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## DEMANDS, CONSTRAINTS, CHOICES AND DISCRETION: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE WORK OF ROSEMARY STEWART

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A few years have past since the Leadership Classics feature last appeared in the *Leadership Quarterly* and so it seems appropriate to revisit the purpose of this feature. The Leadership Classics feature is designed to revisit a seminal scholarly work or line of research. The selection criteria reflect: prior contribution to the development of the field and ongoing potential to inform leadership research. The focus of the current feature is on the work of Rosemary Stewart of Templeton College, a specialist management college within the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom.

From her seminal book *Managers and Their Jobs: A Study of the Similarities and Differences in the Ways Managers Spend Their Time* (1967) through the third edition of *The Reality of Management* (1997), Professor Stewart has broadened our understanding of what managers actually do. Her work, spanning five decades (Stewart 1965, 2002), stands as a testimony to the benefits of a truly cumulative and programmatic research program focused on systematically exploring a phenomenon layer-by-layer, nuance-by-nuance. Her research methods were (and remain) innovative, exhaustive, and cutting edge. Using a battery of techniques such as structured interviews, diaries, structured observations, group discussions, case analyses, and critical incidents, Stewart was developing grounded theory work and implementing method triangulation before those approaches had fashionable labels. Among the many important contributions emerging from this work are the demands–constraints–choices framework and the notion of managerial exposure, useful models for defining differences in managerial work and discretion across jobs.

There is something for almost everyone in Professor Stewart's research. Her insights and observations span the micro to meso to macro perspectives. Leadership scholars interested in dyadic interactions, group level phenomena, organizational culture, national culture, and the impact of technology on the practice of management will all benefit from reading this feature's "twenty thousand feet" view of Professor Stewart's work. One persistent theme, that the demands, choices, and constraints in managerial work *vary more dramatically across jobs than across hierarchical levels or organizational functions*, has important, but largely ignored, implications for the samples scholars select and the generalizations they make and infer from the results.

Human resource scholars interested in more effective utilization of the performance appraisal process, improving managerial development processes, and for an alternative perspective on person–job–organization fit will be informed by this body of work. Her discussion of the ability of managers to (not) see choice in situations as a determinate of (in)effective leadership is both a lucid and promising area for future research. Indeed, one of the defining characteristics of the transformational leader may be the ability to identify choice in situations where others perceive little or none. Professor Stewart suggests that the ability to see a wider set of choices in a situation can be developed in individuals. This ability to see a larger choice set may in part explain the utility of less system ensconced organizational consultants.

Readers of *The Leadership Quarterly*, especially younger U.S. scholars, may be relatively unfamiliar with the work of Rosemary Stewart. This may be due to the effects of time on the ardor for a particular body of research or to a regio-centric “crowding out” effect when research agendas appear, on casual inspection, to be similar. Another contributing factor may be the tendency for U.S. scholars to treat “leadership” research as distinct from “managerial work” research. While leadership research has progressed considerably in recent decades (House & Aditya, 1997; Hunt, 1999; Lowe & Gardner, 2000), a comparison of Stewart’s (1982) chapter in *Leadership: Beyond Establishment Views* with the current state of the art reveals that the convergence of “leadership” with “managerial work” research remains substantially neglected.

Non-U.S. readers of *The Leadership Quarterly* tend to view Professor Stewart as quite “famous” (cf. Henry Mintzberg’s reference to Stewart’s work in a recent interview; McCarthy, 2000) and many of the more seasoned U.S. readers will be quite familiar with her work. Whether acquainting one’s self with this body of work for the first time or revisiting the body of knowledge through a fresh set of eyes, the following pages identify that much remains to be done to fully leverage the research of Rosemary Stewart.

Speaking of those fresh eyes, I am especially pleased with this set of feature contributors. They embody the rich cultural diversity and scientific training that are brought to bear on the topic of leadership in the pages of *The Leadership Quarterly*. The feature contributors’ hail from three continents, five countries, range in professional training from industrial–organizational psychology to engineering to anthropology, vary in career stages, and include both prior and new contributors to *The Leadership Quarterly*. Their reviews and reflections reveal the important influence that Rosemary Stewart’s work has had on the field and the equally exciting prospects for future research.

Our feature opens with a personal reflection by Rosemary Stewart on how her interests in social research, training at the London School of Economics, and the prevailing tenor of the times converged to make her an accidental management theorist. She describes how her research methodology was influenced by the pioneering work of Sune Carlson (1951) and contemporaries such as Leonard Sayles, John Kotter, Tom Burns, Joan Woodward, and members of the Tavistock Institute.

This was clearly an exciting time to be a management scholar. Rosemary and her contemporaries were involved in asking a variety of fundamental and important questions regarding the nature and practice of management. This research was conducted in an era

characterized by a greater tolerance for programmatic research progress and relatively less emphasis on narrower lines of inquiry designed to improve publication “hit rates” within shorter time frames. Readers will enjoy reading her description of the logical evolution of her research agenda from what managers do, to developing a typology of jobs, to an interest in cross-cultural and health care management. Her description of the challenges and privileges of being a female researcher, especially early in her career, ring of both past and present.

Following Dr. Stewart’s retrospective are five commentaries on her work. Each of these authors considered the significance of her body of work both in the context of the time and for the insights that will continue to advance the field. Although there are some commonalities across the commentaries, the diverse interests and training of these authors provide quite different lenses on her contributions.

Galen Kroeck of Florida International University provides a broad review of Professor Stewart’s “managerial anthropology.” Kroeck states that though some might criticize Stewart’s predominately qualitative techniques as potentially too subjective, these methods hold the greatest promise for a true understanding of the phenomena. He admonishes scholars to review her techniques for “the clarity of scientific analysis she brings to developing grounded theory.” Kroeck highlights methodological implications for Stewart’s proposition that jobs cannot be properly classified by function or level. Implications of Stewart’s work for the current practice and investigation of management generally, and leadership specifically, are outlined.

Ken Parry of Victoria University of Wellington points out that Stewart’s work, reflecting the anthropological and sociological roots of Stewart and her contemporaries, is about the “who,” “how,” “what,” and “when” of managers with relatively little emphasis on the “why.” Parry offers the latter point not as a criticism but rather to identify that this “managerial phenomenography” line of research provided the groundwork for the current generation of scholars to be more concerned with the why (cause and effect) question. Parry notes some missing elements in Stewart’s research that reflect the prevailing zeitgeist including a discussion of ethics, affect, and intent. He concludes with a call for increased attention to qualitative research of the type conducted by Rosemary Stewart. Such methods have been increasingly crowded out in recent years by a cohort enamored with computer-enabled quantitative techniques.

Next, Deanne den Hartog of Erasmus University describes her reactions as a student to reading Stewart’s work. She identifies that Stewart’s thinking was prescient on a number of conceptual fronts. These include leadership as a shared rather than individual responsibility and the importance of context to leadership effectiveness. Den Hartog leverages the importance of context to provide a discussion of the cross-cultural implications of Stewart’s broad body of work. She then reviews the cross-cultural focused contributions made by Stewart in more recent decades.

Asta Wahlgren, of Jyväskylä Polytechnic, highlights the theoretical and practical utility of Stewart’s model. Wahlgren states that for scholars the elegant simplicity of the model offers the opportunity for easy integration with various theoretical ideas. The model provides a clear rationale and method for categorizing the variety in managerial work, a useful lens for

contemporary research design and data analysis. Wahlgren points out the practical utility of the choices–constraints–demands (CCD) model by showing how college students might reevaluate their perceived and real impediments to effective coursework performance. Faculty members and trainers reading these words should welcome a tool that would simultaneously improve student efficacy, critical thinking, and personal productivity. Wahlgren also provides a useful description of how she has used the CCD model in her own published research on managers.

Completing this feature, Tony Ammeter of the University of Mississippi focuses on a different aspect of Stewart's work, her *How Computers Affect Management* (1972) text. The publication date identifies that Stewart was once again early to anticipate the forces influencing managerial work. With the rapid and voluminous changes in computer technology over the last three decades, it might be tempting to conclude that this work is outdated. Ammeter dissuades us of that concern. He concludes that several aspects of the work remain impactful and that this topic remains understudied in the leadership literature. Ammeter suggests that the framework Stewart developed, and the case study analysis approach she employed to investigate the framework, should be redeployed in the current context. This approach would be useful to assess the current impact of computers on managerial work and to assess the evolution of that influence over time.

The thumbnail sketches above fail to capture the depth and breadth of ideas offered in the commentaries that follow on Rosemary Stewart's work. My hope is that this introduction has enticed you, *The Leadership Quarterly* reader, to "just dig in." For readers who believe they do not have the time to read further, I offer one clear piece of advice from Rosemary Stewart's seminal work. Reconsider your demands and constraints, you may see more choice in your circumstances than initially perceived, and you will be more effective as a consequence.

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## WOMAN IN A MAN'S WORLD

Rosemary Stewart, Templeton College, University of Oxford

I became an academic more by chance than by design. Mine is an unusual career history compared with that of most academics, especially American ones, so a brief account may be of interest. The only consistent thread throughout my career has been a strong interest in doing social research that was useful to practitioners and policymakers. That research interest became focused on management almost by chance. I have always had the advantage, which is much harder for researchers today, to do the research that interested me, and did not, until quite late in my career, think about academic publications as being a necessary part of that career.

My interest in social research first showed itself when I was an undergraduate majoring in economics at the University of British Columbia—I was evacuated from Britain to Canada in 1940 and went to school there and then to the University. I set up a student research society, grandly called IRAC (Inquiry, Research, Action, and Council), which investigated student problems and sought to do something about them. When I returned to Britain I wanted to do adult education, which I did for a year. Then I decided that I was not sufficiently educated to teach adults, so I took an MSc degree at the London School of Economics. It was a very personal course of study, as having registered in Social Philosophy I was allowed to choose my own area for study, Social Philosophy in Britain from 1900 to 1940, and compile my own reading list; my thesis was on Changing Views to Government Planning 1931–1947. I was sent a personal exam paper. The London School of Economics was a very stimulating place at that time. So far I had no thought of studying management.

### *An apprenticeship in management research*

My first contact with management came a few years later when I became a researcher in what was then a small independent research society, the Acton Society Trust. The Society was named after the historian Lord Acton, who said that “power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely,” and was financed by a Quaker foundation. The Society was studying the human and organizational problems of large organizations, and the problems of public

accountability in the newly nationalized industries. Its research reports, mainly booklets published by the Society, were aimed at influencing public policy and management thinking. They were often widely quoted, and thus, probably did have some influence.

The Society's research was done by lengthy semistructured interviews, documentary analysis, and group discussions: groups of senior people from the civil service and industry were invited to dinner and evening discussions. I found it a fascinating opportunity, and spent my time interviewing middle and senior managers, senior civil servants, and trades union officials.

Looking back I realize how surprisingly easy it was in those days to get access for interviews, even with chief executives. I quickly learned that usually, however senior the interviewee, it was me who had to bring the interview to a close. Perhaps men—and they always were men—liked having a fully attentive and knowledgeable young woman interviewing them about their jobs and organization. Both then and later, when I no longer had the advantages of youth, I still found that managers appeared to enjoy the opportunity to talk at length about their work. The most striking example of this was in the 1980s when I was leading a team of researchers who studied 20 general managers in the UK National Health Service (NHS) over a period of 2 years. It was an intensive study including very lengthy interviews and long telephone conversations every week or two. Although the research team differed in age, sex, and experience, none of the 20 general managers chose to terminate the research and all said they were sorry when it was finished, as they had found it helpful to be questioned about what they were doing.

