THE HANDBOOK OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING & MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

Edited by
MICHAEL REYNOLDS
& RUSS VINCE

OXFORD

THE HANDBOOK OF

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

This page intentionally left blank

THE HANDBOOK OF

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

Edited by

MICHAEL REYNOLDS

and

RUSS VINCE

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford ox2 6dp

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide in

Oxford New York

Auckland Cape Town Dar es Salaam Hong Kong Karachi
Kuala Lumpur Madrid Melbourne Mexico City Nairobi
New Delhi Shanghai Taipei Toronto

With offices in

Argentina Austria Brazil Chile Czech Republic France Greece
Guatemala Hungary Italy Japan Poland Portugal Singapore
South Korea Switzerland Thailand Turkey Ukraine Vietnam

Oxford is a registered trade mark of Oxford University Press
in the UK and in certain other countries

Published in the United States
by Oxford University Press Inc., New York

© Oxford University Press 2007

The moral rights of the authors have been asserted
Database right Oxford University Press (maker)

First published 2007

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced,
stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means,
without the prior permission in writing of Oxford University Press,
or as expressly permitted by law, or under terms agreed with the appropriate
reprographics rights organization. Enquiries concerning reproduction
outside the scope of the above should be sent to the Rights Department,
Oxford University Press, at the address above

You must not circulate this book in any other binding or cover
and you must impose the same condition on any acquirer

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
Data available

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
The handbook of experiential learning and management education/edited
by Michael Reynolds and Russ Vince.
p. cm
Includes index.
ISBN 978–0–19–921763–2
1. Experiential learning–Handbooks, manuals, etc. 2. Management–Study and teaching–Handbooks,
manuals, etc. 3. Organizational learning–Handbooks, manuals, etc. I. Reynolds, Michael, 1939–
II. Vince, Russ.
LB1027.3.H365 2007
650.071′1–dc22 2007025804

Typeset by SPI Publisher Services, Pondicherry, India
Printed in Great Britain
on acid-free paper by
Biddles Ltd., King's Lynn, Norfolk

ISBN 978–0–19–921763–2
1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

Contents

List of Contributors ix

Introduction: Experiential Learning and Management Education: Key Themes and Future Directions 1
Russ Vince & Michael Reynolds

PART I FUNDAMENTAL IDEAS AND THEORETICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

1. Double-Loop Learning in a Classroom Setting 21
   Chris Argyris
2. A Good Place for CHAT: Activity Theory and MBA Education 35
   Jeff Gold, Robin Holt, & Richard Thorpe
3. Learning about and through Aesthetic Experience: Understanding the Power of Experience-Based Education 53
   M. Ann Welsh, Gordon E. Dehler, & Dale L. Murray
4. Aesthetics in Teaching Organization Studies 70
   Antonio Strati

PART II THE DIVERSITY OF CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE

5. Experiential Learning without Work Experience: Reflecting on Studying as 'Practical Activity' 87
   Keijo Räsänen & Kirsi Korpiaho

6. Making a Drama out of a Crisis? 'Performative Learning' in the Police Service 105
Ruth Colquhoun, Nelarine Cornelius, Meretta Elliott, Amar Mistry, & Stephen Smith

7. Experiential Learning in the On-Line Environment: Enhancing On-Line Teaching and Learning 123
Joseph E. Champoux

8. Implementing Experiential Learning: It's not Rocket Science 137
Martin J. Hornyak, Steve G. Green, & Kurt A. Heppard

PART III POLITICALLY GROUNDED EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

9. Tales of Ordinary Leadership: A Feminist Approach to Experiential Learning 155
Silvia Gherardi & Barbara Poggio

10. Theatre in Management and Organization Development: A Critique of Current Trends 169
John Coopey

11. Wilderness Experience in Education for Ecology 187
Peter Reason

12. Blue-Eyed Girl? Jane Elliott's Experiential Learning and Anti-Racism 202
Elaine Swan

13. Choosing Experiential Methods for Management Education: The Fit of Action Learning and Problem-Based Learning 221
Anne Herbert & Sari Stenfors

PART IV EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND SYSTEMS PSYCHODYNAMICS

14. Pictures from below the Surface of the University: The Social Photo-Matrix as a Method for Understanding Organizations in Depth 241
Burkard Sievers

15. Becoming Better Consultants through Varieties of Experiential Learning 258
JEAN E. NEUMANN

16. Balancing the On-Line Teaching of Critical Experiential Design: A Cautionary Tale of Parallel Process 274
ELIZABETH CREESE

17. Integrating Experiential Learning through 'Live' Projects: A Psychodynamic Account 291
PAULA HYDE

PART V DOCTORAL STUDENTS' EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING

18. Experiencing Scholarly Writing through a Collaborative Course Project: Reviewing Some of the Literature on the Learning Organization 309
ANDREA D. ELLINGER (& DOCTORAL STUDENTS)

19. Experiencing a Collective Model of Doctoral Research Supervision 327
SANDRA JONES (& DOCTORAL STUDENTS)

20. Drawings as a Link to Emotional Data: A Slippery Territory 345
TUSSE SIDENIUS JENSEN, JANE ROHDE VOIGT, ENRICO MARIA PIRAS, & BENTE RUGAARD THORSEN

PART VI CRITICALLY FOCUSED EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

21. Power and Experience: Emancipation through Guided Leadership Narratives 363
ANNA B. KAYES

22. Work Orientations and Managerial Practices: An Experiential and Theoretical Learning Event 376
TONY WATSON

23. Maximum Disorder: Working Experientially with HRM and Business Studies Undergraduates 388
JANE THOMPSON & TRACY LAMPING

24. Working with Experiential Learning: A Critical Perspective in Practice 400
Kiran Trehan & Clare Rigg

CONCLUSION: Institutional Barriers to Experiential Learning Revisited 417
D. Christopher Kayes

Author Index 433
Subject Index 441

List of Contributors

Chris Argyris has received thirteen honorary doctorate degrees and is author of thirty-three books and monographs as well as numerous articles. Recognition of his lifetime contribution includes awards from the Academy of Management, American Psychological Association, American Society for Training and Development, and the *Financial Times*. His most recent books include *Flawed Advice* (2000) and *Reasons and Rationalizations* (2004), both Oxford University Press.

Joseph E. Champoux is a Regents' Professor of Management at the Robert O. Anderson Schools of Management of the University of New Mexico. His research activities focus on film as a teaching resource and enhancements for on-line courses. He has published articles in several scholarly journals, eleven book chapters, and thirty print or electronic books.

John Coopey, a visiting fellow in Management Learning at Lancaster, has created unusual links between organizational learning and power and politics. Currently John is attempting to theorize how pressures from campaigning groups within global civil society trigger processes of learning and institutional and structural change in the business organizations they target.

Nelarine Cornelius is Reader in Human Resource Management and Organizational Behaviour, Brunel Business School, where she is Director of the Centre for Research into Emotion Work (CREW) and Head of the Organizational Behaviour and Employment Relations Research group. Her research interests include workplace diversity and inequality, and emotion and work.

Liz Creese engaged with a Group Relations approach to experiential learning some eighteen years ago as an arts manager studying a Graduate Diploma in Organization Behaviour at Swinburne University of Technology. She has since continued the 'struggle' in both her research and teaching, face to face and on-line, at various Australian universities.

Gordon E. Dehler (Ph.D., University of Cincinnati) is on the management faculty at the College of Charleston. His scholarly interests centre on critical views of organizations and management, particularly in understanding the place of critical pedagogy in management education. His published work includes papers in *Management Learning*, *Academy of Management Journal*, and *Journal of Managerial Psychology*. He is an associate editor for the journal *Management Learning*.

Andrea D. Ellinger is an Associate Professor in the Department of Human Resource Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She holds a Ph.D. in Adult Education from the University of Georgia with a functional concentration in Human Resource and Organization Development. Her research interests include informal learning in the workplace, organizational learning, and the concept of the learning organization.

Silvia Gherardi is Professor of Sociology of Work at the University of Trento, Italy, where she coordinates the Research Unit on Communication, Organizational Learning, and Aesthetics (RUCOLA), devoted to the exploration of different 'soft' aspects of knowing in organizations, with an emphasis for emotional, symbolic, and discursive aspects of organizational process.

Jeff Gold is Principal Lecturer at Leeds Business School. He has presented conference papers on a variety of topics relating to leadership, management, and organization learning. He is the co-author of *Management Development: Strategies for Action* (with Alan Mumford), published by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development in 2004.

Steve G. Green is a Professor of Management in the Department of Management at United States Air Force Academy. He is also the department's Director of Consulting. His research interests focus on cost analysis, government financial management, managerial and financial accounting, performance measurement, and education.

Kurt A. Heppard is an Associate Professor of Management in the Management Department at the United States Air Force Academy. He is also the department's Director for Accreditation. His current research and teaching interests include entrepreneurial strategies, performance measurement, and strategic innovation.

Anne Herbert completed her Ph.D. in Education in Australia. In recent years she has worked as Academic Director of Executive Education at Helsinki School of Economics. Among her current research interests are managing learning and education and the practices of academic work.

Robin Holt is currently a Roberts University Fellow at Leeds University Business School having received his Ph.D. from the London School of Economics. Robin works as a philosophy and management academic, primarily on research collaborations between universities and the private and public sectors. He has an enduring interest in investigating the use of philosophical perspectives in the business world.

Martin J. Hornyak, Associate Professor of Management, University of West Florida, teaches Strategic Management, Human Resource Management, and Principles of

Management. He completed his DBA in strategy/marketing from Cleveland State University. Dr Hornyak authored/co-authored several publications on strategic alliances, management education, and service learning.

Paula Hyde is Senior Lecturer in leadership and experiential learning at Manchester Business School, University of Manchester, England. Her teaching includes management of change, experiential learning, and personal leadership development. Her research interests are organizational dynamics and change, and organizational leadership. She is particularly concerned with psychodynamic approaches to understanding organizational life.

Tusse Sidenius Jensen has worked as a research assistant at the Department: Learning Lab Denmark, the Danish University of Education. She has been a member of the research group Neuroscience, Corporality, and Learning and has researched the impact of the surroundings and embodied learning. Her research field is 'embodied learning processes'.

Sandra Jones is the Associate Professor of Employment Relations at the University of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. She supervises a number of doctoral candidates and in 2004 received a Research Supervision Award for her innovation in introducing a Doctoral Community of Practice to her supervisory practice.

Anna B. Kayes is Assistant Professor of Management in the School of Business at Villa Julie College. Her doctorate in Human and Organizational Learning is from the George Washington University. Her research focuses on power and trust dynamics and how people learn from experience. Her research has appeared in publications such as the *Journal of Management Education* and *Journal of Managerial Psychology.*

D. Christopher Kayes (Ph.D., Case Western Reserve) holds positions at George Washington University and the University of Hull. He is author of *Destructive Goal Pursuit: The Mt. Everest Disaster* (Palgrave-Macmillan). His article on experiential learning was nominated for the first best paper award by the journal *Academy of Management Learning and Education*.

Kirsi Korpiaho, M.Sc. (Econ.), is a researcher and doctoral student in organization studies at the Helsinki School of Economics. Kirsi is researching management education and students' learning. She is a founding member of the Management Education Research Initiative at HSE (www.hse.fi/meri).

Tracy Lamping is a Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Business and Law at the University of Lincoln. She has designed and delivered a range of management education/development courses. Her particular interest is creating a sociological and psychological awareness of management development at undergraduate level.

Dale L. Murray is an Associate Professor in Industrial Design and is the coordinator of the Industrial Design programme in the College of Design Architecture, Art, and Planning at the University of Cincinnati. He holds a BS and a master's degree in Industrial Design and specializes in sustainable product design.

Dr Jean E. Neumann serves as Director of Studies and Core Faculty for the Tavistock Institute's Advanced Organizational Consultation programme. She has undertaken over 450 projects in the USA and Europe concerned, in some way, with 'good' organizational change. Jean's publications use practice to inform a more critical OD&C theory.

Enrico Maria Piras is a Ph.D. student in Information Systems and Organization at the University of Trento, Italy, and a junior member of RUCOLA (Research Unit on Communication, Organizational Learning, and Aesthetics). His research interests are Organizational Aesthetics, micro-practices of organizing, and research methodologies in organizational settings.

Barbara Poggio is researcher at the Department of Sociology and Social Research at the University of Trento, Italy, and member of the Research Unit on Communication, Organizational Learning, and Aesthetics (RUCOLA). Barbara is lecturer in Sociology of Organization. Her research interests and publications focus on gender practices in work and organizations and on narrative analysis.

Keijo Räsänen is Professor in Organization and Management at the Helsinki School of Economics. He is a founding member of the Management Education Research Initiative at HSE. The MERI group studies academic work and educational activities in the business school (www.hse.fi/meri). He is also researching and teaching practices of workplace development.

Peter Reason is Director of the Centre for Action Research in Professional Practice at the University of Bath, which has pioneered graduate education and research based on collaborative, experiential, and action-oriented forms of enquiry. His major concern is with the devastating and unsustainable impact of human activities on the biosphere, grounded in our failure to recognize the participatory nature of our relationship with the planet.

Michael Reynolds is Emeritus Professor of Management Learning at Lancaster University Management School. His research interests are in the development and application of experiential learning theory with particular interest in illuminating differences between tutor intentions and students' experiences. More recently he has developed these interests in studies of the application of critical perspectives to participative management pedagogies such as the 'learning community'.

Clare Rigg is Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Technology, Tralee, Ireland. She has worked with practitioners from all sectors, integrating action learning and

action research to individual, organizational, and inter-agency development. She researches and writes on action learning, critical action learning, management learning and human resource development.

Dr Burkard Sievers is Professor of Organizational Development at Bergische Universität Wuppertal/Germany, where he teaches and writes on management and organization theory from a psychoanalytic perspective and an action research approach. He is President of the International Society for the Psychoanalytic Study of Organizations for the period 2005–7.

Stephen Smith is a member of Brunel Business School with research interests in methodology, emotional labour, applied theatre, and the 'infrastructure' of authority—all of which collide in his chapter. Steve is currently exploring the emotional labour of consensus building at the local level, the well-being of air transport workers, and the emotional labour of police work. He is a founder member of the 'Working with Emotions Network' and Centre for Research in Emotion Work and edits the *International Journal of Work Organisation and Emotion*.

Sari Stenfors is an Associate Director of Scandinavian Consortium for Organizational Research at Stanford University. Her academic interests, born out of fifteen years as an international business executive and consultant in the healthcare, advertising, and design industries, are strategy tools, experiential learning methods, and methods of business research. Sari is the CEO of Innovation Democracy, Inc., a global NGO.

Antonio Strati is Professor of Sociology of Organization and lectures at the Universities of Trento and Siena, Italy. He is a founder member of the Standing Conference on Organizational Symbolism (SCOS-EGOS), and of the Research Unit on Communication, Organizational Learning and Aesthetics (www.unitn.it/rucola). His research interests focus on aesthetics and organization.

Elaine Swan is a senior teaching fellow at Lancaster University Management School where she is director of the Health Foundations' Leaders for Change programme and adviser on a new leadership programme for older people run by the charity Help and Care. She is interested in the interface between therapeutic cultures and the workplace, and diversity in organizations.

Jane Thompson lectures at the University of Lincoln (Hull Campus) and is also a tutor for the Centre for Labour Market Studies, University of Leicester. Her main area of research is in the field of management learning. She is a member of the editorial board for the *Journal of Gender Studies*.

Richard Thorpe is Professor of Management Development at Leeds University Business School. His interests lie in the field of Management Learning and Organizational Development as well as research methodology more generally. Richard

is currently Vice-Chair of the British Academy of Management and is a member of the Economic and Social Research Council Training and Development Board.

Bente Rugaard Thorsen is a Ph.D. student at the Doctoral School of Organizational Learning at the Danish University of Education. She is a member of the research programme Lifelong Competence Development and she is investigating how academics affect the organizational learning arena in retail banking.

Kiran Trehan is Professor of Management Learning/Human Resource Development and Head of Department at the University of Central England. Her fields of interest include critical approaches to human resource development, management learning, power, and emotions in organizational development. Kiran is an editorial board member of *Journal of European Industrial Training*, *Journal of Business Innovation*, and *Action Learning, Research and Practice.*

Russ Vince is Professor of Leadership and Change in the School of Management at the University of Bath. His research interests cover management and organizational learning, leadership, and change. Russ is Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Management Learning.*

Jane Rohde Voigt is a Ph.D. student at the Department: Learning Lab Denmark, the Danish University of Education. She is a member of the Doctoral School of Organizational Learning and the Research Programme Lifelong Competence Development. Her research field is social learning processes as a part of the clinical setting of nurse education within a hospital as an organization.

Tony Watson is Professor of Organizational Behaviour at Nottingham University Business School. His interests cover industrial sociology, organizations, managerial and entrepreneurial work, and ethnography. Current work, is on the relationship between the shaping of the 'whole lives' of managers and entrepreneurs and the shaping of the enterprises within which they work.

M. Ann Welsh (Ph.D., University of Missouri) is Professor of Management at the University of Cincinnati. Her research interests include political activity in organizations, new product development processes, and constructive deviance. Her published research includes papers in the *Academy of Management Review*, *Academy of Management Journal*, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, and *Management Learning*, as well as in various book chapters.

INTRODUCTION

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND MANAGEMENT EDUCATION: KEY THEMES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

RUSS VINCE
MICHAEL REYNOLDS

Experiential learning is having a revival. We have been aware for some time of a new interest in the potential of experiential learning, particularly as a way of developing the practice of critical management education. In building this Handbook, we set out to illustrate some of the ways in which the social and political complexities of organizing can be raised and reflected on, both by managers and by management educators. In addition, we wanted to demonstrate the depth and creativity that experiential methods and approaches can bring to management learning.

As management teachers and researchers, experiential learning has long been an important, although by no means dominant, part of our educational approach. In general, management education in business and management schools is delivered through traditional, didactic approaches, sometimes with group work attached, and

sometimes not. Where experiential methods have been used, they have attracted criticism for being unlikely to deliver the 'agreed' management curriculum and clear learning outcomes. Worse still, the approach has been seen as subverting the authority of the academic institution by legitimizing experience as a source of knowledge and understanding. So although experiential learning has been popular for decades, it has not made a significant impact in management and business schools. This Handbook is for scholars (like us) who would like to remedy this situation.

We have many colleagues in management education who are actively engaging with the various criticisms of experiential learning while introducing its methods into management and business schools at all levels. There are some exciting and challenging developments in both experiential methods and the ideas and theories which support them. Our starting point for this volume therefore was that this seemed to be a good time to bring together a selection of high-quality papers in order to reintroduce experiential learning and to remind management educators of its strengths and value. As the chapters in this volume illustrate, not only is the tradition of experiential learning and its considerable array of methods an emergent feature of contemporary management education, the theory and practice of experiential learning is being developed, applied, and evaluated at all levels of management education. Through these developments, there has been a significant shift in perspective from a predominantly personal development agenda to one in which experiential approaches are used to find ways of helping management students and managers understand and work with the complex social and political processes which characterize living and working in organizations. This Handbook represents this shift, providing twenty-five examples of experiential approaches to management education.

Towards a Critical Perspective

It is no coincidence that this volume comes at a time when critical management education is gaining ground within the community of management teachers, and it was to the 'critical management studies' network that we first turned for contributions to this project. Over the years since the field was being given its foundations by such writers as Kurt Lewin, Donald Schön, Malcolm Knowles, and David Kolb—all of whose contributions are acknowledged in the chapters of this volume—experiential learning has attracted its share of critique. Questions have been raised, for example, about the ambiguities of tutor and student roles and relationships during experience-based programmes, and the appropriate degrees of power and control exercised by tutors—especially in the context of assessment. These

questions were manifestations of more fundamental concerns that the experiential project was characterized by overly psychological interpretations of organizational behaviour and paid insufficient attention to the social, emotional, and political content of experience. Elaine Swan expresses this very well in this volume when she says that: 'experience isn't what it used to be.' In other words, we do not think that 'experience' provides 'neutral access to reality and selfhood', and this means at the very least that we should ask: what kind of 'microcosm' is being created through experiential methods, what versions of the social, and what versions of experience are being imagined in experiential methods?

These questions and the debates which pursued them have provided the platform through which the theory and practice of experiential learning has been developed recently. This is illustrated for example in the writing of Chris Kayes, who contributes the Conclusion to this volume. Chris has worked with critiques of experiential learning theory, reconciling the principles of a critical perspective with learning approaches which foreground experience—personal *and* organizational (Kayes 2002). In the same spirit, others (see, for example, Willmott 1994; Reynolds and Vince 2004) have argued the case for experiential learning as the basis for a critical pedagogy because it enables complex social and political processes to be observed and understood through both its content and its methodology.

While we believe that experiential learning has much to offer the future development of management education, we also take some pleasure in its limitations. We think that it is important to acknowledge the unreliability of experience as a concept because this encourages us to question assumptions about the nature of experience. For example, how can we know that our personal perception of experience is real? How are others accomplices in our perceptions and constructions of experience and how stable is experience as a concept related to learning? This last question is particularly important because we want to argue that the very value of experiential learning is in its unreliability and instability. It is an educational approach that mirrors the complexities and uncertainties of being in the role of manager; that can represent the contestation and change that takes place in organizations; and that reflects the ways in which organization is constructed and reconstructed within practice. The value of experiential learning is that it can discourage and disrupt our tendency to produce prescriptions for learning, our attempts to define 'best' practice, and it asks us to reflect again on the 'imagined stability' of organization (Vince 2002).

This Handbook presents a collection of new papers from leading international authors on experiential learning and management education. Its aim is to surface the developments and debates that currently characterize experiential learning in business and management schools, and to bring together a clear set of theory-based practices and recent developments within a range of settings. The chapters in the Handbook all discuss experiential events that have been designed to engage students in the complex emotional, social, political, and relational issues that

underpin management education. These include: the emotional and/or aesthetic experience of managing and organizing; developing an understanding of power relations in organizations; the dynamics of organizational change; avoidance and/or human development in organizations; and an understanding of how control and/or compliance is mobilized in organizations. The richness and importance of experiential learning comes from the desire for management education to highlight the complexities involved in organization and organizing. Often, the reason for using experiential approaches is to generate lasting insights about management and organization thinking and practice.

