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The essay, "Academic Men," attempts, through a review of the biographies of five American academics of the progressive era, to explore the similarities and dis-similarities of their lives. It deals with their horizontal and verticle mobility, their collegial associations and styles, their manners and teaching, and the relationships between their professional and personal lives. It suggests that, for the most part, those turn-of-the-twentieth-century academics were quite conventional men.

DAVID MUSCHINSKE*

Academic Men: A Review Essay

Historians of education have been hesitant to examine the lives of major academic figures. While the ideas of major figures have been criticized, the nature of their professional and personal lives has all but been neglected. Perhaps this is the result of a tendency in academic life to avoid *ad-hominem* arguments. That is, an appraisal or discussion of a figure's life and career and speculation on its relationship to his ideas might be taken to belie a weakness in the discussant's critical powers. To note that William James experienced psychological difficulties might be taken as an *ad-hominem* attack upon the quality of James' psychological ideas. However, an analysis of the professional and personal lives of academics in the past can be much more than that. It can reveal what it was to live, to work, to be a professor in times past. Such an analysis is important because academics generate ideas within the context of a day-to-day existence. To have some understanding of that context — of what it was like to "profess" in the past — might enrich our understanding of what it is to "profess" now.

It is fortunate therefore that recently several biographies have appeared which chronicle the lives of significant and internationally known American educators.[1] Though the quality of the biographies is varied, they provide an important source of information concerning just what it was to be an academic — teacher, researcher, professor — in late nineteenth and early twentieth century America.

Generally speaking, the five biographies are informative. They contain much for the historian of education as well as for the general intellectual historian. In each case the scholarship is careful and, as much as can be expected, the authors have avoided being laudatory.

The general weakness of the biographies is a lack of analysis of the ideas of the men under consideration. There is a good bit of explication but only minimum effort at analysis and explanation of ideas. Also, by and large, readers would have profited from more of an insight into the per-

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[1]Walter H. Drost, *David Snedden and Education for Social Efficiency* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1967); George Dykhuizen, *The Life and Mind of John Dewey* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1973); Hugh Hawkins, *Between Harvard and America: The Educational Leadership of Charles W. Eliot* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972); Geraldine Joncich, *The Sane Positivist: A Biography of Edward L. Thorndike* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1968); and Dorothy Ross, *G. Stanley Hall: The Psychologist as Prophet* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972).

sonalities of the individuals studied, if not through the analysis of source materials, the biographers' controlling limitation, at least through speculation about their personalities.

Dykhuizen's biography of Dewey is well researched. He traces Dewey's career from its origins in Burlington, Vermont in the 1870s through Dewey's work at John Hopkins, the University of Michigan, the University of Minnesota, the University of Chicago, and finally Columbia. Of the five biographers, Dykhuizen most allows his sympathy for his subject to come through. This poses a difficulty for when he deals with situations such as Dewey's conflict with William Rainey Harper, president of the University of Chicago, over the management of the laboratory school. In a situation in which it might be said that he was perhaps over-ambitious, Dewey is portrayed in an entirely sympathetic manner.[2]

A more serious criticism of Dykhuizen's book is that the treatment of various aspects of Dewey's life and career is too even. He gives as much attention to the birthday parties and ceremonials that were held in Dewey's honor as he does to the publication of *Experience and Nature.* One senses that Dykhuizen had difficulty separating the trivial from the profound. Because of this the book does not contribute much to a critical understanding of Dewey's ideas.

Another difficulty arises from Dykhuizen's lack of adventurousness in dealing with the relationship between the development of Dewey's ideas and the vicissitudes of his personal life. For example, in the revised edition of *Experience and Nature,* published in 1929, Dewey wrote that man lives ". . . in an aleatory world: his existence involves, to put it baldly, a gamble."[3] Those words were written shortly after the death of Dewey's first wife in 1927. Although Dykhuizen does mention that Dewey lost two sons in years previous to this, he does not even speculate on the possibility that there could be a relationship between Dewey's "aleatory" posture in *Experience and Nature* and the loss of three members of his nuclear family. Of course, attempting to make such connections involves a good bit of risk-taking and could lead one to make weak psycho-historical generalizations. But to fail to make some connection is almost to deny that one's personal life has an impact upon the development of one's ideas.

On the whole though, Dykhuizen's book is a valuable one for any student of intellectual history. It must be said that he was courageous for attempting to chronicle the life of a man who lived so long, had so many interests, and who was such an extremely prolific writer.

Dorothy Ross' biography of G. Stanley Hall is perhaps the most interesting study — and not only because Hall was an intriguing, contradictory, and sometimes bizarre character. It is also interesting because Ross has a dramatic flair for presentation and because she was willing to make psychological excursions in an attempt to connect Hall's ideas with certain dimensions of his personality. The material is meticulously researched and well documented. She presented facets of Hall's personality that here-tofore one could only suspect existed if one had read his autobiography,

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[2]Dykhuizen, pp. 112-113. For a more detailed discussion of Dewey's conflict with Harper, see Robert L. McCaul, "Dewey and the University of Chicago," *School and Society* 89 (March, April, May 1961): 152-157, 179-183, and 202-206.

[3]John Dewey, *Experience and Nature* (rev. ed.; Chicago: Paul Carus Foundation, 1929), p. 41.

Life and Confessions of a Psychologist.[4] For example, shortly before Hall left Johns Hopkins for Clark University, two students in Hall's department, James McKeen Cattell and John Dewey, were competing for a fellowship. Neither received the fellowship and Ross' careful investigation suggests duplicity, if not dishonesty on Hall's part. She wrote: ". . . he [Hall] praised Cattell when with Cattell and agreed to Dewey's superiority when with [George Sylvester] Morris and [Daniel Coit] Gilman."[5] She suggested that Hall kept at a distance from both Cattell and Dewey and sponsored neither for the fellowship because he was threatened by them. This would be a weak claim if, in addition to her account of this incident, she had not pointed out that Hall was given to telling one-half truths — to his parents, to William James, to Gilman, and others.[6] Such meticulous scholarship with a view to reconstructing character is skillful and commendable.