My first major project at the Acton Society, after an apprenticeship with the then director of the research society—I succeeded him after a few years—was a study of the management development and management succession policies and practices in the 50 largest U.K. manufacturing companies. I soon learned that the policies that were described at the head office often operated very differently, if they operated at all, out in the plants where I went to interview the local managers. I was treated remarkably well—far more helpfully than when I was researching in the United States. For example, when I visited a steel plant in Britain and was interviewing 12 managers, a dinner was arranged for me to meet them informally the previous night. I was always met at the railway station and taken to the plant with a hotel booked for me. I remember how hard I found it visiting meat-packing plants in Chicago using public transport and finding that the cheap hotel that I had booked was in a scary area!

During this time I got to know the pioneering social scientists, Tom Burns, Joan Woodward, and members of the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations. I remember vividly one conference between management consultants and the social scientists at which the latter tried, unsuccessfully, to persuade the consultants that their classical view of organizations was incorrect.

The research that I did at the Acton Society awakened my interest in management and started a lifelong fascination with interviewing as a way of learning about what is happening in organizations and about how people think about their jobs. One result of my interest in the nature of jobs, and a personal weakness, is that I can remember peoples' jobs and their organization but rarely their names.

I resigned as the director of the Acton Society in 1961 when I married an Oxford academic in pure mathematics. When we got engaged I registered for an external doctorate

at the London School of Economics as I thought we might go to live in the United States and there I would need a doctorate to work in a university. I was able to work on the doctorate externally as I already had a postgraduate degree from there. I had no supervisor and so did the research described below entirely on my own. I first published it in a book (Stewart, 1967) and then rewrote it for a doctorate—an unusual way round—but then I was doing a doctorate later than usual and was more interested in publishing another book.

## **Main research interests**

### *Understanding managerial jobs and behavior*

This has been my major research interest for over 30 years. It has been managerial jobs and later behavior rather than managerial work, with a particular interest in differences but also in similarities. The studies have built on each other, moving on from what I had learned from the previous one and where I thought it fell down. My research thinking was, of course, also influenced by the work of others, initially by Sune Carlson (1951) and later particularly by Leonard Sayles' *Managerial Behavior* (1964) and John Kotter's *Mayors in Action* (1974) and its development in *The General Managers* (1982).

Interviewing managers in many different jobs and organizations for my work at the Acton Society made me realize how different their jobs, and the settings within which they worked, were. An interest in trying to understand these differences was stimulated by being invited to lecture to large groups of managers, who were grouped together by level, e.g., junior, middle, or senior managers. I realized that hierarchical level only accounted for some of the differences between managers' jobs, and I wanted to research the others to understand their relevance in management development.

My first attempt to study differences in managerial jobs was based on the work done by Sune Carlson, a professor in Sweden, who had specially designed diaries kept of the work of a small number of chief executives. His book, *Executive Behavior*, was the first major contribution in this field of research. Carlson was interested, as I was, in using the results of his research as an executive development tool. My first study of managerial work and behavior was published in 1967 as *Managers and Their Jobs: A Study of the Similarities and Differences in the Ways Managers Spend Their Time*. Specially designed diaries, pocket sized, booklet form, were kept by 160 managers recruited via their professional bodies. Perhaps the most interesting and distinctive outcomes of the study were the diagrams showing the variations in time spent by different individuals and by the same person from one week to the next. It confirmed the Carlson finding of a very fragmented work pattern. An attempt was made to discover the reasons for the variations by writing to the individual managers.

One aim of the study had been to produce a typology of different types of managerial jobs. This was done, but the types were not illuminating. This was my most quantitative research project. All the later studies were qualitative, although often triangulated with an intensive subsample study.

My next major study was an attempt to produce a better typology of managers' jobs. It was a triangulated study, using diaries, interviews, and observation. It was published in 1976 as *Contrasts in Management: A Study of Different Types of Managers' Jobs: Their Demands and Choices*. It received the award for the British management book published that contributed the most to management theory and practice in that year. This book was the beginning of a change in the focus of my research from jobs to behavior—the distinction between these two is not, I think, sufficiently recognized in this field. I was trying in this and the previous study to produce a typology of jobs that revealed differences other than those of function and level. So I had been thinking of management jobs as defined entities. I gradually realized the extent to which individuals in similar jobs saw and did them differently—though the full significance of this and of how to describe it only came to me as a result of further research.

One of the reasons why my thinking evolved was that part of the research for *Contrasts in Management* was an interview schedule including a structured questionnaire about different aspects of the interviewee's job. It had a seven-point rating scale ranging from 'this is no part of my job' upwards to show how important a part of the job it was. I was shocked when I started comparing the answers of managers in similar jobs and found that they could vary from 1 to 7. So I had to start thinking of possible explanations and decided that poorly worded questions were not an adequate answer.

The subtitle of *Contrasts in Management* included the words *Demands and Choices*. Only in subsequent studies did I learn to understand what this meant and to develop a model for describing the interplay between individual and job. A number of different studies contributed to this including *Choices for the Manager* (1982) and *The District Administrator in the National Health Service* (Stewart, Smith, Blake, & Wingate, 1982). The latter was the most important for developing my thinking. It was a study of 41 senior managers in similar posts, that of district administrators in the UK NHS. Part of the study consisted of observation of eight of the managers at work as well as lengthy interviews. To me, the most remarkable finding was the extent to which the managers spent their time doing different kinds of work from each other even in such bureaucratic jobs.

We have always known, though I had not thought about it sufficiently, that there is some flexibility in jobs, especially the more responsible jobs like those of managers. When I first started trying to make sense of the variation in what I observed managers doing, I thought of this flexibility. It was only gradually that I developed a model for describing it, that of demands, constraints, and choices. Demands, I called the core of the job consisting of the work that any jobholder would have to do in order to stay in the job. Constraints, I saw as the factors, both tangible like finance and intangible like attitudes, limiting what the jobholder could do. Choices, which can be very large in some jobs, were the opportunities in a job for one jobholder to do the job differently from another.

These differences are not just in terms of style, but also in what work is done. Over the years my thinking about the model evolved. I came to realize how dynamic the model may be as circumstances may change the nature of the constraints and the demands and hence affect the choices available. The actions of the jobholder may also change the shape of the job, for example, by modifying some of the constraints or by the types of choices exercised, leading

to changes in the expectations of the role set. Nanette Fondas, a former graduate student of mine, and I wrote about the opportunities for a jobholder to shape the expectations of the role set (Fondas & Stewart, 1994).

The model is a good management development tool, as I and others have found, to help individual managers examine their conception of their job and the distinctive ways in which they are doing it. For some managers, it can be liberating to discover that they have more choices than they had recognized, but others may not want to know that these choices exist. I have found that a way of helping this kind of analysis is to ask managers to work in groups of three, with two cross-examining the third about his or her job and about its demands, constraints, and choices.

My thinking about the nature of managerial jobs, managerial behavior, and the different context within which managers' work was also influenced from the late 1960s onwards by my work at the Oxford Centre for Management Studies (later renamed Templeton College), a specialist management college within the University of Oxford. Over the years I worked at the College with middle and senior managers from many different companies and from the public sector. Often the courses were tailored for particular companies providing an opportunity to learn much about that company, the work, and the thinking of their managers, a valuable addition to my understanding of managers and managerial jobs. Sometimes the managers were suspicious of me because I had written a number of popular management books and they were afraid they might be used as raw material!

I became increasingly interested in understanding the different contexts within which managers worked and how this shaped their jobs. Taking part in a six-country study in Europe of changes affecting middle managers led me to initiate a comparative study, with Professor Alfred Kieser of Mannheim University, of the job perceptions and behavior of middle managers in Britain and Germany. We had hoped to study managers in comparable jobs and industries, but found no clearly comparable middle management jobs in the brewing, construction, and life insurance industries that we selected because of differences in company organization between the two countries. Our research was an in-depth study of middle managers in matched firms in the three industries, which included interviews and observation. The demands, constraints, and choices model was used, at Alfred Kieser's suggestion, as the main tool for analyzing the findings. We found very marked differences in the ways that middle managers in the two countries perceived and did their jobs. They had different conceptions of what a manager should be doing.

### *Health care management*

In 1964, I was invited by a senior official in what was then called the Department of Health, to take an interest in management research in the UK NHS. Accepting the invitation was consistent with my interest in putting my research to practical use. Over the years, I have done many practical studies, one of which was mentioned above, that have also fed into my research in managerial work and behavior. One advantage of research in the NHS was that I found that health service managers were more willing to cooperate and were more interested in potential lessons from the research than were managers in industry. My understanding of

the nature of the problems that managers in the NHS faced was enhanced by the small periodic workshops that I ran for some of the chief executives of local units. At the end of 11 years the group still included six of the original members. I now run its successor for chairs in the NHS.

Another of my research programs in the NHS bears directly on understanding managerial work and behavior, making use of the demands, constraints, and choices model. It was one aspect of the study mentioned above of 20 newly appointed general managers, that of the roles and relationship of chairs and their chief executive. It showed the different ways in which the pairs related and shared the role of leading the district. This finding suggests that more attention could usefully be given in leadership studies to the idea of shared leadership. An area that has been, surprisingly to me, neglected since the pioneering work of Hodgson, Levinson, and Zaleznik (1965).

### **Relation to leadership**

Readers may have noticed that until the last paragraph the word “leadership” was not used. Partly this is because I have been primarily interested in managerial jobs and behavior and did not think of myself as doing research on leadership. The fact that I did not think of myself as a leadership researcher, even though I was co-organizing with Jerry Hunt a small international conference on leadership, probably reflects the different importance attached to leadership as an academic study in the USA compared with the UK and other Western European countries (Stewart, 1982). However, much of my research could have been relabeled leadership, especially the research that I did in the UK NHS. One of my books is called *Leading in the NHS: A Practical Guide* (1989).

I see myself as primarily a qualitative researcher who believes that the most important aspect of research is seeking to understand the meaning of the data and being searchingly critical about its quality. I recognize that quantitative testing is essential, particularly as a difficult field of research develops. But I worry that an enthusiasm for measurement rigor may not be accompanied by sufficiently rigorous thinking about the validity of what is being compared. One suggestion for quantitative research in managerial jobs is to compare the nature and extent of exposure in different jobs (cf. *Contrasts in Management*, 1976).

I share Leonard Sayles’s comments in an earlier issue of *The Leadership Quarterly* devoted to his work, about the excitement of thinking that one is seeing something new. I also agree with his suggestion that leadership researchers could usefully seek to understand ‘profoundly difficult leadership roles’ such as those found in high pressure government positions, and I have begun to do some work on that.

