PLYMOUTH COLLEGE of ART

making FUTURES

Crafting the future of ethical leadership
Can the event of making itself create empathic leaders who are capable of building socially responsible supply chains?

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Introduction

Future business leaders will not just be leaders of business; they will be, because they need to be, leaders who are protectors of the natural and social world. We need leaders to be better leaders for a better society. If the (business) world is changing so, too, should business schools' perspectives and practices for effective and impactful management education. For decades, providers of management education have been criticised for curricula misaligned with business [and societal] needs (Porter & McKibbin, 1988). Such criticisms include curricula being overly theoretical, delivering the wrong content, using the wrong teaching methodologies, or not providing sufficient experiential learning experiences (e.g., Pfeffer & Fong, 2002; Schlegelmich & Thomas, 2011). Curtly put by Denning (2018): business schools teach yesterday's expertise.

In this paper, we, similar to Denning and other scholars (e.g., Dobson & Walmsley, 2020; Statler et al, 2015), propose that there is a need for alternative perspectives on management education, especially in the domain of sustainable and ethical business. We argue that without this, we are, again, "leading the parade to yesterday's problems" (Dobson & Walmsley, 2020, p.2). Theoretically and specifically, we suggest that there is a need for art- and craft-based learning, and for crafters to act as engaged-scholars, in the sphere of management education. In this paper we describe our rationale for thinking in this way, and end by inviting artists, makers, and crafters to join this multi-discipline and collaborative research-led journey; to help change the practice of management education and the curricula of business schools for social good.

Business Schools need to Change their Approach

Historically, business schools have adopted a largely information-led approach to management education. This perspective follows from the preferences of logical empiricism (LE) – as an account of the relationship between knowledge and the world, rational choice (RC) – as an account of how people exercise knowledge in practice, and agency theory

(AT) – as an account of how shareholders and executives relate to each other. This bias towards the "LERCAT" paradigm has resulted in business schools, and their graduates, typically approaching learning from the perspective of linear causality, resulting in several generations of business school graduates who are, as Colby et al identify (2013, p.31), "purely linear thinkers who see only one-way causation" (Colby et al, 2011, p.31).

In recent times, this epistemological paradigm has, rightly so, received much criticism (see Eckhardt, & Wetherbe, 2014, for example). Management education has been accused of failing to prepare students for the 'real world' (McDonald, 2017) and not developing the managerial and interpersonal skills needed by employers and wider society (see Hesseldenz, 2012; Azevedo et al, 2012; Mihail & Kloustiniotis, 2014). Beyond the academic area, global events, such as the financial crises and corporate scandals, have also, and rightly so, put the role of business schools in society under much closer scrutiny. This has stirred up consciousness towards alternative teaching viewpoints and methods (Statler et al, 2015), including the use of humanities and arts in the business school classroom.

With a clearer purpose to foster inspired and impactful learning, there is increased pressure for business schools and providers of management education to shift their worldview from organization-centric and profit-focused towards a more human-centric and purpose-focused perspective. This, we suggest, will place greater emphasis on a humanistic paradigm than on the prevailing economist one, and will affirm that the pursuit of human dignity and wellbeing, alongside planetary health, are now the ultimate goals of business activity.

Indeed, such values are clearly outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals; the universal goals that are shaping business practices and the context for global business. Specially, SDG8 – decent work and economic growth – and SDG12 – sustainable production and consumption – are particularly relevant here, and are helping, on a broad scale, to shape the future of management education towards collective economic, planetary and social health and equality. At the next level, the Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME) seek specifically to transform management education by bringing the SDGs into the business school curricula and develop responsible leaders as key decision-makers. This puts business schools and their pedagogies at the heart of the future of responsible leadership and ethical business practices.