Ross traced Hall's life and career from their beginnings in Ashfield, Massachusetts, and at Williams College. She documented his search for a profession from Union Theological Seminary, to Germany, Antioch, Harvard, Johns Hopkins, and finally to the presidency of Clark University. She demonstrated well how the various currents of American thought permeated this psychologist's thinking and were appropriated by him in a way to fit his needs. All in all Dorothy Ross' biography is an excellent study.

Geraldine Joncich's enormous biography of Thorndike is less interesting than Ross' biography of Hall probably because Thorndike was a less interesting figure. She traced Thorndike's long professional life which he began as an outstanding student at Wesleyan in the early 1890s. She discussed his graduate student days at Harvard and Columbia, his early teaching experience at Western Reserve, and his career as a psychology professor at Columbia University. There is much in the biography that is revealing of both Thorndike's character and of the enthusiastically pioneering spirit in which scientific psychology was carried on at the turn of the twentieth century. The book was written in the present tense which may cause readers to think that they are reading the script of the "March of Time" but that stylistic quirk does not present difficulties.

The main difficulty with the book is that Ms. Joncich might have approached Thorndike's psychological ideas more critically. She rather uncritically explicated his ideas and in so doing suggested to the reader that they were without serious critical difficulties. She also suggested an affinity between the ideas of Thorndike and those of James and Dewey, an affinity which does not stand up under close scrutiny. If there is something "behavioristic" about Dewey's psychology, it is certainly a much different behaviorism than the S-R bond behaviorism which permeated Thorndike's studies of animal intellect.[7] She also might have dealt with the social implications of Thorndike's psychology, the sort of psychology that tends to measure, "statisticize," and generalize about groups. That kind of psychology can lead to "Jensenisms" in the hands of those who wish to use psychology to support certain pre-conceptions about groups. She might have pointed out that it was somewhat unfortunate that Thorndike attempted to apply his psychological methods to a study of urban problems late in his career —

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[4]G. Stanley Hall, *Life and Confessions of a Psychologist* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1923).

[5]Ross, p. 146.

[6]Ross, pp. 138-139 and 232-236.

[7]Compare John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York: Free Press, 1966), with E. L. Thorndike, *The Principles of Teaching Based on Psychology* (New York: A. G. Seiler, 1906).

unfortunate because among his findings was the generalization that the quality of life in particular American cities was inversely proportional to the number of black inhabitants dwelling in those cities.[8] Such a bald conclusion could be taken in a cause and effect manner by those prone to do so. It could give "scientific" credence to racism and could be used to fuel prejudice.

Hugh Hawkins claimed not to have written a full-scale biography of Charles W. Eliot, president of Harvard from 1869 to 1909. However, *Between Harvard and America* is a biography of Eliot's relationship with Harvard and as such it should have set out to explain that relationship. Such an explanation would have to come through a study of Eliot the man as well as Eliot the college president. More of an explication of Eliot's personal life and its relationship to his work was needed. Readers are told little of Eliot's motivations and his apparent drive. To say, as Hawkins does, that Eliot came from a Brahmin family in which public service was a real choice for a vocation is really to say very little in the way of explanation of Eliot's motivations. At points, Hawkin's account calls for some interpretation or speculation as to just what it was that made Eliot tick. In his mid-twenties, for example, in no particular professional capacity, Eliot suggested sweeping reforms at Harvard. What was it that made this young Brahmin so presumptuous to think that venerable old Harvard could use his advice? The Harvard tradition of alumni intervention in College affairs is not sufficient explanation for Eliot's aggressiveness. Hawkins also points out that Eliot was not particularly loved by members of the Harvard community. But he does not tell readers why Eliot was so ingratiating. Why, in his account of Eliot's efforts to centralize administration at Harvard did Hawkins not comment on what was apparent elitism and authoritarianism in Eliot's makeup? Why did Eliot want to liberalize course offerings at Harvard? To save it from financial ruin and protect his administrative position? Hawkin's study is little help in answering questions such as these for it offers little insight into Eliot the man.

Hawkins has succeeded in painting a fairly clear picture of an ambitious, perhaps insecure man in a position of considerable power. He has demonstrated that a good part of the art of administration lies in compromise, in seeing what is possible and in making it known that the possible is what is desirable. For that achievement alone the book is worth reading.

Drost's study of David Snedden traces the career of that premier educational sociologist from his youth in Southern California and his early days as a public school teacher there to his retirement from Teachers College and his return to the rural California life. Drost discusses Snedden's student days at Stanford and Columbia and his stormy tenure as superintendent of education for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The major strength of Drost's study is his explication of Snedden's conception of social efficiency and the manner in which he clearly distinguishes it from conceptions of others such as John Dewey on one hand and W. W. Charters on the other.

What is lacking in Drost's study is similar to what is lacking in Hawkins' — a glimpse into Snedden's character and his motivations. Perhaps Drost's sources were so limited as to prevent much explication and speculation about Snedden's character. However, the reader is told almost nothing about Snedden's personal life during his most productive years, those at Columbia. Perhaps the materials were not as abundant as in the cases of Dewey, Thorndike, and Hall but nevertheless the reader is offered little insight into Snedden.

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[8]E. L. Thorndike, *Human Nature and the Social Order* (New York: Macmillan Co. 1940).

Even when dealing with the development of Snedden's thought, Drost is hesitant to make connections and generalizations. For example, while Drost mentions that Snedden studied with Dewey, Thorndike, and Cattell at Columbia as well as with David Starr Jordan and E. A. Ross at Stanford, he only briefly examined the impact that the ideas of these powerful thinkers might have had upon the development of Snedden's thought.

Of more interest than the quality of these specific biographies is the general impression of the early twentieth century academic man which emerges from them. The five subjects were contemporaries; therefore, an inquiry into the commonalities and differences of their lives and careers yields a notion of what it was to be an academic man during the first one-half of the twentieth century.[9] All five men were significant members of the American academic community during the first generation in which that community had a vital existence. They were born within forty years of each other and the most productive periods of their careers overlapped. Hall, born in 1844, reached prominence in 1885 when he went to Hopkins and remained prominent until at least 1920 when he retired from Clark. Thorndike, the youngest of the five, was born in 1874 and began the productive portion of his career in 1899. He remained influential at least until his retirement from Columbia in 1940. Snedden was born in 1868, came to Columbia as a professor in 1916, and remained active there until his retirement in 1935. Dewey, of course, lived the most productive academic life of the five. Born in 1859, it is probably reasonable to say that his Columbia years, 1904-1940, were the most vital. Eliot assumed the Harvard presidency in 1869 and retired in 1909 although he remained an influential public figure until his death in 1926.