### *Woman in a man’s world*

Some readers may be interested to know what it was like to be a woman in such a masculine world in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s—a time before women had begun to play a greater role in management and management studies. Being a woman had some advantages in gaining access

to organizations and in interviewing. It also had disadvantages as a management teacher, because of the greater skepticism that a woman could have anything useful to say about management. Usually, in the early days, all the students in executive courses were men and so were my colleagues—it was good to have some women graduate students. There were unexpected snags to being a woman in a male community, for example, at the grand opening of the then Oxford Centre for Management Studies, I found the ladies lavatory had been taken over by the male guests, perhaps assuming there were no women. There were prejudices too, I remember asking a prominent management figure, whom I knew well, to be a referee for an application for a full professorship at another university and he said No as: “No woman could hold such a job, as she would be gate-crashing a man’s world.” Yet I at least had a teaching post in management: when I first had my job at the college I remember visiting the Harvard School of Business in the late 1960s and talking with the Dean. He said no woman in the US could get a job like mine—how times have changed!

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## **ROSEMARY STEWART ON MANAGEMENT: BEHAVIORAL SCRIBE, SQUIRE OF THEORY, PRAGMATIC SCIENTIST**

K. Galen Kroeck, Florida International University, USA

Rosemary Stewart devoted over 30 years to the study of managerial behavior using qualitative analysis to develop a body of thought and a framework for analyzing what managers actually do. A graduate of the London School of Economics, Dr. Stewart's work is better known in Great Britain and Europe than in the United States. However, it is apparent that her thinking about management practice has developed adjacent to that of many well known theorists both in Europe (e.g., Burns & Stalker, 1961; Carlson, 1951; Glover, 1977; Guest, 1962; Hales, 1986; Marples, 1967; Woodward, 1965) as well as the evolution of management theory in the United States (e.g., Bass, 1981; Campbell, Dunnette, Lawler, & Weick, 1970; Drucker, 1955; Fayol, 1948; Hackman & Oldham, 1980; Kotter, 1982; Leavitt, 1964; McGregor, 1960; Martinko, & Gardner, 1984; Mintzberg, 1973; Sayles, 1964; Simon, 1957; Stogdill, Shartle, Scott, Coons, & Jaynes, 1956).

Dr. Stewart has long held that the job of a manager is a complex one that is best analyzed by studying distinctive patterns of behavior rather than seeking to understand commonalities of managerial work across functions and levels. In fact, she argues that the variations in the manager's job are more important to understand than the similarities (Stewart, 1982a), and that these variations are greater than can be understood by simply grouping managers according to function or level in the organization. Clearly, managers in similar jobs may focus attention on very different aspects of the work.

She has defined her career by studying managers through intensive face-to-face and telephone interviewing, analyses of diaries (Stewart, 1968a), group discussions, case analysis, and structured observation methodology. She also adapted Flanagan's (1954) critical incident technique to expand the breadth of her qualitative analyses of management practices.

Based on qualitative research, Dr. Stewart developed a framework for the study of the manager's jobs based on the *constraints* within which the manager must operate, the *demands* of the position, and the *choices* that managers can and do make. She believes that we can best realize a greater understanding of behavior in an occupation through intensive qualitative analyses rather than through the study of empirical correlates among selected variables. Stewart has squired her model through several refinements, and has used it to both demonstrate relevance in a variety of academic and practitioner arenas and to challenge some of the "management wisdom" of the field. The following sections describe some of this thinking in regard to a number of topics pertinent to management theory.

*A Framework for Analysis and Understanding*

Fig. 1 depicts Dr. Stewart's model. The model is based on her observation of how managers exercise their *choices* in carrying out the functions of the position. The domain of a manager's choices is launched by a set of *demands* of the job such as job requirements, goals, type of work involved, the amount of experience of available personnel, the amount of personal involvement necessary (such as the amount of required supervision or the amount of signatory paperwork required), and obligatory communications. Another set of demands result from both the general and specific criteria of effectiveness mandatory for success in the job.

In the model, a manager's choices are also proscribed by a set of occupational *constraints* such as available resources, legal and union constrictions, technological limitations, geographic restrictions, dependence on the attitudes of others, and the clarity of boundary definitions established for the job. Constraints and demands both limit and provide opportunities for choices by the manager. Managers are able to exercise choices such as how to actually perform the work, how much to delegate, how much they are willing to observe established boundaries, and how much they are willing to expend energy within and outside the domains implicit in the organization. Choices concerning how the manager mortgages his or her time through the choices made—within the constraints and demands of the job—represent the domain of managerial choice.

Stewart (1982a) describes these choices as (1) what aspects of the job the manager chooses to emphasize in terms of time, effort, and commitment of resources; (2) how and what tasks are delegated; and (3) how the manager manages his or her boundaries. In this regard, one of

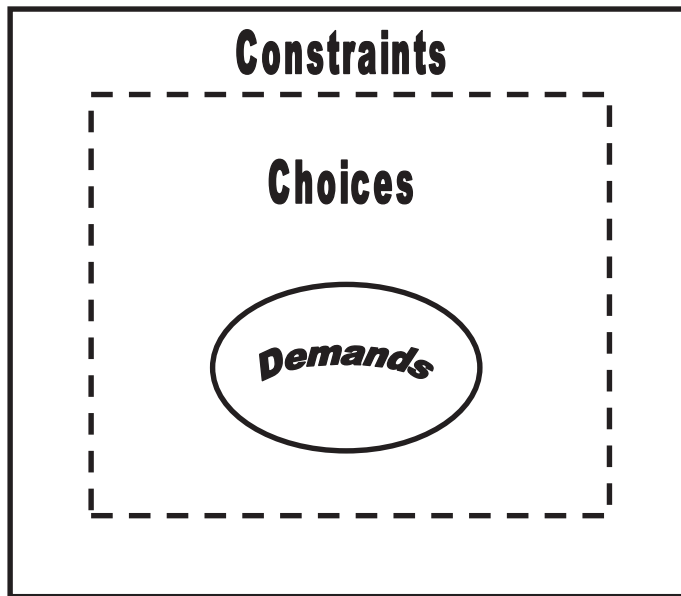


Fig. 1. Stewart's model of constraints, demands, and choices.

the most important choices managers make is the selection and maintenance of contacts, both internal and external to the organization (cf. Stewart, 1991).

She believes that her model can be used to analyze and expose the differences across functions and levels of an organization or across organizations resulting in a systematic description of the managerial job based more on the variations of it than upon the similarities in this unique and diverse occupation. Using the constraints–demands–choices headings, managerial activity can be comparatively summarized. Through such analysis, a variety of positions could be grouped according to pattern similarities in constraints and demands (cf. Stewart, 1976a, 1976b). Research on managerial effectiveness could assess the types of choices exercised and value of the choices made given constraints and demands of the job. A manager's personal awareness of the available choices could be used to evaluate and provide feedback to the manager (Stewart, 1965). Perhaps most importantly, the question posed by Dr. Stewart “Is the manager steering or just being carried along by momentum?” could be answered to remove one onus probandi that has vexed the field of management theory.

Stewart's model can be criticized on a number of grounds, which she readily acknowledges. One ambiguity is the difficulty in making clear distinctions between constraints and demands. For example, is the amount of autonomy in the position a constraint placed on the manager by the organization, or is it a requisite supervision demand of the job? Also, the fundamental proposition that it is better to explore qualitatively the differences, rather than the similarities, in managerial jobs may contain an inherent tautology. The tautology in this reasoning is that, if one sets out to find differences, the capacity to do so is a foregone conclusion as comparative dissimilarity can always be observed. In contrast, identifying similarities that may or may not exist is not inevitable. As a matter for scientific hypothesis, similarities can be demonstrated only by quantitative analysis; otherwise observed differences are merely a matter of subjective opinion. On the other hand, Stewart's work resounds with the most fundamental scientific view that true understanding of a phenomenon comes only through direct experience with the subject matter rather than through a dissociated analysis of quantified observations (Margeneau, 1961).

## Research Techniques

Rosemary Stewart's methodology is prototypical qualitative analysis. She utilizes intensive structured interviews, often encompassing 7 h per manager, supplemented with phone call sessions every several weeks during the data collection phase of research. Dr. Stewart acknowledges that there are limitations to managers' own descriptions of their jobs (Marshall & Stewart, 1981a, 1981b; Stewart, 1982a). Hence, she utilizes other confirmatory techniques such as group discussion, direct observation, and diaries of managerial activities for which she has developed structured analytic methodology. Her observation often is conducted over substantial periods of time during which she diligently serves as the passive scribe of managerial thought and behavior. While she does not utilize the participant–observer method, her work could be summarily described as “managerial anthropology.” Students and academicians engaging in qualitative analyses would be well advised to review her procedures

for the clarity of scientific analysis she brings to developing grounded theory. For example, she developed a scoring device for assessment of the demands on a manager given by relationships with subordinates (cf. Stewart, 1976a, p. 50). Her volume, *Contrasts in Management: A Study of Different Types of Managers' Jobs, Their Demands and Choices* typifies her commitment to declaratory exposition of the scientific method applied to qualitative analysis (see Stewart, 1976a, p. 155 and Appendices).

Some of her earliest work (Stewart, 1967) in the book, *Managers and Their Jobs: A Study of the Similarities and Differences in the Ways Managers Spend Their Time*, demonstrates the power of the diary method. In that volume, she documented how managers spend their time and provided a revealing glimpse into actual managerial activities. She documented analytical evidence showing how many hours managers on average work per week (42 h), what percent of their time is spent in their own unit (75%), in other units (15%), outside the organization (9%), in their own office (51%), traveling (8%), in activities involving paperwork (36%), in activities involving inspecting (6%), engaging in informal discussions (43%), attending committee meetings (7%), talking on the phone (6%), socializing (4%), working alone (34%), in dyadic discussions (32%), in multiple person discussions (34%), with subordinates (26%), with their own boss (8%), with colleagues (12%), with specialists (8%), with customers (5%), with other internal contacts (5%), and with external contacts (6%). She noted that managers have a minimum of 12 fleeting contacts per day (Stewart, 1967).

The objective of the above research was to demonstrate the fragmented characteristics of the position using archival data, thus corroborating Mintzberg's speculation that the managerial job is characterized by brevity, variety, and fragmentation. Stewart's concern with acquisition of specific data on managerial activity was later influential in other analyses focused on what managers actually do (cf. Hales, 1986; Luthans, Rosenkrantz, & Hennessey, 1985).

## Opposing Views

Dr. Stewart has taken issue with a number of the assertions of various managerial researchers and theorists, rebutting many of their conclusions with logical inferences gleaned from her research experience. For example, Stewart disagrees with Mintzberg's (1973) conclusion that managers' jobs are alike across 10 roles. Influenced by the work of Katz and Kahn (1966) and Graen (1976), she agrees with Mintzberg (see also McCall & Segrist, 1980) that the managerial job is a complex, fragmented set of roles rather than a common set of activities with readily available correlates. However, she believes that Mintzberg's roles are excessively broad and that the questionnaires used to generate his theory are response-leading and heavily influenced by the cultural demands of the organization (Stewart, 1982, 1987; Stewart & Fondas, 1994). While she acknowledges that some of these roles may accurately portray common activity of many managers (cf. Child & Ellis, 1973), some roles do not apply across jobs and those that do could probably be applied to any occupation given their generic nature.

