his heresy (van Braght, 1950).
- [10] Over time the original meaning of this 'royal' responsibility was socially reconstructed (see Genesis 4:17 ff). Before long, God's people chose to see their kings as individuals who – like kings in neighbouring nations – made autocratic judgements and took unilateral actions. Moreover, they even transposed these human secular kingly traits onto their view of God, rather than the other way around. Similarly, of course, we are arguing that the contemporary materialist-individualist view of management is also foreign to the *character* that God models for humankind.
- [11] Of course, we are not using the term 'management' here as a synonymous with the individualist-materialist utilitarian worldview. Also, we recognize that the contemporary notion of management would have been foreign in biblical times, and we do not mean to limit the understanding of these passages, for example, only to applications in the workplace. The idea that Jesus' teaching may be of particular relevance to the kinds of issues facing contemporary managers is hinted at in the observation that his most responsive listeners were from a segment

of the population somewhat analogous to modern middle class managers: 'the majority of post-Easter followers of Jesus [were] artisans like himself' (Oakman, 1986, p. xiii). Perhaps reflecting his own work experience in his family's carpentry firm until he was thirty years old, 'Jesus spent most of his time in the marketplace, in the fields, by the lakeshores with the fishermen and the businesspeople of his time. His stories and parables were designed to teach the values of the kingdom as they applied to everyday life and work' (Tucker, 1987, p. 44). His parables 'most frequently focus on full members of the community' and usually describe relationships 'between unequal partners' (Moxnes, 1988, pp. 56, 62).

- [12] This passage describes the Year of Jubilee, which specifies that every fifty years all properties should revert to their original owners. A modern-day analogy might be to compare the game of business to a game of *Monopoly*, where all players get a fresh start after each contest.
- [13] Even so, future research may determine whether occasionally 'counterfeit' improvements, implemented based on a conventional moral-point-of-view, can nevertheless inadvertently act as yeast to transform the status quo. For example, some of the organizations purported to be on the leading edge of 'genuine' sustainable development were initially motivated to save money within the iron cage (Dyck, 1994a).

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