Generally speaking, all of these characters had successful academic careers. In the light of contemporary concern for mobility and the relative roles that schooling, intelligence, hard work, and luck play in success, it is interesting to look at how these careers were fashioned. While all were successful and while schooling, intelligence, and hard work played an important part in their success, luck was also an important factor.

All were upwardly mobile. Hall came from a family of middle-class Massachusetts farmers. He toyed with the idea of entering the ministry but became one of the leading psychologists of his generation and eventually the president of Clark University. Thorndike's father was a Methodist minister who served various congregations in New England. The family was not prosperous but neither was it poor. Thorndike did undergraduate work at Wesleyan, and after studying graduate psychology at Harvard he found himself being brought to Columbia to study under James McKeen Cattell. Over the next forty years he gained a reputation as one of America's foremost psychologists. Dewey was born into a similarly middle-class family: his father a shopkeeper in Burlington, Vermont. Dewey graduated from the University of Vermont, took his Ph.D. at Johns Hopkins and established himself as America's foremost philosopher. Snedden, the only one of the five not of New England origin, grew up as the son of a land-poor California rancher. He attended a small Roman Catholic undergraduate institution,

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[9]Although there is a fair amount of literature available concerning the sociology of the academic profession, little of it deals with specific lives and careers. The class study is perhaps Logan Wilson's *The Academic Man: A Study in the Socioligy of a Profession* (New York: The Oxford University Press, 1942). While interesting, Wilson's study lacks a personal and human texture. A more recent volume, *Leaders in American Education*, Seventieth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, part II, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), contains autobiographical and biographical sketches of living educators which are of quite a person and human texture.

St. Vincents, earned a B.A. from Stanford and a doctorate from Teachers College. Eventually he became superintendent of schools in Massachusetts and spent the last twenty-five years of his career on the Teachers College faculty applying sociological ideas to educational administration. Of Eliot, the only one of the five not born to a middle-class family, it might be said that upward mobility also characterized his career. Eliot's father was prosperous until Eliot was in his twenties. The family fortune that might have made him independently wealthy was lost in the panic of 1859. Eliot's career was not deterred by this however. He went on to become president of Harvard.

While all were thus upwardly mobile, it is significant that good fortune — luck — fortuitous circumstance entered into their mobility in important ways. For example, Hall came under the influence of Henry Ward Beecher while studying at Union Theological Seminary. Beecher knew that Hall wanted to study in Germany, knew that he lacked the necessary funds to do so, and gave Hall a note to present to Henry Sage, a wealthy merchant. Much to Hall's surprise, Sage signed a check for $500 and gave it to Hall. Hall left shortly for Germany. In neither Ross' account of the incident nor in Hall's own account of it is there any indication that Hall got the loan by his own effort.[10] In a similarly fortuitous way, David Snedden's collegiate career was made possible. His father, a rancher, had invested heavily in land for grazing stock. There was little money available for higher education. It was Snedden's good fortune to have a wealthy aunt in Los Angeles who financed his education at St. Vincents. That education enabled him to obtain a position as a school teacher.[11] Dewey also benefited from good fortune. Upon receiving his undergraduate degree from Vermont, Dewey was hard-pressed to find employment. He wanted to teach high school but was regarded as too young by potential employers. As the summer passed, Dewey continued without employment. Then came a stroke of good fortune. Dewey's cousin, principal of a high school in Oil City, Pennsylvania, offered him a position there which he accepted.[12] All three, Snedden, Hall, and Dewey, got important help in their careers from what might be called, for want of a better term, luck. In a sense, aspects of their mobility illustrate the gist of the Horatio Alger myth; the importance of just happening to be in the right place at the right time with the right connections.[13]

The role good fortune played in the lives of Thorndike and Eliot is not as clear. Both were expected by their families to attend college and enter some form of public life. It was not really a step upward for Eliot and Thorndike to take B.A. degrees as it seems to have been for Hall, Dewey, and Snedden. It might be said though that good fortune entered into the picture in that both men grew up in families with the culture and the means to send them to college. However, Thorndike's move to Columbia to study with Cattell was unplanned and, as it turned out, fortunate for him. It gave him a sense of direction and encouragement at a point in his life when his future seemed particularly unclear and insecure.[14] Also, Eliot's ascension to the Harvard presidency seems fortuitous. After completing his under-

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[10]Hall, p. 182; Ross, pp. 34-35.

[11]Drost, pp. 11-12.

[12]Dykhuizen, p. 182.

[13]For an interesting fictional account of the Alger Myth see Nathaniel West, *A Cool Million* (New York: Berkley Publishing Corp., 1961).

[14]Joncich, pp. 98-117.

graduate work, Eliot took a position as tutor in mathematics at Harvard College. He was soon promoted to assistant professor. After several years at Harvard an attempt was made to improve the teaching of chemistry by establishing a full-time faculty position in the subject. Eliot was considered for the post; however, due to financial exigency and a conflict with some faculty members, Eliot was dropped from the faculty. Unemployed and despondent, he went to Europe for a year, came back to the United States, and took a position at M.I.T. Then, after having been fired from Harvard in 1862, and having been jobless for a year, Eliot, in 1869, was elected to the Harvard presidency. His ascendency was an unlikely event since Eliot was only thirty-five years old, a chemist and mathematician, and clearly outside of Harvard's tradition of paternal clerical leadership.[15] Hawkins does little in the way of explaining the event except to point out that Eliot had strong ties to certain members of the Harvard corporation. For Eliot it was certainly a good break.

To say that luck played an important part in the establishment of the careers of these men is not to say that other factors such as talent, formal schooling, or hard work played no part in their apparent success. Their elementary schooling was of varying quality and quantity. They attended a variety of undergraduate institutions. All five were reasonably good students. They were all talented and once they obtained positions put their talent to use. The significant thing is that what only could be called luck played an important part in their lives.