In her consistent argument against the idea that there are distinctive patterns of behavior across all managerial jobs (cf. Stewart, 1976), she cites her own evidence that managers

engage in 6–16 different episodic activities per hour. She found that 40% of retail managers' activities each took less than one minute of attention. Like Weick (1983), she (Stewart, 1976) views the thinking of a manager across time as characterized by a stream of consciousness where the manager's focus drifts from one activity to another and the action chosen originates in whatever comes to mind. She interprets this notice process as indicative of how managers view their own choices, hence she routinely poses the question of "How much of a manager's work involves fragmented activity versus sustained attention, and how much involves unexpected crisis management versus recurring work patterns?"

In this vein, Stewart tends to agree with Cyert and March (1963) that most managers are so absorbed with disturbance handling activities that little time remains for planning and development activities. While managers may think in terms of priorities, the pattern of work may be more a response to demands than an exercise of discretion (Stewart, 1974, 1976). In her view, taxonomies of management (e.g., Hemphill, 1960; Tornow & Pinto, 1976) that neglect the vast variations in enacting choices for action fail to reveal the most distinguishing aspect of the manager profession, the disparate ways in which the job is behaviorally carried out by different managers (Fondas & Stewart, 1994; Stewart, 1973, 1990).

Another opposing view she takes concerns the necessity of reference to effectiveness in the practical study of management behavior. Stewart (1982, 1989) rejects the arguments of Glover (1967), Marples (1967), and Martinko and Gardner (1985), that it is meaningless to study the managerial position without reference to performance output or some measure of success in describing what managers do. She agrees that the overall goal of the work done in the field is to discern prescriptive finding to help managers be more effective. However, she also believes (Stewart, 1976b) that we are still at the stage where improving our understanding of managerial thoughts and actions over time is more important than trying to measure the more limited domain we know. Intensive qualitative research is a more valuable analytical tool in this stage than quantitative analysis as it avoids the researcher's preconceived notion of what managers do and what should be measured.

Only through qualitative analysis, for example, would it have been revealed to her that the amount of "exposure" in the manager's job has an ineluctable linkage to responsibility. In a rejoinder to Hales' (1986) criticism of qualitative analysis as capitalizing on a phenomenon that is particularly susceptible to diverse analysis, Dr. Stewart (1989) concludes that diverse analysis is precisely what is called for when attempting to understand a phenomenon as complex and differentiated as managerial behavior.

She poses the question "Should we study managers' jobs, work, or behavior?" then replies that it is toward jobs and behaviors that we need to direct attention, as the concept of "work" is too ambiguous. Stewart seems to recognize that quantitative analysis can also move the field forward in some areas such as by focusing on the interaction between individuals and jobs and the study of dyadic job relationships (cf. Stewart, 1987, 1991) within and across managerial groupings. Nevertheless, she has always held that the variation in the managerial job cannot be described simply by function and level. An empiricist would necessarily argue that this assumption could only be tested through quantitative methods such as analysis of variance to determine if between-group variation (between functions and/or levels) can account for a significant portion of the differences across jobs relative to within-group variation.

Stewart, of course, would argue that the choice of variables made by the researcher would be severely limited to those amenable to quantification and may or may not represent the most important components of managerial thought and action over time. She points out that there are not many construct-valid measures of the influences on managers nor of managerial activities themselves. Alternatively, it is her view that analyzing choices according to categorization of managerial jobs by their constraints and demands is a more definitive strategy that may identify such measures. Stewart further suggests that categories of or patterns in management activity can be identified by looking at the similarities in choices managers make across a set of jobs (Stewart, 1982b).

### **Many Questions Identified Through the Qualitative Perspective**

Stewart (1970), in her book *The Reality of Organizations*, demonstrates the value of the case method for generating important questions that are not readily amenable to quantification. For example, Dr. Stewart asks the question “Is the study of organization sufficiently useful to be worth the time that it will take?” She answers by arguing that the study *is* useful and necessary because managers need to know when they must start thinking about organizing and when they need to take the time to diagnose organizational problems. We need academic understanding to teach managers how to decide when creative chaos—“the enthusiastic pursuit of new ideas with maximum flexibility and little planning or coordination” (Stewart, 1970, p. 193)—becomes too costly. Her efforts have always been directed toward bringing practical answers to real managers. Even at the earliest stages of her career, Stewart (1970) asked a variety of questions that circumscribed the field.

While these questions have been addressed by many in the field of management inquiry, Dr. Stewart has provided uncommonly practical and thoughtful analysis in combination with metaphorical simplicity to explain and prescribe. Some of her questions included:

How much work should be delegated and how much specialized?

How well defined should jobs be?

How important are rank, title, and legitimate power?

How should work activities and functions be grouped?

How many subordinates should be supervised by one manager?

How should customers be grouped?

How should time be organized?

How should the leader coordinate with specialists?

How should a manager spend his or her time?

What kinds of relationships should managers form with other managers?

How much decentralization for is too much?

How much order versus flexibility and what are advantages and disadvantages of each?

A visit to the Harvard Business School in the 1980s and her own experience in graduate education were influential in shaping her discomfort with much of what is taught in graduate

management education and reaffirmed her emphasis on pragmatic questions. She agrees with Mintzberg that we are not teaching MBAs to manage, but disagrees that we should teach them roles to carry out. Rather, she believes that we should teach potential managers how to see their opportunities for action, how to manage their boundaries, how to select and maintain contacts, and how to make choices that maximize their effectiveness given different constraints and demands of the job. She holds similar beliefs about training of managers in industry (Fleishman, 1953). While quite concerned about values in management education (cf. Stewart, 1984a, 1984b; Stewart & Farr, 1977; Stewart & Marshall, 1982; Stewart & Smith, 1982, 1983), Stewart, oddly enough, never addresses the choices involved in ethical decisions in any of her works. While not the *zeitgeist* at the time of her most influential publications, concepts such as ethical choice can be readily incorporated into the demands–constraints–choices model and may have substantial explanatory power in business ethics research.

### **The Manager as Leader**

In general, Dr. Stewart (1982a) is of the opinion that it is more important to study managerial behavior than leadership per se as leadership tends to be a value-laden construct and is often narrowly studied. Hence, we need to study manager behavior generally to capture aspects of leadership more specifically (Stewart, 1982a, p. 100). Stewart argues that typical leadership research is circumspect in that it constrains our notions of leadership through the questionnaires used to measure it (e.g., Fiedler, 1967; Heller, 1971). Her research has shown that leadership involves not just relationships with subordinates but also those with peers, senior members of the firm, and individuals outside the organization. Leadership is not just downward contacts but also upward, sideways, and outward (1982a, p. 99). Thus, to study leadership, we must study it in all the various areas in which the managers are leading. We should look to how a manager's time is distributed in these activities, the types of contacts they form, and how managers manage their network through techniques such as analysis of diaries and interviews with their contacts.

Stewart (1970, pp. 62–66) concludes that at higher levels it is a requisite change in attitude rather than a change in actions that must be communicated as an executive control mechanism. Her analyses have further allowed her to conclude that those leaders who have distinctive and consistent styles are more effective than leaders who vacillate because subordinates know where they stand with the leader (cf. Stewart, 1981). Otherwise, she denotes few prescriptive advices for leaders. For managers, on the other hand, she offers considerable practical guidance.

### **Some Basic Implications**

#### *Evaluating Managerial Effectiveness*

Rosemary Stewart provides a number of prescriptions for managers based on her structured observations, qualitative analysis and reasoning. Generally, she concludes that one of the primary distinguishing features of effective versus ineffective managers is a greater ability to

recognize opportunities for action in the choices available. The ability to operate within and outside of boundaries and to see boundaries as fluid rather than rigid, further distinguishes the ascendant manager. Her work is then applicable to personnel selection in that managers should be chosen based on their “fit” within the constraints demands, and choices they are likely to exercise in a given position. She agrees with Drucker (1967) that an organization should build on a manager’s strengths, but extends the idea of job “fit” to include placing managers in jobs where the choices the manager is likely to exercise are fit to the constraints and demands of the job. In her opinion, the type of analysis required to identify this person–job correspondence for selection and placement options is typically absent from the content of job descriptions.

Stewart (1965, 1989) asserts that there are strong implications of her constraints–demands–choices model for performance appraisal. For example, she believes that discrepancies between the managers’ own perceptions of constraints–demands–choices in the position with those of his or her own supervisor or those of the organization can afford a significant point of departure for evaluative feedback (Stewart, 1965). She believes that the appraisal of managerial effectiveness should focus on the following questions:

Does the manager have a strategy?

Does the manager allocate time to long-term planning as well as reacting to short-term response to unanticipated events? (see also Stewart, 1979a).

Does the manager review his or her own effectiveness?

Does the manager review his or her own focus?

Are the choices that the manager makes consistent with how the manager can best contribute?

Do the choices the manager makes match how subordinates can best contribute?

Is the manager fulfilling the demands of the position?

How good is the manager’s network?

Does the manager enjoy the job energetically?

Stewart concludes that only through an analysis of the constraints and demands of the job and by observing the choices the manager makes through his or her thinking over time can we really understand effectiveness. There exists, however, the beguiling problem that the answer to the question set above will ultimately require quantitative comparisons of managerial effectiveness rather than merely subjective suppositions in answering “yes” or “no.”

### *Use of Committees*

Stewart (1970) provides a canon for the usefulness of committee meetings based on her interviews, group discussions and case analyses. She states that committees will be useful: (1) when bringing together all those whose experience is necessary to the decision to be made; (2) when it is important to prevent decisions from being taken too quickly; (3) when the meeting has the educational value of keeping managers informed about other parts of the organization; (4) when decisions by committee are likely to be more objective than those made by individuals.

Dr. Stewart believes that committee members should have homogeneity of outlook in order to reach consensus—an idea from her 1970 book that runs contrary to current conjecture about the value of diversity. She also acknowledges the deep value of informal discussion such as the institutionalized coffee (tea) break.

## Conclusions

The work of Rosemary Stewart is prodigious, ranging from well-documented qualitative methodology and a heuristic grounded theory to meaningful paradigms for analyzing managerial activity and powerful extensions of her logic to those of better-known theorists. Though her work has had less impact on the field of management than it would have had were it better known in the United States, her contributions are quite well recognized in Europe and the rest of the world. Her emphasis on practical guidance for real managers is exemplary for academicians. Many of Dr. Stewart's works are exemplars of the argument for qualitative reasoning rather than quantitative analysis for studying a complex and weakly understood phenomenon. She has made persuasive arguments for how the field can best move forward while also demonstrating that the argument has teeth for devouring knowledge about management practice. In this realm, she is both descriptive and prescriptive. Dr. Stewart has ostensibly been one of the major contributors to our understanding of what managers actually do.

Some of the greatest impact of Dr. Stewart's work may not yet be realized. For example, Stewart frequently acknowledged the importance of organizational culture in describing constraints and demands of management positions. She described how, in lesser-constrained jobs, the culture of the organization may provide more of a constraint than the nature of the work (Stewart, 1989b). She also recognized the effect of sociocultural constraints in studying differences between organizations in different countries (Stewart, 1966; Stewart, Barsoux, Kieser, Ganter, & Walgenbach, 1994). Her model has application to the comparative management research such as the work on cultural dimensions of Hofstede (1980) and large-scale studies such as the ERGOM research by Bass, Burger, Philip, Doktor, and Barrett (1979).