Examples of Experiential Learning

One way that we can explain what experiential learning means to us is by providing a couple of examples of how we use experiential learning in our own work with managers and management students.

Example 1: The 'Whole Group Task'

The 'whole group task' is designed to help managers to engage with the emotional and political dynamics that construct and often constrain organization. The exercise belongs to the 'group relations' tradition of experiential learning (French and Vince 1999). It is best done with groups of between twelve and twenty managers, in a room where the chairs can be arranged in a circle. The exercise runs for seventy-five minutes and then there is a short break before a thirty-minute plenary to debrief the event. At the start of the exercise, the tutor will say something like: 'This session is called the whole group task. It will finish at (give the group the finish time). The task is for the group to decide, and the management of the task is with the group. Your tutor will be commenting only on the process.' The first thing that happens, as soon as the tutor has finished making this initial statement, is some form of reaction to not having a clearly defined task. Some people express this through their silence; others, through attempts to take control (for example I'll write the ideas on the flip chart); through offering traditional or predictable solutions (for example let's vote on it); similarly, people decide that smaller groups would be easier or better; that a chairperson or leader would help to manage the group more effectively; that we should all go round and each say our idea for a task; that it is all a waste of time; that we should go for a walk; that that tutor is a . . .

The exercise raises a number of issues that are important to an understanding of behaviour in organizations. The person who jumps up to stand at the flip chart and write down the group members' ideas for a task is behaving in this way in order to alleviate her or his own anxieties as much as to help with the effective

management of a group task. Similarly, splitting into smaller groups helps group members to dispel some of the uncomfortable feelings generated by such a task. Finding a task is, of course, not the main point of this exercise. The 'whole group event' is a method for exploring the complex interplay of emotions, relations, and politics as part of processes of organizing, as well as understanding the implications of organizational dynamics for leadership and change. The exercise can reveal how quickly (and often unconsciously) implicit rules and expectations are brought into groups; it shows how difficult it is to break free from 'the way we do things here'; and how readily individuals abandon their authority when faced with uncertainty.

Example 2: An Undergraduate Lecture on Management and Organizational Behaviour

This lecture was a response to a colleague who said that experiential learning was all very well with small groups of managers, but that it could not be used in a lecture room with 250 management undergraduates. The 'lecture' lasted for fifty minutes. When the students came into the lecture theatre they were each given one sheet of blank A4 paper. After they had settled down, they were given ten minutes to 'create something beautiful'. The students interpreted this task in many ways. For example, after a few minutes, paper aeroplanes started to float from parts of the lecture theatre. Some students sat with the sheet of paper in their hands, unclear what they were supposed to be doing. From the front the lecturer could see the students drawing, colouring with different pens, tearing shapes into the paper, folding it, screwing it into a ball, talking about other things, sending text messages, and making origami figures.

When the ten minutes were over, the ways students responded to the task could be used to illustrate some very common aspects of human behaviour in organizations. The behaviour that results from being asked to do a task, however well or ill defined it is, is likely to be varied. There will be, for example: predictable responses (paper aeroplanes); ambivalent responses (sending text messages); creative responses (elaborate colour pictures); and enquiring responses (talking with others to clarify or criticize the point of the task). There are many different interpretations possible of the things we are asked to do in organizations, as well as fantasies and expectations concerning what may be the 'right' and 'wrong' ways to do them. This exercise helps management students to understand that managing and being managed involve, for example, complicated relationships, varied interpretations, limited resources, and unclear commands. It also allows the lecturer to comment on the importance of collective reflection as one way of understanding the complexities and uncertainties of experience in organizations.

Experiential Learning: Key Themes

In both of the above examples there is a desire by the tutor to illustrate aspects of behaviour in organizations that can be *felt* as much as understood by those seeking to learn. Experiential learning is used to encourage students to become actively involved, and it is this activity that provides a means to generate 'here and now' examples in order to reflect on the emotional, relational, and political dynamics of managing and organizing. There are many more such examples represented and discussed in this Handbook and together, they present the reader with five main themes of experiential learning and management education. These are:

- Experiential learning is an approach that can reveal the 'underground organization'. The use of experiential learning implies a desire to examine emotional, unconscious, social, and political forces that shape learning, managing, and organizing.
- Experiential learning is a way of introducing concepts to students in depth, as well as representing complex work environments and allowing reflection on specific aspects of how and why we can and cannot learn.
- Experiential learning inevitably raises a tension that is inherent in both learning and organizing: that the 'radical potential' of experiential learning to challenge ways of thinking and ways of working cannot be separated from the 'political purpose' in educating managers to comply with organizational norms and expectations. In this volume, experiential learning is a method for generating critique. The value of critique is that it promotes a reflexive approach to both learning and organizing.
- Experiential learning is often a challenge to the educational institution in which it is situated.
- Experiential learning is an approach that encourages collective and critical reflection as well as individual learning.

We think that these themes provide an informal framework and an outline agenda for the future development of experiential learning. If we are trying to generate examples in order to reflect on the emotional, relational, and political dynamics of managing and organizing, then it is important to try to use a pedagogical approach that gets beneath the surface of organizing, which addresses conscious and unconscious dynamics, underlying power relationships, persistent expectations, and emotions. The chapters in this volume illustrate how experiential learning allows management educators to introduce such concepts to students in depth, and to represent work environments that encourage reflection on not only the possibilities for learning but also the restrictions and limitations on learning that are inevitably part of organization.

There are always tensions raised by the utilization of experiential methods in management education. At the same time as this approach might offer 'radical potential' (John Coopey, this volume) to challenge ways of thinking and working, it is important to start to question the 'political purpose' in educating managers in this way. This emphasizes the understanding of experiential learning we are seeking to support and develop in this Handbook, which can be called *experiential reflexivity* (Gherardi and Poggio, this volume). Experiential learning not only challenges what and how individuals and groups expect to learn, it often poses a challenge to the educational institution in which it is situated. Attempts to reflect on power relationships in the classroom are likely to connect to the broader institutional context within which such power relations are created and sustained.

In principle and in practice experiential learning challenges the assumption of learning as dissemination from expert to novice. Learning is seen as a collaborative process, one in which people critically examine the ideas they use to make sense of 'experience'. In the academy, teachers play a crucial part in providing the connections to research and theory which students use to elaborate and understand the complexities of their experience. But reflecting Paulo Freire's (1974) concept of pedagogy, this process of construction is co-authored rather than totally differentiated into students-with-experience and tutors-with-ideas to explain that experience. Our view about experiential learning is that it is not a solution but a way of reflecting within and on complexity. It is certainly not a simplistic or easy approach. As the chapters in this volume demonstrate, experiential learning is demanding theoretically, practically, and emotionally, because it mobilizes organizational politics and anxieties. However, this is exactly why it is important. In the tradition of Dewey, through an exploration of work and working relationships, experiential learning provides the basis of learning for living and working democratically.

The Chapters in This Volume

All of the chapters describe an event and how this has been used within a process of management education and/or learning in organizations. They reveal the theories and intentions that inform the event, as well as explaining the thinking that underpins it, the reasons for using it, and the learning that it is designed to produce. Authors' thinking is linked to wider debates within and about experiential learning, to reflections on the experience of using the event, and to student responses and reactions to the experience. Authors are explicit about why the experiential event they are describing is important, and the themes in management and organization theory and behaviour that the event is designed to address.

The volume covers examples of experiential learning in undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral, and post-experience management education. It provides the

reader with new perspectives: on the importance of learning from experience; on the varieties of thinking behind the experiential approach; and how the approach has been used in management education to ensure interest, challenge, and in-depth learning.

Part I

We have called this part 'fundamental ideas and theoretical developments in experiential learning'. There are four chapters which between them demonstrate a considerable range of underlying ideas from applications of classic developments in experiential learning theories to applications which move into less familiar conceptual territory. In each case the authors illustrate how the theory is used in the education of managers and management students. The concept of double-loop learning is a well-established and fundamental theory in the lexicon of management education. In putting theory to work Chris Argyris (Chapter 1) describes an experience-based intervention designed to help managers understand the difficulties they have in generating a double-loop learning approach to solving organizational problems at work. This is an example of a classic contribution to theory developed as the means of helping managers to challenge and revise their assumptions. Through experience-based activities—including role-play—managers identify the defensive routines and mind-sets which all too often undermine their learning and effectiveness. In conveying the principles of double-loop learning, Chris Argyris draws a parallel between 'skilled unawareness' at an individual level and the 'underground organization' in which defensiveness has become culturally embedded. The aim of the intervention is that managers develop a theory-in-use which is supportive of a more creative, challenging organizational culture.

In Chapter 2, Jeff Gold, Robin Holt, and Richard Thorpe give their account of introducing activity theory as a perspective for experience-based learning for Master of Business Administration (MBA) students. The MBA students are encouraged to make sense of their experiences of organization—whether at work or on the MBA—as an activity system. The perspective they introduce emphasizes the importance of historical, contextual, and cultural influences as well as the ways in which experience is mediated by both 'sentient and non-sentient entities'. Gold, Holt, and Thorpe's intention is that through this approach MBA students should be able to understand better the nature of social realities from an experiential perspective and to develop the ability to engage with the complexities of business life in both a practical and critical manner.

Experiential learning makes possible the crossing of boundaries which subject disciplines protect. In Chapter 3, Ann Welsh, Gordon Dehler, and Dale Murray describe a course in which students studying different subjects (business, engineering,

design, etc.) work in multidisciplinary teams on the design and development of various products. These action research projects bring together the principles of experience-based learning and critical pedagogy in that the student groups generate in the classroom the experience of working in multidisciplinary teams, learn to depend at least as much on their own ideas and experience as on input from the faculty, and analyse power relationships as they evolve within the programme. Ann Welsh and her colleagues emphasize the aesthetic nature of work experience as the basis of learning to form judgements, providing a balance to discursive knowledge.

Aesthetics is also the focus of Antonio Strati's chapter (Chapter 4) in which it becomes central to understanding the experience of organization. Through the application of a riddle and of a video as artistic performance—devices not often associated with academic pedagogy—students are encouraged to put value on their 'imaginings, tastes and intuitions' as the means of understanding organizational phenomena. Even 'the lecture' is used by Antonio Strati and a colleague to illustrate to students the dynamics of power and emotions within the classroom. Through this highly creative and challenging approach, experiential learning is a perspective through which organizations can be understood, rather than simply a particular form of pedagogic method.

Part II

The title of this part is 'the diversity of classroom experience'. The four chapters illustrate the richness in variety which characterizes experiential learning. There are considerable differences in the type and scope of the activities presented in this part which nevertheless share common ground in terms of the learning theories which support them.

Chapter 5 reminds us that the hard-and-fast distinction which is often made between 'experience' and other aspects of study is questionable. Reading, researching, or taking part in discussion is itself an experience which can confront behaviour and beliefs. The problem with which Keijo Räsänen and Kirsi Korpiaho engage in this chapter is to develop a way of introducing experiential learning to management students who have no experience of work. These authors invite students to examine their ongoing experience of their own course as a 'practical activity' employing a theoretical framework intended to be of later use when they become members of work organizations. This framework incorporates three perspectives: tactical, strategic, and moral. Keijo and Kirsi describe in detail the process of design, acknowledging the challenge of introducing such an approach to students who can regard academic work as out of touch with the 'real world' of management, even if they have no clear idea of what the 'real world' of management involves.

In Chapter 6 Ruth Colquhoun, Nelarine Cornelius, Meretta Elliot, Amar Mistry, and Stephen Smith present a detailed description of a simulation which develops Custody Sergeants' understanding of and capacity to deal with the arrival of a 'detained person' (DP) into their charge. In the tradition of the safe learning laboratory, the simulation recreates the complex interaction between police, members of the public, the physical arrangements of the police station, and the pervading presence of governmental regulations. Student actors are used to enact a series of detained persons arrested and brought to a police 'custody suite'. They develop their understanding of their part as DPs, based on brief police résumés describing actual 'circumstances of arrest'. Their drama tutor encourages them to create a 'back story' from which their role-play can be brought to life in a convincing fashion and with great realism. As well as enabling practice development in the student Custody Sergeants, practice development also takes place in the student actor. The design seen here dissolves the distinction between teaching, research, and practice development and, as the authors remind us, in representing in microcosm the relationship between police and the community, an important part of what is learned is the realization of civilized practice.

It can be argued that through the intermediary of technology, networked learning presents possibilities for tutors and students to work more democratically together. In Chapter 7, Joe Champoux discusses ways of introducing experiential learning into a networked environment. He describes on-line activities which have the aim of increasing students' involvement with course content, each other, and the tutor, enhancing not just subject learning but self-awareness—in the same way that experiential activities would contribute to students' experience in the face-to-face classroom. Joe draws on a number of learning theories—in particular experiential and constructivist—in support of this approach, which he illustrates with examples from individual and team-based activities—some of which use film—and through which students engage with concepts such as job design, decision making, and organizational culture.

In Chapter 8 the experiential component of the United States Air Force Academy programme described by Martin Hornyak, Steve Green, and Kurt Heppard is designed with the aim of equipping students with the knowledge and skills, technical, intellectual, and social, which they will need in their professional careers. In another example of crossing boundaries between disciplines, the learning experience in this case is a student team project, which involves the design and eventual launch of a satellite. This extraordinary and ambitious experiential project brings together both technical and non-technical aspects of the programme, including principles of engineering and management, by creating a student-centred environment in which students learn to identify and solve problems on their own as well as develop skills of communication and teamwork.

Part III

Part III of the Handbook addresses what we are calling 'politically grounded experiential learning'. In our view, experiential learning is always set within a political context. Sharing experience both generates politics and reflects the politicized nature of managing and organizing. In addition, addressing the politics and power relations mobilized within and by experiential learning encourages reflexive critique on the ways in which we position and interpret the meaning of 'experience' as well as the political function of experiential learning within organizations.

The chapter by Silvia Gherardi and Barbara Poggio (Chapter 9) is an exploration of the relational and emotional dynamics involved in leadership and situated practice. They consider the value of narrative knowledge in stimulating reflexive thought and they outline an approach to experiential learning based on the interaction between storytelling and listening. Their training approach is grounded in 'memory work' (the self as historical product, cultural product, relational practice) and designed to stimulate individual and group reworking of both leadership and the relationship between gender and leadership. The event they describe is a five-day workshop designed around 'core themes' of leadership (rationality, control, decision making, strategic thinking) each framed in relation to its opposite, what they call 'the suppressed term', reflecting an aspect of gendered experience and power relations that links to each of these themes. Participants within the workshop read and write stories of leadership, engaging with each other in dialogue for improvement or transformation. The chapter presents the reader with an example of 'experiential reflexivity', and the authors explain how 'the process of narrating leadership creates the context for experiencing leadership and reflecting on its practices'.

In Chapter 10, John Coopey discusses how 'theatre workshops' can be used to create the trust and the physical and emotional space for learning through 'playful experimentation'. He also highlights the broader political context within which this approach to experiential learning can be negotiated and performed, placing particular emphasis on its political function within organizational development. John argues that a specific value of theatre workshops is that they can be used to address the problem of potential harm that comes from trusting and being trusted within a political system. While such workshops can provide an 'aesthetic space' within which individuals might become visible and find voice, John also acknowledges that this is rarely achieved in practice and that theatre workshops can be created, consciously or unconsciously, to induce conformism and to rehearse emotional labour. They can become an exercise in learning how to behave in order 'to reflect the company's position'. John's chapter conveys a powerful message about the political dynamics of experiential learning, the inevitable tension present in experiential learning between its 'political purpose' and its 'radical potential'. His chapter also provides the reader with insights about the importance of understanding the

paradoxical nature of experiential learning: that it contains both the hope of making change and the reinforcement of established power relations, expectations, and norms.

In Chapter 11, Peter Reason describes a 'wilderness experience', part of an exercise in education for ecology that occurs on the M.Sc. in Responsibility and Business Practice, a programme that has been running for the past ten years at the School of Management, the University of Bath. This M.Sc. programme is informed by strong values in relation to the global challenge of ecology and the issues of individual and social responsibility that arise from these values. The idea behind the wilderness experience is to take managers 'beyond the conscious, rational mind and into a literal and internal wilderness'. Experiential learning therefore provides the specific context of a 'profound challenge', a challenge faced both by individuals and by the global human community. Here, experiential learning is being used to explore a crisis of perception concerning the way we see ourselves in relation to the planet and as a way of developing forms of management education that might address these issues.

Elaine Swan provides the reader with a challenging and useful thought: that 'experience isn't what it used to be'. In other words, 'experience' does not provide us with neutral access to reality and selfhood. In Chapter 12, Elaine explores the meaning of the category of 'experience' in experiential learning. She positions experience as problematic and discusses how experiential learning is beset by its own contradictions. Elaine adds to the critique of experiential learning begun in John Coopey's chapter, acknowledging the tension in experiential learning, its connections both to social movements and to consumerism. She reminds us that 'experience' in all forms of experiential learning cannot and should not be taken for granted, and therefore of the need to interrogate what kind of microcosm is being created through experiential methods. Elaine's theme is: 'how social reality is being understood in experiential methods'. In particular, and through a discussion of a specific approach to race equality training, she examines what version of the social, and what versions of experience, are being imagined in experiential methods.

In Chapter 13, Anne Herbert and Sari Stenfors reflect on their use of action learning and problem-based learning within the institutional context of the Helsinki School of Economics (HSE). They explore the institutional tensions that can be generated by using experiential learning in a teacher-centred institution. We are sure that the Helsinki School of Economics is not the only institution that demonstrates a mismatch between the espoused mission to 'develop dynamic teaching programmes' and the actual practice of teaching and learning. They found that their attempt to change from traditional teaching methods to experiential methods was not easy, and that institutional forces make change challenging. They argue for a conscious comparison of experiential methods in order to develop the best possible fit between the experiential approach and the institutional context. The differences between experiential methods are seen to be important because different

methods address different needs, demands, and constraints within the institution. They conclude that, while teachers have relative freedom to choose the teaching and learning methods they use, there is limited practical support for experiential learning methods.

Part IV

Part IV contains four chapters which are informed by a psychoanalytic perspective on experiential learning. There is a long tradition of experiential learning from a psychoanalytic perspective represented by the work of the Tavistock Institute, London, and many other organizations around the world. Within this tradition, experiential learning has been a preferred method because it provides opportunities to engage with unconscious dynamics, with the collective emotions of organizing and their implications for structure and action.

In Chapter 14, Burkard Sievers describes an action research project designed to examine feelings and emotions 'below the surface' of the university and of the experience of students and faculty within university settings. His experiential framework is the 'Social Photo-Matrix' (SPM), a method designed to 'allow access to the unconsciousness of the university' and to highlight what remains hidden or goes unnoticed. The method asks students to take digital photographs of the university. Students' images then provide access to a 'transitional space' between the inner world of the photographer and the outer one of the 'object'; the photographs capture both a picture of the university and a memory of experience. Burkard's analysis reveals that students predominantly see the university as a production line. His conclusion is that the university engages only in part of its task, the generation and transmission of technologically exploitable knowledge, while losing sight of the part of its task that might engage students in critical reflection. Such critical reflection may be of benefit to students and might also provide a way of rediscovering the role educational institutions have in activities that create new knowledge.

Jean Neumann (Chapter 15) discusses the ways in which experiential learning can be used in the education and development of organizational consultants. She describes the thinking and approach that she and colleagues have developed on the Advanced Organizational Consultation (AOC) programme run by the Tavistock Institute, London. Experiential learning is used to bring 'real life' consultancy work into the classroom and it serves as a basic strategy for teaching and learning about the dynamics of organizational analysis and intervention. Jean discusses 'five varieties' of experiential learning used in the programme. These are: curriculum and module design, experiential activities and reflection, consultancy experience and reflection, vicarious learning, and institutional reflexivity. She carefully outlines the experiences of learning and learners within these five varieties and thereby demonstrates the importance of actively working through the political and emotional

dynamics of the institutional context. Jean then outlines 'patterns' for how each type of experiential learning contributes to the education of consultants. We find the category of 'institutional reflexivity' to be a particularly important description of the relationship between psychodynamic theory and experiential learning. Institutional reflexivity begins when the AOC programme begins, and the function of this variety of learning is to reveal 'regressive dynamics that excite political and psychological anxieties and conflicts' and 'substantially delay or block many strategically important changes and developments in organizations'.

In Chapter 16, Liz Creese provides the reader with a personal story about her own teaching and learning, an example of the experience in the role of teacher and how she was 'unable to learn in the very way I expected of my students'. Rethinking experience in the role of teacher is the theme of this chapter. In our minds, the chapter contrasts well with Jean Neumann's, providing an example of the emotional energy that can be given to resisting reflexivity. Anxieties about the learning experience initially undermined her ability to be effective in her role and then in sustaining and developing the design for learning. Liz uses her chapter to revisit the experience of 'not really knowing what experiential design we are teaching until we have been able to be critically reflexive about it'. There is much that is left open in this chapter and there is also a very clear sense of how difficult it can be to understand and accept that, as teachers, we can easily become accomplices in the failure to learn.

Paula Hyde (Chapter 17) discusses the use of 'live projects' in a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) programme and explores the challenges involved in attempting to integrate experiential approaches to management education in university settings: particularly how isolated experiential learning can be and that 'the possibility of accounting for what is learnt during an experiential event remains elusive'.

She contrasts three ways of thinking about the delivery of the MBA. First, the 'lecture-centred' MBA, which is taught and assessed by traditional means. This approach seeks to minimize uncertainty and to place opportunities for creativity with the teacher. The second way of thinking she calls the 'project-added' MBA, which builds on the lecture-centred approach by providing projects that allow for some personal and experiential learning. This approach increases the possibility for uncertainty, for unintended outcomes, and for creativity by the student in the completion of a project task. Paula's final approach is the 'experiential' MBA programme. This is not an easy approach to find or to create. However, the experiential approach has the capacity to contain anxiety in the face of uncertainty in order that students might move between 'not knowing', 'knowing', and 'established knowledge' as part of their experience of learning. Her conclusion is that, without opportunities for experiential learning, management education programmes will continue to produce students unprepared for the realities of organizational life.