Experiential Learning Works

With the LERCAT paradigm now appearing out-dated and limiting management practices to "blind trust in an exclusive economic view of business and the world" (Colby et al, 2011), alternative perspectives are needed, and we are actively seeking them. The traditional business tools of logic and rationality are ill suited to the complex and chaotic environment that business leaders face (Weick, 2007). We reason that if the 'think-learn-do' conceptualisation is no longer appropriate then, perhaps a 'do-learn-think' approach might be. In essence, we mean the expansion of the curriculum to endorse the humanities and arts, and inclusion of experience to support learning: in short, experiential learning focused on art and craft practices.

Experiential learning is defined by Kolb (2007) as the process of knowledge creation through the transformation of experience. In sum, learning by doing. The theory contends

that in the management arena, real learning occurs through engagement in challenging experiences, and later reflection on those experiences (DeRue & Wellman, 2009). Learning-by-doing is an important theme in management education delivery and should involve opportunities for "play, creation, empathy, experimentation and reflection" (see O'Dwyer et al, 2019, p.100). Engaged learning methods can vary in intensity and impact, and can encapsulate a wider range of activities such as class discussion, breakout group work, roleplays, and simulations. The learning can also extend beyond the classroom and include internships, community-based and service learning, and mentoring (Lund Dean & Wright, 2017). It can also provide a valuable vehicle for preparing for future leadership challenges such as those related to ethical business and sustainability (Gitsham, 2012; Waller & Gitsham, 2014).

Despite this form of teaching being as old as learning itself, e.g., apprenticeships, the adoption of experiential learning into the curricula of management education has, for the majority of business schools, been slow. This might, as some have suggested (see Reisz DATE), be because today's universities and business schools don't provide the right space for experimentation and failure, coupled with their divergence towards technology-enabled education and the implementation of experiential learning being complicated by the practical and operational limitations imposed by the increasingly large and diverse classes. Often experiential and more creative pedagogic activities, such as craft practices, are less easy to accommodate within the structures and processes of a business school (Dobson & Walmsley, 2020); they often fall beyond traditional boundaries. Here we suggest that they should be at the core of the curriculum and that the 'classroom' should be extended to different contexts, e.g., outdoor learning pursuits, and transformed to accommodate experiential and, as we suggest later, emotion-evoking pedagogies. Think design studio rather than classroom.

Moving beyond the classroom, researchers have found that experiential learning helps business leaders put purpose alongside profit. For example, in an evaluation of the Prince's Trust Seeing is Believing programme – an initiative designed to close the gap between the boardroom and the community by taking senior business leaders into the heart of the communities they serve – Gitsham and Waller (2014) confirmed the powerful effect of experiential learning in helping leaders understand the major social and environmental forces shaping our world, and how to respond for the good of their organisation and for society as a whole. Second, and with a closer connection to our current research agenda on responsible leadership and ethical trade, research exploring corporate leadership on modern slavery (see Lake, MacAlister, Berman, Gitsham & Page, 2017) found that business leaders who showed the most understanding of human rights in the production process were those who had actually experienced/seen the human hand at work.

These empirical insights confirm the value of experiences and experiential learning for fostering responsible leadership through raising awareness and inspiring action around purpose and social good. It is unfortunate to say, however, that often these 'experiences' happen opportunistically – driven by personal motivations – or through limited educational sessions rather than collectively as part of the main business school curriculum. This narrows reach and impact. For business schools who acknowledge the importance of experiential learning, there is an opportunity to intentionally design-in experiential learning experiences for social purpose that are: 1. scalable – to transform the practices of a larger group of business leaders; 2. realistic – representing the true

reality of the challenge not just pseudo-reality and; 3. transformational – enabling a truly transformative and impactful experience. It is the third point on transformation that is explored further here, in the context of introducing art and the art of making into management education. We start by exploring how contemporary trends in business are requiring business leaders to be more artful in their approach. We then consider how art, more specifically the art of craftmanship, fosters care and empathy.