However, applications of her model on a more macro scale fit quite well with recent conceptualizations of cultural differentiation and "best management practices." In these models, the constraints of culture and the demands of organizations within the culture converge to identify the firm's best practice choices (cf. Von Glinow, Drost, & Teagarden, 2002). At the micro level, Stewart's model has broad explanatory applicability for the study of multinational firms in describing how managers operating within the demands of the job under different cultural constraints might formulate different choice strategies through the contacts chosen, how boundaries are managed, and how attention is focused on different aspects of the work.

Similar to the potential applications of her model to theories of ethical choices in business mentioned earlier, the potential for application to comparative international management is also apparent. Perhaps the greatest appreciation of her theoretical work is

forthcoming. Nevertheless, Rosemary Stewart's prolific practical suggestions for managers and for management education should continue to have considerable effect on the scientific study of what managers actually do for a long time to come.

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## **OF COMPLEXITY AND DISTILLATION: STEWART'S CONTRIBUTION TO UNDERSTANDING WHAT MANAGERS REALLY DO**

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Like many of my colleagues, my first understanding of management as a topic of study was learning about the works of Rosemary Stewart, Burns and Stalker, Henry Mintzberg, Joan Woodward, the National Training Laboratories and, of course, the grandfather of all the works, Henri Fayol. I first heard these names in the 1980s when studying management and

organizational behavior for the first time. They seemed a bit “old hat” even though it was barely 20 years since their works were published. But, like all of us, the more I learned, the more I realized their work was ageless. Quality work always is. I was teaching about them in the 1990s, and now in the 21st century their work is as critical as ever to our appreciation of what managers actually do.

The first thing that struck me when re-reading Rosemary’s (Stewart, 1967), seminal book, *Managers and Their Jobs* was the ubiquitous use of “his” and the book cover, now torn and tatty, featuring an illustration of four middle-aged men in suits, three of whom were bespectacled. Wearing my hermeneutic hat for a moment, I am conscious that in the 1960s, managers *were* men, they were predominantly in manufacturing or in the public service, and people knew little of what managers really did. After all, “management” is very much a 20th century concept, and the work of Rosemary and her contemporaries was undertaken early in the second half of that tumultuous century. Even then, their work was undertaken after “management” and “business” had taken a terrible beating during the Great Depression prior to the Second World War. These were momentous times, indeed. The fact that Rosemary was a young woman studying this male domain made it an even more exhilarating scholarly feat.

It is my observation that “classic” authors are classic through a book, usually, rather than through journal articles. Observers and historians invariably point to a seminal book, not a seminal article or articles. There are exceptions such as Abraham Zaleznik (1977), but I believe that, in general, “classic” is bestowed on book authors’ more than on journal article authors. Among many other books and monographs, Rosemary Stewart has published two editions of *Managers and Their Jobs* as well as the 1976 classic *Contrasts in Management* and three editions of *The Reality of Management*. *Contrasts in Management* reported a similar kind of descriptive and categorizing work. However, it made more effort to learn from *real* managers. Actual people in actual organizations were especially emphasized. In so doing, the reality of managerial life was brought home even more clearly to the reader.

### **A question of method**

The data Rosemary gathered for *Managers and Their Jobs* were from managers completing diaries on their daily activities and interactions. They completed columns on *where* they did their work, *who* they did it with, *how* they did it, *what* they actually did, and *when* they did these various things. However, there was no mention of *why* they did what they did. Again, with the hermeneutic hat on, we can sense that the asking of the ‘why?’ question was done much less in that era, whether in research or in the workplace, or in the home, or in the public arena.

Colleagues like Jay Conger (1998) have agreed with me that in the research of leadership, ‘how?’ and ‘why?’ questions should dominate not just our research questions; they should also dominate the interview questions that we might ask of our research respondents. Imagine the rich value we could get by going back to some of these managers and asking why they spent so much or so little time with their subordinates, or why they spent more time with their

boss than with their subordinates, or why they spent so little time in their own office. These are the sorts of questions that presented themselves upon perusing Rosemary's findings. By the way, "boss" and "subordinate" are widely used terms in *Managers and Their Jobs*. Although unpopular now, it was the language of the era, and deserves translation to the highly judgmental students we have in our present era.

In a sense, *Managers and Their Jobs* was a replicative study. Stewart cites a number of other studies that also classified how managers spend their time. From Europe, she cites Sune Carlson (1951), Tom Burns (1957), Horne and Lupton (1965), and Copeman, Suijk, and Hanika (1963). In the 1950s, and across the Atlantic, the Ohio State Studies conducted similar work under the heading more of "leadership" than "management." "Leadership" is mentioned only twice in *Managers and Their Jobs*. Chapple and Sayles (1961) did similar work in the United States, as did Mahoney, Jerdee, and Carroll (1963).

By the time her second edition was published in 1988, there were many more researchers who had followed and extended Stewart's methodology. Colleagues like Kotter (1982) and Mintzberg (1973) loom large among them. However, we have to walk before we run, and we needed to know what managers actually did, indeed what a manager really was, before we could take our probing to the next level. With the not inconsiderable discussion since the late 1970s about the similarities and differences between "management" and "leadership," we sometimes fall for the trap of downplaying or belittling the importance of management in favor of leadership. I know this is a leadership journal, but let's face it; management is "where it's at." Management is the overarching task that must be done well in our organizations and societies. Certainly, leadership is one important function of management, and more than just "managers" can display leadership, but we must not lose sight of the important role to our institutions of "what managers do."

The methodology employed by Stewart was very descriptive of what managers did. It tells the story of the manager's organizational life, including how much time he spent alone, how much time was spent traveling or entertaining, and so on. The "story" of the life of the subject was the foundation of the sociological and anthropological roots of Stewart and her contemporaries. There was little consideration of cause-effect relationships, but there was considerable categorizing of their experiences and activities. Therefore, Stewart did tell us much about the lived experience of the managers in her study, and most importantly, *from their perspective*. Realistically, there was little technology available during the 1950s and 1960s to undertake more complex analysis than Stewart and her contemporaries did. The analysis they did was as complex as it could have been for the era in which it was conducted.

Rosemary did conduct a cluster analysis with three-dimensional clustering and standardizing of the deviations of each variable, using a computer program. My mind boggles at how big that computer must have been. Even in the 1970s we were still using punch cards and computers as big as rooms. She then told representative stories for the profile of each group of managers (each cluster). The methodology is simple by today's standards, but enormously and incredibly innovative for the 1960s. Moreover, it is an example of methodological triangulation in attempting to integrate statistical analysis into the anthropological analysis of each managerial profile. That, too, was incredibly innovative for the time.

It was also at the cutting edge of the discipline. It was descriptive research, but it was richly descriptive. Stewart made great use of examples to flesh out the points she was making. It was an early example of phenomenology in management studies. The phenomenon of ‘manager’ was all around us, but was little studied hitherto. Therefore, we should all be grateful for her innovation. To the extent that Stewart’s work was from the perspective of the manager, it was more than just phenomenology, it was early managerial phenomenography.

Interestingly, 1967 was the same year that Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss brought out their seminal work, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*. This work gave us a method for probing into qualitative data to establish the relationships between “cause” and “consequence” as well as “covariance,” “contingency,” intervening “conditions,” and of course, “context.” At last, qualitative research could really go past the descriptive and get into the explanatory. Technology and computers were not needed for such analysis at that time, but since then, quite sophisticated programs have been developed to help researchers to catalogue data and search very quickly and efficiently. Unfortunately, organizational research has taken far too long to take up this challenge. Now that we have computers and software to help us with this analysis, we have little excuse. Sadly, the sociological and anthropological perspectives dominating organizational research until the 1960s have largely been lost, certainly in leadership research, and certainly in North America where leadership research mainly resides.

### **Other observations**

In Stewart’s work there is little mention of “effectiveness.” That was more the domain of the North American researchers. There was little mention of “success.” I suppose it was difficult not to be successful in 1966 and 1967, in Britain at least. Success is far harder to come by nowadays. There appears to have been the assumption abroad during that time that if a manager did his job, then “success” would follow. Of course, “success” is another construct that has been teased out and interrogated considerably since that time. Fred Luthans is one who interrogated the difference between success and effectiveness. Effective managers get the job done with maximum positive effect upon motivation, performance, and organizational goals. Successful managers work their way through a career expeditiously. Successful managers are characterized by “advancement,” whereas effective managers are characterized by “achievement” (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2000). Luthans (1988) found that only 10% of managers are both successful *and* effective. Most managers are either successful *or* effective. Of course, details such as these are common knowledge to the organizational researcher of today. However, we would not have had that luxury without the innovative and integrative work of Rosemary Stewart, who opened up our minds to research questions like these.

Similarly, constructs such as “affect” and “intent,” so prevalent today, received no mention in Stewart’s work. “Affect” is a construct from the discipline of psychology, and Stewart was not a psychologist. However, there was considerable consideration of “efficiency” in Rosemary Stewart’s work, especially with regard to the use and allocation of time.

Perhaps that was a legacy of the era. After all, the workplace was only just moving out of the post-Taylorist efficiency era of time-and-motion studies and the like. The “rapid rate of change” was mentioned a couple of times in the first edition of *Managers and Their Jobs*. If only those managers knew how rapid it was to become, and will still become.

Rosemary Stewart was one of the first to open up to us the incredible variety and complexity of managerial work, and the folly of generalizing about “management” and “what managers do.” In today’s era, as we acknowledge the incredible complexity of the task of the chief executive, it is humbling to reflect on the equivalent complexity, albeit on a smaller scale, of the humble “manager.” Since the 1960s, the task of the manager has become considerably more complex. Managers have less clear-cut lines of authority and spans of control. They have a more aware, diverse, and demanding set of “subordinates” and “bosses.” They have to do more “leadership” and less “motivating” and “controlling.” They have much more complex and diverse personal lives. The managers themselves are much more demographically diverse.

Because of this complexity, we need holistic and integrative methods to harness the huge range of variables that reflect the phenomena we investigate. Rosemary Stewart probed into this research conundrum in 1967. Since then the complexity of the phenomenon, and of the methodological challenge, has exploded. We need these integrative methods more than ever.

## Second edition

In 1988, the second edition of *Managers and Their Jobs* was published. Stewart clearly had put great effort into how people could do “management” better. At the very least, she was able to simplify the complexity or distill the essences of management that contemporary managers could take away and use to make their own personal learning more effective.

Nonetheless, the main research questions revolved around “What *do* managers do?” Both editions of *Managers and Their Jobs*, as with *Contrasts in Management*, are all about the activities and interactions of managers. Questions such as “Do they enrich lives?” “Do they help bosses and subordinates (vis-à-vis merely spending time with them)?” and “Do they fight ethical dilemmas?” were not asked. However, once again, bear in mind that such questions were not at the forefront of the consciousness of organizational scholars until at least the late 1970s. Rosemary addressed these questions, and many more besides, in later years. In particular, the most recent edition of *The Reality of Management* (1997) was a complete examination of management, including leadership, organizational design, structure, and theory, and the social environment of organizations.