It is also interesting to take note of the circuitous routes by which these men came to their academic careers. Their careers as academics were unplanned until they were into their twenties. Once they decided upon an academic career none of them had a smooth time establishing it. They struggled, moved from one position to another, occasionally lost positions, and were faced with various career disappointments. The lot of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century academic man was not an easy one in terms of career and job security if the lives of these men are any indication.

The most restless was Hall. He did undergraduate work at Williams, studied theology at Union Theological Seminary, found that the ministry did not appeal to him, and quit the Seminary, when the opportunity arose to study in Germany. Upon his return at age twenty-eight, he took a position at Antioch teaching English, German, and French literature and philosophy. He was dissatisfied with life at Antioch but stayed there four years. His attempts to secure academic positions at Johns Hopkins, the University of Cincinatti, Washington University, and Harvard were discouraging. At the age of thirty-two he quit Antioch and moved to Cambridge in the hope that he could make some connection with Harvard. Still not sure of what he wanted to do with his life, Hall began to hear lectures at Harvard and secured an instructorship there. The instructorship was in English composition, a field about which Hall was not enthusiastic, and, after an evidently poor performance, his instructorship was not renewed. Since he could not find an academic position in the United States after taking his doctorate, he again left for Germany. Upon his return a year later, he asked the Harvard faculty to sponsor a course of public lectures for him at the Lowell Institute. He was refused. Again he applied to Hopkins and again he was refused. Finally, after giving a series of lectures to Boston teachers and having met with fair success in that endeavour, Hall was able to make a favorable

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[15]Henry James, *Charles William Eliot: President of Harvard University*, 2 vols. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1930); 1:184-204.

impression upon Hopkins' president Daniel Coit Gilman. In 1882 Hall was appointed as a lecturer in psychology and pedagogy at Hopkins. Hall was thirty-eight before he obtained a secure academic position.

Dewey did not seem to fumble and grope for a career in the same manner as did Hall. However, he was certainly peripatetic. After attending the University of Vermont, Dewey managed, for three years, to eke out a living as a high school teacher. During the 1882 school year Dewey applied, at the urging of his Vermont mentor, H. A. P. Torrey, for a Johns Hopkins scholarship. He was refused and when he applied for a lower-paying scholarship he was refused again. After borrowing $500 from an aunt, he enrolled at Johns Hopkins. After two years at Hopkins Dewey received his degree and expected to receive a subordinate appointment there. However, he heard nothing from President Gilman. In July, 1884, James B. Angell of the University of Michigan, an acquaintence of Dewey's family, offered him a position. He accepted, spent four years there, and in 1888 went to the University of Minnesota. He returned to Michigan one year later to assume the chairmanship of the philosophy department upon the death of George Sylvester Morris. In 1894, William Rainey Harper offered Dewey a professorship of philosophy at the University of Chicago. Dewey accepted and spent the next ten years there, became embroiled in faculty politics, and left for Columbia in 1904. He remained at Columbia until his retirement in 1930. It was not until 1894 that Dewey achieved a reasonably stable academic position. He was then thirty-five years old.

Similar horizontal mobility characterizes the career of David Snedden. After completing his work at St. Vincents, Snedden spent five years as a small-town school teacher. In 1897 he enrolled at Stanford, completed his work for the B.A. and took a position as a superintendent of schools in Paso Robles, California. After spending the 1900-1901 school year earning a Masters degree at Teachers College, Snedden joined the Stanford faculty. During the 1905-1906 school year he returned to Teachers College to take the doctorate, fully intending to return to Stanford after completing his studies. However, he was appointed to a professorship at Teachers College. In 1909, after four years on the Columbia faculty, Snedden accepted the Massachusetts superintendency. In that post he became a controversial figure and resigned in 1916 after James Earl Russell offered him a position at Teachers College. He remained on the Teachers College faculty until he retired in 1935. Snedden was forty-eight before he gained the stable Columbia position.

The careers of Eliot and Thorndike demonstrate less horizontal mobility than those of Hall, Dewey, and Snedden. Still, their careers were not easily established. Thorndike graduated from Wesleyan in 1895 and entered Harvard in the Fall of the same year with uncertain career plans. He intended to study English but eventually came to consider himself a candidate for the Ph.D. in psychology. After several years, dissatisfied with his progress at Harvard, he applied for a Columbia fellowship and accepted it when it was offered. During the next years he completed requirements for the Ph.D. and, with degree in hand, went searching for an academic position. He was unsuccessful and considered studying medicine, contemplated more study at Harvard, and applied to James Earl Russell for a Columbia position but was turned down. He flirted with an offer from Oshkosh Normal School and entertained an offer from Western Reserve. He chose Western Reserve even though his teaching assignment was pedagogy rather than his specialty, psychology, largely because his brother had also taken a position there. After a year at Western Reserve, Thorndike returned to Columbia where he stayed until his retirement in 1940. Thorndike achieved his first secure academic position at a rather young age compared to the others but he did not secure

it without a good bit of prior uncertainty. Eliot's career has already been discussed. After taking his B.A. he accepted a tutorship in mathematics, was fired, spent a year in Europe, worked at M.I.T., and was appointed president of Harvard at age thirty-five. Eliot's career might have been checkered indeed had he not come to the Harvard presidency. Thus, there was a good bit of chance and uncertainty involved in the establishment of the careers of these five men.

There were striking and intertwining master-teacher-colleague relationships among these men but it does not appear that anyone of them was a disciple of the other. Independence, both intellectual and social, seems to have been an important aspect of their lives. Although all five of them addressed similar sorts of problems, problems of psychology, philosophy, and pedagogy, they do not appear to have thought of themselves as representing a community of interest for they did not associate with each other either professionally or socially.