Part V

Part V has three chapters that give examples of experiential learning with doctoral students. Experiential approaches to working with doctoral students might help them to understand the value of peer working and review; offer different models for doctoral supervision; and provide a method for qualitative data collection and analysis. In all three chapters there is an emphasis on collective reflection as a key element in the development of scholarly knowledge and practice.

In Chapter 18, Andrea Ellinger and her class of doctoral students present the reader with the work they did together to improve learning processes at the same time as reviewing the literature on the learning organization and writing a conference paper. Experiential learning was used as a way of reflecting on and developing the 'emerging scholar'. The approach was designed to help doctoral students become more immersed in the literature through a collaborative writing project. The idea was to experience scholarly writing through collaboration and reflection and through this to understand and develop skills and knowledge relating to scholarship and literature review. Andrea does not claim this as a new idea, but she does re-emphasize the importance of finding an appropriate and consistent learning process for understanding how to study organizational learning.

Sandra Jones (Chapter 19) focuses on a 'professional doctorate' and she addresses the question: 'what should an appropriate student–supervision relationship for practice-based research include?' Her chapter gives an example of an experiential research community of practice, designed 'to provide peer-supported knowledge sharing and discovery'. She explores how experiential learning can be used, outlines some principles for experiential designs with doctoral students, and she proposes a collective model for a 'more equal' supervisory–candidate relationship.

The final chapter in this section (Chapter 20) is by Tusse Jensen, Jane Voigt, Enrico Piras, and Bente Thorsen, who are all Ph.D. students who attended a research methodology workshop organized by the Doctoral School of Organizational Learning in Copenhagen. The chapter is the direct result of an experiential exercise run by one of the editors of this book (Russ Vince). The exercise was designed to help doctoral students understand how and why to use visual data collection methods within their research (see Vince 2007), and the particular value of this method in researching emotion in organizations. The exercise asked all the participants to produce images of their experience of being a Ph.D. student and then to use collective processes of data interpretation and analysis in order to build a short and contained study on the emotions involved in being a doctoral student. Workshop participants were invited to utilize the data generated to write a chapter for this Handbook, reflecting their understanding of this approach to research. Tusse, Jane, Enrico, and Bente took up this challenge.

Part VI

This part is called 'critically focused experiential learning'. We noted earlier in this introductory chapter the important debates as to both the 'critical' potential of experiential learning and, for some, its lack of criticality. Critical perspectives will be illustrated and applied throughout this volume but in this section we have presented four chapters which illustrate quite different expressions of this.

In Chapter 21, Anna Kayes describes an application of experiential learning which has the aim of helping management students to develop their understanding of the dynamics of power in organizations. Based on recent developments in Kolb's theory of experiential learning, Anna draws on 'conversational learning' as a means of surfacing different perspectives, contradictions, and possibilities for the interpretation of complex organizational processes as well as implications for action. Using the device of guided leadership narratives, groups of students are encouraged to reflect critically on their experiences of power and leadership so as to identify ways of deconstructing and transforming them. Anna illustrates how, in learning from experience in this way, students are encouraged to work with emotional and social processes and to engage with the inevitable complexity of organizational life.

In Chapter 22, Tony Watson introduces an approach though which undergraduate management students learn about aspects of organization through 'negotiated narrative'. He illustrates how students work with theory and research material from the literature and from lectures through reflection on their own experiences of being in organizations. In the examples in the chapter Tony shows how students are encouraged to make connections between their personal experience and case studies of people in employment through individual studies which provide the basis for classroom, student-led meetings in which ideas about management and organization are developed through discussion.

In Chapter 23, Jane Thompson and Tracy Lamping apply a critical perspective to both content and process in their work with HRM and business undergraduates. Their aim is to provide students with classroom activities which reflect the social and political behaviours they will encounter in organizations. In engaging with the uncertainties of the experiential activities designed for them, students encounter in the 'here and now' social issues including those of power, trust, responsibility, and gendering, connecting these with selected literature and developing the skills and insights which will support their development as reflexive practitioners.

Chapter 24 is also an account of critical pedagogy in practice. In this illustrated example by Kiran Trehan and Clare Rigg, educational practice is aimed at integrating the social and political into management education. The authors make clear the principles on which the course design is based, and as with the previous chapter, emphasize the ways experiential processes can be as much a source of learning as the curriculum. Trehan and Rigg show how, for example, action learning, student-led projects, and participative assessment, supported by psychodynamic theory, enable

students to learn about social and organizational process through an understanding of their own experience of working with each other and with the staff of the programme.

Conclusion

We invited Chris Kayes to read all the chapters and to write a conclusion to the volume. He has called this 'Institutional Barriers to Experiential Learning Revisited'. Chris has sought to engage both with Kolb's theories of experiential and conversational learning, as well as critical perspectives on experiential learning. We thought that this meant that he was uniquely placed to reflect on the volume as a whole, and to provide a way of finishing the Handbook that connects back to and contrasts with our own Introduction. Chris focuses his Conclusion on institutional barriers to successful experiential learning and on the themes that emerge from his reading of the chapters in this Handbook.

He uses his reading of the chapters to 'take stock' of experiential learning in order to look at future directions for experiential learning theory and practice. He recognizes, amongst other things, that there is a strong connection between experience and narrative; that experiential learning shares something in common with critical theories; and that experiential learning is moving more toward social and group dynamics (from a concern with personal learning). Chris points to the bias inherent in the reading of experiential learning within the Handbook. He is right to surmise that, as editors, we have privileged 'a particular viewpoint', and that, looking outside of the examples here, there is likely to be a much wider selection of methods and approaches available (particularly 'of functionalist, quantitative, and outcome-driven experiential exercises'). His overall view is an optimistic one. He identifies the breadth, depth, and diversity of experiential learning, as well as the variety of settings in which it is being used and the wide range of content.

Our view of experiential learning is also optimistic. We have brought together what we consider to be a comprehensive range of high-quality examples of recent thinking about experiential learning. For us, this Handbook shows the richness of thought and action that experiential learning can bring to management education. It offers an overview of some new insights into this subject, and thereby provides a basis for increased interest in understanding how and why experiential learning is such an important component in the education of leaders and managers.

References

Freire, P. (1974). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

French, R., and Vince, R. (1999). *Group Relations, Management and Organization*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kayes, D. C. (2002). 'Experiential Learning and its Critics: Preserving the Role of Experience in Management Learning and Education', *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 1/2: 137–49.

Reynolds, M., and Vince, R. (2004). 'Critical Management Education and Action-Based Learning: Synergies and Contradictions', *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 3/4: 442–56.

Vince, R. (2002). 'The Politics of Imagined Stability: A Psychodynamic Understanding of Change at Hyder plc', *Human Relations*, 55/10: 1189–208.

—— (2007). 'Drawings and Images in Management Research', in R. Thorpe and R. Holt (eds.), *The Dictionary of Qualitative Management Research*. London: Sage.

Willmott, H. (1994). 'Management Education: Provocations to a Debate', *Management Learning*, 25/1: 105–36.

PART I

FUNDAMENTAL IDEAS AND THEORETICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

This page intentionally left blank

CHAPTER 1

DOUBLE-LOOP LEARNING IN A CLASSROOM SETTING

CHRIS ARGYRIS

In this chapter I will focus on problems that require double-loop learning. For example, why do human beings appear to design and implement actions that are counterproductive to achieving their intentions? Why, even after they do see the counterproductivity of their actions, do they repeat them in the same and in other settings? Why is it that the context in which this occurs rewards and strengthens these actions even though they violate the norms of effective actions?

The Organization of the Chapter

I begin with some fundamental assumptions about how human beings strive to make sense of the context in which they are embedded. Next, I present some observations from cases written by participants in our session. Inferences are then made that begin to answer the questions raised at the outset. The concepts of single- and double-loop learning are introduced. A theory of action is presented that explains the problems described above.

Next, I turn to the Joe–Bill case used in the classroom seminar intended to focus on double-loop learning. I describe the dialogue and show how the participants are helped to become aware that they are not skilful at producing double-loop learning. After dealing with their bewilderment, I present an example by the faculty member of a double-loop learning solution for the Joe–Bill case. I conclude with some comments on the underground world in organizations.

Some Fundamental Assumptions

Human beings strive to make sense of the context in which they are embedded. Three key activities required are to understand and explain what is going on, to design effective action, and to implement the design. Our task as educators and interventionists is to make sense of how they go about making sense.

I begin with several propositions that are relevant to the analysis. First, all actions that human beings produce they do so by using their mind/brain. Second, human beings hold theories of action that inform their action. Third, human beings hold espoused theories of action and theories that they use to act (theories-in-use). Fourth, in order to develop a valid diagnosis of sense-making process it is necessary to begin with their theory-in-use. Fifth, in order to do so, it is necessary to base the diagnosis upon actual behaviour. Sixth, from the fifth step, we can infer the reasoning human beings used to inform their actions.

The Diagnostic Methodology: The Left-Hand-Right-Hand Case

One method that has been used with, conservatively estimated, over 10,000 participants is a case method that is called the left-hand-right-hand case. Individuals are asked to write a case about a challenge that they are facing with individuals, groups, intergroups, or organizational behavioural systems. Next they are asked what they would do to begin to solve the problems (about a paragraph).

Finally, they are asked to divide several pages into left-hand and right-hand columns. In the right-hand column they are asked to describe the dialogue that occurred (or would occur if it has not happened). This data represents the actual behaviour as they recall it. In the left-hand column they are asked to describe any feelings and thoughts that they had (or would have) that they did not (or would not) communicate. The objective of this column is to ask the writer to make public what they kept secret.

Both columns exhibit certain patterns that are central to inferring the theory-in-use of the case writer. Examples of the left-hand column are:

1. Don't let the group upset you.
2. This is not going well. Wrap it up and wait for another chance.
3. He is clearly on the defensive.
4. He is playing hardball because he is afraid of losing power.
5. This guy is unbelievable.
6. You are nowhere near as good as you think you are.
7. I am losing her, so I have to go in for the kill.
8. Great, try patronizing me. That won't get you far. He cares about trust. Talk about trust.

These examples help us begin to develop insights into the sense-making processes used by human beings. They appear to focus on three behavioural strategies. They advocate their views, they evaluate their own and others' effectiveness. They make causal attributions about the others' intentions. They keep this information secret from the others. Indeed, they cover up the secrecy.

A second feature is to test the validity of these early sense-making activities. Unfortunately, their testing (that often is implicit) assumes that their evaluations and attributions are valid because they honestly believe this is the case. The reasoning they use to develop their views is based on their own sense-making process. Their logic is self-referential.

If you combine cover-up and biased testing, it is a recipe, as we shall see, for faulty and incomplete learning. When we ask the participants what leads them to believe that cover-up and biased testing are connected to effective action, they provide two interdependent answers.

First they could become vulnerable (for example 'Don't let these guys upset you', 'This is not going well'). If others knew this information they could take advantage of them. The second response is that if they made their left-hand column public, it would make the others defensive. They keep their left-hand columns secret out of caring and concern for the others.

We see a double bind. If they are to behave effectively, it is necessary to test the validity of the left-hand column. But if they do test they are likely to create defensiveness in others and themselves. We can begin to see how human beings act to create the condition described in our questions at the outset of the chapter.

Double binds are complex consequences to solve. They require a level of awareness that cover-ups do not permit. They also require independent testing that self-referential logic does not supply.

Double binds under these conditions produce further double binds. The individual must act as if they are not creating undiscussables. To do so, they must make the undiscussability of the undiscussable, undiscussable. To compound the problem

Left-hand column	Right-hand column
I am going to get attacked, straight out of the box.	I'm so happy to meet you and get to know you. I think we will have a great working relationship and can learn a lot from each other.
What a bunch of crap. I don't want to get drawn into this discussion.	I'd like you to know that I believe in open, direct communication.
Did he say our plan? He must have meant his plan. Doesn't he know I disagree with his decision?	No problem, it seems like we are at a crucial point.
Winning the Nobel Prize will not help the company. Perhaps it is time to expand the development stuff and downsize the research stuff.	I am sure that you all realize that we work in a for-profit industry and must be realistically oriented.

Fig. 1.1 'Skilful spinning': examples

they deny their causal responsibility by using skilful spinning (See Figure 1.1). The spinning blocks the learning required to check the effectiveness of the actions taken. The anti-learning processes are reinforced by the other recipients who infer that the individual is spinning. They too cover up and do not test their inferences. We now have a systematic, self-fuelling, self-reinforcing set of processes that are counterproductive to learning. These results hold regardless of colour, gender, education, wealth, culture, size, and type of organization (Argyris 1990, 1993, 2000, 2004; Argyris and Schön 1996).

The above again reminds us of the puzzle stated at the outset. Why do human beings choose to act in ways that are counterproductive? How do they come to learn to become skilful at acting skilfully incompetent (i.e. producing consequences that are counterproductive to their intentions)? How do they come to learn to live with these conditions by blaming others? How do they come to learn to believe that they are not responsible; indeed to believe that they are victims?

A Theory of Action

One explanation is generated by a theory called a theory of action. The same theory can be used to develop learning for human beings and for organizations. The theory hypothesizes that human beings produce action by activating designs for action that they have created and stored in their heads (mind/brain). Human beings also develop designs to assess the degree to which they are effective. This introduces the concept of learning defined as detecting and correcting error. There are two types of learning. Single-loop learning occurs when errors are corrected without changing the underlying programme. Double-loop learning occurs when an error

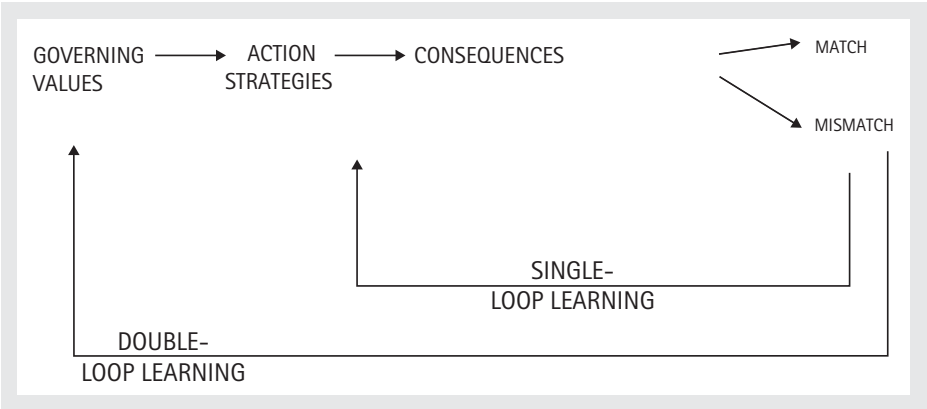


Fig. 1.2 Managerial and organizational learning

is corrected by first altering the underlying programme. For example, a thermostat is a single-loop learner. It is programmed to turn the heat up or down depending upon the temperature. A thermostat would be a double-loop learner if it questioned its existing programme that it should measure heat (Argyris 2004b).

The premiss of this approach is that all actions (behaviour with intentions) are produced as matches with the designs stored in our heads that we activate. These designs are developed by human beings as they strive to become skilful in whatever actions they intend.

If it is true that all actions are produced by activating designs for action stored in our heads, then actions that are counterproductive to our intentions must also be produced by activating appropriate designs stored in our heads. If this is true, the actions that are counterproductive must be consistent with the design that we have activated. If this is true, then even actions that are counterproductive are matches, and not mismatches. Counterproductive actions represent 'errors' that are designed, hence they are not errors.

How do we make sense of the puzzle? One way is to hypothesize that human beings are unaware of the errors that they are producing and the unawareness is skilful. But if unawareness is behaviour then it too must be designed. In what sense is unawareness skilful? One hypothesis is that the theories of action stored in our heads lead to actions that are counterproductive to our intentions and to being unaware that this is the case. We are programmed when dealing with double-loop problems to be skilfully incompetent and skilfully unaware. What kinds of programmes are we talking about?

Model I Theory-In-Use

There are two types of master programmes or theories of action. First, there are those that are espoused. Second, there are those that are used to produce the

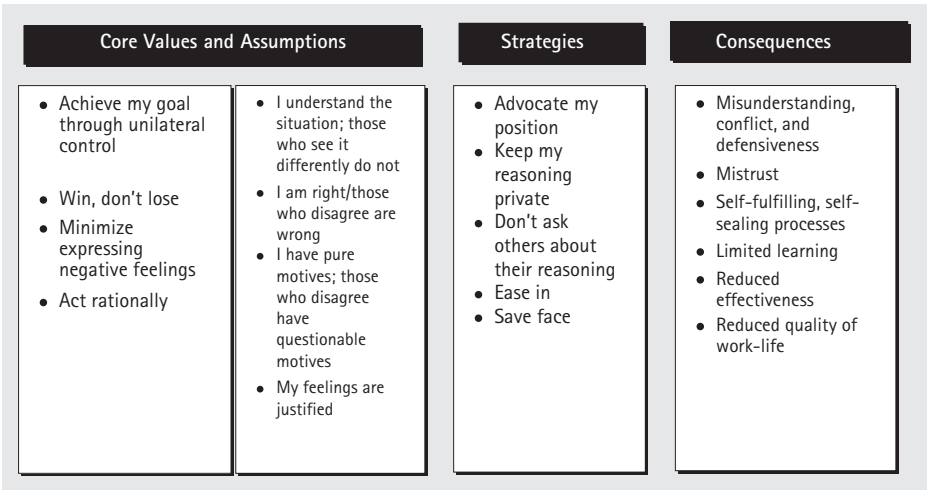


Fig. 1.3 Model I: unilateral control

action (theories-in-use). We have identified a theory-in-use that we have labelled Model I.

Model I is said to be dominant because we have found it to be used regardless of gender, race, education, social status, wealth, age, and size of organization as well as culture (Argyris 1982, 1985, 1990, 1993, 2000, 2004; Argyris, Putnam, and Smith 1985; Argyris and Schön 1996).

The three most prevalent action strategies are, advocate ideas and positions, evaluate performance, and make attributions about causes of the actions of self and others. Action strategies are implemented in ways that are consistent with the governing values, which means enquiry into them is not encouraged nor is testing of claims, such as that the conclusions are self-seeking. Testing is based upon the use of self-referential logic. The logic used to generate a claim is the same logic used to test the claim (for example: trust me, my conclusion is valid because I know the organization, group, or individual). The consequences of Model I action strategies include misunderstanding and escalating error, self-fulfilling prophecies, and self-fuelling processes. These feed back to reinforce the governing values and the action strategies.

The use of Model I produces a defensive reasoning mind-set. Premisses and inferences are implicit and kept minimally transparent. The purpose of testing claims or conclusions is self-protective. A self-protective mind-set generates skills that produce consequences that are counterproductive to valid learning and systematic denial that this is the case. The incompetence and unawareness or denials are skilled. They have to be. Otherwise, they would not exist as theory-in-use designs in the human mind to produce the actions observed.

Model I theory-in-use and a defensive reasoning mind-set combine to produce organizational defensive routines. Organizational defensive routines are any actions

or policies intended to protect individuals, groups, intergroups, or organizations as a whole from embarrassment or threat and do so in ways that prevent getting at the causes of the embarrassment or threat. Organizational defensive routines are anti-learning and overprotective. For example, organizations exhibit mixed messages. The theory-in-use to produce them is (1) state a message that is mixed, (2) act as if it is not mixed, (3) make 1 and 2 undiscussable, and (4) make the undiscussability undiscussable.

Defensive routines feed back to reinforce Model I, and the defensive reasoning mind-set. There is a tightly integrated relationship between individual theory-in-use and group, intergroup, and organizational factors. The result is an ultra-stable, self-fuelling, and self-sealing state. Under these conditions, it is difficult to call any factor (individual, group, intergroup, and organizational) the primary cause. They are highly interrelated. If so, then we may predict that if we give human beings a genuine opportunity to help others and themselves to create double-loop learning, they will fail to do so and be unaware of their failure, even if the conditions are ideal for double-loop learning. For example, thirty-eight CEOs came together in a seminar to learn more about effective leadership (Argyris 2000). They were asked to help 'Andy' who sought advice on how to overcome the blindness and incompetence that he admits he exhibits in the way he leads. Thus the CEOs were embedded in a context where Andy seeks help, where the credibility of the leadership of the CEOs is not in jeopardy, and where they do not come together with an organizational history and culture that contains organizational defensive routines. Moreover the context is not hierarchical and unilaterally controlling of their actions, and being without the pressures of everyday work life to act, the CEOs are not required to behave consistently with Model I, whether using defensive reasoning mind-sets or creating organizational defensive routines. Yet they produced these consequences. The same counterproductive consequences occur in the seminar to be described below.

The Joe–Bill Case

The first step is to help the participants to see the extent of their skilled incompetence and skilled unawareness. The methodology that we use has to be able to achieve this objective even though we can predict that the participants are going to be bewildered and baffled. They come to the seminar with the honest belief that they are not skilfully incompetent and unaware. The methodology should make it difficult to deny their personal causal responsibility for these two features. It should also help them to realize that if they are victims it is by their own design as well as the organizational norms and behavioural systems that they create in their organizations.

In this seminar, we used a two-prong methodology. The first was for them to complete a left-hand-right-hand case about a problem that they experienced in

their setting that they wish to resolve. The second prong was to send them a one-page case of Joe and Bill written by Joe (the superior) about a sexual discrimination problem that Bill (the subordinate) was creating in their organization. The case was sent to the participants ahead of time. The participants were asked to help advise Joe on how to deal more effectively with Bill (Joe has stated in his case that the first session with Bill did not go well).

The session began with the faculty member (FM) asking the participants to become consultants to Joe. FM asked the participants to role-play their advice to Joe. FM said that he would role-play Joe receiving the advice. Finally, FM said that it was important for the dialogue to be stopped at any point in time when any participants believed that FM's role-playing of Joe's likely reactions was inaccurate or unfair.