Much of Rosemary’s work is on the totality or the holistic nature of management. I would suggest that all the great or “classic” management works share this characteristic. Context and complexity are important in the organizational lives of managers and executives. Therefore, it is important for researchers neither to overlook the context nor to attempt to simplify the complexity of management by discounting variables.

Like Bernie Bass, Rosemary is officially semiretired but still of good health and quite prolific. With the benefit of having seen eras come and go, we hope that she continues to bestow upon us the benefit of her wisdom and insight for many years to come.

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## WHAT INDEED DO MANAGERS DO? SOME REFLECTIONS ON ROSEMARY STEWART'S WORK

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What is management? The traditional management textbook answer is planning, organizing, motivating, controlling, coordinating, and providing general ideas about the responsibilities managerial jobs entail but very little about what a manager actually does (Carlson,

1951). What do managers really do? What does the manager's job look like? How do managers' jobs differ? These questions are more difficult to answer than one might, at a first glance, assume. Terms such as management and managers are often taken for granted, introducing a false assumption of homogeneity, when we talk about or study 'managers'.

Rosemary Stewart (e.g., 1965, 1967, 1976, 1982, 1997, 1998) and others in this area (e.g., Carlson, 1951; Kotter, 1982; Mintzberg, 1973; Sayles, 1964) have made tremendous contributions by questioning assumptions to reveal that managerial work, behavior, and jobs are much less straightforward than imagined. The research in this area shows managers spend much of their time in interaction with others, for instance, in meetings or on the phone. The pace of their often rather fragmented work is hectic, leaving them little time to think. Managers also spend much time traveling, in committees and on paper work, etc. (e.g., Stewart, 1967).

In this reflection on work by Rosemary Stewart, I briefly describe the contributions her work has made to the study of managerial work as well as some difficulties with this line of research. Research on managerial work can be taken forward in many ways with the methods and models developed by Stewart along with other models of interest to researchers on a wide range of related topics. I will touch upon several areas that seem promising for future research, focusing especially on cross-cultural applications of Stewart's work.

I remember my somewhat dual reaction as a young student upon reading work by Rosemary Stewart and others in this area. On the one hand, the down-to-earth approach taken in analyzing the nature of a manager's job and observing what managers really do was attractive. It broke down the abstract idea of "management" into understandable and concrete activities, and, in doing so, made me feel that one might not have to be superhuman to be a manager. On the other hand, the findings also shattered the somewhat romantic and glamorous image of managers I had back then. Still, young students look at me very suspiciously when I describe findings of studies on what managers really do. The mundane nature of many tasks and the chaotic pace of work do not fit their image of the heroic and wise leader, decisively leading the troops. This finding alone is a very valuable contribution because it dispelled many myths about management.

In her book, *The Reality of Management*, Stewart (1997) broadly defines the manager's job as "deciding what should be done then getting other people to do it" (p. 6). Deciding what needs to be done includes setting objectives, planning, and setting up a formal organization. Getting it done includes elements such as motivation, communication, control, and developing others. However, "deciding what to do and getting it done" does not provide the specific activities managers need to undertake to accomplish these aims, what managers should do to be successful, or how to avoid being ineffective.

One dilemma in the observational research on managerial jobs and what managers do is the constant interpretation required to translate very concrete observed activities to a more abstract conceptual and interpretative level to understand *why* managers would engage in a specific activity. One activity can have different meanings or effects and different activities can lead to the same effect. Thus, it is important to go beyond a purely descriptive approach to avoid losing the ability to explain *why* managers do what they do and whether what they do is *effective* or not. Regarding *why* managers engage in specific behaviors, Mintzberg (1991) states that the *why's* need to be considered alongside the *what's*.

Hales (1989) holds that researchers need to ask questions like why *these* behaviors and activities and not others? If not everything a manager does is necessarily or exclusively managerial in nature one might also ask which activities are and which are not “managerial.” Willmott (1984) indicates studies have mostly ignored the political realities of managerial work, hindering our understanding of the *why* question. The issue of effectiveness as an outcome is raised by Martinko and Gardner (1985), who point out that “it is difficult to ascertain which if any of the behaviors described by structured observation studies are critical for effective performance. Although studies give a better idea of how managers spend their time, current designs provide no way of evaluating the effectiveness or efficiency of these activities” (p. 688).

Hales raised some other related problems with the research in this area (e.g., problems with the categories used to describe behaviors, the lack of a solid theoretical base, and the ambiguities surrounding the object of study). In her edited volume entitled *Managerial Work*, Stewart (1998) brings together many of the studies as well as such critical reviews of this literature. In doing so, she offers an overview of 40 years of research in this area, the specific findings, and criticisms of this line of work. Rather than summarize those findings and arguments here (see Stewart, 1998 for those), a few suggestions for future research and cross-cultural applications are presented below.

## Future research

Rosemary Stewart’s impressive body of work on management brings many valuable lessons and insights that can take studies of leadership forward. Stewart (1989) recommends concentrating on the interaction between individual and job, studying how managers think about their work and job or studying the thoughts and actions of managers over time. She also recommends focusing on the cyclical nature of managerial work, how managers deal with problems over time, and studying how managers decide on the timing of their actions (why do they do what they do, *when* they do it). The methods used by Stewart would also benefit leadership research. Given the dominance of questionnaire research, studying “what leaders really do” would make an interesting contribution to the field. Diary studies (both leader and follower diaries would be of interest) and systematic observation methods offer possibilities to further current understanding, for triangulating results found using other methods, and for developing and validating questionnaires.

Stewart suggests studying dyad jobs or those with a major team element. Although most of the work on managerial jobs as well as on leadership focuses on the individual manager/leader and his or her job/leadership role, management and leadership are often a shared responsibility. Thus, the functioning of different executive constellations offers an interesting context for future research. Studying management teams, shared and distributed leadership, or what Gronn (1999) describes as “leadership couples” are examples. Questions might include: Which activities are shared and how are they shared? What are benefits and problems associated with sharing these? How do communication and coordination run in different executive constellations? When and where are such constellations found and effective?

Stewart's work shows that "managers" are a diverse breed. Even though we often talk about them as a specific and homogenous group, the differences between, and among, managerial jobs are vast. Attention to the similarities and differences between managerial jobs is of interest. The same goes for leadership. Some aspects of the leadership role are—by definition—found in almost all leadership positions. However, there also are vast differences between leadership jobs due such as work group composition (e.g., accountants, steel production workers, professional hockey players, and nurses) and hierarchical levels. It would be interesting to apply Stewart's (1982) demands, constraints, and choices model to different leadership positions and to use the observational and diary methods to study the diversity of *why* do they do *what* they do, *when* they do it.

Recent research in the leadership field seems to suggest that some characteristics and behaviors (often associated with transformational leadership) seem to be effective in most cultures or situations. However, the required enactment of characteristics may vary in different contexts. For instance, a characteristic such as "inspirational" may be associated with effective leadership everywhere; however, what one must do to be seen as inspirational may vary across cultures (e.g., Bass, 1997; Den Hartog, House, Hanges, Dorfman, Ruiz-Quintanilla, & Associates, 1999). The aforementioned research methods would be useful to gain additional insight into these differences in enactment across contexts.

### **Management from a cross-cultural perspective**

What managers do is in part dependent on what is customary in their organization, industry, or country. Managers' subjective theories of acceptable and effective behavior reflect aspects of societal culture. The accepted goals, values, and mores of the society influence what managers strive for and the rules they observe in doing so. "Whether they seek to expand their business rapidly, to undercut their competitors, to misrepresent their products, or to put customer satisfaction before economic production will again, at least partly, depend on the prevailing mores" (Stewart, 1997, p. 129).

### **Managerial work across cultures**

Stewart calls attention to the possible impact that cultural differences may have on the manager's job and on managerial behavior. Unfortunately, at this time, thorough systematic observational research on managers and their behavior in a cross-cultural setting was rare. To date, the research on managers' jobs and behaviors has been done in highly industrialized, "western" societies (mainly North America and some European countries). Also, most studies were done in a single country and did not aim to systematically compare the views, behaviors, and jobs of managers in similar positions in different countries.

In a rare comparative study, Stewart, Barsoux, Kieser, Ganter, and Walgenbach (1994) compared managers from the UK and Germany. Their findings show many interesting differences between the British and German middle managers. In Germany, vocational

education was emphasized and formal qualifications were tied more strictly to the functional responsibilities than in Britain. Britain has a tradition of recruiting graduates of any discipline for many jobs. In Germany, the management task is perceived in more functional terms and a direct relationship between vocational training and the job to be done was more common.

Regarding career development, in Britain, more emphasis was placed on mobility. Large British companies prepare their potential future senior managers through changing jobs and functions every so often and by 'broadening' managers through project work or involvement in strategic steering committees. In contrast, large German companies place less emphasis on mobility and development, though exposure to different situations was found. German managers spent more time in a single job, which suggests expertise rather than variety is valued at the middle management level. Stewart et al. (1994) hold that the findings reveal an interesting difference in British and German views of what management is about. It indicates the relative importance of the general (people) compared to specific (task) experience as a necessary quality of middle management (Stewart, 1994, p. 62). Such differences in management development, and possible related differences in methods used for leadership development in different countries are an interesting area to explore in future research.

Other differences between the German and British middle managers found by Stewart et al. (1994) concluded that communication for German managers with their subordinates was predominantly task oriented, whereas the British managers focused more on motivation, reaching agreement on targets, and getting general policies implemented. To enlist support, the British relied more on persuasion and networking, whereas the Germans assumed they could convince others by the content of their arguments rather than their presentation. The British middle managers preferred (and spent more time in) meetings as a method for achieving coordination, whereas the Germans relied more on establishing routines and programs. In line with this, German managers predominantly apply process controls to check subordinates' work, whereas the British prefer output controls. German managers were found to spend more time alone, make more (and briefer) telephone calls, and have more (and briefer) ad hoc face-to-face contacts than British managers.

Many of the differences Stewart et al. found between British and German managers seem to reflect the culture dimension of uncertainty avoidance (cf. Hofstede, 1980). Societies high on uncertainty avoidance have a stronger tendency toward orderliness and consistency, structured lifestyles, clear specification of social expectations, and rules and laws to cover situations (House, Hanges, Ruiz-Quintanilla, Dorfman, Jaurdan, Dickson, Gupta, Den Hartog, 1999; Javidan & House, 2001). Germans have been found to have a much stronger antipathy towards uncertainty than the British (e.g., Hofstede, 1980). Stewart et al. (1994) note that the German managers' desire for control over uncertainty manifested itself in many ways.

For example, the legal framework, labor regulations, contrasting organizational structures and approaches to management, everyday management relations with subordinates, and even the interaction with the researchers (e.g., Germans resisted the observation method more). Whereas the British emphasized resourcefulness and improvisation, the Germans expected reliability and punctuality. Consistent with other research (cf. Rauch, Frese, & Sonnentag, 2000), Germans gave much more attention to strict planning and plan adherence (not doing so

as a sign of weakness). In their study, Rauch and associates expected and found that business planning had a positive influence on small business success in Germany and a negative influence on small business success in Ireland. Thus, the cultural appropriateness of extensive planning indeed seems to influence its success.