The master-teacher relationships are especially striking if two other figures are included: James McKeen Cattell and William James. Hall was a teacher of Dewey and Cattell at Hopkins. He was also a student of William James. Thorndike was James' student at Harvard, Cattells' student at Columbia, and Snedden's teacher there. Dewey was a student of Hall at Hopkins, a teacher of Snedden, a fellow student of Cattell and was strongly influenced by William James. Snedden was a student of Dewey, Thorndike, and Cattell. Although Eliot was neither teacher or student of the other four, he encouraged Hall, while Hall was at Harvard, and supported James' psychological work. During the period from 1905 to 1935 Thorndike, Snedden, and Dewey were all on the faculty of Columbia University.

The quality of relationships among the men is hard to determine from the biographies but it is fair to say that they were not always amiable. Hall seemed to avoid Dewey, perhaps because as his biographer suggests, he was threatened by him.[16] Hall was highly critical of Thorndike's ideas,[17] and, if his autobiography is a fair indication, he was in awe of Eliot.[18] In private correspondence, Thorndike wrote that Hall was a madman[19] and in public statements he rather vigorously criticized Hall's ideas.[20] Thorndike was openly anti-philosophical and said that he simply did not understand Dewey's ideas but there is no evidence of any animosity between the two as there is no evidence of a close working relationship or comradeship.[21] Snedden thought little of Hall's specialty, child study, and was critical of Dewey's ideas.[22] There is no evidence that ill-will existed between the three. There is some evidence of ill-will between Snedden and one of Dewey's fellow instrumentalists, Boyd Bode.[23] Dewey was a critic of the ideas of the other four but, characteristically, he avoided open conflict.[24] While the five were contemporaries, knew of each others' work, and were personally acquainted with each other, they did not seem to have conceived of themselves as belonging to a community of interest.

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[16]Ross, p. 146.
[17]Ross, pp. 348-349.
[18]Hall, pp. 216-217.
[19]Joncich, p. 244.
[20]Joncich, pp. 168-241.
[21]Joncich, p. 3.
[22]Drost, pp. 36-37 and 176.
[23]Drost, pp. 172-173 and 189-190.
[24]Dykhuizen, pp. 93-94.

It might be expected that academic luminaries such as these were stereotypically academicians — open to debate, gregarious, eccentric, rational, and unconventional. However, the biographies demonstrate the inadequacy of the stereotype and present an assortment of teaching and collegial styles. The five do share a zeal, almost a religious compulsion for work. In that zeal they seem embodiments of the work ethic.

Ross presents Hall as exhuberant, flamboyant, paranoid, defensive, duplicitous, and for all of that, intriguing in a bizarre way. To be with Hall as a student or a colleague would have been initially, an intellectually stimulating experience. His stage presence seems to have been almost seductive. In retrospect, however, it would have been a disappointing experience. One would have been disappointed by Hall's lack of intellectual depth and his apparent popularization and homogenization of various conflicting viewpoints. Also, Hall might have had the tendency to make individuals uneasy in his presence. This would have been especially true if they would have been witness to some of his more questionable dealings such as those with his faculty during his first years at Clark.[25] In his professional life, it seemed that Hall contrived confrontrations. His behavior might be characterized by a lack of intimacy — with others and with himself. Hall apparently did not have friends. One gets the sense that in dealing with Hall one was dealing with a character who was almost pathologically defensive and very lonely. He avoided face-to-face confrontations but took advantage to backhand his colleagues. In a notable public exchange with William James, Hall repeatedly said one thing to James and opposite things to others.[26] It seems that he would have been an exasperating man to work with.

The case is different with Thorndike. Joncich portrays him as a very decent fellow; steady, kind, but ill at ease in informal situations. Thorndike seemed quite single-minded, quite aggressive in a non-abrasive way, and sometimes impulsive. But, one gets the idea that Thorndike had a good sense of the direction in which life should be taking him and would not have been one to puzzle over the riddle of human existence. In relationships with his colleagues, Thorndike seemed to avoid confrontations, particularly on a personal level. For example, when Cattell, Beard, and others left the Columbia faculty as a result of their stance over United States' policy in World War One, Thorndike did not rush to their aid on the principle of academic freedom as did other Columbia faculty. Rather, he chose to lend support, on a personal rather than a public and professional level, to Arthur Gates, a student and eventual colleague. Gates was re-classified and subject to the draft probably as the result of his close association with Cattell. Although Thorndike took action which resulted in a change of Gates' status and his continued exemption from the draft, he said nothing publically about the principal of conscription. Rather, he saw Gates' problem as essentially Gates' personal problem and supported Gates through the period of difficulty.[27] As Joncich describes Thorndike's daily comings and goings one gets the impression that of the five, Thorndike was the most regular, the most conventional, in a non-perjorative sense of the term. It almost seems that Thorndike saw life as a duty rather than an adventure and went about fulfilling that duty in a manner that was most pleasant to him without serious personal or professional conflicts.

Drost's biography provides little evidence of Snedden's personal or professional character. Readers are told that he disliked small talk and perhaps

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[25]Ross, pp. 207-230.
[26]Ross, pp. 231-250.
[27]Joncich, pp. 377-379.

there was something about him akin to Thorndike's lack of ease in informal situations. One gets the impression that he was quite single-minded about his social efficiency position. His relationships with his colleagues seem to have been quite amiable although Drost does not picture him in collegial situations as Joncich pictured Thorndike. What does stand out in Snedden's make-up is that he seemed not to respond to criticisms of his work. When he came under attack in Massachusetts there is no evidence that he responded to his critics in a sharp, vehement, or particularly defensive way. Rather, he politely resigned.[28] In a rather celebrated exchange with Boyd Bode, Snedden seemed to shirk response. To Bode's criticism that his ideas were undemocratic, Snedden said little.[29] As Drost noted: "As was his custom when confronted with adverse criticism, Snedden replied by bringing his critic into seeming agreement with his own position."[30] Perhaps this belies a lack of security in Snedden's make-up.

Dykhuizen's picture of Dewey is a sympathetic one. He notes that Dewey was a shy person who was amiable although reserved with colleagues. It does not seem that Dewey had many friends on the Columbia faculty. Again, as Snedden and Thorndike, Dewey does not seem to have been comfortable in informal situations. More than Hall, Thorndike, or Snedden, Dewey seemed to be an intense individual. He was perhaps boring to those who did not share his interests but surely he was exciting to those who did. To be with Dewey, it would seem, would to have been with an individual who was quite alive to many facets of his world: one who, unlike Hall, Thorndike, and Snedden, attempted to understand his world for what it might be rather than to make it fit some private, a-priori, frame of reference.

