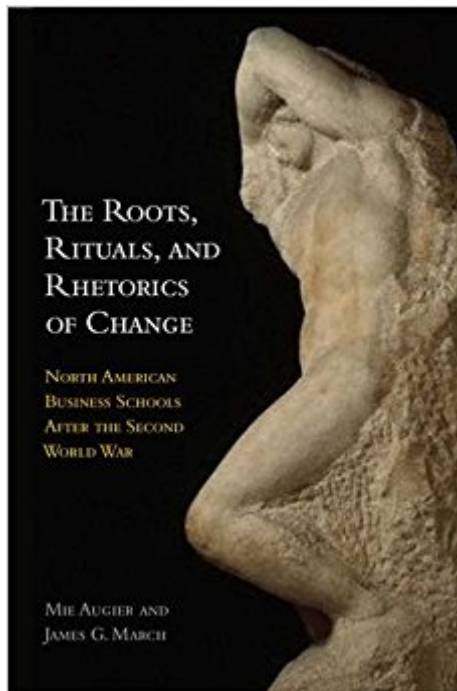


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# The Roots, Rituals, And Rhetorics Of Change: North American Business Schools After The Second World War



## Synopsis

Some rather remarkable changes took place in North American business schools between 1945 and 1970, altering the character of these institutions, the possibilities for their future, and the terms of discourse about them. This period represents a minor revolution, during which business schools are reported to have become more academic, more analytic, and more quantitative. *The Roots, Rituals, and Rhetorics of Change* considers these changes and explores their roots. It traces the origins of this quiet revolution and shows how it shaped discussions about management education, leading to a shift that weakened the place of business cases and experiential knowledge and strengthened support for a concept of professionalism that applied to management. The text considers how the rhetoric of change was organized around three core questions: Should business schools concern themselves primarily with experiential knowledge or with academic knowledge? What vision of managers and management should be reflected by business schools? How should managerial education connect its teaching to some version of reality?

## Book Information

Hardcover: 376 pages

Publisher: Stanford Business Books (August 10, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0804776164

ISBN-13: 978-0804776165

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (3 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,823,149 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #125 in [Books > Business & Money > Job Hunting & Careers > Business School Guides](#) #460 in [Books > Education & Teaching > Higher & Continuing Education > Graduate School Guides](#) #7856 in [Books > Business & Money > Education & Reference](#)

## Customer Reviews

Now that about one in four of ALL American college students is 'studying business' our understanding of what - precisely - this means is becoming a national issue, not merely one of the student's personal choice. The educational 'opportunity costs' are becoming huge. Students are probably attracted to 'business studies' because it seems to give them better access to a job, obviously important in these days of the Precariat - see Guy Standing's book or wonder what the

Occupy Wall Street movement is about from a young person's point of view. But why do firms recruit from business schools? And does business education do anything to prepare students for working in business? The answers here are wobbly at best. It is no secret that many inside and outside the business of business education doubt its substantial value, even as most accept it as an increasingly mandatory 'rite-de-passage', especially into the upper tier firms. These doubts have generated considerable discussion about how to make business education 'better'. That's the good news. The bad news is that the discussion has actually been going on for many decades without impacting the doubters' case one little bit. An intelligent alternative way into this discussion is to look at the history of US business education and, through that lens, get a sense of why it has grown into the monster that it now is - perhaps the next great bubble, as Peter Theil asserts. The business education community is surprisingly ill-informed about and largely indifferent to its history. This is weird and worrying, and makes talk of a bubble even more sensible. No match, of course, for the AACSB's stunning smugness on this whole matter.

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