Example of Advice Given to Joe by the Participants

Participant A: advises Joe to make sure that Bill understands the harassment policy.

Joe (as role-played by **FM**) 'I do not think that Bill will respond positively. As you read in the case Bill doesn't believe that he harasses anyone. Also he doesn't believe that the female co-workers believe that he has harassed them.'

Participant B: advises Joe to tell Bill that you have personally witnessed several of the incidents. 'Make it clear that you did not like what you saw. "Joe, you must find better ways to be specific without violating your promise not to identify the women" '.

FM: 'I agree with you. What would this behaviour look like? What do you advise me to say?'

B: 'I don't have the answer. I see problems but I am not sure how to get around it.'

Participant C: 'Joe, were you not offended with what you saw?'

FM: 'Absolutely'

C: 'Then use your feelings as a way into the problem.'

FM: 'What do you advise me to say? After all he says that I am making a mountain out of a molehill.'

C: 'So you feel he will reject your views?'

Participant D: 'Joe would it not be enough for you to tell B that you are personally offended with his behaviour?'

FM: 'I doubt it. He believes my discomfort is invalid because the women see him as being funny.'

Participant D: 'So why not explore with him the difference between his intentions to be funny and what is actually happening?'

FM: 'What do you advise me to say?'

D: 'You might say, "Bill you told a joke by the cooler. You thought it was funny" '

FM: 'Bill would say "correct" '

D: 'Ask him to share his experience honestly.'

FM: 'Again, I need advice as to what I would say to get him to be honest.'

FM: interrupts the dialogue. He notes that, so far, each of the advisers crafted advice with a sense of confidence that it would work. Joe's biggest problem is that he did not find the advice helpful. 'Do my interpretations make sense?'

D: 'yes.'

FM: 'Are you feeling a sense of failure?'

D: 'Just a tad' (group laughs)

FM: 'Please talk a bit about your feelings.

D: 'I feel stuck.'

FM: (role-playing Joe) 'I also feel stuck. I feel that you are highly motivated to help me. I believe that you are concerned about me. I conclude that I am faced with advisers who are concerned yet who are not helpful. I too feel stuck. It appears that we are creating a set of self-fuelling, self-sealing counterproductive processes.'

Reflections on the Experience

Reflecting on the dialogue we see that the advice given by the participants is consistent with Model I theory-in-use and defensive reasoning. For example:

1. Joe should act rationally. Tell Bill his actions are wrong and they are against company policy.
2. Joe should be in unilateral control. Joe should make it clear that if Bill does not change his actions Joe will not hesitate to punish him.
3. Joe should be cautious about being forthright. The advice crafted by the participants and given to Joe was consistent with easing in. If Bill did not respond favourably then Joe is advised to threaten Bill with punishment, including firing him.

The dialogue produced by the participants also illustrated the predicted consequences of Model I, namely, skilled incompetence, skilled unawareness, the use of self-referential logic to test claims.

Finally the FM helped the participants to realize that although they said they wanted to learn, although Joe pleaded for help, although they were in a classroom setting where their future was not at risk, they skilfully created a setting where as one of them said 'things are going nowhere' (consistent with the Andy case described above).

FM invited, at the outset, the participants to confront FM if they thought that FM, acting as Joe, was unfair. At the end of the dialogue FM asked again if anyone thought that FM role-played Joe irresponsibly. If so, would the individual please

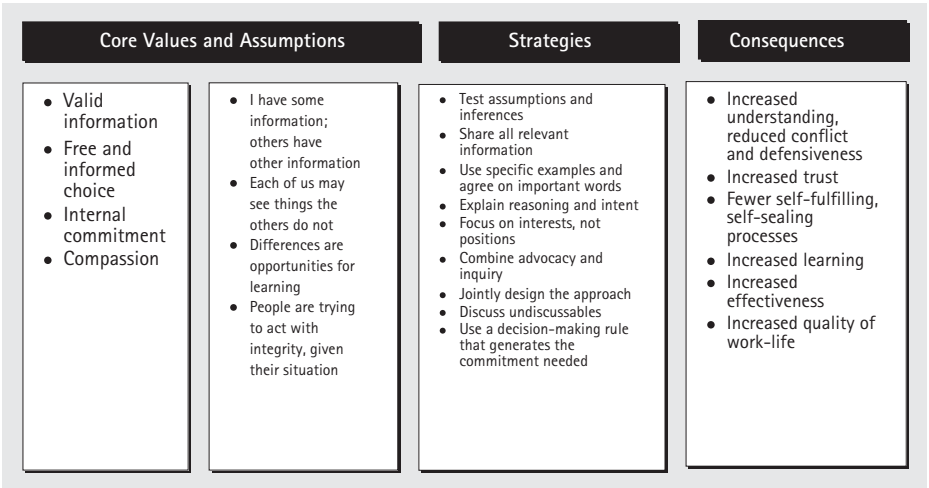


Fig. 1.4 Model II: joint control

say so and illustrate their claims by using Joe's behaviour as role-played by FM. No one volunteered an example. The participants expressed bewilderment because none of them expected that they or the members as a group would be responsible for creating the conditions for failure in double-loop learning. The next question is, how can the participants learn a new theory-in-use that will help them to reduce the stuckedness that they created? The first step is for them to learn a new theory-in-use called Model II.

Model II: Theory-In-Use

The governing values of Model II are valid knowledge, informed choice, and personal responsibility for one's actions. The action strategies are to advocate, to evaluate, to attribute in the service of the Model II governing values and productive reasoning. Productive reasoning emphasizes encouraging enquiry and robust testing of claims in the service of learning. The consequences are the reduction of self-fulfilling and self-sealing processes. These consequences feed back to reinforce Model II governing values and action strategies. This, in turn, produces organizational behavioural systems that encourage learning, especially double-loop learning.

An Example of Model II Strategy

The faculty member then said that he would like to present Model II strategy that Joe could use during his second session with Bill. The strategy is aimed at helping Bill become aware of his defensive mind-set that includes denial and blaming others, test his claims with the use of self-referential logic, and accept his share of personal responsibility.

FM first described his thinking in terms of a seven-point action strategy for the meeting.

1. I should begin the meeting by stating that some of the staff are upset about the comments and jokes that he (Bill) makes.
2. I should strive to do so in as constructive a manner as possible. By that I mean I will begin by describing the problem as I see it and then ask Bill for his reactions (confirms-disconfirms).
3. If Bill agrees then we can move to how he can begin to change and how I can help him to do so.
4. However, I doubt that this will be Bill's response. I hypothesize that he will continue to be defensive and self-protective.
5. My task will be to help him express as much of his defensive reactions as he wishes. The more he does, the more he is likely to produce directly observable data of his defensiveness. It is this kind of data that I can use to begin a constructive dialogue.
6. I will strive to react to Bill's responses by focusing on the impact they have on me. I will do my best not to use the staff's descriptions as evidence that Bill is a problem.
7. I will focus on what I might be doing wrong. I seek to learn. I seek to examine any behaviour, mine or his, which inhibits learning.

FM then role-played how he as Joe would implement the strategy.

Bill, let's review the bidding from the previous session.

1. I began by describing how upset the staff was over your unwanted behaviour. I asked for your reaction.
2. You responded, in effect:
   (*a*) Don't worry. My behaviour is always appropriate.
   (*b*) If they had a problem with me, they would tell me.
   (*c*) If this is a problem it means that no one has a sense of humour.
3. In effect your responses were I was wrong, they were wrong, and you were not wrong.
4. Let us first focus on me. I could be wrong. But it is difficult to learn about my possible errors from your responses.
5. Under these conditions, I want you to know that if your actions continue I will use my authority to 'order' changes or to implement other consequences. I do not prefer these actions. I prefer the actions that would help us both learn how to correct the situation in a way that the corrections persevere.

After the presentation FM asked the participants especially if they had doubts about the effectiveness of this strategy with Bill. Examples are:

1. What if Bill surfaces his fears that if he crafted a constructive response the women might get mad? Is there is a way to prevent their being held responsible for their defensiveness.
2. What if Bill tries and he too gets stuck? Are we not placing him in a vulnerable situation? Could the others take advantage of him?
3. What if Bill decided to mimic Joe? He would not have changed his theory-in-use yet he would act as if he did.

FM responded that their questions were valid. He asked that answering them be postponed until the end of the seminar when they would have had several days of practising Model II using their own left-hand-right-hand cases. He predicted that many of the questions would arise during these sessions

When they revisited these questions at the end of the week they found that they had learned:

1. The first step to prevent the defensiveness of others is to prevent one's own Model I actions and defences from informing their actions. If they become defensive then focus on how they can express these feelings. Begin by assessing the extent to which they unrealizingly acted in ways that helped to activate the defensiveness of others.
2. This also helps the others to see that you can be vulnerable without feeling weak. They may begin to observe how they might act to develop similar competence and confidence in the competence.
3. If Bill decided to mimic Joe, he would soon learn that he has not developed the skills to be able to go beyond Joe's crafting of actions. He will realize that Joe's advice may be fine for a first step but it is not adequate as the others continue their defensiveness. Mimicking may be helpful as a first step in practising (Argyris and Schön 1996). It is inadequate for helping develop new theory-in-use actions that do not evaporate under unexpected or expected hostile responses.

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to describe in detail the activities that the participants experienced while learning and internalizing Model II competencies. Examples are available (Argyris 1985, 1993, 2000, 2004a, 2004b; Argyris and Schön 1996).

Closing Comments: The Underground World in Organizations

At the outset of this chapter, I asked why human beings design and implement actions that are counterproductive to achieving their intentions. Why do they keep

repeating them? My response is that human beings appear to be programmed, through acculturation, to Model I theory-in-use and defensive mind-sets. When they design and create organizations, human beings inevitably create organizational systems that themselves have left-hand columns (underground world of organizational defensive routine). We do not seem to be the focus of the limitations because we focus on moving boxes around and redefining policies. These are important. But they are non-trivially limited in being implemented because of the Model I theories-in-use, organizational defensive routines, and defensive mind-sets.

The second strategy is to attempt to focus on these underground worlds by changing the culture. There are several problems with most of these efforts. They focus on espoused values and beliefs. They assume that the new values and beliefs can be imposed by charismatic leaders who champion these values. The trouble is that the fundamental process for such implementation leads to external commitment. Once the senior executive is gone, the touted accomplishments seem to disintegrate.

Recall that after the *Challenger* tragedy there was a special commission to make recommendations to prevent such a tragedy from happening again. The commission recommended a change in culture. NASA officials agreed. The implementation was top down. Several years later the *Columbia* tragedy occurred. Again the commission recommended changes in the culture. They were similar to the ones 'implemented' a few years before.

Recall ABB. This company was touted for several years as having produced a successful cultural change. The new culture emphasized openness, initiatives, trust, risk taking, and personal responsibility. A few years ago, the *Financial Times* interviewed the new CEO of ABB. He reported that the biggest challenge he faced was to create a new culture that emphasized openness, initiative, trust, risk taking, and personal responsibility. These were the same features the previous CEO had been acclaimed for creating (Argyris 2004a).

Recall 3M. 3M was a corporation acknowledged for several decades as a company that rewarded innovation. Last year, the new CEO told a *Wall Street Journal* reporter that his biggest challenge was to recreate a culture of innovation that had been lost. How do innovative cultures get lost? Why are these causes not foreseen (Argyris 2004a)?

One way to begin to explain all these puzzles is to realize that in all organizations there are managerial components that are above ground and underground. The above ground in organizations is managed by productive reasoning, transparency, and tough testing of performance. Truth (with a small 't') is a good idea.

The underground organization is dominated by defensive reasoning where the objective is to protect the players from embarrassment or threat. It rewards skilled denial and personal responsibility. Truth is a good idea, when it is not troublesome. If it is, massage it, spin it, and cover up.

The underground organization has several fascinating features. It develops even though it violates the current concepts of effective management. It survives even though there are no courses taught to executives on how to help it to survive. It flourishes by engaging the rules and regulations intended to smother it. It is a major cause for individuals using defensive mind-sets protected by organizational defensive routines that guarantee its survival.

These self-sealing processes are counterproductive to a productive reasoning mind-set. They make it difficult to produce trust, openness, transparency, and testing of ideas, all features that I suggest will be increasingly required for the future design of organizations and their management. Individual, group, intergroup, and organizational double-loop learning can help to meet these challenges.

References

Argyris, C. (1982). *Reasoning, Learning, and Action: Individual and Organizational*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

—— (1985). *Strategy, Change and Defensive Routines*. New York: Harper Business.

—— (1990). *Overcoming Organizational Defenses*. Needham, Mass.: Allyn Bacon.

—— (1993). *Knowledge for Action: A Guide to Overcoming Barriers to Organizational Change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

—— (2000). *Flawed Advice and the Management Trap: How Managers Can Know When they're Getting Good Advice and When they're Not.* New York: Oxford University Press.

—— (2002). 'Double Loop Learning, Teaching, and Research', *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 1/2: 206–19.

—— (2003a). 'A Life Full of Learning', *Organizational Studies*, 24/7: 1178–92.

—— (2003b). 'Actionable Knowledge', in H. Tsoukas and C. Knudsen (eds.), *Organizational Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

—— (2004a). *Reasons and Rationalizations: The Limits to Organizational Knowledge*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

—— (2004b). 'Double-Loop Learning and Organizational Change: Facilitating Transformational Change', in J. J. Boonstra (ed.), *Dynamics of Organizational Change and Learning.* Chichester: John Wiley and Sons, Ltd.

—— Putnam, R., and Smith, D. (1985). *Action Science*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

—— and Schön, D. (1996). *Organizational Learning II*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley.

CHAPTER 2

A GOOD PLACE FOR CHAT

ACTIVITY THEORY AND MBA EDUCATION

JEFF GOLD
ROBIN HOLT
RICHARD THORPE

Introduction

In this chapter, we are going to argue that activity theory, specifically the approach offered by Cultural and Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) (Engeström 2000), has an instructive role on MBA programmes. We base our argument on the following grounds. First, as a theoretical model CHAT embodies rather than represses the multiplicity associated with business life; secondly, it offers users a mode of engaging with practical concerns; and, finally, it allows MBA students to reflexively engage with their educative and wider organizational experience. As such, it is, we argue, a theory that advocates aspect seeing above formal representation; practical knowledge above validity; and rigorous enquiry above imitation. In doing so its use on MBA programmes can go some way to addressing the concerns we have about orthodox thinking that informs the design and delivery of such programmes.

We connect these concerns to the criticisms that have surrounded the MBA degree in recent years. For example, Bennis and O'Toole (2005) have illustrated the extent to which MBAs and the professors who teach them are removed from business practices. Their claim, like those of Pfeffer and Fong (2002) and Mintzberg (1976, 2004) before, is that business schools, particularly represented in the MBA, have been too focused on 'scientific' research and analysis and less concerned with developing qualities and abilities that can accommodate the complexities of business life. The knowledge informing many textbook models and cases used in MBA teaching is of a condensed, formalized nature somewhat removed from the 'real' experience of managing. The problem occurs when students find that in re-applying these learning tools they have to struggle to make them 'fit' their experience; a struggle that in part is attributable to the intellectual abstraction and practical naivety of what they have been taught (Alvesson and Willmott 2003: 16–17).

Intellectual abstraction refers to how the data being used in models and cases is sifted from the experiences of managers and employees by means of surveys, or is replicated through experiments, in order to realize a coherent, generalized account of organizations and their management. The prevailing assumption is of an objectified world of passive resources that are bundled and managed by active managers using a rational, economizing calculus in order to secure economic rents. Unfortunately this clean and tidy representation does not embody fully the complexity and uncertainty of business life. Even in its own 'representative' terms, the static models and cases often fail to account for the choices and contradictions that ensue when resources from different organizations, or parts of organizations, are combined and recombined. More critically, the representations do little to convey how different organizational members view particular aspects of the organization differently, and how the resultant images can only ever present one of many possible perspectives (Sutton and Staw 1995). For example, within a model of good knowledge management one way of understanding patents as a 'knowledge resource' is to link their ownership to the revenue benefits accruing from exploitation. Yet even on this limited model and governing logic, questions arise as to what those benefits consist of and whether they would accrue to the shareholders, organizational stakeholders, or wider communities. Likewise, questions also arise as to whether rent-seeking behaviour is appropriate when the patent concerns human proteins, for example. And even if a human protein can be sensibly 'owned', are the associated rights and duties distinct from those associated with owning a piece of machinery or building? Here the simple logic of the knowledge management model equating the possession of a patent with the possession of an exploitable resource is not wrong, only inevitably incomplete. To understand patents as exploitable resources is one way of modelling them, but it is a partial selection of observable phenomena behind which lies a host of background assumptions. It

is these assumptions that are rarely tested within MBA programmes (Ghoshal 2005).

Practical naivety refers to how models and cases often fail to convey how people grapple with the practical experience of doing management in which competence is as much an expression of tacit know-how as it is formal instruction. Business life is not simply the sum of bundles of resource ready to be marshalled into efficiency drives and value-adding initiatives for the good of a known and uncontested set of interests. Rather, it is people doing and using things for a whole host of reasons, utilizing a variety of practices each with potentially diverging theories of effectiveness and efficiency. From this more complex perspective, management is more a performance than the application of economic logic. Managers have to appreciate how they may need to create and work within 'an organizational landscape' consisting of people, things, and structures whose continued existence within the organization requires argument and justification (Shotter 1993). Here managers are not overseers, instructors, or conduits of enlightened vision, but practical authors who have to persuade others to enlist in the joint production of outcomes (Holman and Thorpe 2003: 7). The knowledge being taught on many MBAs fails to convey business life in such terms because it tends to shy away from appreciations of the ethnographic, personal, and rhetorical nature of these persuasive skills (Ghoshal 2005).

The final concern relating to the relevance of MBA teaching stems from a wider understanding of the practice of education itself, and is embodied in the question: 'To what extent should MBAs be seen vocationally as tools to improve and promote enterprise, and to what extent should they encourage an independent spirit?' Whilst these are no mutually exclusive concerns (namely, the importance of entrepreneurial spirit to wealth generation), there has been a tendency for business schools to critically consider academic credentials of rigour and pedagogy in the light of their practical relevance (as discussed above) rather than their contribution to intellectual autonomy. At present many MBAs embody such a skew. They teach students according to well-understood, academically established criteria to allow them to make contributions to established understandings about business and the economy. In doing so, students experience the weight of common-sense activity sustained by establishment *doxa* (unexamined opinion) without necessarily being exposed to doubt, challenge, and a sense of being engaged on an intellectual mission (Rorty 1999: 118).

It is in addressing these three concerns of abstractness, naivety, and teaching *doxa* that we see a significant role for approaches such as Cultural and Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) on MBA programmes. We will argue that CHAT encourages those who use it to adopt practical, mature, and critical attitudes to business life. The suggestion being that not all theory is bad theory. We go on to explain how this is so by discussing our use of CHAT in an experiential and learner problem approach

to the teaching of two MBA modules. We will explain how the theory was introduced and discuss how it helped participants better understand the ideas they held about organizations and their roles within them. In conclusion we also note some problems with using the model.

Cultural–Historical Activity Theory

Background

Cultural–Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) is not a theory that establishes valid propositions or predictions about the future, rather it provides people with a rigorous heuristic that allows them to configure and reconfigure the changing objects or goals of their activities. In this sense, it is a theory that establishes the importance of doubt rather than certainty. It draws on a number of strands. One is Marx's (1969) *Thesis on Feuerbach*, which provides a basic critique of the conception of social reality as an object 'of contemplation' rather than 'as sensuous human activity, practice' (p. 13). Another is the work of Vygotsky and other psychologists working in Soviet Russia in the 1920s and 1930s. CHAT aims to understand knowledge as the pragmatic product of open-ended, competent, social enquiry informed by historical and narrative traditions. As such, we argue that CHAT offers an effective model for MBA teaching; one that is both theoretical whilst at the same time being alive to the problems of intellectual abstraction, practical relevance, and *doxa*.

Understanding the composition of social reality in terms of activities rather than causally linked objects means the theories by which this reality is explained move from abstract representations to concrete considerations of practical use value. The truths about which we learn are not established by lawlike predictions but by understanding what assists people in realizing their goals in specific contexts. It is truth set within, and established by, the intentional relationships people have with objects and their causal links, rather than the objects themselves, that is of interest (Kaptelinin 2005). It is science that is concerned with understanding objects unadorned by human intention. Social science, argue exponents of activity theory, is different. It concerns itself with how we have built up relationships with one another, with other entities (sentient and non-sentient), with objects and symbols, and with our wider environments. Inspired by such a concern, academic models and cases must attest to the cultural and historical patterns (as well as deviations from these) by which people have gone about understanding their intentional relationships. In organization and management studies, this involves an active investigation of the informing values, the communities, the tools and symbols in use, and the procedural structures involved in activities such as the production of goods, the making of strategy, and so on, and how these are understood as being

more or less useful in realizing collectively configured goals and outcomes. What is produced by this theory is insight into how the hurly-burly of everyday business life can be effectively captured with a sufficient degree of clarity and certainty that knowledge claims (not theoretical propositions) can be made of it.

Activity Theory and the Activity System Model

For activity theorists, to know something equates with the ability to use *things* in a meaningful and potentially innovative way. When used, *things* become tools. These tools include all those entities that mediate our experience, and in doing so are complicit with that experience. So as well as things like machines or tools we can also include symbols, aesthetic appearances, gestures, and, most pervasively of all, language itself. Mediation describes how tools impose limits on actions (where they have a material quality and become a prosthetic extension) and mental operations (where they are immaterial signs and become an extension of our thought, aspirations, etc.). These tools, then, engender meanings, patterns, and purposes that extend beyond the individual judgement of any single actor (Bedny, Seglin, and Meister 2000); they also carry with them the trace of previous uses. In so doing knowledge becomes less a representative statement about states of affairs and more a demonstration of practical skill, a know-how versed in learning from others how tools have been used in the past, and so how they might be used in the future. To know things is to know one's way about situations or problems, something that is achieved when the use of a tool conforms to, and resonates with, previous uses (Engeström 2000). Orthodoxy frames meaning, insofar as what we do and say carries itself not merely as an enactment of our self-understanding but also as a disclosure to others that we are someone of significance, an identity with plans and purposes that can be and wishes to be understood by others. Failure to conform to established standards within a context (to use language as others do, or to conform to certain manners or rituals) jeopardizes this disclosure. Yet this know-how is distinct from merely reiterating established opinions (*doxa*) about things. The use of tools remains potentially innovative because submission to established standards does not entail conformity to outcomes. Each use of a tool is unique; our personal 'style' and specific experiential focus breathes life into the meanings associated with it. Hence whilst we follow rules for using tools, we do not obey such rules. In following rather than obeying we have the capability to use tools in new situations and in novel ways—what counts as meaningful does so throughout its expression, its use, and not in its conforming to a template, or formula (Cavell 1969: 48–52).