The Artful Leader

As Adler (2006) boldly argues, management must learn from the arts; we add to this, more so now than ever before. Existing forms of management have become obsolete in the face of the contemporary challenges of the 21st Century challenges. For example, rapidly increasing global connectedness needs invention (not replication and benchmarking). Networks and distant teams need team-based collaborative skills (not management by hierarchies). The yearning for significance brings humanity and intrinsic values and motivations into the workplace (not motivation through success or extrinsic factors). The responses required reflect the profile of an artist rather than a manager. In sum, the new business landscape requires 'skills that creative artists have used for years' (Alder, 2006, p.489). Business leaders of the 21st Century need to be 'artful' in their approach.

There are several examples demonstrating how organizations have obtained inspiration from the arts. The application of art-based interventions in organizations has been defined as 'when people, products or practices from the world of the arts enter the world of organizations (Berthoin Antal, 2009, p4). There is no typical artistic intervention (see Berthoin Antal & Strauss, 2013); they, like other organizational interventions, can cover a broad range of learning interventions that vary according to timeframe, number of artists, type of artist, engagement and level of impact (Schiuma, 2009; Schuima, 2011).

There is, of course, variability in the type of art that can be used, with examples of theatre, music, and dance all reported (see Feltham, 2012; Spencer, 2010; and Zeitner et al, 2015). Specific examples include: managers at the LEGO company building 3-dimensional representations of their organizational strategy using LEGO bricks (Roos, Victor & Statler, 2004); U.S Army leaders watching a film to illustrate lessons about leadership (Bognar, 1998); and medical students being taught theatre skills to increase their clinical empathy (Dow, Leong, Anderson & Wenzel, 2007). In the main, the application of art-based interventions has been successful, with benefits reported at individual, team and organizational levels (see Berthoin Antal & Strauss, 2013). It is worth noting that the impact of art-based interventions has largely been measured within the organization, with metrics relating primarily to the internal ecosystem of an organization. Our offer here is to highlight the potentially wider benefits of art-based interventions, specifically the art of making and craft to improve the care and ethics of individuals outside of the organizational context; those individuals in the wider supply chain.

With a growing interest in art-based interventions in organizations, it is important to further explore the process of art-based intervention and how they contribute organizational impact. Taylor and Ladkin (2009) propose that arts-based methods are underpinned by four processes that are distinct from conventional organizational development approaches. First, skills transfer – skills learned in the arts can be effectively applied

to the management of organizations. For example, when leaders learn to conduct an orchestra and apply their learnings of coordination and collaboration to their management team. Second, projective techniques – artistic activities can facilitate access to thoughts and feelings that are more difficult to access from more conventional development modes. For example, choosing a visual image that best reflects a complex problem or issue (Palus & Horth, 2001). Third, illustration of essence – art-based methods that encourage reflection through the presentation of art as an object that can be reflected on the world. For example, using literature to illustrate the complexity of organizational life. Fourth, making – the making of art can foster a 'deep experience of personal presence and connection' (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009, p.56). This can nurture a deeper experience of personal presence and connection. The similarities across these processes is their engaged learning methods that lead to deeper meanings and more personal connections compared with more traditional interventions. In essence, they uncover new experiences through the engagement in new (and more creative/craftful) simulations.

As art-based intervention methods show greater use and effectiveness to leaders and organizations, their presence in the business school classroom also needs to increase and be better understood. With other researchers already realising the potential of art-based interventions in managerial learning (see Springborg & Ladkin, 2018), we focus the rest of this paper on making and the use of craft in management education specifically for developing leaders who are caring and empathic; responsible leaders who are capable of building socially responsible supply chains.

Crafting Care into the Business School Classroom

The process of craft and making is often deeply connected with the individual. Indeed, Ruskin (1853) famously asserted that hands-on work (craft) is what makes us human. Responsible leadership in the 21st Century is all about realising our common humanity. It requires us to slow down and become absorbed in the process; often an antidote to the usually fast-paced world of business (Otter, 2020).

Craft involves an embodied relationship between the craftsperson and the people who will use it. Craftmanship requires care; 'crafters' must embrace attention, empathy, and self-critique in order to master (their) craft. Researchers have suggested that a caring orientation is fundamental to both craft, craftmanship and ethics (Klein 2011) because caring requires being alert to the specifics of the situation; recognising and doing what is best for the individual and their relatedness to the larger social context (Tayler et al, 2015).