It is difficult from a reading of Hawkins to tell how anyone outside of his immediate family could have felt affection for Charles W. Eliot. Even though Hawkins' portrayal is a sympathetic one, Eliot, as a professional, seems withdrawn, alienating, abrupt, and difficult to get along with. Particularly in his early years as Harvard's president, Eliot seems to have adopted a cold, aloof posture. Hawkins mentioned John Jay Chapman's comment that Eliot was " . . . the martinet who stalked across the yard."[31] Age seemed to have softened Eliot and in the latter years of his presidency he gained expressions of respect if not affection from both students and faculty. But generally, he does not seem to have been a very pleasant man to deal with.

In general, in terms of character, it seems that all of these men tended to be aloof from their colleagues. One does not get the sense that they had intense personal friendships with colleagues. They did have, sometimes, lengthy correspondences with them: Hall with William James, Dewey with Arthur Bentley. But nowhere in the biographies does it become evident that they had intimate friends either professional or non-professional. They seemed to shun personal attachments and friendships in favor of professional and academic associations. Other than that common trait, they seem to represent a variety of personality types.

It goes without saying that these men were effective teachers. They were effective in the sense that they communicated their ideas convincingly and won disciples. However, in terms of classroom performance, the most visible aspect of teaching, their styles differed widely. As a classroom performer it appears

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[28]Drost, pp. 123-143.
[29]Drost, pp. 172-173.
[30]Drost, p. 137.
[31]Hawkins, pp. 14, 35 and 107-119.

that Hall would have taken the prize. He was entertaining, flamboyant, and seemed to truly enjoy performing. He lectured frequently to diverse groups and if the frequency of lecturing is an indication of the popularity of the lecturer, was was quite popular. His language, although prolix, was picturesque and romantic.[32] Thorndike, on the other hand, while it appears that he enjoyed the classroom, seems to have had little use for classroom formality. It was said that he respected his students' motivations and would rather have had students working in the laboratory than be in the classroom. He would enter the classroom with a stack of papers and books, proceed to ignore them, and conduct the class in a spontaneous way. He precipitated laughter by responding somewhat flippantly to a particularly self-evident question or by paraphrasing the romantic ramblings of Hall.[33] It seems that it would have been an interesting experience, although not a particularly intellectually intense one, to have had a course with Thorndike.

Comments on the quality of Dewey's classroom manner are quite mixed. For Erwin Edman, studying with Dewey was an experience in philosophizing. Dewey's approach was to walk into class with several sheets of paper, sit at his desk and begin to talk quietly, seemingly oblivious to the class in front of him. Edman notes that at first he was terribly bored by Dewey but then, after realizing that Dewey was thinking out loud, trying to work through a problem, he was much taken by his classroom manner.[34] On the other hand, Joncich notes that it was said of Dewey that he was at his best when he forgot to come to class.[35] Perhaps it would be most reasonable to say that Dewey's classroom manner was unassuming but intense.

Snedden and Eliot's teaching styles were not dealt with at length by their biographers. However, both possessed excellent oratorical skills. Early in his career, Snedden developed an excellent reputation as a speaker at teacher's institutes.[36] Eliot's lectures and public pronouncements celebrated the conventional wisdom of the day in a direct and outspoken manner.[37] He was a widely circulated platform speaker. Thus, it might be said that as teachers, Hall, Snedden, and Eliot were good performers. Dewey and Thorndike were less performers than they seem to have been gadflies attempting to make something significant happen in the course of a class session.

From the biographies it seems clear that the family lives of these men were subordinate to their careers. By and large they put off marriage until they had reached somewhat secure academic positions. When they married, they did so either within their own social class, if of upper middle class origins, or above the class of their origins if lower-middle class. Their wives and children assumed positions which supported or at least did not interfere with their careers.

Hall, probably the most insecure in terms of career, married latest, at age thirty-five, while on his second trip to Germany. He wrote little about his courtship or marriage but did write a fantasy, "A Leap Years' Romance," in which he fictionalized his courtship.[38] His first wife, Cornelia Fisher, was

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[32]Ross, pp. 267, 288 and 425-426.

[33]Joncich, pp. 217-218.

[34]Irwin Edman, *Philosopher's Holiday* (New York: Viking Press, 1956), pp. 138-143.

[35]Joncich, p. 217.

[36]Drost, pp. 62-66.

[37]Hawkins, pp. 290-295.

[38]G. Stanley Hall, "A Leap-Year Romance," *Appleton's Journal*, n.s., 5 (September, October 1878): 211-222 and 319-330.

an art student and an acquaintance from Antioch days. She was the daughter of a wealthy, retired Cincinnati merchant.[39] Of Hall's second wife, Florence Smith, a teacher in Newton, Massachusetts, little is known.[40] Eliot married at age twenty-four. His first wife, Ellen Peabody, was a fellow Brahmin. His second marriage was to Grace Hopkinson, daughter of Thomas Hopkinson who was a lawyer, judge, and president of the Boston and Worcester railroad.[41] Thorndike, Dewey, and Snedden married at ages twenty-six, twenty-seven, and thirty respectively. Thorndike married a family acquaintance and childhood sweetheart, Elizabeth Moulton, daughter of a prominent citizen of Lynn, Massachusetts.[42] Generva Sisson, Snedden's wife, was the daughter of a well-respected school principal in San Luis Obispo, California.[43] Alice Chipman, Dewey's first wife, was raised by grandparents who were not particularly well-off but were rather eccentric social activists.[44]

While all established families within the first two years of marriage, the sudden, unexpected deaths of both children and spouses was a fairly common phenomena in their lives. Most dramatic was Hall's loss of his first wife and his daughter due to a faulty gas fixture in their Worcester home.[45] Even when Hall re-married ten years after the tragedy, domestic stability eluded him. His second wife suffered a psychological breakdown and lived out her life in an institution.[46] Dewey's family experienced tragedy through the loss of two sons, Morris in 1894 and Gordon in 1904.[47] Two grandchildren of Dewey's also died unexpectedly.[48] The Thorndike family lost an infant child and Mrs. Thorndike had three spontaneous abortions.[49] Eliot's first wife died after several years of marriage, an infant son died, and in 1897 his son and namesake died while in his mid-thirties.[50] These deaths, except in the case of Dewey, do not seem to have had an impact upon the careers or the ideas of these men.