In proposing that knowledge arises from competent, practical use, activity theorists are imbibing what Evald Ilyenkov called an 'epistemological responsibility'—an awareness of the socially configured scenes of significance through which we act. These scenes are normative, acting like a 'space of reasons' for doing things

in certain ways; they filter our actions (Bakhurst 1997). The tiered benches and proscenium arrangement of a lecture theatre, for example, might elicit certain actions in both teacher and students. The teacher is invested with the role of 'vanishing point' in this scene of learning, not merely a material arrangement, but a normative one conveying a source of learned authority. The students are invested with the role of engagement, meaning they listen to, note, and, where appropriate, comment upon what they hear. This normative structure, defined by previous engagements (personal or vicarious) and tradition (collective), carries and sustains the meaning of the actions within the lecture theatre. Where such a proscenium arrangement is suggestive of an unwarranted and unhelpful distance between student and teacher the normative 'space of reasons' would be altered somewhat, perhaps eliciting exploratory interactions requiring less hierarchical room layouts and actions that were more conversational.

To understand these normative spaces in our social experiences, Engeström (2000, 2001) shifts the unit of analysis from the specific actions of individuals to what is called the activity system. This shift is particularly germane to understanding business life because the activity system uses a framework for representing and analysing organizational experience as a three-way interaction of subjects, objects of activity, and communities, each of which is mediated by rules (social norms), artefacts (technology/tools, symbols, language), and divisions of labour (organizational structures). To understand one aspect of business life is to understand it in relation to the other aspects set within one or multiple normative spaces. Understanding spaces as activity systems allows theorists to identify individual motives, structural conditions, localized norms, and available tools as things that exist in dynamic relations with one another rather than as entirely separate entities. Figure 2.1 shows Engeström's basic framework of an activity system.

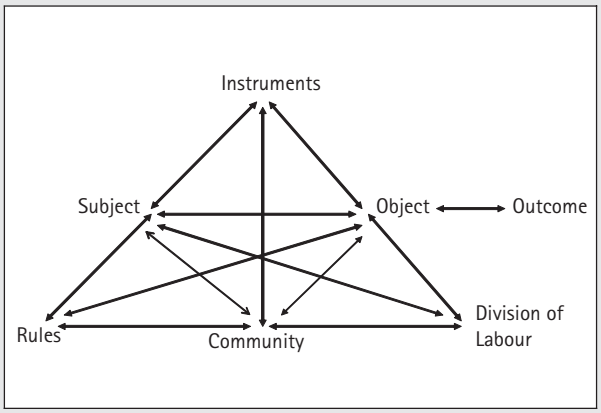


Fig. 2.1 A framework of an activity system

Source: Engeström (1999).

The MBA as an Activity System

Because activity, rather than action, is highlighted as the unit of analysis, it is only through situating actions and claims in previous experiences and traditions that they can be said to have sense and be acknowledged by others as legitimate. So, for example, the activity of studying for an MBA would provide the framework, logic, and impetus to actions such as: questioning; essay writing; grading; experiential learning; and so on. Outside of the activity these same actions and frames would 'hang' as meaningless or empty movements. Understood within the activity system these actions would be informed by a host of mediating influences: university premises, institutional repute, testimony from alumni, brochures, and so on. Defining this activity is an object, from which outcomes emerge. The object of studying for an MBA, for example, might be gaining a qualification and extending peer networks, gaining a symbolically powerful qualification, or alternatively learning how to better manage people; but it might also extend to internal goods associated with becoming more knowledgeable *per se*. As a subject within such an activity system, the student would develop know-how of the material arrangements and social/historical rules, purposes, and techniques by which MBAs are recognized and legitimized as things (qualifications) of significance. In doing so the student contributes to the collective understanding of the MBA as something that is both objective (understood by people as an object of intentional interest) and projective (it has outcomes that have a social use value linked to a repertoire of skills, norms, procedures and tools) (Miettinen and Virkkunen 2005; Engeström 2001). So there is an orthodoxy associated with the object of the MBA activity system; not anything counts as having an MBA, nor can an MBA be fully understood outside of the activity system itself. Yet the object is not fixed and there are a number of them. The object is characterized by what Miettinen (2001) calls 'horizons of possibility'. Studying for an MBA can be done in different ways, informed by different people and norms, and produce differing outcomes (in terms of expectation as well as results).

It is within such an open structure that we wish to understand how MBAs can evolve in response to their critics. Yet we also want to show that using this structure as an academic model is one way of realizing such an evolution. As a pedagogic tool we show how activity theory models allowed MBA students to better understand how theories and cases of organizational life provide knowledge claims that are informed by specific interests, aims, values, and communities. It also encouraged students to appreciate the fragmented and often contested views of the knowledge produced. As a practical tool we show how students were able to use it within their organizations to appreciate how procedures and aims were understood and the different perspectives taken on these understandings. It provided students with a model that they could use to critically orient themselves towards prevailing objects of concern within their organization. As a tool of personal development,

we show how the model can lead students to question their own participation within any activity system, be it in this case educational or economic, and to understand the responsibility associated with knowledge claims made through such participation.

Using Activity Theory

CHAT was incorporated into MBA programmes at both Leeds University and Leeds Metropolitan University. In total, thirty students were required to identify and analyse their 'own' organizations as an activity system for their study. For those studying part-time, the unit for study was straightforward and easily identified. For full-time students, 'own' organizations required further elaboration, even though the full-time students had work experience. This is because we were keen that all students could appreciate that working with CHAT should be achieved from a grounding of flux in actions and operations within an activity system and that to gain this understanding they needed to enter the activity system in a relevant and practical way (Engeström 1999). So full-time students were guided to consider the MBA programme itself as their 'own' organization and as an activity system and to examine it from the perspective of creating influence within such a system. All students therefore, both full- and part-time, could through their own actions engage with the system and this could in practice lead to new meanings and understandings among all who were part of the life of the activity system.

Completing a study using CHAT requires a multi-layered, multi-voiced approach where students can collect information on the different voices in a system as well as present their views as they participate in various tasks that contribute towards the realization of some defined objects and wider normative spaces. In addition students also need to be aware of the traditional patterns that exist and how they change over time. While no specified time period was allocated, it was clear to us that the time-bound nature of 'modules' and the additional constraints of assessment would limit the nature of the study that students could undertake. Our aim was to balance the time required for students to explore the working methods of CHAT with a realistic awareness that any study they conducted might well be only partial.

Our approach to assisting students in acquiring tools for their enquiries was to employ the metaphor of 'construction'. A Vygotskyian perspective informed the initial process adopted. Students in the role of problem solvers required guidance or what Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976) refer to as 'scaffolding'. This scaffolding came from the teachers and was initially offered in quite a didactic way. However, through

practice, there was an eventual transfer of direction to the inside. The 'building materials' adopted were as follows:

1. An explanation of the concept of mediation.
2. An understanding of the meaning and content of cultural and historical influence.
3. The role and nature of disturbance and contradiction.
4. The way different levels of operation, action, and activity influence and 'nest' within any activity.

We used these materials to build up Engeström's framework of an activity system as an amalgam of interrelated triangles. The triangles became the building blocks for the construction of understanding. The first of these is the 'triangle of production' in which an individual subject and a goal are understood as being mediated through cultural and historical tools. We used the example of a person lying on a beach wearing sunglasses on a sunny day, presented in the form of a reworking of Vygotsky's (1978) triangle.

This image (fig 2.2) was meant to connect directly to student experience and to quickly surface the cultural historical nature of human action. So, in relation to the diagram, humans in contrast to animals have goals which are cultural in origin: they set out to 'get a tan' rather than merely seek warmth in the sun. In order to achieve this goal, they make use of tools and this allowed us to introduce

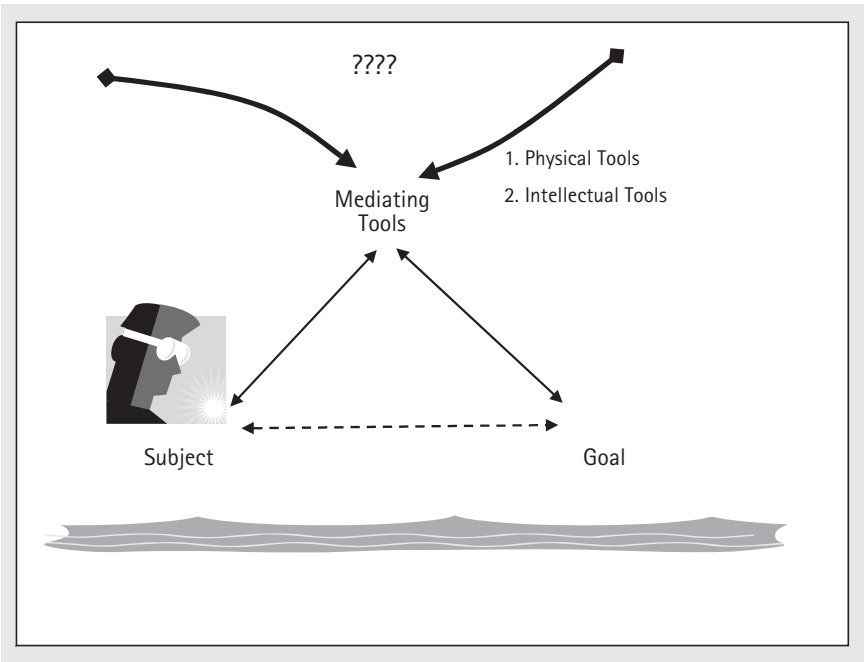


Fig. 2.2 The production triangle

the concept of mediation. The sunbather cannot achieve his or her goal directly but only through the use of physical tools such as trunks, sun cream, sunglasses, as well as psychological tools such as ideas about looking good, along with previous knowledge that exposure to the sun will provide a tan. The example was also useful in illustrating how tools also have a historical origin and cultural meaning. This introduces Engeström and Miettinen's (1999) contribution that 'objects, and the means by which we realize them, are complicit with historically and culturally framed resources that are common to society at large' (p. 8). We were also keen to illustrate that questions or 'hypotheses' can be introduced in order to explore the way certain tools work; for example: 'What exactly is the origin of sunbathing?', 'What are the perceived benefits of sun oils and whose interest is served by the sale of sun cream?', 'Is our understanding of the function of sun cream changing?', 'Will any old sunglasses do?'

These questions and others also highlight a further important exploration which relates to how tools act upon individuals through what Vygotsky (1978: 40) called 'reverse action', where a tool leads to behaviour 'that breaks from biological development and creates new forms of culturally-based psychological process'. So using the same example we were able to engage with students to consider the influence of tools such as designer as opposed to normal sunglasses, in the social construction of individuals, their identities and values and motivation. We were also able to consider how the influence of such tools, and fashion items more generally, can quickly become accepted as natural and normal rather than historical and cultural, in time becoming attributes of the individual as user of the tool rather than the tool itself (Pea 1993).

Finally, we considered the effect a change in tools might have. CHAT is centrally concerned with the dynamics of change and the tensions and learning that may be provoked. For example, students can consider the impact of new ideas about sunbathing and the connection with skin cancer; with sun cream being used protectively. This new orientation to a tool creates a disturbance to current ideas about lying on a beach, what to wear, where to go, etc. The ongoing tension and contradiction between tools, represented by a lightening arrow in the production triangle, can affect over time the motivation to sunbathe but also the goal, not to mention the sale of sun cream and sunglasses. Following this introduction, students were able to practise their use of the triangle to analyse actions in their organizations, with prompts to explore the cultural and historical features of mediation, posing questions as hypotheses for enquiry.

Following this session, the students met to share their findings, reporting their use of the 'production triangle' and clarifying their understanding of CHAT. We were then able to move towards the introduction of a collective activity system model, utilizing Leont'ev's (1981) three-level schema of operation, action, and activity. Using the sunbathing example again, we considered how locations for sunbathing such as beaches are often crowded with more than one sunbather,

many of them wearing designer sunglasses but also obeying the rules of the beach and/or accepting the various roles that accompany life on the beach. In this way, students can recognize how sunbathing *actions* (lying down, spreading out towels, swimming to cool down) can be parsed into smaller physiological and cognitive *operations* associated with personal space, muscle movement, and memory, but also have to be situated in larger contexts of *activity*. There is a community of sunbathers, who occupy a space and who interrelate with others undertaking different activities, all of whom are governed by procedures and rules which guide behaviour. Further, we encouraged the students to reflect on how the individual or group achievement of goals only makes sense on the basis of social, cultural, and historical influences that provide the rationale for performing operations, taking action, and having objectives.

This move to the collective activity, as shown earlier in Figure 2.1, is made by breaking the framework into three more triangles, each showing the mediation of various contextual elements. Figure 2.3 shows this breakdown.

In each case the reader will see that the 'production triangle' remains but now students consider the cultural and historical mediation of rules, community, and division of labour respectively. We guided students to consider all aspects of mediation as they began to use the model to investigate activity systems of which they

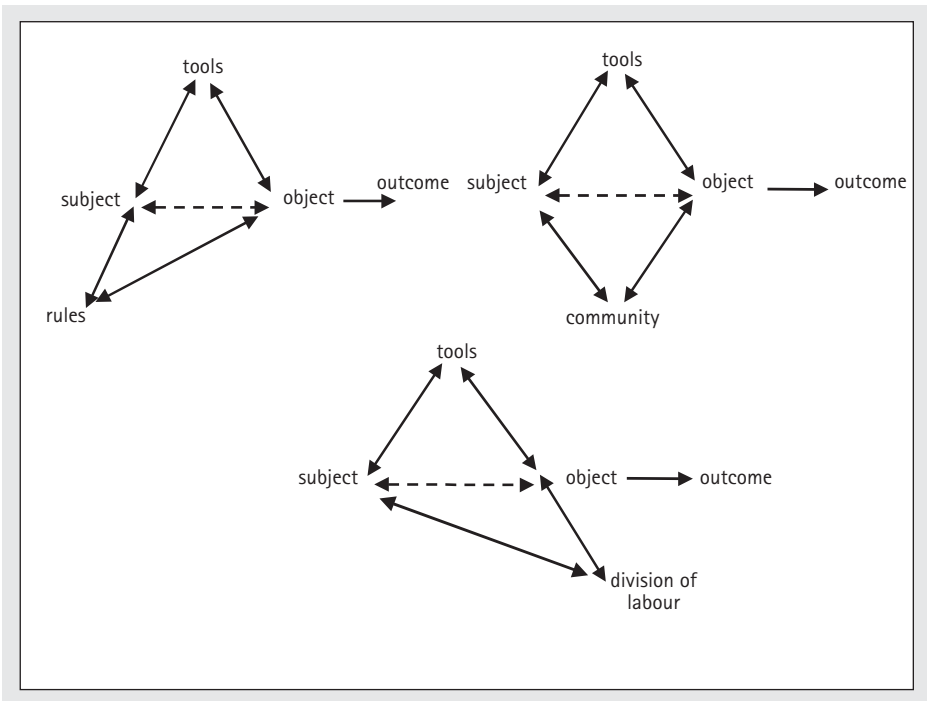


Fig. 2.3 Contextual elements of activity

Source: Adapted from Engeström (1999).

were a part. They were given two options upon which to focus their investigations; either the use of written human resource policies or to consider the relevance of Gronn's (2000) theory of distributed leadership for their own organizations (part-time) or for the MBA programme itself (full-time). Students were encouraged to pose questions for enquiry and explore tensions and contradictions, some of which may have been suppressed or 'patched over' to prevent difficulties or contradictions from surfacing.

The Student Response

The first observation to make was how quickly the students learnt to appreciate the mediating role of tools. To be able to recognize mediation is the anchor point here, as it is through acknowledgement of mediation that a better grasp can be gained of how people are complicit with their context and with those who work within and beyond it. For example, following the beach scenario, students investigating distributed leadership were asked to describe the practice of leadership. A number spoke of exerting influence (positive or negative) and others of the need to achieve specific goals by undertaking multiple tasks assisted by the use of certain tools (physical, intellectual, or imaginative). The actions undertaken by the would-be leader and the tools used were clearly seen by the students as being influenced by factors both cultural and historical. Some students went further and noted that leadership need not be influenced by people alone, nor need its influence be solely over people but a wider environment of which people are a part. A number even alluded to the potential for some leaders to share responsibility for exerting influence on others, as well as amongst themselves, so as to bring about a complementary effect of collective achievement. These observations, we believe, were fed from a general consensus amongst the students that purposeful actions were culturally and historically embedded through the established use of tools.

A second observation relates to the way an understanding of the mediating role of tools extends to an understanding to contextual elements such as rules, community, and the division of labour. Here the students began to deepen their awareness of the richness and depth of what exactly constitutes cultural and historical influences, and how these might be investigated using the conceptual structure of the activity system triangles. For example, one student studying human resource policies honed in on the issue of billing for time in their organization. Focusing on the role played by the mediating role of rules, they identified the way handbooks were laid out and how these formed rules about the completion of time sheets. These rules included procedures for how often time sheets should be handed in, how much time off in lieu could be accrued, and how much time 'debt' was allowed. When considering the mediating effects of community, the student began to understand

how the staff team applied social pressure on individual members to concur with the orthodox system. Yet they were also able to reflect on how much cheating was allowed, reporting that 'if someone openly abuses the system—beyond social parameters—then the rules are brought into play more rigidly by that staff member being reminded of them'. This highlighted the effects of the division of labour and the role played by line managers responsible for checking and verifying time sheets by countersignature. The student observed that the fact that this official task rarely occurs—leaving finance assistants to query obvious errors—meant most abided by the rules because of community rather than official pressure. The student also identified how action by senior staff created room for manoeuvre through continual interpretation that 'bent the rules', allowing new rules or benchmarks to emerge. This dynamic appreciation of how rules shift is further appreciated in noting the influence of third parties, in this case external funders who, because of their own extensive audit procedures, put pressure on staff to allocate recorded time to specific projects rather than 'company' business. Here the student is identifying competing rule systems, contradictions whose consequence is to make a simple task more complex. These considerations were made in a presentation to us following the period of study in his own organization of the everyday strategic management of HRM. He concluded:

> Notwithstanding the principle that many staff hold that they oughtn't be required to complete one [time sheet] since they are wholly employed on one project or that the time that they spend completing one is a waste since they could be doing 'actual work'; the payoff is that the system demands a TOIL be put in place. The activity system analysis helps a strategy manager to consider the whole cultural system of time recording and enables her to consider where changes can be introduced to encourage or incentivise different outcomes.

When identifying mediating influences, another student went even further in their use of the activity system model by investigating the practical use of an established academic model, namely 'communities of practice'. Their investigation highlighted a set of internally commissioned documents which outlined procedures the aim of which was to link business value, knowledge management, and structures to the concept 'communities of practice'. In this example, what the management team were attempting to create were communities of practice through the identification of particular roles and responsibilities.

Being a member of the central team, the student was able to investigate a specific community of practice very much like a participant observer (as opposed to a core member). During four sessions over two full days, they observed what took place and how the 'scaffold' for an activity system could be built up. Their analysis then provided an understanding of how the community of practice operated. They were able to summarize their observations so as to understand such things as: the use of rules, mediating artefacts, community, and so on. They then constructed an activity system model (Figure 2.4) which depicted the links and contradictions by which

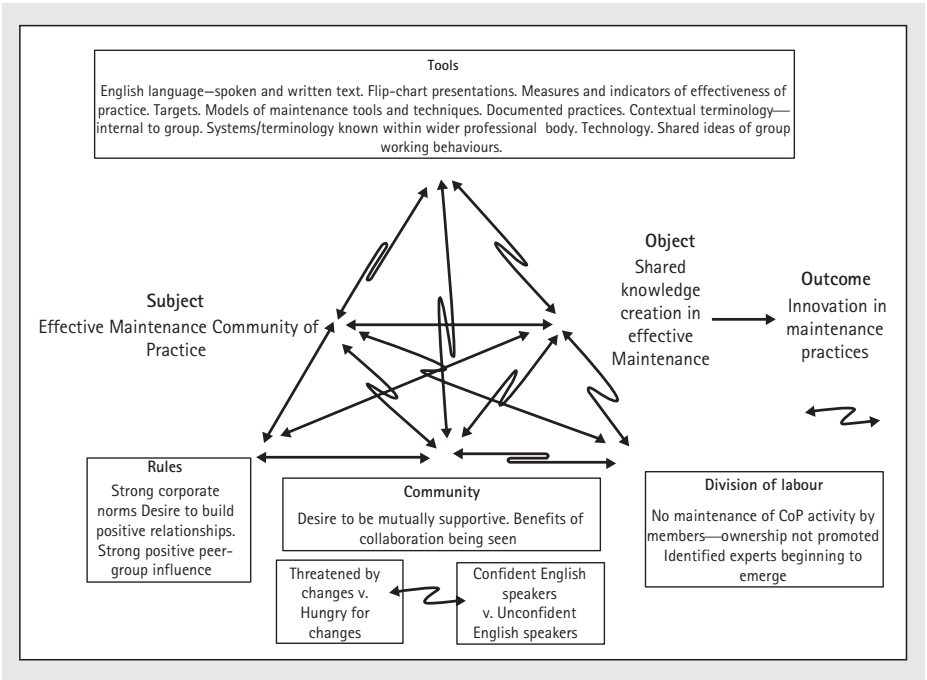


Fig. 2.4 The Community of Practice Activity System (CoPs)

the community of practice acted, made sense of its actions, and potentially challenged its actions through a critical awareness of its 'defining' objects of activity.