Interpersonal contacts were found to be much more formal and ritualized in Germany than in Britain (Stewart et al., 1994). In many workplaces, it is still uncommon to be on a first name basis with co-workers. Germans also tended to use formal titles more when addressing each other (even when people knew each other well). Stewart et al. (1994) also found some differences between German and British managers that they felt were related to the culture dimension of individualism–collectivism (cf. Hofstede, 1980). For instance, they found a stronger emphasis on cooperation, team spirit, and agreement in Germany, whereas the British strongly emphasized the individual (e.g., self-fulfillment, personal accomplishment, and the opportunity to influence decisions).

Communication skills are important for managerial effectiveness. However, what constitutes being a good communicator is likely to vary greatly across cultures, as there are profound differences between cultures in the preferred use of language, styles of responding, typical or appropriate nonverbal cues, rhythm, and intonation. Trompenaars (1993) describes cross-cultural differences in patterns of verbal communication such as tone and interrupting the speech of others. Typical styles of responding and use of direct versus indirect language also vary across cultures. For instance, in many “Western” cultures, being direct and unambiguous is valued (Holtgraves, 1997). However, in other cultures, a less direct manner of responding is appreciated. Such indirectness in communication is related to “face management.” People are motivated to collectively manage “face” (i.e., public identity) and one way to do this is to phrase their remarks politely and indirectly. Although face management in some form or other seems important in any culture, members of collectivist cultures are assumed to be more concerned with face management than people from individualistic countries.

There is some support for the idea of cultural differences in this area. For instance, Koreans were found to be more indirect in their speech than Americans (Holtgraves, 1997). Stewart et al. (1994) also found an example of such differences. Although British managers are not necessarily less status conscious than German managers, authority and respect are expressed in a less formalized and more complicated manner in the UK (including tone of speech, vocabulary, attitude, and body language). Compared to Germany, Britain is a more “high-context” culture, in which communication is more indirect and ambiguous. In line with this, the British use humor much more and much more deliberately in order to get things done (e.g., to criticize with a smile, soften a blow, discharge tension, or challenge authority) “Humour is used as a channel for making oblique statements which avoid head on assertion. It is the natural instrument of ambiguity” (Stewart et al., 1994, p. 171).

Other culture dimensions may also play a role in managerial work, for instance, interactions between managers and subordinates are likely to be influenced by power distance (cf. Hofstede, 1980, 2001). Centralized decision making and concentration of authority is found in countries high on power distance. Directly approaching or disagreeing with managers is likely to be far less common in countries high on power distance. Organizational

hierarchies are usually taller, information flow is constrained by the hierarchy, and privileges for managers will be more common in societies high on power distance. Employees expect to be told what to do. In contrast, in a more egalitarian society, flatter structures are found and employees expect to be consulted by their managers (Hofstede, 2001). Such differences obviously affect and shape the managers' job.

Also, some societies believe in the value of competition and competitiveness, whereas others de-emphasize the role of individual achievement, in favor of cooperation. For instance, most people from the United States believe competition is needed for economic prosperity, and essential for achievement in sports, science, arts, and other areas (Kohn, 1986). Such a stress on competition seems likely to be reflected in managers' behavior and expectations as well as firms' approaches to management development.

Yet other cultural norms and values may also yield interesting hypotheses on what managers do or need to do to be effective (e.g., how people in a culture deal with time, the rules guiding appropriate expression of emotion). Besides the similarities and differences in managerial work between cultures, studying managerial work in a multicultural context, in which managers are working with people from different backgrounds, is also of interest to further understanding of managerial work in different contexts. The work by Rosemary Stewart and her colleagues offers a tremendous stepping-stone to further develop this area.

## In conclusion

Rosemary Stewart has made a strong contribution to the field with her insightful work on issues such as what managers do, what their jobs are really like, and how they differ. Her many contributions to the literature in this area include her empirical studies which she disseminated in both academic works and practitioner-oriented books (e.g., Stewart, 1967, 1976, 1997; Stewart et al., 1994). She edited a volume (Stewart, 1998) bringing together major insights in the area of studying managerial work (see also Stewart, 2002). She offers insights on useful methods (e.g., Stewart, 1965) and describes many different ways to take the research in this field forward (e.g., Stewart, 1989). Finally, she has contributed thorough theoretical work to the field through her work on the demands, constraints, and choices model (e.g., Stewart, 1982) and for role analysis of the managerial job (Fondas & Stewart, 1994). I am sure that her work will serve as an inspiration for students, managers, and researchers alike, for many years to come.

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## **CHOICES, CONSTRAINTS, AND DEMANDS: STEWART'S MODEL FOR UNDERSTANDING MANAGERIAL WORK AND BEHAVIOR**

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An understanding of the nature of the flexibility inherent in all managerial jobs is necessary if we are to have a realistic picture of what they are like. (Stewart, 1982a, p. 13)

One of the more seminal scholars of managerial work and behavior is Rosemary Stewart. Her extensive work (see, e.g., Stewart, 1965, 1967, 1976, 1982a, 1982b, 1989c, Stewart, Barsoux, Kieser, Ganter, & Walgenbach, 1994) provides competent tools for studying what managers do and how they see their work. The focus here is on Stewart's (1976a, 1982b) CCD model, a framework proposing that *choices*, *constraints*, and *demands* outline managerial work and behavior. The reasons for this choice of focus are many.

First, characteristic of a true classic, this model has stood the test of time: it is today as relevant for analyzing what managers do as it was 20 years ago. Second, the framework has proved relevant both for practical and theoretical purposes and is used by managers,

consultants, and academics. Third, it has enabled understanding of *why* managerial work in similar managerial positions entails so much variety. Fourth, it may be suggested that Stewart's distinctive contribution culminates in this model. Finally, thanks to the elegant simplicity of this three-element model, it can be used in new ways, be integrated with various theoretical ideas, and be adopted while approaching managerial work—and the differences and similarities it involves—within different contexts and from different paradigms.

### **Theoretical contribution of Stewart's model**

The main form of validation is whether others, both academics and practitioners, find the model a fruitful way of conceptualizing managerial work and behaviour and of thinking about their interrelationship. (Stewart, 1982b, p. 11)

Stewart's model has strong support and her conceptual contribution has moved research on managerial work forward. This field has been criticized for being atheoretical, decontextual, and conceptually inconsistent, but critics have not sufficiently taken into account the distinctiveness of this inductive approach (Noordegraaf & Stewart, 2000). Many studies have attempted to enhance the understanding of individual managers and their managerial work as it is practiced without adopting a normative stance or aiming at theoretical conceptualizations of management. Definitional issues, such as who should be considered a manager or what is it that is studied (managerial work, jobs, or behavior), as well as changes in research focus, have retarded the progress. Therefore, it is no wonder that empirical evidence on the activities, elements, patterns, and nature of managerial work is full of diversity—"variation of variation" (Hales, 1986).

The CCD model makes it possible to explain the obvious contradictions between the findings presented over 50 years. In short, it is consistent with the four main themes identified by Hales (1986); variation and contingency, choice and negotiation, pressure and conflict, and reaction and nonreflection. Further, this empirically based model enables managerial work to be investigated within a social context and, more importantly, to utilize interdisciplinary frameworks such as role theory (see Fondas & Stewart, 1994). According to Stewart (1982a, p. 2), *demands*, "what anyone in the job has to do," form the inner core of a job, while different internal or external *constraints* draw the outermost frame and limit to what can be done. The distinction between demands and constraints is, however, not unambiguous, since both categories basically reflect expectations sent by various stakeholders as well as those of the manager in question. *Choices* bring self-determination, flexibility, and dynamism in work. They are related either to how the work is done or what work is done. Hence, choices may reflect the manager's competence, in particular, with regard to leadership and expectation enactment. Respectively, choices may increase discretion and widen the manager's personal domain within the social environment, but the opposite outcome also is possible.

As to future research settings, Stewart's CCD model also opens up various methodological alternatives. She distinguishes between factual and perceptual demands, constraints, and choices. In order to avoid epistemological problems, this conception should be considered,

together with the other underlying assumptions of the paradigm, adopted. In my view, this model is best used in qualitative, emic approaches which aim to increase our *understanding* of managerial work, since the flexibility inherent in managerial work speaks against overgeneralizing. In studying how managers *see* their work, the researcher deals with subjective realities, perceptions, and sensemaking. Moreover, if a subjectivist paradigm is adopted, the researcher and the subject studied create understandings interactively as the investigation proceeds.

### **Practical contributions and implications**

The extent of the choice that exists in managerial jobs to do some kinds of work and not others, to emphasize certain aspects of the job and to minimize or ignore others, is itself another characteristic of managerial work—one that also has implications for working effectively. (Stewart, 1988, p. 119)

Empirically based understandings of managerial work are necessary to teach management and to develop the work of practicing managers. All prominent scholars of managerial work have shared this view. The increasing complexity of management and managerial work seems to create anxiety in many students of management. I have found that Rosemary Stewart's framework helps them to make sense of managerial chaos and to relate the empirical evidence offered in this field. A careful strategic and operational analysis of the choices, constraints, and demands is a powerful tool for improving personal effectiveness and setting objectives for personal development. Through self-reflection a student can, and even should, evaluate how much flexibility and discretion in managerial work appears optimal for him or her. This reflective exercise will help practicing managers reconsider their view of their work and their way of doing it. Students may also test the validity of the model by analyzing their own work and the choices, constraints, and demands faced while studying. By comparing their views, students may further recognize the importance of perception.

Effectiveness, however it is defined, is largely influenced by the choices that a manager makes. The most essential question is whether the manager is doing the right work. Delegation is a major issue: what a manager views to be a demand of his or her job may really be a choice. A strategic focus is essential for allocating time and effort at all levels. As to choices, many managers tend to underestimate the amount and quality of choices available. Such a view often leads to a reactive approach, although a proactive one—recognizing the threats and opportunities managerial work involves—is elementary. In other words, wise managers know what the restrictions of their economic and social environments must be accepted and which are malleable. A manager needs also to take stock of the way he or she works daily. For example, a habitual response may over time become a demand or a constraint, whereas in rapidly changing environments, managers should avoid becoming mentally set.

Stewart's model is also useful for various purposes of human resource management; for job descriptions, selection, appraisal, and training of managers, and for career design. Job

descriptions seek to define managerial work, yet each jobholder interprets them uniquely. Managers may also have an impact on job responsibilities and work objectives by communicating their own expectations. It is worth noting that perceived discretion—freedom—appears to have a positive impact on a manager’s motivation. Moreover, the lack of unnecessary constraints and demands seems to further creativity and innovation in work and, thereby, create satisfaction. However, if the demands appear too compelling or the constraints too restricting to offer meaningful options, this may start a vicious circle of derailment in a manager’s work. To break this vicious circle often requires an external intervention. Management consultants may find the gaps between “factual” and “perceptual” choices, constraints, and demands useful while attempting to increase managers’ effectiveness. Merely by asking questions, consultants may show managers a different approach or orientation to managerial work and, thereby, improve the quality of the manager’s work life.