None of the men left revealing accounts of his family life. Their writings, where autobiographical, do not include much in the way of discussion of their relationship to their wives and children. In each case though, a picture emerges from the biographies of an essentially nuclear Victorian family. Father is quite bound-up in professional activity. Around him revolve the activities of the wife-mother and children. In keeping with Victorian convention, none of the wives of these men pursued separate careers although several of them were prepared to do so. Except in the case of Eliot, all of the wives had some collegiate education; however, in marriage, they seemed to support their husbands in a traditionally "feminine" rather than in an academic or professional manner.[51]

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[39]Ross, p. 52.
[40]Ross, pp. 274-275.
[41]James, 1:76-79, 334-337, and 342.
[42]Joncich, pp. 193-198.
[43]Drost, pp. 32-33.
[44]Dykhuizen, pp. 53-54.
[45]Ross, p. 207.
[46]Ross, p. 275.
[47]Dykhuizen, pp. 78 and 115.
[48]Dykhuizen, pp. 271-272.
[49]Joncich, p. 199.
[50]James, 1:171 and 2:89-92.
[51]For an interesting account of changes in ideas about sex roles during the period under consideration see: William O'Neill, *Divorce in the Progressive Era* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967).

Hall wrote little about his family life but from his romantic writings on women and children it can be fairly inferred that he expected his wife to follow his lead and his children to remain in their place as children. His wife was, it seems, expected to remain in the home and supervise its care, nurture the children, see to the entertainment of professional colleagues, and find fulfillment in that. Hall's biographer did not note if Hall's second wife left teaching after marrying him but given the descriptions of the hospitality provided in the Hall home for visiting luminaries under her direction and given Hall's conventional ideas about the place of women, it is reasonable to conclude that she did. Hall's daughter died young and although he mentions the grief that he felt at her death in his autobiography,[52] his relationship with his surviving son does not seem to have been a warm one.[53]

Much the same seems to have been true in the case of the Thorndike home although Thorndike did not rationalize the relationship with his wife and children philosophically as did Hall. Thorndike's wife, Elizabeth Moulton, does not emerge in the biography as an intellect in her own right but rather as a source of support for her husband. A graduate of Boston University, she was dutiful and supportive of Thorndike's career. It seems that she too was expected to find fulfillment in maintaining the home and bringing up the Thorndike children. At no point in the biography, and Joncich has made extensive use of her letters and diaries, does she seem to have been dissatisfied with this role. While there is evidence that Thorndike was concerned about the raising of his children, there is little to indicate that he took charge of the day to day vicissitudes of raising them. Rather, he seems to have delegated this responsibility to his wife.[54]

Similar relationships seem to have existed in Snedden's family. Generva, Snedden's wife, was more of a professional than Hall's or Thorndike's wife. She was interested in the child study movement and, early in her career, did some original work in it. But after marriage and children she put those things behind her and gave her life to supporting Snedden and his efforts by taking care of the home and children.

It is difficult to say much about the relationship of Eliot and his wives and children on the basis of either the Hawkins' or James' biographies. They evidently pursued no separate careers. Eliot's second wife, from their correspondence in James' biography, seems to have played a role similar to that played by Hall's wife and Thorndike's wife. She was interested in drama and came to Eliot's notice as a singer in a choir. She had no separate career and little mention of her is made in Hawkins' biography. The impression is given in the James' biography that her primary activity was to run the Eliot household and act as a companion to Eliot.[55]

Dewey's familial relationships seem to have been somewhat different. Dewey's first wife, Alice Chipman, seemed to be much more independent than the others. She had an active interest in philosophy and social problems and it seems fair to say that she was integrated into the substance of Dewey's career much more than the other woman. She pursued no separate career of her own after 1904 but previous to that she had actively participated in the management of the Laboratory School at the University of Chicago. The Dewey family traveled together, not only for recreation but also on

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[52]Hall, *Life and Confessions*, p. 293.
[53]Ross, p. 209.
[54]Joncich, pp. 201-209.
[55]James, 1:337-339 and 2:242-243 and 294.

professional junkets. Dewey's children were also integrated into his professional life. He cooperated with his daughter Evelyn on *Schools for Tomorrow*. He included his daughters on trips to Japan and China. Although the women around Dewey did not have careers independent of him, they did play other than the roles of Victorian wives, mothers, and children.[56]

It seems fair to say that professional activities dominated the lives of these individuals and that professional concerns played a central part in all facets of their lives. They engaged in few of what might be called recreational activities either with friends or family. They all seemed to have a compulsion for work and, by and large, they did not separate the professional and recreational aspects of their lives.

As has been mentioned before, little is known about Hall's personal life. During his student days in New York, he spent time visiting low-life places such as red-light districts and burlesque houses. He did so, at least as he recalls it, to ascertain the nature of such places rather than to participate in their offerings.[57] He also attended the theatre frequently. While a student in Germany, he came to enjoy dancing and beer drinking and to revel in leisurely non-pious Sunday afternoons. But in those years after he began at Hopkins recreational activities seem to have played a small part in his life.

Thorndike, Eliot, Dewey, and Snedden spent a good deal of time away from their universities, often in summer residences in the Adirondaks, New England, or Canada. These periods, however, do not seem to have been primarily recreational. Although they were not in the physical presence of their workplaces, they continued to work and professional concerns dominated their time.