This analysis was useful in surfacing various tensions and contradictions within the activity system which were then explained in the following bullets:

- The existing maintenance practices were severely criticized following pressure to reduce production costs. As a result, practices benchmarked as excellent from plants in other regions were documented and presented to newly formed CoPs. These factors appeared to have a negative effect—especially among long-serving members who consequently exhibited defensive behaviours during discussions. Newly appointed managers, by contrast, were more positive.
- Diversity within the CoP highlighted different conventions in operation in the behaviour of groups. Ways of working were usually developed within the CoP and included in a 'charter'—the charter represented explicitly stated 'rules'. However, this particular CoP had not developed a charter. Nevertheless, strong corporate conventions along with an evident desire to form personal relationships had resulted in the development and use of strong conventions of its own.
- The principle of developing roles from members of the CoP, as set out in guiding documentation, had not been progressed. 'Thought-leaders' were emerging, but other roles were left to the facilitator. This appeared to discourage the ownership of 'systems/practices' as enablers to promote and maintain the CoP.

- The 'official' language of English was a second language for most members and this has the effect of limiting conversations but also accelerated the development of a 'contextualized' vocabulary implying the emergence of collective understanding. Another consequence was the reliance on 'alternative' methods of communication (tools) to spoken text such as the use of electronic presentations. Where this was recognized written materials were detailed; however where unrecognized, the impact on verbal exchanges was evident. Whilst all members raised questions, verbal exchanges during constructive discourse were dominated by more confident English-speakers. This to some extent was mediated by shared ideas in group working practices leading members to proactively include others.

Through mastering the concept of mediation and through the use of analytic tools the students on these programmes have been able to complete enquiries into practices embedded in their organizations. Through the method of storytelling they have identified characters, interpenetrated all within the context of continually changing themes, shifting causal influences. The enquiry formed an integral part of the module assessment.

When we asked students to reflect on their experience of using activity system models, they spoke of the following advantages:

- It allowed for an appreciation of the multiple 'sites' in which mutually influencing changes occur. One student remarked, for example: 'Far too often I have used the phrase: "Well that was the straw that broke the camel's back!" But what caused the camel to get overloaded in the 1st place? Well that depends on the experiences of the camel.'
- It allowed students to understand the inevitability of only ever understanding theories and frameworks as half-truths being used from different perspectives. For example, one student remarked on the theory itself: 'My perception of the value of Activity Theory might not be correct and then again, that is exactly the value of it!'
- A more instrumental view of the theory was the way it afforded a holistic vision, how individuals, structures, and cultures which occur in great complexity can be made sense of and brought into more harmonious alignment.
- It afforded an appreciation of the multi-voiced nature of social experiences characterized by disturbance. So that in relation to the above, the theory acknowledges that any alignment of interests and objectives is always only at very best an ongoing orchestrated engagement that will have an end or be superseded somehow.

However, we would also caution readers that in using the CHAT model there may still be a tendency to overly focus on individuals, objects, and tools and view them as isolate entities rather than as emerging, processual relations. This is perhaps something that is imposed by limits on the time students have to spend on the

modules and would be rectified with a chance to develop a fuller study that allows them to be more critically reflective and pose critical questions about how they as managers act under which rubric, with what they identify, and for what ends. In addition the longitudinal and ethnographic requirements of the approach are demanding for students and often difficult to fit into an educative programme. Moreover, the identification of the contradictions in the cases does not then prompt interventionist action. These areas require further consideration and revision.

Conclusion

The specific focus of this chapter is an account of how we have attempted to introduce activity theory models to MBA students. But the chapter also opens up a number of debates surrounding management education in general and the curriculum of MBA programmes in particular. For many years now we have known (Davies and Easterby-Smith 1984) that much of the management knowledge used to tackle difficult problems at work occurs naturally, so that the more learning can be structured around activities at work and the more it promotes critical and reflective engagement, the more productive the experience. In this chapter we have illustrated an attempt at creating such a learning experience on MBA programmes. The designs adopted were to chosen explicitly to counter the already identified criticisms levelled at MBAs, namely their being too abstract, impractical, and too orthodox. The chapter shows how we developed the design to give the MBA programme participants the confidence and ability to work with theory. In so doing our objective was to provide them with working models and conceptual competences that would help them practically as managers to deal with complex and ambiguous information and yet also engage them as critical learners in their own right. This we achieved through introducing them to the concept of activity theory and providing them with a framework through which they could understand and relate the theory to a range of organizational experiences.

Activity theory enables students to reflect on the practical implications of their analysis and helps them to consider the next courses of action they might take. Further it helps them to understand that organizations are not static but dynamic and that current modes of operation have derived from cultural and historical factors and that these could themselves be further influenced by managerial action. It is from such awareness that students can then go on to consider themselves. The assignment, by asking participants for a collection of data about a particular object in their own activity system, focused attention on the participants' own motives, perceptions, values, and intentions. In so doing they became more conscious of the ideas they held, how they were formed, and how they might be changed, and potentially for a significant majority what next courses of action they would take

as managers with the activity system to either change their behaviour, systems, or other mediating means.

By using activity theory we argue that the activity of management that is taught and critically investigated in MBAs might be viewed more like a design science (Van Aken 2004), much in the same way disciplines such as engineering or medicine are. If this were so, there might, in the ways we have illustrated, be a move away from simply understanding management towards an orientation that emphasizes and engages managers (students) in producing knowledge relevant to their own organizations linked to a commitment to make change and improvement (Gibbons et al. 1994), without thereby collapsing it into the unquestioning circulation of orthodoxy (*doxa*).

References

Alvesson, M., and Willmott, H. (2003). *Studying Management Critically*. London: Sage.

Bakhurst, D. (1997). 'Meaning, Normativity and the Life of the Mind', *Language and Communication*, 17: 33–51.

Bedny, G., Seglin, M., and Meister, D. (2000). 'Activity Theory: History, Research and Application', *Theoretical Issues in Ergonomic Science*, 1: 168–206.

Bennis, W., and O'Toole, T. (2005). 'How Business Schools Lost their Way', *Harvard Business Review*, 83: 96–104.

Cavell, S. (1969). *Must We Mean What We Say?* New York: Charles Scribner.

Davies, J., and Easterby-Smith, M. (1984). 'Learning and Developing from Managerial Work Experiences', *Journal of Management Studies*, 21: 169–84.

Engeström, Y. (1999). 'Activity Theory and Individual And Social Transformation', in Y. Engeström, R. Miettinen, and R. Punamäki (eds.), *Perspectives on Activity Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

—— (2000). 'Activity Theory and the Social Construction of Knowledge: A Story of Four Umpires', *Organization*, 7: 301–10.

—— (2001). 'Expansive Learning at Work: Toward an Activity Theoretical Reconceptualisation', *Journal of Education and Work*, 14: 133–56.

—— and Miettinen, R. (1999). 'Introduction', in Y. Engeström, R. Miettinen, and R. Punamäki (eds.), *Perspectives on Activity Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ghoshal, S. (2005). 'Bad Management Theories are Destroying Good Management Practices', *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 4: 75–91.

Gibbons, M., Limoges, C., Nowotny, H., Schwartzman, S., Scott, P., and Trow, M. (1994). *The New Production of Knowledge*. London: Sage.

Gronn, P. (2000). 'Distributed Properties: A New Architecture for Leadership', *Educational Management and Administration*, 28/3: 317–38.

Holman, D., and Thorpe, R. (2003). *Management and Language*. London: Sage.

Kaptelinin, V. (2005). 'The Object of Activity: Making Sense of the Sense-Maker', *Mind, Culture and Activity*, 12: 4–18.

Leont'ev, A. N. (1981). *Problems of the Development of Mind*. Moscow: Progress.

Marx, K. (1969). *Marx/Engels Selected Works*, Vol. i. Moscow: Progress.
Miettinen, R. (2001). 'Artifact Mediation in Dewey and in Cultural-Historical Activity Theory', *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, 8: 297–308.
—— and Virkkunen, J. (2005). 'Epistemic Objects, Artefacts and Organizational Change', *Organization*, 12/3: 437–56.
Mintzberg, H. (1976). 'Planning on the Left Side, Managing on the Right', *Harvard Business Review*, 54: 49–58.
—— (2004). *Managers Not MBA's: A Hard Look at the Soft Practices of Managing and Management Development*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
Pea, R. D. (1993). 'Practices of Distributed Intelligence and Designs for Education', in G. Salomon (ed.), *Distributed Cognitions: Psychological and Educational Considerations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Pfeffer, J., and Fong, C. T. (2002). 'The End of Business Schools? Less Success Than Meets the Eye', *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 1: 78–95.
Rorty, R. (1999). 'Education as Socialization and as Individualization', in *Philosophy and Social Hope*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
Shotter, J. (1993). *Conversational Realities: Constructing Life through Language*. London: Sage.
Sutton, R. I., and Staw, B. M. (1995). 'What Theory is Not', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 40: 371–84.
Van Aken, J. T. (2004). 'Management Research Based on the Paradigm of the Design Sciences: The Quest for Field Tested and Grounded Technological Rules', *Journal of Management Studies*, 41: 219–45.
Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*, eds. M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, and E. Souberman. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
Wood, D., Bruner, J. S., and Ross, G. (1976). 'The Role of Tutoring in Problem Solving', *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 17: 89–100.

CHAPTER 3

LEARNING ABOUT AND THROUGH AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE

UNDERSTANDING THE POWER OF EXPERIENCE-BASED EDUCATION

M. ANN WELSH
GORDON E. DEHLER
DALE L. MURRAY

This course was a unique opportunity to participate in a project with a group of individuals with different backgrounds and who would hopefully give me a different perspective on how to approach a problem. The desire to understand how other disciplines work came from my experiences on co-op [where] I observed that the individuals running

> the show were people who could relate to professionals with differing backgrounds and direct their combined efforts. From this I concluded that if I wanted to effectively serve in a managerial position I need to refine this interpersonal skill.
>
> (Donald, engineering student[1])

This chapter describes a transdisciplinary action research course created to help students understand the dynamics of innovation and change within an organizational setting. There are three distinct characteristics of the course context that contribute to its effectiveness: it is an aesthetic experience, emotionally intense, and politically real. Applying principles of critical pedagogy in this context produces a transformative learning experience for students where they not only learn about issues in product development but also become more effective learners.

Our chapter is organized as follows: first we present the learning objective and describe our pedagogical approach. Next we demonstrate how each of the three course characteristics identified above plays out in the students' experience. Then we discuss how this combination of attributes yields a distinctive learning experience.[2] Finally, we discuss why this experience is so valuable in helping students to develop a critical stance on both organizational action and their educational experience.

Learning Objective: Design a Branded Experience

The course we describe introduces students to issues associated with the new product development process. In product design and development, the use of multidisciplinary creative teams that work concurrently throughout the development process is now widely accepted as the most effective practice. Since team-based multidisciplinary experiences are becoming the norm in professional product development situations, modelling those experiences in the classroom has great pedagogical value for students who plan to work in any aspect of new product development, including students in business, design (industrial, digital, graphic, fashion), engineering, science, and technology programmes. The course design is also intended to introduce students to a higher standard in product development: the formation of transdisciplinary creative teams capable of creating more significant innovations.

The course objective requires multidisciplinary student teams to create a branded experience for a corporate client. This entails 'designing a product system within a designed environment for a designated user group to create a significant,

memorable, or poetic experience. The proposed solution should engage all of the senses and be socially responsible.' Examples of branded experiences developed in course iterations include:

1. Creating a customized brewing experience (for example, tea, coffee) for a range of venues including fine restaurants, drive-up kiosks, organizational workplaces, and private residences using a proprietary brewing technology developed by the corporate client. This course involved students from industrial design, digital design, and business.
2. Creating a branded experience for air travel for a legacy airline. Here students identified several underserved market segments and created travel experiences either consistent with the firm's existing brand equity or designed to build entirely new brands. This course involved teams of industrial design and business students.
3. Creating the concept for an alternative-fuel-powered vehicle targeted toward a global market fifteen years out for a major auto manufacturer. This course included students from industrial design, fashion product design, mechanical engineering, and business.

Students work in creative multidisciplinary teams using a concurrent product development model (for example, Cagan and Vogel 2002). Corporate partners act not only as the client but also as a co-learners and mentors to the students. Faculty members manage and monitor the interaction of the corporate representatives with the students to be sure the content of the course remains aligned with pedagogical goals.

Pedagogical Foundation

Faculty members teaching the course use a critical pedagogical approach (Dehler, Welsh, and Lewis 2001). This involves creating classroom spaces which challenge students to question assumptions, analyse power relationships, critically reflect upon this embedded network of relationships with other students, and consider alternatives for the transformation of that network (Reynolds 1997). Application of critical pedagogy is relatively rare in each of the base disciplines. And indeed, adopting such an approach requires significant modifications in curriculum design and course content. Happily, because this course exists on the margins of our respective curricula, we have been able to develop a course that is entirely consistent with the aims of critical pedagogy. It has been our experience that success in the course is directly and strongly related to the extent to which faculty understand critical pedagogy and believe it to be valuable. The following sections describe the fundamental aspects of critical pedagogy.

Decentred Classroom

No one really knew what the faculty really wanted from us. (Jack, engineering student)

I consider myself a very good note taker, and when I walked into a class and there was little or no notes, it made me uncomfortable. I like for teachers to tell me what I need to know, not simply give me the keys to the car and say get there. (Mike, business student)

The designers were more experienced with these projects. It was difficult for the business students, who had never approached a design task such as the one laid out for us, to figure out how to manage the project. I must admit that even though I am accustomed to the 'fuzzy front end' I am also used to receiving more instruction from teachers and employers, so this was a challenge for me too. (Dave, industrial design student)

Adopting a critical pedagogy means creating a decentred classroom (Giroux 1997) with the instructor more of a collaborator, co-learner, and mentor than an authoritative figure dispensing factual information. While a departure in educational culture for business and engineering students and faculty, a decentred classroom is consistent with the established norms of the 'studio' approach to learning typically utilized by design educators, and is directly and emphatically related to our success in the course. Early on, design students exhibit greater comfort with the ambiguity and anxiety inherent in the course objectives. Their comfort level provides crucial reassurance for business and engineering students accustomed to highly structured courses and classrooms. The physical space of design studios—blank walls covered with tack boards, tables, and stools (but never enough stools for everyone!)—helps communicate to students from the start that 'this class is going to be different'.

This difference is further reinforced by the absence of a traditional syllabus with assigned readings, clear schedules, and benchmarks. Students receive a statement of the 'deliverable' expected by the client (for example, a branded experience for air travel), a set of background materials on the disciplines and industry involved, information on effective collaboration, and are introduced to their process consultant (the management faculty member). How the deliverable is to be developed (and what it should include) are decisions left to the teams. The absence of the pre-packaged road-map creates a higher than normal level of anxiety for students.

Multidisciplinary Approaches

I felt uncomfortable that I was taking a class that integrated so many different groups of people. I had not had the opportunity to work with students from different colleges, and to some extent, I had a fear that they would hate us as business students.

(Karen, finance student)

The most obvious obstacle was due to the diversity of majors participating in this collaborative. The first example of this to come to mind was a conversation between Bill [an industrial designer] and me. We were discussing the placement of fuel cell and hydrogen tanks, and

how that would affect the outer proportions of the vehicle. Bill kept using terms like 'body-side' and 'demi' which I did not understand. I'm sure that I also used 'technical' terminology that was foreign to him. (Keith, engineering student)

Student anxiety is further exacerbated by the multidisciplinary approach. Not only are the 'classroom rules' suspended, students quickly learn that talking to each other is also going to be more difficult as a consequence of differences in behavioural norms, learning models, and language. In a multidisciplinary course, students are not expected to be proficient in any of the other disciplines. It is important to allow each discipline to participate equally and for students to excel in their area of expertise. Students develop an understanding of who has what skills, the answers they need, and how best to communicate with practitioners of those various disciplines. This is essential in learning to function effectively in creative teams and appreciating the skills and knowledge that the other disciplines bring to the problem. It takes some knowledge of other disciplines/functions to ask the right questions—those that allow expertise to flow into the decision process.

Over time, design students come to see that engineers or accountants are practising their craft rather than simply throwing unreasonable obstacles in the designer's way. Similarly, the manager-in-training begins to appreciate the intellectual quality of design and the integrity of the design process. This deeper understanding makes it more difficult to dismiss the designer as undisciplined or the manager as uncreative. Debate then is focused where it belongs, on the intrinsic merit of ideas and of the interests these ideas serve. The goal is to create a space where students start depending upon their own knowledge and experience as they try to gain more of each and begin to engage in critical self-reflection (Raab 1997). This is the essence of the multidisciplinary experience—creating a 'borderland' (Welsh and Murray 2003) where the expertise and interests of engineers, designers, and business students coexist and inform.

Power Relationships

I was surprised at the resistance to certain methods of approaching problems . . . As engineers . . . we were already pushing ourselves to think outside our 'three towered box'. I think the differences in priorities, and in problem-solving tactics, between colleges was a significant obstacle and took us much of the quarter to overcome.

(Keith, engineering student)

From an engineering standpoint . . . if it can't be done in two years don't bother because the technology will change; however, the design faculty swore on 15 years out . . . If reality is not to enter the picture, then engineering is not needed. You just do whatever sounds good in your head. I don't think this was engineering not wanting to come out of our box, it was designers not wanting to come out of never-never land. (Donald, engineering student)

An example of this was nuclear power. . . . A piece the size of a person's thumb could run the car for years . . . and never have to be refuelled. Current technology does not have a method to store the nuclear material on the car; however, we had fifteen years to design something to do this. A couple of group members in particular were strongly against nuclear . . . After a discussion, with strong negative feelings from some group members, the idea was put on the back burner as an option for the future, but not one we would pursue.

(Jack, engineering student)

Beyond exposing students to the cultural and intellectual differences, multidisciplinary learning experiences introduce students to the existence of disciplinary power as the interests and agendas of each discipline are represented and organized around a general conceptual scheme, core idea, or problem. Educational reality becomes problematic for students as they (at least momentarily) question the monolithic, conventional educational imaginary of their home discipline. The quotes above illustrate the tension characteristic of these collaborations.

Students come to understand the institutional and ideological authority expressed in those theories and how traditional faculty–student relationships reinforce this authority. Their typical experience has been faculty who, via their own power, alleviate the inherent tensions by making decisions on the 'students' behalf'. Once this is understood, it is a short step to understanding how managers, engineers, and designers are similarly positioned as a consequence of dominant theories about organizations. Instead of articulating the meaning in other people's theories, students theorize their *own* experience within the context of the discursive texts, ideological positions, and theories that are introduced as part of the course. From a critical perspective, by acquiring more skills in reappropriating knowledge, students acquire a greater capacity to act. As Stehr notes (1994: 259), setting specific pressures and interests (in our case the experience of design) heightens the learning potential of a critical discussion of discipline-based knowledge claims. Students become independent or, in the language of critical pedagogy, emancipated learners, ready to act.

Action Orientation

Some confusion came from the professors' leadership. They all had excellent advice, but often their advice conflicted . . . which forced us either to value one prof higher than another, or to side with the prof who would grade us . . . in the end we simply took it all in and made the decisions we felt were right. (Brant, marketing student)

The learning objective, to create a branded experience, provides students with the opportunity to act, as they are required to do relevant research, propose design solutions and marketing plans, refine and evaluate results. The deliverables of the course (the designed experience and a complementary business and manufacturing model) require them to demonstrate the efficacy and viability of their ideas in a

specific situation. Creating a branded experience requires some combination of engineering, design, and marketing decisions to be made. The process of producing, articulating, defending, and advocating for their experience forces students to make choices and understand their implications.

Context Meets Process: Aesthetics, Emotion, and Power

Aesthetically Compelling

Creating a branded experience is like what graphic designer Edward Tufte (1997: 138) calls a 'visual confection', an assembly of many visual events brought together and juxtaposed on a flat piece of paper. Composed of a multiplicity of image events, confections 'illustrate an argument, present and enforce visual comparisons, combine the real and the imagined and tell us yet another story'. This is the essence of a branded experience. 'Confection makers cut, paste, construct and manage miniature theaters of information—a cognitive art that serves to illustrate an argument, make a point, explain a task, and show how something works, list possibilities, narrate a story' (p. 138). Creating a branded experience, like a visual confection, is an aesthetic experience.

Following Gagliardi (1996: 566), we use the term aesthetic to refer to 'all types of sense experience and not simply to experience what is socially described as beauty or defined as art'. Aesthetic experiences have long been viewed as valuable learning experiences. Dewey (1934) argued that all aesthetic experiences are by nature educational, because they invoke an active, reciprocal interaction instead of passive reaction. While Dewey was discussing the interaction between a work of art and its perceiver, the argument may easily be extended to educational experience as well. Langer (1942) held that aesthetic experience promotes a different way of knowing. He argued that while explicit knowledge is expressed through discursive forms, tacit knowledge can be represented through artistic, presentational, or symbolic forms. Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981) state that aesthetic experiences, whose inherent subjectivity leads them to be dismissed by social scientists as inessential, are in fact one of the essential ways in which we learn judgement. And as Nissley (2004) suggests, these ideas that different ways of knowing are suited to different forms of expression—and in particular, that tacit knowing and the development of judgement may best be expressed through art forms—challenge the dominant intellectual forms of knowledge. This is the distinctive contribution of aesthetic experience—it provides a needed balance to our traditional disciplinary emphasis on discursive, propositional knowledge.