Three orientations of caring have been identified (see Hamington, 2004). We outline these next and assert their relevance to responsible leadership and ethical business practices through the process of care ethics – "a species activity that includes everything we do to maintain, continue, and repair 'our world' so that we can live in it as long as possible" (Tronto, 2013; Hamington, 2019).

Th first orientation of caring is caring knowledge. This is focused on concern for materials, including working with materials and learning about their properties and limits. Knowing what they can and can't do. Employees can be considered as 'materials'; each individual is unique and has different limits and boundaries that need to be considered

interactively with the other elements of the system within which they work. Managers should be educated to notice employees as individuals, giving attention to wellbeing and enabling human flourishing both within and beyond organizational boundaries.

The second orientation of caring is concern for the process. Craft processes have the pursuit of quality (Sennett, 2008), thus crafters undertake their practice with care and precision, and thus with greater awareness of their senses. This enhances their capacity for moral perception (Ladkin, 2011). The third orientation is caring imagination – engaging with the needs of people who will use the framework – the end-users such as consumers or the suppliers further down the 'chain'. Ensuring that products are fit for purpose – and add value – rather than for simply maximising profit. Considered collectively, these elements of care highlight the need for 21st managers and leaders to be craftspeople; individuals who are empathic and create caring cultures that foster learning organizations where new knowledge creation is supported by human flourishing (Hamington, 2011; von Krogh, Ichijo & Nonako 2000).

Empathy, Craft and Responsible Leadership

Drawing parallels with care, empathy has been identified as one of the most important leadership skills of the 21st Century (Clark, Robertson & Young, 2019) and also as a critical predictor of responsible leadership in light of the sustainable development goals (Voegtlin et al, 2019). Research on how empathy can be developed, however, has not kept pace with the multitude of definitions and measurement approaches and thus, offers a new research opportunity. We assert – based on forthcoming evidence – that the practice of making and craft production has, similarly to the evidence on care, the potential to evoke empathy and, more specifically, empathic leaders who are focused on social good. Next, we provide applied examples of cultural projects that have created care and empathy.

Within arts and culture there are many recent examples of projects designed specifically to put the 'onlooker' in another's shoes to create care and empathy (Jeremy Deller, We're Here Because We're Here 2016; Crossroads Foundation @Davos 2019; The Empathy Museum). The reported success of these projects (Bazalgette, 2017) gives substance to our hypothesis that an empathetic engagement with materials and processes involved in craft production will teach a better understanding of the human experience within global supply chains.

Katz-Buonincontro (2011) suggest that business scholars frequently experiment with arts-based learning processes because they provide an occasion for students to cultivate empathy and an opportunity for them to exercise their creative imagination. This extends our mode of understanding and relating to the world beyond the LERCAT paradigm, which, as discussed previously, has been the backbone of management education for many years.

On a practical level, the search to cultivate human understanding among business students has led academic Katz-Buonincontro (2011) to explore a treasure box of different art forms including, amongst others, improvisational theatre, storytelling and poetry. These art forms involve texts and language, but they emphasize the performative dimension of language rather than the representational. The arts are, in this respect, not only effective tools to communicate information in the classroom; additionally, they can bring about playful exploration of the social and thus also the ethical aspects

of organizations. By experiencing art in a business course, students can become more sensitive to the needs of others, and more imaginative in their responses to those needs.

In line of this evidence, we suggest that the field of contemporary art (perhaps more so than the traditional categories of heritage and classical fine arts) includes a wide variety of practices dealing directly with this collective dimension of human experience that may inspire future innovation in the business school classroom.

Embedding craft-based experiential learning into management education offers a safe space to practice the art of craftmanship, afterall, craft is about learning from experience (Tayler et al, 2015). For experiential learning to be effective, participants need to not only engage, but also be prepared to fail and learn from the experience. This is what Stanford Psychologist Carol Dweck (2006) calls as a growth mindset.