Perhaps the most compulsive worker, the individual least able to participate in activity not of a professional nature, was Thorndike. Joncich offers many examples of his penchant, his compulsion, for work. While attending a reception in Baltimore, for example, Thorndike excused himself early, insisting that he had to catch a train. Accidentally, his host found him in the train station doing word-frequency counts at midnight.[58] Also, early in his career, Thorndike purchased a summer house for his family near Lyme, New Hampshire. He soon found, however, that he suffered from asthma and could not tolerate the New Hampshire summers and the house was sold.[59] Thorndike seemed uncomfortable when not at his desk and suffered insomnia and asthma frequently when away from his work. Noting an incident which took place many years after the Lyme mis-adventure, Joncich tells of a three-week period which the Thorndikes spent in Nova Scotia while one of their children was recuperating from pneumonia. Thorndike was restless, unable to sleep, and suffering from asthma. However, he commenced to improve as soon as he got back on the train to New York.[60] There are some glimpses of Thorndike's lighter side such as his participation in July Fourth celebrations at the Thorndike home at Montrose, New York, but they are rare. Thorndike certainly seems to have had a compulsion for work.

Eliot, Dewey, and Snedden managed with somewhat more physical success to be away from their universities during the summer months. But pro-

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[56]Dykhuizen, pp. 193-194.
[57]Hall, *Life and Confessions*, pp. 178-182.
[58]Joncich, p. 387.
[59]Joncich, p. 199.
[60]Joncich, p. 487.

fessional activities certainly occupied a good bit of their time away. Eliot loved sailing. Shortly after assuming the Harvard presidency he purchased a sailboat and began to spend his summers sailing and camping along the New England coast. Eventually he purchased land near Northeast Harbor, Maine, and became the center of an intellectual summer community there which counted as its residents notables such as Daniel Coit Gilman and others. As James has written about Eliot's summers:

> Once away on these holidays, Harvard and his ordinary cares seemed to drop out of Eliot's mind. The sea, the wind, the day and its small adventures, the procuring of supplies, the sailing of the boat, absorbed him completely.[61]

Perhaps James overstated Eliot's capacity for recreation for in a 1907 letter to the Dean of the Harvard Medical School, Eliot noted that he rode horseback five miles before breakfast, sailed nine miles at mid-day, and drove a carriage six miles in the afternoon to take a friend to the boat dock. This left him little time, he lamented, for official correspondence and conversation.[62] In spite of that, it is clear from Eliot's letters that he enjoyed the time spent in Maine.

Although Dykhuizen does not comment extensively on the nature of Dewey's summer excursions to the Adirondaks and Nova Scotia, there is some indication that professional activity absorbed a good bit of Dewey's time during those "vacations." During the first decade of the twentieth century Dewey and his family spent summers at Hurricane, New York, near Thomas Davidson's summer school, Glenmore. Glenmore attracted such notables as W. T. Harris and Josiah Royce and Dewey had contact with them there.[63] From 1910 to 1923 the Deweys spent summers at a farm near Huntington, Long Island. As his biographer writes, while there, Dewey tended the garden and the hens and, along with his son, sold the surplus to neighbors. The remaining time was spent reading and writing.[64] For the next thirty years until his death, Dewey spent summers in Hubbards, Nova Scotia. Photographs in Dykhuizen's biography show him engaged in manual labor — cutting firewood — and working at a typewriter. It seems evident that Dewey, perhaps in the manner of Eliot, comfortably combined professional and non-professional activity.

David Snedden liked manual activity. Never having lost his love for his boyhood ranch, Snedden and his family spent summers camping and horseback riding in places which approximated the ranch or at the ranch itself. In his early years, Snedden found relief from professional duties in cabinet making and even up to his eightieth year, he participated in cattle drives in the California ranch country. One might get the impression that Snedden approached his professional work in a somewhat less intense manner than the others for his non-professional activities seem to be uncontaminated with professional concerns. However, his biographer notes that during summers spent in New Hampshire, Snedden would often seek out the most strenuous labor he could find and throw himself into it. Since he was as intense in regard to manual labor as he was in regard to academic work, perhaps the work ethic permeated his professional as well as his non-professional life.[65]

What was it then to be an academic luminary in the first one-half of the twentieth century? In regard to the establishment of a career, the lives of

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[61]James, 1:323.
[62]James, 1:161-162.
[63]Dykhuizen, pp. 106-107.
[64]Dykhuizen, p. 151.
[65]Drost, pp. 57 and 181.

these five indicate that it was to have been fortunate; lucky to have gotten the expected good break. Also, it was to have had the intelligence and persistance to have taken advantage of it. Second, it was to be mobile both horizontally and vertically. All except Eliot were born in rural or semi-rural areas to middle class families and all, upon retirement, lived upper-middle class lives in major urban centers far, in atmosphere if not in distance, from their places of birth. Third, it was to be tolerant about the ambiguity involved in the establishment of careers. None of the five achieved secure academic positions without a good bit of prior uncertainty.

In terms of professional style and personality, it was to be somewhat reticent regarding inter-collegial relationships. It was also to have studied or worked with other luminaries of the day at institutions of higher education which possessed prestige: Columbia, Harvard, Michigan, Chicago, Johns Hopkins, Minnesota, Stanford. Princeton, Wisconsin, Cornell, and Yale could have figured in the lives of these men but it so happened that their specialties, philosophy, pedagogy, psychology, and educational sociology were more dominant at the institutions represented rather than those not represented. Also, it would have been to have taught in no particular way but to have taught effectively.

In regard to personal life, it would have been to have married either within one's social class if upper-middle-class or above one's social class if of middle-class origins. It also would have been to have lived in a patricentric family; patricentric in that wives, children, and recreational life would have revolved around and been subordinate to the professional life of the father.

Would it have been substantially different to have been another sort of professional — physician, lawyer? That question is an intriguing one but beyond the scope of this essay. One suspects, however, that it would not have been substantially different for it seems that inspite of their varied achievements, Hall, Dewey, Snedden, Thorndike, and Eliot were quite conventional men.

RESUME

L'essai intitulé "Hommes académiques" est un examen critique, basé sur les biographies de cinq académiciens américains de l'ère progressive, qui tente d'explorer les ressemblances et les différences qui les caractérisent. On y étudie leur molilité horizontale et verticale, leur comportement et leurs associations collégiales, leurs façons d'enseigner, ainsi que le rapport qui existe entre leur vie professionnelle et leur vie privée. Il semblerait que, dans la plupart des cas, les académiciens au début du vingetième siècle étaient des hommes plutôt conventionnels.