As students from business or engineering initially watch, and eventually participate, with their design counterparts in creating the images necessary to depict an experience, they are simultaneously learning (or reinforcing lessons) about making effective judgements and supporting rationale. Tufte (1997) presents design strategies for presenting information, noting that the limits of visual confections (our branded experience) arise from thinness of content, flimsy logic, poverty of annotating text, and heavy-handed arrangements of structure (p. 141). We might say the same about any other form of composition. The value of the aesthetic experience is that students learn to *see* (*feel*, *hear*) whether a composition meets standards. Involvement in a design project thus trains the non-designer's eye. For example, images with subtle visual differences (for example, in colour) allow more differences to be presented in a clear and effective manner. Visual parallelism builds connections among images by position, orientation, overlap, synchronization, and/or similarities in content. Not simply a matter of design arrangements, however, it is the reciprocal interaction as the perceiving mind actively works to detect and make sense of the assorted visual elements that is the aesthetic experience. 'Embodying inherent links and connections, parallelism synchronizes multiple channels of information, draws analogies, enforces contrasts and comparisons' (Tufte 1997: 103). Thus, the criteria are the same but the lens through which they are viewed is significantly different. But it is a short distance between eye and the mind's eye. Excellence in the display of information requires clear thinking (Tufte 1997: 141).

When students have a direct and immediate aesthetic encounter, this experience adds dimensionality to their learning, as they can reflect appreciation of constructing images, i.e. presentational knowing, onto their experiences in writing position papers, i.e. propositional knowing (Heron and Reason 2001). This enables them to both build and debunk arguments more quickly and effectively. Further, it leads to practical knowing of how to construct the branded experience. When aesthetic encounter forms the basis for critical reflection, students are demonstrating the best of intentional learning (Dehler 1996), becoming more open-minded, risk taking, intellectually responsible, and emotionally committed to their work, making aesthetic experiential learning transformative (Weddington 2004).

Emotionally Intense

This was by far the most challenging thing I have done while in school. . . . I was stressed, nervous, anxious, unsure I knew what I was doing, challenged, excited, worried, happy, and all other emotions during this course however the feeling I had on Friday afternoon when we presented was by far the best feeling I have had academically. It was such an achievement and something I am very proud of. (Anita, marketing student)

> The course has been a source of constant frustration and struggle. There were clear differences in expectations, commitment, and respect between the students and professors. This relationship obstacle was never fixed but it was overcome by the students grudgingly dealing with the issue. I hated this course and really see no value with the experience.
>
> (Norm, finance student)

Dewey (1934) argued that an aesthetic experience is only possible if an emotional investment is made. He stated that emotion is the 'cementing force' connecting what is happening in the current experience with prior knowledge, experience, and sentiment, thus allowing a sense of continuity. The comments above capture the rollercoaster ride of emotions our students experience in the course as well as the variation in student response to the course.

Activating emotion is a necessary and important outcome of critical pedagogy. Decentred classrooms, multidisciplinary exchanges, problematizing issues and interests, taking action—because they alter traditional educational relationships (i.e. faculty–student, across disciplines)—promote anxiety in students. Learning and organizing are inherently emotional activities, yet for the most part proceed in an intentionally unemotional manner. Vince (1996) describes how anxiety can initiate cycles that either inhibit or promote learning. Traditional learning models reinforce student dependence upon the knowledge of others (for example, Freire 1972). Even the most accomplished graduates leave ill equipped to understand and use the emotions activated in either process. Experiential learning, by contrast, is directed toward helping students feel emotionally competent and in charge. Learning to work from and through emotions is a principal learning outcome of experience-based courses such as ours.

How much learning occurs, however, depends on the risk-taking propensity of students, whether they are willing to give themselves over to the experience (Weddington 2004). Our unhappy student Norm railed against what he perceived as the messy, inefficient, and unprofessional process. His proposed solution was to segregate students and tasks according to initial competence and hold faculty solely responsible for structuring activity—in other words, he wanted to turn this learning experience into one just like all the others. This behaviour is characteristic of students whose performance orientation outweighs their learning orientation (Dweck 1999). Individuals with a performance orientation seek validation; those with a learning orientation seek growth. This orientation influences an individual's response when encountering challenging tasks.

Relevant here is the tendency towards denial and avoidance in individuals with a strong performance orientation. Since negative feedback is perceived as a judgement of one's competency and self-worth, situations that present risk and uncertainty are to be avoided. In contrast, individuals with a strong learning orientation view novel, potentially risky situations as opportunities for additional self-development (Cron et al. 2005). Students with strong performance

orientations are thus more likely to have anxiety followed by denial and avoidance, ending in 'willing ignorance', while those with a learning orientation find the struggle results in greater insight and a sense of personal authority (Vince 1996).

Politically Real

We had to negotiate with our marketing professor concerning the integration of the two classes. Originally, the thought was to integrate both . . . but our marketing teacher strongly disagreed with the field study approach. (Karen, accounting student)

I hated the political pissing matches between professors and other external sources such as the university administration and CarCo. (Albert, industrial designer)

I learned that AirCo's culture is not very innovative at all. The AirCo executives that came in to speak with us did not appear to be very receptive of what people want in a flight. They kept telling us what they thought people wanted and what they thought needed to be done to fix it. If all their executives are like this, they will go bankrupt fast.

(Derrick, finance student)

The worst things about this course were: conflicting professor and industry expectations and resistance to come to a mutual understanding of student expectations; unwillingness from some professors to allow the expectations to be developed by the students as the scope of the project was more understood . . . and to readjust the expectations and evaluate us on a more broad criteria than simply what we do in all our other classes. Since the curriculum expanded in some ways, I felt that the evaluation criteria should have expanded as well.

(Bill, industrial design student)

Another way in which our learning context is distinctive is in its illumination of power relationships within academia and the client firms. This occurs initially through the decentring of power within the classroom setting—grappling with differences in pedagogical approaches students wonder, 'Who is in charge here?' Over time, students begin to understand the intellectual 'contests' between disciplines, taking on the responsibility to work through them. Faculty disagreements about course process cause students to uncover normative and political processes of academia. Situations become interpreted through a political lens, expanding the possible meanings of decisions. Through interactions with managers from the corporate clients, students begin to see corporate decisions as not necessarily reflecting the true 'merits' of a situation as much as the firm's cultural and political façade. Thus, students come to understand the political landscape (Welsh and Dehler 2004), the rituals and structures through which power identities are constituted within academia and client firms.

In our setting, learning about power involves using the inherent tension between identifying with and negotiating over meaning. Students from each discipline begin the course with novel insights based on their experience. To accomplish

their objectives, they have to learn to translate this knowledge to other disciplines. Through this process, ideas and interests are made explicit. Some are incorporated, others marginalized. Students come to appreciate influence processes—literally and figuratively! At the same time, as students achieve a more complicated understanding of the issue (i.e. necessitating a major infusion of funds, or cultural change) they can become assailed by feelings of powerlessness as the enormity of the problem becomes manifest. Thus their learning has greater depth; students come to see how the complexity of power relationships influences what happens during and because of their work.

How Learning Proceeds within Transdisciplinary Teams

There was not always a clear definition of the professors' roles in the course. The normal teacher–student relationship was challenged as both parties lacked clear direction and deliverables at most points in time. The absence of the traditional student–teacher relationship made me feel a bit more uncomfortable in the class. Eventually, instead of viewing the professors as knowledge boxes deciding your ultimate fate (grade), I began to see them as valuable resources and partners in the class. (Nina, marketing student)

Our first responsibilities were fairly easily defined. Team members researched a variety of facets of the project and reported their findings back to the group . . . we were a group of consultants working on a single project and acting fairly independently. As the quarter progressed, a time arrived where critical technical decisions had to be made in regard to the project. It was decided to present these questions to the group in such a format that everyone could contribute input to determine the most appropriate solution to be aligned with our thematic goal. This process opened the door for other issues to be brought up and discussed within the team. (Donald, engineering student)

The business kids surprised me last meeting when they asked how long they should set aside for story boarding. A lot of the other people thought that would be taken care of by the designers, but now it is hard to tell which students are which.

(Ally, industrial design student)

The outcome of learning in the borderland (Welsh and Murray 2003) is the creation of transdisciplinary teams. Geertz (1973: 33) characterized scientific advancement as the 'progressive complication of what once seemed a beautifully simple set of notions but now seems an unbearably simplistic one'. Viewing a project from a single lens is no longer satisfactory for our students. As they engage in course activities together, students learn that their underlying craft is similar, even if the targets are different. They also come to see how incomplete (and potentially misleading) either craft is when enacted in isolation.

Students also encounter three added layers of texture in this learning process, those of aesthetics, emotion, and power discussed earlier. Learning becomes more than a matter of making sense of interactions for instrumental ends, i.e. to solve the problem presented by the client or to learn how to navigate effectively among a firm's different subcultures. Sense making (Weick 1979) around what it means to 'be' a designer, engineer, marketer, or manager is also occurring. Mutual appreciation and interdependence lay the foundation for collaboration, now and in the future. Next, we describe how building a critical framework around an aesthetic experience provides the foundation for effective collaboration and transdisciplinarity.

According to Jantsch (1971), transdisciplinarity occurs when there is multi-level coordination within an entire system. In our teams, transdisciplinarity is expressed through transparency. When movement within and between disciplines becomes transparent despite still significant differences in expertise among team members, the barriers between disciplines are seen as permeable, rather than obstacles to be overcome. Students find that their own disciplinary expertise has been informed and expanded as a consequence of their involvement with new and different disciplines.

Because of the centrality of practice in the development of the transdisciplinary team's identity and the existence of significant coordinative requirements, learning within the teams can be analysed using the framework and processes of communities of practice (for example, Brown and Duguid 1991; Lave and Wenger 1991). When interacting, team members share understandings about what they do and what the doing means for them and for their speciality (discipline). Learning takes place in a participation framework, not in the individual mind (Orlikowski 2002), and is mediated by differences of perspective among the co-participants.

In the beginning, the team culture reflects the additive influence of each discipline. Students engage in different ways and at different levels of intensity as the task unfolds and their expertise is required. The changing locations and perspectives represent the learning trajectories of the participants. The shape of a transdisciplinary team emerges during its practice, rather than being assigned or created specifically. Members of each discipline are gradually socialized to the values and expertise of others, ultimately learning to function as a community.

Over time, team members take on the knowledge embedded in the community. The home discipline reproduces itself through the acculturation of newcomers yet is transformed as well (the necessary requirement for transdisciplinarity). This enables students to socially construct their own identity as a specialist practitioner as well as that of generalist team member and learn how to transition between these two roles. Thus membership in a transdisciplinary team enables students to enhance their specialist skills in practice and develop significant skills as learners. The combination of in-depth skill as a practitioner and the ability to continuously learn and unlearn in a social context is crucial to the student's professional development.

Learning within communities is collaborative, socially constructed, and proceeds through the development of narratives. Narratives (Bruner 1990) reflect the causal maps that community members develop in the course of their practice. As practitioners encounter new or unexpected events, they construct stories in which the new or unexpected make sense. Exchanging stories allows the community to uncover the implicit assumptions or interpretative structures with relevance to the situation. This interchange produces the friction of divergent or competing ideas necessary to spark experimentation and improvisation. At least initially, these new experiences create causal ambiguity and, in turn, encourage the participation of all team members as a means of constructing or elaborating narratives that reduce this ambiguity. From this process, new stories emerge that belong to the community and are modified by subsequent exposure to the new or unexpected.

Learning through narrative development is particularly suited to both our course objective (developing branded experience) and pedagogy. The narrative mode of thought is based on the goal of understanding and the construction of meaning, requiring an involved, self-relevant reflection on experience (Bruner 1990). Forming narratives to use in conveying the branded experience or forming narratives to understand how this new pedagogical experience operates—in each case we are asking for information to be organized in a story format. It suggests the possibility—indeed the likelihood—that there can be multiple interpretations of a particular experience. It does not necessarily seek to identify the best explanation because the idea of a correct interpretation has no meaning. Students want to know the 'correct answer'. All faculty struggle to prepare students for a world where definitive answers are all too rare. One of the most important contributions of learning the narrative mode of thought is that it provides students with a powerful tool to use in anxiety-provoking, ambiguous, novel, and challenging events in their future.

Thinking and Leading Critically

We conclude the chapter with a few remarks about why we continue to offer this course and recommend it to others. Our experience-based course is modelled on action research, intended to 'produce practical knowledge that is useful to people in the everyday conduct of their lives' (Reason and Bradbury 2001: 2). True to the roots of action research, real organizational problems serve as the starting point for students. But the approach extends beyond the pragmatic, problem-solving aspects of the pedagogy by guiding students into and through the less familiar terrain of aesthetics, emotion, and politics.

Action research, however, also requires students to question the motives for their proposed actions. According to McNiff, Lomax, and Whitehead (1996), action

research requires praxis rather than just practice: 'Praxis is informed, committed action *that gives rise to knowledge rather than just successful action*' (p. 8, emphasis added). Learning takes precedence, but the linkage between learning and action is explicit. In this sense, action research is emancipatory in that it generates not only new practical knowledge, but the development of 'new abilities to create knowledge' (Reason and Bradbury 2001: 2). The overarching objective is the explicit connection of practice as it is currently being conducted (experience) with a more rigorous knowledge base (the curriculum). In other words, 'where the traditional teaching-centred approach privileges textbook learning for use later, i.e. *toward practice*, action research begins with practice and works the other way, i.e. *toward knowledge*' (Dehler 2006).

Knowledge is not something to be accessed; rather it is created (Dehler 1996). In an action research context, practice is transformed through the creation of knowledge (McNiff 1990). But our concern is with developing students' capacity to be critical. This requires reflexivity, i.e. turning the process back on itself through reflection (Reynolds 1998). By revealing heretofore unexplained, taken-for-granted assumptions, reflection serves as the primary mechanism for leveraging experience and translating knowledge into action. Through critical reflection, new insights are generated and their interpretation and understanding of the underlying problem reformulated. The candid student comments included in this chapter illustrate their recognition of how much of their prior training, and even their workplace context, is built upon a set of assumptions that fail to consider emotional, political, or cultural-symbolic perspectives. The culmination of critical reflection is emancipatory—developing the student as a change agent. Gregory (1994) suggests that adopting a critical attitude toward their own practice raises students above the ranks of technician. Engaging learners at a different level of experience, for example, critically reflective and freed from disciplinary constraints, leads to a transformation of perspectives—a two-way bond between theory and practice rather than theory-led practice (pp. 46–7).

Learning in the context of work has been proposed as a response to the 'changing articulation of the knowledge-based economy' (Rhodes and Garrick 2003: 447). The challenge for management educators and learners appears deceptively straightforward: 'How is it that competence is turned into performance?' (McNiff 1990: 54). This seemingly simple question presents a conundrum that defies simplistic solution and continues to perplex management educators. Our experience-based action research course provides a pedagogical mechanism for management educators to do this—by engaging students more directly into 'the messy real world of practice' (Griffiths 1990: 43).

First, it enriches students' learning by raising their level of 'complicatedness' (Dehler, Welsh, and Lewis 2001). Second, it expands the scope of potential learning. Students are often stumped and frustrated by the project, fearful about trusting their own competence absent someone checking their work or providing specific

task guidelines. For them, learning has been defined and experienced as performance related to propositional knowledge. This venture into experience-based learning provides the opportunity to directly relate curricular learning to actual workplace context, and to translate programmatic learning into workplace action. Students experience the struggle of coping with turmoil, tension, and the social embeddedness of real organizational problems, enhancing their competencies as a result.

Third, it underscores the importance of integrating the 'critical theoretic' component of action research. Universities and business endeavour to foster closer linkages, yet Rhodes and Garrick (2003: 463) caution that it would not be 'completely healthy to uncritically remove all aspects of the distance' between them. The risk would be 'instrumental outcomes in which learning no longer requires critical distance, dialogue, and critique—knowledge is only valued insofar as it produces economically legitimated results' (p. 464).

Finally, a widely held supposition about innovation suggests that leadership makes a difference in the nature and success of creative efforts. Mumford and Licuanan (2004), after reviewing articles on this issue, suggest that leaders foster innovation by facilitating the adoption of a creative identity by a team, effectively managing the emotion relative to this identity, and competently utilizing influence processes. As the final set of quotes from students indicates, successful execution requires practice; our experience-based action research course is a crucial step in this direction.

As we gained understanding of our respective fields, I believe we found it much easier to respect, and contribute, to the other fields. (Keith, engineering student)

I would say that I did not 'get' what this course was about until our group met for the first time out of class. This was when we finally decided what route we wanted to do for our project. We had been brainstorming for a few weeks, and we all sat there and decided on the . . . idea. It was then it hit me that we thought of this idea completely on our own, no lecture or PowerPoint could have gotten us to where we were at this point. It was our little 'baby' if you will, and, at least for me, motivated me to work harder as we had spent so much time and we were actually 'getting' somewhere. (Mike, business student)

I want to believe that my existence as a designer is more than just a product and that I can change the way people live and feel by what we do. (Sharon, industrial designer)

Notes

1. All student quotes were extracted from journals kept as part of the course requirements. Student names and corporate clients are disguised to maintain confidentiality.
2. This course is co-taught by the first and third authors.

References

Brown, J. S., and Duguid, P. (1991). 'Organizational Learning and Communities of Practice: Toward a Unified View of Working Learning and Innovation', *Organization Science*, 2: 40–57.

Bruner, J. S. (1990). *Acts of Meaning*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Cagan, J., and Vogel, C. M. (2002). *Creating Breakthrough Products*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Cron, W. L., Slocum, J. W., VandeWalle, D., and Fu, Q. (2005). 'The Role of Goal Orientation on Negative Emotions and Goal Setting when Initial Performance Falls Short of One's Performance Goal', *Human Performance*, 18: 55–80.

Csikszentmihalyi, M., and Rochberg-Halton, E. (1981). *The Meaning of Things: Domestic Symbols and the Self.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dehler, G. E. (1996). 'Management Education as Intentional Learning: A Knowledge-Transforming Approach to Written Composition', *Journal of Management Education*, 20: 221–35.

—— (2006). 'Using Action Research to Connect Practice to Earning: A Course Project for Working Management Students', *Journal of Management Education*, 30/5: 636–69.

—— Welsh, M. A., and Lewis, M. W. (2001). 'Critical Pedagogy in the New Paradigm: Raising Complicated Understanding in Management Learning', *Management Learning*, 32: 493–511.

Dewey, J. (1934). *Art as Experience.* New York: Pedigree Books.

Dweck, C. S. (1999). *Self-Theories: Their Role in Motivation, Personality, and Development*. Philadelphia: Psychology Press.

Freire, P. (1972). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Gagliardi, P. (1996). 'Exploring the Aesthetic Side of Organizational Life', in S. T. Clegg, C. Hardy, and W. R. Nord (eds.), *Handbook of Organization Studies*. London: Sage.

Geertz, C. (1973). *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books.

Giroux, H. A. (1997). *Pedagogy and the Politics of Hope: Theory, Culture, and Schooling*. Boulder, Colo. Westview Press.

Gregory, M. (1994). 'Accrediting Work-Based Learning: Action Learning—a Model for Empowerment', *Journal of Management Development*, 13: 41–52.

Griffiths, M. (1990). 'Action Research: Grass Roots Practice or Management Tool?', in P. Lomax (ed.), *Managing Staff Development in Schools: An Action Research Approach*. Avon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Heron, J., and Reason, P. (2001). 'The Practice of Co-Operative Inquiry: Research "With" Rather Than "On" People', In P. Reason and H. Bradbury (eds.), *Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice*. London: Sage.

Jantsch, E. (1971). 'Inter- and Transdisciplinary University: A Systems Approach to Education and Innovation', *Ekistics*, 32: 430–7.

Langer, S. (1942). *Philosophy in a New Key*. Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press.

Lave, J., and Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McNiff, J. (1990). 'Writing and the Creation of Educational Knowledge', in P. Lomax (ed.), *Managing Staff Development in Schools: An Action Research Approach*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

—— Lomax, P., and Whitehead, J. (1996). *You and your Action Research Project*. London: Routledge.

Mumford, M. D., and Licuanan, B. (2004). 'Leading for Innovation: Conclusions, Issues and Directions', *Leadership Quarterly*, 12: 163–71.

Nissley, N. (2004). 'The "Artful Creation" of Positive Anticipatory Imagery in Appreciative Inquiry: Understanding the "Art of" Appreciative Inquiry as Aesthetic Discourse', in D. L. Cooperrider and M. Avital (eds.), *Advances in Appreciative Inquiry*. Greenwich, Cana.: JAI Press.

Orlikowski, W. (2002). 'Knowing in Practice: Enacting a Collective Capability in Distributed Organizing', *Organization Science*, 13: 249–73.

Raab, N. (1997). 'Becoming an Expert in Not Knowing: Reframing Teacher as Consultant', *Management Learning*, 28: 161–75.

Reason, P., and Bradbury, H. (2001). 'Introduction: Inquiry and Participation in Search of a World Worthy of Human Aspiration', in P. Reason and H. Bradbury (eds.), *Handbook of Action Research*. London: Sage.

Reynolds, M. (1997). 'Towards a Critical Management Pedagogy', in J. Burgoyne and M. Reynolds (eds.), *Management Learning: Integrating Perspectives in Theory and Practice*. London: Sage.

—— (1998). 'Reflection and Critical Reflection in Management Learning', *Management Learning*, 29: 183–200.

Rhodes, C., and Garrick, J. (2003). 'Project-Based Learning and the Limits of Corporate Knowledge', *Journal of Management Education*, 27: 447–71.

Stehr, N. (1994). *Knowledge Societies*. London: Sage.

Tufte, E. R. (1997). *Visual Explanations: Images and Quantities, Evidence and Narrative*. Cheshire, Conn.: Graphics Press.

Vince, R. (1996). 'Experiential Management Education as the Practice of Change', in R. French and C. Grey (eds.), *Rethinking Management Education*. London: Sage.

Weddington, H. S. (2004). 'Education as Aesthetic Experience: Interactions of Reciprocal Transformation', *Journal of Transformative Education*, 2: 120–37.

Weick, K. (1979). *The Social Psychology of Organizing* 2nd edn. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley.

Welsh, M. A., and Dehler, G. E. (2004). 'P(l)aying Attention: Communities of Practice and Organized Reflection', in M. Reynolds and R. Vince (eds.), *Organizing Reflection*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

—— and Murray, D. (2003). 'The Ecollaborative: Using Critical Pedagogy to Teach Sustainability', *Journal of Management Education*, 27: 220–35.