### **How this author has utilized the CCD framework**

A job can also be described as dynamic and as consisting of a negotiable space. Such a conception suggests other lines of enquiry than lists of job elements. It also affects the conceptualization of the relation between the individual and the job. (Stewart, 1989, p. 4)

For me, Rosemary Stewart’s contribution culminates in choices, constraints, and demands. I have utilized her framework in two studies highlighting the importance of the external environment on managerial work. Although the external focus dates back to Carlson (1951), it also seems most consistent with “new managerial work” (Kanter, 1989). The first study (Wahlgrén, 1995), applying methodological triangulation, investigated the managerial work of four Finnish managing directors within the context of their external social environment. The framework created follows Katz and Kahn (1978) and sees constraints and demands as expectations either sent by external stakeholders of a firm or those held by the focal manager. It also suggests that leadership, which is embedded in the core of managerial behavior, furthers expectation enactment (Weick, 1979) to a remarkable extent. In other words, external leadership enables managers to affect and effect stakeholders’ demands and constraints; to select, emphasize, modify, and allocate their attention to particular expectations. This external leadership implies that managers can get part of their choices, i.e., their own expectations, accepted among external stakeholders. In this way, the external managerial behavior of a managing director may, over time, become circular and reflect a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The second study (Wahlgrén, 1998), focused on self-employed owner–managers, their managerial work, and the extent to which they experienced “entrepreneurial freedom.” Owner–managers of small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) were chosen, since their managerial work has neither been investigated in this field nor within entrepreneurship research. Freedom was chosen as the focal phenomenon because being an owner–manager implies freedom in many respects and has different meanings.

The above study posits that owner–managers, like all of us, enact their environments, and infers that the important reality is what the subjects imagine it to be (Bogdan &

Taylor, 1975, p. 2). Therefore, owner–managers’ life-worlds are emphasized. Freedom is defined as *perceived opportunity to choose*. To understand freedom, it is necessary to understand the constraints faced: building on Berlin (1969), a distinction between positive and negative freedom—freedom to (choices) and freedom from (constraints and demands)—is also made. External demands and constraints originate in resource exchanges. Some of them can be turned into facilitators, which help owner–managers in choosing. Although entrepreneurial freedom appears illusory for most studied, owner–managers can reduce some obstacles and widen their personal domain by enactment, intelligent choices, and internalizing (i.e., accepting) constraints (von Wright, 1980).

### How to continue forward?

The central theme that runs through the various improvements is the increasing contextualization of managerial behaviour: the growing focus on its social or institutional embeddedness. This calls for parallel research initiatives which imply both a broadening and a deepening of available research. (Noordegraaf & Stewart, 2000, pp. 438–439)

Rosemary Stewart has made a sustainable contribution to research on managerial work. Her CCD model holds great potential for future studies within institutional contexts and cross-national studies. Thanks to its simple structure, this framework is well suited for use in international settings and comparisons, as illustrated in Stewart et al. (1994). The model also is easy to integrate with theories and ideas derived from other fields and disciplines. My study focusing on freedom perceived in owner–managers’ managerial work is one example of this application. In fact, the CCD model is easily linked with managerial discretion and thus can be related to strategic leadership [management] research. Through innovative idiographic research designs, the full potential of Stewart’s classic framework can be fully leveraged to contribute to our knowledge of what managers do in the 21st century. . .

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## **CONTRIBUTIONS OF ROSEMARY STEWART’S WORK TO THOUGHT ON THE MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS**

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*Oxford’s Dictionary of Current English* (2nd edition, 1992) defines *classic* as “...of lasting value and importance.” As an author of several *leadership classics*, Rosemary Stewart introduced theories of management and their implications to a generation of academics and practitioners from the mid-1960s that remain “...of lasting value and importance” to the field. The focus here is on how one of Stewart’s books, *How Computers Affect Management* (Stewart, 1972), informs one of the newer and more dynamic and difficult-to-capture fields of organizational research, the field of management information systems (MIS).

Given that this book was written in the early 1970s, one could expect that outside of its historical context, it would have little currency for managers and researchers thirty-plus years later. This impression might be held even more strongly considering that the focus here is on the relevancy of Stewart’s discussions on computerization and its effect on managers. In

contrast, despite the publication period of this work, certain aspects of this research remain impactful today and useful for contemporary research agendas.

*How computers affect management (Stewart, 1972)*

Stewart reported on the findings from a series of case studies of organizations that were in the implementation stage of computerization of their business systems. The main objective of this book was, simply, "...to try to find out what impact the computer is having on management" (p. 3). The research was conducted at a time when computerized systems were slowly being put into place in organizations and most of these systems were either for highly routinized accounting systems ("clerical procedures" in the terminology of the day) or were highly experimental (and often unsuccessful) short- or long-term planning and control systems. For example, of three companies approached by Stewart to provide case data for Critical Path Method (CPM) systems for project management, two expressed doubts about the eventual success of their CPM efforts and the third, while successful, refused to be a part of the study.<sup>1</sup> Project management professionals in today's environment would likely express amazement at such findings, but this underscores the utility of an analysis such as Stewart's for informing practice at the time and as a historical benchmark for the present.

The research projects Stewart describes involve several in-depth and several short case studies in a cross-section of industries including banking, production organizations (e.g., natural gas production and distribution), and warehousing operations. From this research, Stewart developed three useful structures for classifying computer effects or sources of these effects: (1) standard stages involved in introducing computer systems (e.g., development versus implementation stage), (2) types of applications (clerical, short-term planning and control, and long-term planning/policy), and (3) associated changes, where other changes in process above that of computerization cause effects on managing (e.g., the introduction of organizationally powerful computer support departments).

The lessons contained within the discussion of the development stages remain useful for managers today. Given the proliferation of information systems, current managers are more knowledgeable about development of computer systems, increasing the likelihood her observations could be applied productively. Especially relevant are the discussions of the changes that are introduced by these systems and by the new structures and forms of organization associated with their introduction. The number of types of applications has increased dramatically (e.g., e-commerce and Internet-based applications), making aspects of the original structure dated and providing an opportunity for current scholars to extend Stewart's work. While more and more anecdotal discussion about effects of computers on managing accumulates, scientific study of these effects in the field of information systems still lags considerably behind the proliferation of such systems.

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<sup>1</sup> The major problems with the CPM system cited by one of these organizations was (1) the CPM could not take into account the numerous equally acceptable alternative paths available to the site project manager and (2) the CPM did not have a fine enough level of detail to provide anything more than the most obvious solutions to critical path problems.

An illustration of this lag is provided by a search of the ABI/Inform database (copyright ProQuest Information and Learning Company, 2002). Of the approximately 128 articles/book reviews, etc., listed for the *Leadership Quarterly*, none of these contained either “computer” or “information system” as keywords in any of the basic search fields.<sup>2</sup> It is true that other journals do cover this topic, for example, in the *MIS Quarterly* authors Roepke, Agarwal, and Ferratt (2000) discuss the role of leadership in the alignment of IT human resources with business vision in 3M. However, even with the e-leadership article in *The Leadership Quarterly*, there is still room for more leadership-focused research in this important area.

More important than specific advice to managers, Stewart provided the frameworks mentioned above and then utilized the case analyses to fill in this framework and clarify how it could inform managers faced with the implementation of a computer system. This is the main contribution of the book and provided managers with four topic areas to consider: (1) how relations between burgeoning departments of computer staff and user management can dictate implementation success; (2) how the introduction of computerized systems can affect the amount and type of tasks that managers have to attend to; (3) what things managers need to know to make reasonable and informed use of computerized systems; and (4) implications for leading and managing in the “new age” of computerization.

In her discussion of how relations between burgeoning departments of computer staff and user management can dictate implementation success, Stewart detailed the different levels of involvement needed at different stages of a system implementation and the reasons for difficulties between computer staff and users/user management at these various stages. The key lessons drawn from the case studies include the need for management to remain involved in the development of computer systems and to “. . .not abdicate in the belief that it cannot understand. . .” what is being done by the computer specialists (Stewart, 1972, p. 206). Given the increasing complexity of computer systems over time, it is likely that managers will always have the potential to feel overwhelmed technically.

Thus, managers today can still benefit from Stewart’s advice to continue to use their business and leadership acumen to assess the system’s benefits, to motivate and monitor relations within their own (user) departments and the computer specialists, and to provide the coordination necessary to realize a successful implementation. In short, managers must continue to lead and manage. Likewise, managers of computer specialists and projects must do their best to involve user management in the development and implementation efforts.

Stewart outlined how the introduction of computerized systems can affect the amount and type of tasks attended to by managers. She illustrated how different computer applications might contribute to more effective management efforts and how the structuring and management of organizations might evolve. For example, the time taken to analyze planning processes in order to implement them in a computerized system results in more attention given to important aspects of the planning process. Work in this area has been continued by a number of authors in a number of fields, for example, Huber’s (1990) conceptual piece on the

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<sup>2</sup> However, there is an e-leadership article in the 2000 *Leadership Quarterly Yearly Review of Leadership* that focuses on the information and computer areas.

effects of utilizing information technology on organizational decision making processes. This is an area where current thinking has built on earlier authors such as Stewart, Simon (1960), and Whisler (1970), extending the relevance to contemporary practitioners and researchers.

Problems arising from ignorance, such as fear of computer systems, inadequate input data, overoptimism in setting schedules, and failure to use the information produced by the new system, are not unique to the timing of Professor Stewart's book. Stewart discussed the problems arising from managers being unfamiliar with the business processes and how they fit into the organization as a system. That these are less of a problem today is unclear, as examples of sophisticated systems not being properly utilized or invoked still occur. For example, the failure of the Space Shuttle Challenger was subsequently viewed by many as a problem with top management not properly utilizing either managerial or analytical information systems to make the important decision of whether or not to fly (Vaughan, 1996). One indicator of the increasing need for systems level analyses is the rise in enrollment in business systems architecture and systems engineering courses in the United States (cf. the number of new systems engineering programs developed in the last several years).

Implications for leading and managing in the "new age" of computerization are the final contribution of *How Computers Affect Management*. One key implication is that the large gains that managers can realize from the computerization of various business processes is not in the efficiency and speed provided by the technology but to a large extent from the "...stimulus provided to re-examine policies or procedures" (p. 235). In today's terminology, this would be termed the benefits of business process reengineering, with the implementation of a (now second or third generation) computer system providing the impetus for this re-examination of procedures. Thus, despite prolific advances in computer technology from the 1970s to the present, the one constant is that computerization forces managerial thought. Other key implications that are still relevant in today's environment are the importance of *effective* use of information (echoed by other authors since the 1970s) since decision complexity increases with the availability of more detailed data and more sophisticated analysis techniques (cf. Huber, 1990). Finally, the development and implementation of any computerized system virtually always means more work for the manager, whether in using the system, setting up appropriate organizational structures to manage the system, or in directly managing user staff or computer staff.

While the implications for leading and managing may be thought of as the most important section of *How Computers Affect Management*, many other contributions still inform researchers and practitioners today. The preceding discussion outlined several ways that the Professor Stewart's work can still continue to contribute to finding out, as was the objective of the book, "...what impact the computer is having on management" (1972, p. 3). The structures suggested by Stewart remain useful for analyzing the development and implementation of computer systems. It would be interesting to perform case analyses similar to those Stewart performed in today's organizations to see the extent to which these structures are still informative and what new implications in addition to those revealed by Stewart are now important.

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