Challenging Mindsets and Engaging Emotions through Educational Experiences
The implicit theories we have about ourselves shape our perception, motivations, and achievements; this includes our mindset. Mindset theory, as developed and articulated by Dweck (2006), acknowledges that individuals differ in their beliefs about whether human attributes such as intelligence, talents, and abilities, are stable or malleable, and what they can do to change them over time. Here we argue that 21st Century leaders need a 'growth mindset' (Dweck, 2006) to help them to respond to new challenges. This perspective "cultivates a skillset that enables individuals to cope with pressures and adversity faced by today's leaders through promoting cognitive agility. Possessing a growth mindset describes individuals who are interested in continual learning and believe that one's ability is not fixed. Today's volatile economic and political environment makes workplaces especially challenging. Leaders who approach this with the right frame of mind will ensure their own and their organisation's success. With a growth mindset, as opposed to a fixed mindset, leaders are able to better adapt to new business challenges and embrace the learning opportunities that, we add, new management education experiences, such as craft, can offer (Page, 2019). The good news is that growth mindsets can be cultivated through structured experiential learning (Page, Sullivan & Anthony, 2019), and once developed, they are often retained and exhibited within working behaviour, demonstrating the feasibility of teaching a growth mindset through learning interventions. Today's volatile economic and political environment makes workplaces especially challenging. Executives who approach this with the right frame of mind will ensure their own and their organisation's success. Looking at previous research (Waller, Culpin, Sherratt & Bradbury, 2018), the best way to encourage this learning outlook and motivation towards continual learning is through experience; in sum, experiential learning. An important element of this type of learning is not just focussing on successes, but also the experience gained through mistakes and adversity – in essence, failure. Being tolerant of failure, and also learning from the experience of failure, has, for some time, been widely recognised as an important aspect of leadership development. Studies suggest that failures are better motivators than successes for drawing lessons from experience (Ellis & Davidi, 2005; Daudelin, 1996; Kets DeVries, Bakker-Pieper & Oostenveld,W, 2010). One of the reasons for this is that failure requires a process of double-loop learning. When we encounter failure, we are forced to revisit and revise our existing mental models. This requires not only correction of the mistake (single-loop learning), but also further evaluation of the underlying thoughts and assumptions which may have led to that mistake,

and other similar errors occurring (Carmeli, 2007, Carmeli & Schaubroeck, 2008). So, what does this mean for providers of management education and the use of craft pedagogies. The key is to provide emotionally engaging learning experiences that provide a safe space for failure. Doing so activates a process of double-loop learning whereby existing mental models are corrected and the foundations of these are also evaluated. We suggest that the use of craft-based pedagogies adds a third loop to the learning experience. By providing a pedagogy that business leaders are less familiar with, craft methodologies move learning away from information and the LERCAT paradigm and more towards practice. As a consequence, business leaders have to re-learn their craft and master practices that they are less familiar with – this, we posit, is the third loop.

Conclusion

If education is ultimately the way to change leaders and business, then art- and craft-based pedagogies need to be embedded into the business school classroom. If we loop back and re-consider the historical context of learning, whereby rather than going to school, ancient crafts would be passed down through apprenticeships, it is not surprising to see that our brains are hardwired to respond effectively to art- and craft-based experiential lessons. It is hands-on (craft) work that makes us human, and as we have suggested throughout this paper, makes us value humanity. Crafting the future of ethical leadership is essential as responsible leadership in the 21st Century is all about realising our common humanity.

To conclude, it is people and their ability to evolve and adapt, rather than strategy, that most determines business success and sustainability, particularly in times of rapid change and volatility. The question for business leaders is how best to foster adaptability in themselves and their staff – the capability to deal with change, adversity, and unpredictability. The question for management educators is how best to foster this adaptability through pedagogy. Our answer – craft-based experiential learning. Responsible leadership in the 21st Century is all about realising our common humanity. Embedding craft, craft practices and craftmanship into management education offers a way to build empathic leaders who are capable of building care into their organization and socially responsible supply chains beyond.

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