CHAPTER 4

AESTHETICS IN TEACHING ORGANIZATION STUDIES

ANTONIO STRATI

Brief Introduction

The aim of the chapter is to illustrate how aesthetics activated experiential learning while I was teaching organizational subjects. The experiences recounted relate to undergraduate and master courses at an Italian university. The linking theme of the chapter is a module on organizational aesthetics which formed the final part of the Sociology of Organizations course on a specialist degree programme in Work, Organization, and Information Systems. This experience also enabled me to reflect on some ten years' experience of a 'riddle-based' process of learning. The second experience described is a performance (riddles have features characteristic of the performance as an artwork) that a student (and artist) on my course staged for her degree examination. The subject of the performance was Max Weber's ideal type of bureaucracy. I will focus on the use in teaching of the performance as a video artefact. The chapter will end with some 'inclusions' about the perceptual faculties and sensitive judgements involved in appreciating the performance, and/or the video of it, and then with reflection on academic teaching and the aesthetic understanding of organizational life.

Observing through the Lens of Aesthetics

Last academic year I decided to devote a module of my Sociology of Organizations course to the aesthetic study of organizational life. My intention was to give students attending at the specialist degree programme on Work, Organization, and Information Systems an opportunity for the practical-factual learning of qualitative methods. My more specific purpose was to have the students experiment with their personal capacities to conduct qualitative empirical research on organizations.

Aesthetics lends itself well to this type of teaching because it induces students to activate their perceptual-sensory capacities and their aesthetic judgements in order to understand organizational phenomena, and to reflect upon those capacities and that judgement. When teaching the everyday practices of qualitative research, in fact, aesthetics immediately brings to light the constant dialogue between ordinary routine and personal configuration. It does so by inviting students to invest something of themselves in their research and to follow where their imaginings, tastes, and intuitions lead them.

But there is something else that aesthetics invites students to do: *pay very close attention to how they observe an organizational phenomenon in its setting*. The details of organizational action are extremely valuable for aesthetic understanding. Immersing oneself in those details, detaching oneself from them, and then letting oneself be absorbed by them, to evoke and relive them, finding representations for them: all this is involved in the 'aesthetic' study (i.e. analysis performed with all the senses and the sensibility) of organizations.

I therefore conceived the module as moving through the following phases:

(a) a review of the standard distinction between qualitative and quantitative analysis, preparing the students for aesthetic analysis of qualitative type by means of this theoretical introduction;
(b) a survey of the literature on the aesthetic dimension of organizational routine;
(c) an invitation to the students to conduct observations on some organizational setting, but as far as possible avoiding interviews with organizational personnel;
(d) classroom discussion of their field notes, and the formation of work groups;
(e) constructing a dialogue between their research and literature on the aesthetic approach; and
(f) monitoring and stimulating the learning process.

Hence an entire module of twenty-four hours was to be devoted to one single approach to organizational analysis—and indeed devoted to only that part of it

involving observation and representing what has been observed. But the course as a whole amounted to seventy-two hours, and this final module was envisaged as a workshop on empirical studies or case studies drawn from the organizational literature. It was designed to follow on from the theoretical aspects examined in the two previous modules.

The problem, however, was that I could not foresee how things would turn out. I had devised the module without knowing the students, given that my course was scheduled for the first year of the specialist degree programme, the syllabuses for which were published in the spring term of the previous academic year. Yet with my syllabus the willingness of the students to participate actively was crucial. This participation I could not take for granted, however, because it required the students to 'risk' something of themselves. The texts studied could do little to protect them against this risk, because what I planned to activate was a largely experiential form of learning.

I also wanted to give a young researcher—particularly expert in the aesthetic study of organizations—an opportunity to conduct this learning experience together with me. I would thus introduce further plurality into the collective action. I told the researcher how I imagined the module, stressing its experiential nature, and asked him to draw up an outline programme. Just before the module began, we pooled our ideas and decided its structure. At that stage I had completed the first two modules of the course, and the students had acquired corporeality in my mind, and I in theirs, so that reciprocal trust had been established. A feature that had become apparent during the previous part of the course was that the roughly twenty students—the number varied, as did the composition of the class, because attendance was not compulsory—did not form an aggregate of individuals but a collective comprising diverse student subcultures besides that of the course as a whole. My assistant had also 'acquired corporeality' for some students—in part for institutional reasons (research and teaching) and in part for informal and personal ones.

At the first meeting with the students, I explained—alternating with my assistant—what we intended to do and what we intended to have them do. The students showed interest in our ideas, although I could see a certain amount of apprehension and uncertainty in their faces.

And so my lectures on the methodology of organizational empirical research began, followed by those of my assistant on the aesthetic approach. In the meantime, we had decided that the organizational setting investigated by the students would be the one most accessible to them: their faculty, the Facoltà di Sociologia. We asked the students, first, to write a brief note outlining their knowledge about the faculty. Then, we asked them to leave the classroom in the last half-hour of the lesson, conduct their observations for ten to fifteen minutes, return to the classroom and write their preliminary field notes, briefly tell the others where they had been, what they had seen, and what their first sensations had been. They would come to the next

lesson with their field notes organized so that they could be read out and discussed by the class. They would also have studied an article—first Gagliardi (1996), then Strati (2000) and Martin (2002), and finally Barry (1996), one for each of the next four weeks—on the aesthetic approach, and they would have related it to their field notes.

The Aesthetic Experience of Power in Lecturing Practices

The first striking aesthetic experience came during a lecture by my assistant. He was describing certain features of the aesthetic approach. He was standing up and he had moved from behind the table at which we were sitting to face the students scattered around the benches in the classroom. I cannot remember exactly how, but he introduced a topic which aroused strong emotion in the room. He began to talk about his power, as well as my own, over the students; but this was a power deriving more from our teaching than from our hierarchical positions and institutional roles in the organization. Lecturing has intrinsic power, he explained, because it constructs knowledge artefacts which simultaneously establish teacher–pupil relations that—though subject to controvertible power dynamics—put me and him in a position of pre-eminence. But the students were not devoid of power, because the outcome of their learning depended on their active participation; and the reputation of our module, and to a certain extent his reputation as a teacher, depended on their assessment of the quality of our teaching—assessment made both informally and formally by the faculty questionnaire. As he was saying this, the assistant moved away from the table and towards the students. He then walked along the aisle between the left-hand block of desks and the wall, to the back of the room. There he turned and raised his arm to point at me. There was a further kind of power, he said: my power over him, or the fact that while he was teaching he felt that I was examining him. As he spoke he walked backwards without turning until, still facing the students, he passed the first row and moved into the centre of the space separating it from our desk, where I was sitting with his empty chair to my right. In other words, by moving and 'touching' the space of the classroom, he had placed himself physically between me and the students, albeit slightly to one side. His account was overtly offered to the students as a reflection on relational power within the organization tied to the construction of intangible artefacts like knowledge and learning: sentiment, openness, and corporeality of action in the organizational space that transformed the materiality itself of our organization. But it caused tension, irritation, and embarrassment in the room, which seemed no longer recognizable, now

that it had lost the relaxed, sometimes playful, nature of its previous teacher–learner relations.

The students deemed me 'guilty' because I had power to evaluate the work of the young assistant. They understood what he felt, but they did so with the embarrassment of people suddenly involved in relational dynamics whose substance they do not know, and which they are unwilling to judge. But they knew me as well; they sympathized with the assistant but they sympathized with me too, perhaps realizing my surprise at what had happened from the expression on my face and my physical posture.

The students watched my reactions surreptitiously. As Simmel (1908) pointed out, sight is distinctive among the five senses of aesthetic-sensory perception in that it activates a relation of particular sociological interest. Unlike the other senses, hearing for example, it produces reciprocity: we look at others, and they look at us, in the same moment of time. I and the students looked at each other. We faced each other as my assistant moved from his initial lateral position to a central space between us. But numerous students avoided reciprocity of gaze. Although I was strongly aware of the embarrassment of the situation, I did not feel impelled to get rid of it. I just as strongly felt my duty not to leave the assistant alone in the complex of emotions that his speech on power had aroused. Hence, when the drama of the situation had subsided, though not entirely disappeared—when, that is, it was still heavily present in the room—I did my duty and spoke to the students. I stressed that the organizational event we had witnessed had been experienced 'aesthetically' and not just 'intellectually'.

My assistant's thoughts on power, I stressed, had been purged of neither emotion nor aesthetic feeling. Consequently, they had not been experienced as mental experience alone, but in the complexity, interferences, and con/fusion of experience that converts it from intellectual to bodily and material matter. My assistant's reflection on power in the organization had 'evidently' become an account of diverse dialogic experiences of power. It had brought out paradoxes and incongruities, powers and impotencies, conflicts and assonances. Power had been articulated, declined across several levels, echoed in the plurality and diversity of Italian academic practices, rather than being reduced to the more or less conflictual lecturer–student dynamic. We had been immersed in it with aesthetic-sensory feelings, with emotions, and also with aesthetic judgements based on various aesthetic categories, to wit: (a) 'the ugly'—the ugliness of the young teacher's situation, of relations among academic staff, or of power; (b) 'the tragic'—through sympathy with the young assistant's organizational heroism, the tragedy of his account of it; (c) and 'the comic'—what a good joke at the professor's expense!—in the human comedy that sets drama within lived experience. Power in organizations had become more than a theoretical notion; it now constituted aesthetic experience of lecturing practice performed—and manifest in its

analytic and aesthetic complexity—in the lecture room. It did so for the following reasons:

(a) the participation by everyone, students and lecturers, had been intense, though not couched in speech, in that only my colleague and myself (now) had spoken;
(b) the interactions among us had been elicited by the words spoken, by their illocutionary force, by the emotion that they evinced, communicated, and passed from body to body through gesticulation, movement, gaze, silence, non-movement;
(c) the revelation of the power relations between professor, assistant, and students had occurred during theoretical analysis, which was suddenly transformed into aesthetic experience;
(d) the critical event caused by one organizational actor and experienced by all the others demonstrated that organizational experiences subject the same event to different and personal interpretations and to dynamics of organizational memory construction which intermingle corporeality, emotion, aesthetic judgement, and ratiocination;
(e) the event had given salience to the 'game' of organizational relations, in the twofold sense of playing and gambling, of pleasure and risk, of transparency and deception, of awareness and not knowing what will happen, of imagination and ignorance;
(f) the game had put aesthetics at the centre of organizational relations, while also showing that the reputation of every individual and collective actor and trust in others are not just 'known' but 'felt';
(g) involvement in the organizational event had provoked pleasure but also discomfort, thus further emphasizing that aesthetic experience is complex because it concerns the tragic, the ugly, or the grotesque, as well as the comical, the beautiful, or the elegant—as the aesthetic category of the sublime (the co-presence of profound pleasure and suffering) emblematically demonstrates.

At this point—I concluded—the students were ready to begin empirical analysis. We had already discussed both the empirical qualitative study of organizations and the main features of the aesthetic approach. We had completed the lectures with the riddle of the organizational artefact. Moreover, the students had also seen—during the first part of the course when Weber's bureaucracy was discussed—the 'Iron Cage Performance'. My reflections on the materiality and corporeality of power relations in organizational practices should, I said, further persuade them to rely on their capacities for aesthetic comprehension of organizational phenomena, to take personal responsibility for empirical research, to risk their reputations as students, to enjoy knowledge acquired in not exclusively analytical-rational manner. But what, then, of the riddle?

The Riddle

I have used the riddle as a teaching device for the last ten years or so, although not on all my courses: sometimes I have been unable to use it; or sometimes, more simply, I have not wanted to do so because I have not felt that the situation was appropriate. But in the majority of cases, I have brought out this riddle in my courses on sociology of organizations. The students have been very different, both because they have been so by their very nature, and because they were attending different universities and faculties (I teach at the Faculty of Sociology, University of Trento, and at the Faculty of Letters, University of Siena).

Riddles are a somewhat bizarre teaching technique at university level. A riddle differs from a quiz in its 'serious irony', playfulness, and non-sense; and also because it is widespread in childhood game playing. Answering the riddle 'what was the colour of Napoleon's white horse' demonstrates, not knowledge of the correct answer, but an infantile ability to engage in play. Riddles are decidedly out of place at a university. Yet it is precisely this change of aesthetic-cognitive 'frame' which makes them enjoyable and rich with emotions that prompt reflexivity—as I have amply described elsewhere (Strati 1999).

Reflexivity in regard to what? The knowledge artefacts that populate the symbolic domain of Italian university-level teaching, we might say, paraphrasing the title of the collected volume edited by Pasquale Gagliardi (1990) on pathos and symbolism in artefacts. Hence, when I have deemed the didactic situation appropriate, I have introduced my riddle at the beginning, or during, or towards the end of a course, my purpose being:

(a) in the first case, to use the riddle to conduct joint reflection with my students on their knowledge of forms of organizational life at the beginning of the course. Later I have used the riddle to evoke an experience shared by myself and my students but which distinguishes us: a symbol, therefore, of ongoing styles of teaching and learning:
(b) in the other two cases, to conduct an 'experiential' test on student progress and my teaching input, as well as to support my lecturing style.

In all three cases, however, I have always introduced or recalled what in the literature is meant by 'organizational artefact'.

The ritual of the riddle differs according to the students, to the setting of the lesson, and to the moment. But the proposal of solving a riddle has always evoked surprise and pleasure: 'inner laughter' and the students' agreement to play as if they have become children again. Not all of them, though, because some have been loath to participate, and their grimaces and bodily movements protested that this was no way to conduct a serious lesson. In many cases these students translated it into a 'quiz' and tried to answer the quiz rather than experience

the process engendered by the riddle. This situation is not always easy to handle, because the riddle loses its didactic value and its ability to have the students enjoy the game through their sensory faculties and aesthetic judgement. The situation has the awkwardness one feels when watching a comic film with someone who does not like that kind of comedy, or simply does not understand it; so that when you laugh you receive a stony gaze enquiring what it is that you find funny.

The riddle can be solved either individually or in small groups, according to the students' preference. I often ask them to pool their small change as a prize for the winning student or group. This process embedded within the larger one of the riddle always animates the students. Some of them collect the prize money, others count it. Some of them move around the room to form pairs or groups; others only do so to exchange quips and then go back to their seats. The atmosphere in the room changes: I hear giggling and laughter, names being called out, the noise of tables, chairs, and benches being moved. I see faces smiling and grinning, or bent over pieces of paper on which the names of group members are being written; bodies no longer still but in movement, leaning on desks, lounging across seats. I watch the negotiation and creation of a different organizational order distinguished by doing-in-movement, instead of doing-in-stillness. When the money has been collected and the name lists of pairs or groups have been placed on my table, the room is again different, the organizational order has again changed: before me are no longer students, but those particular students on their own, those students in couples, those in groups. They are scattered around the room if it is large, or bunched together if it is small. I now place the answer to the riddle on my table—after waving the envelope in the air to show that it is sealed—and press the button on the overhead projector to display the riddle.

Which organizational artefact in the broad sense:

1. is purchased more often than it is produced
2. extends beyond organizational boundaries
3. is simultaneously material and non-material
4. is individual and belongs to everybody
5. shows up anyone who does not have one
6. is constantly sought after
7. is a metaphor for the hierarchy of organizational levels
8. if flaunted may provoke criticism and invoke sanctions
9. if it shifts, may provoke hilarity
10. homogenizes positions downwards

?

The answers that I have collected over the years have always related to the lofty themes of university education; 'power', 'control', domination', 'money',

'professionalism', 'work', 'culture', 'emotion'. Only on two occasions have I received more mundane replies: 'toilet' and 'window'. These were given by a student and a group of three female students in Siena, on two different courses. When asked, in both cases they replied that they had come up with the answers by basing themselves on my 'unconventional' lecturing style.

Neither did the students on last year's course on organizational aesthetics depart from broad organizational themes like 'culture', 'gender', 'control', 'money', 'work', 'social position', 'fashion', 'power' (numerous answers), 'organization' itself. However, two answers were different from those offered on other occasions: 'marriage' and 'sex'. The former indicated organizational mergers; the latter meant sex both as a gender construct and as personal diversity among organizational actors and a dimension of interpersonal relations in the organization. However, although intrigued, I could not discuss these answers with the two female students who had proposed them because the class was anxiously awaiting the result of the riddle game, and the lesson was drawing to a close.

Also these students on the organizational aesthetics course were surprised by the answer to the riddle. Laughter, protests, and demands for explanation erupted as soon as a female student opened the envelope and incredulously read out the solution. Her incredulity was evident from the tone of her voice, which halted halfway through reading the short word written on the piece of paper. It then resumed, but too faintly to be heard by the other students because it was muffled by the girl's own laughter. However, the word flashed around the classroom, being repeated with different tones and emphases by the students. Now, as the girl student regained her composure and repeated out loud—with tears in her eyes—the answer to the riddle, the laughter of the other students was accompanied by bodies collapsing on the desks, gesticulations which emphasized the pleasure of the surprise, expressions of astonishment, signals of satisfaction with the ingenuity of the riddle, but also with its successful performance. The lecture room was once again changed by these bodily movements, facial expressions, shifts of gaze, the noise of voices and laughter. There was no longer a focus of interactions, but a plurality of loci of action which overlapped and merged. Then, as on previous occasions, attention returned to myself as I explained the answer to the riddle and showed why the students' solutions were wrong. But then, unlike on many other occasions, the students stopped arguing for their quasi-solutions and showed appreciation at the answer read out to them, which, with a minimalist touch, reduced grand abstract concepts to the banality of organizational routine and its corporeality. What was the right answer? It was an organizational artefact that all of them were using at that moment and which they constantly used in the organization. The artefact without which they would not feel accepted by the organization, nor feel they had a proper place in it, nor feel at ease in it, but which they did not 'see' because they took it for granted as if they were attached to it in their routine practice: the chair. In other words, the riddle had induced the students to:

(a) problematize their habitual learning practices, eschewing institutionally learned theories and relying instead on what they could see, touch, and feel—this being a phenomenon widespread in organizations, as documented by Zucker's (1977) ethnomethodological studies;
(b) conduct empirical analysis, because what matters when solving a riddle is the ability to grasp the meaning of the game and to play it; in other words, the ability to use one's intuition, imagination, and sensory perception to grasp the materiality of everyday organizational life in its details and nuances;
(c) to appreciate organizational aesthetics, because it had shown the ineludibility of sensible knowledge, the emotions, the aesthetic judgement, in short, the complexity of forms of action and knowledge in organizations; as well as demonstrating that many of these forms, though used in organizations as essential components of the experiential flow of quotidian routine—and therefore, as in the case of the chair, a crucial element in the personal experience of acting in organizations—are not grasped, studied, and understood but instead taken for granted and therefore paradoxically excluded.

The riddle has therefore been a teaching device in which the pleasure gained from participating, and the enthusiasm shown in doing so, the serious irony involved in collectively constructing the didactic event, the taste for constant change in the organizational setting, the pleasure of the game, and enjoyment of its humour, had been experiences acquired by participating corporeally in the flow of creating and recreating the organizational order, its 'spatial focuses', its rhythms, noises, and materiality. Some of these elements were also comprised in the students' experience of watching the video of the 'Iron Cage Performance'.

The 'Iron Cage Performance'

When during the first part of the course I discussed Weber's notion of bureaucracy, I did so by projecting a video of the 'Iron Cage Performance' (Gherardi and Strati 2003). This is an audio-visual artefact available on CD-ROM, cassette, or DVD which was produced on the occasion of the performance submitted by a student—and artist—Anna Scalfi as her project for the examinations in sociology of organization and sociology of work, and then as an essential part of her degree thesis. I have described this teaching experience in more detail in an essay on organizational artefacts (Strati 2005), where I dwell on the performance as an ephemeral organizational artefact difficult to explain to those who have not seen it/taken part in it. The topic is important in regard both to theoretical-methodological developments in the aesthetic study of organizational life and, more generally, to qualitative analysis of organizations. It is so because it centres on the issue of the

knowledge and learning acquired experientially by a researcher and also, as stressed by Chris Steyaer and Daniel Hjorth (2002), on the issue of their representation and communication to different audiences. It was in these terms—representation of the organizational understanding acquired by the researcher—that I showed the 'Iron Cage' video to the students attending my organizational aesthetics course. Such representation was contextualized in the framework of empirical research, and therefore in a framework different from that of classroom discussion of Weber's ideal type of bureaucracy.

The video (which lasts about twenty minutes) has always aroused contrasting aesthetic and emotional reactions when I have shown it to students. Initially, there is pleasure that something artistic has been introduced into a lecture on a standard topic, and curiosity to see how that topic could be treated unconventionally. It is the diversity itself of the didactic experience which has in many respects aroused the students' interest and solicited use of their perceptual-sensory faculties and sensitive-aesthetic judgement. Although by now largely routine practices in university teaching, lowering a screen, switching on the computer and the projector (or video projector), turning off the lights, closing the window blinds, projecting images and sounds change the nature of the lecture room. They make it different in terms of both the physicality of the organizational context and the disposition of participants to activate their capacity for aesthetic understanding. The rituality of these practices changes the type of attention required, for it now focuses not on the goodness of the theories expounded but on the multiformity of the didactic experience in which the cognitive and analytical dimension is embedded in the *pathos* of sensible knowledge and the emotions connected with it.

Paradoxically, projection of the performance video benefits from the separation between art and science distinctive of university teaching in Italy and elsewhere. Videos and performances pertain to the world of art, which is institutionally kept distant from the seriousness of academic pedagogy, and with it student expectations of experiencing aesthetic sentiments and enjoying—or disliking—transgression of conventional teaching practices.

During the title sequence, the video shows a large cage consisting partly of rigid straight elements and partly of soft and sinuous ones, standing in the entrance lobby to the Faculty of Sociology. It is an installation by the artist Loris Cecchini which had previously been displayed at the Civic Gallery of Trento. The student had seen it and associated it with my treatment of Weber's bureaucracy. Prompted by a workshop on the organizational space of workplaces held during Gherardi's course, the student had decided to 'do something different' in the form of the 'Iron Cage' performance. This was based on extracts from Weber which were 'said'—not recited—by the female student and which alternated, as in counterpoint, with voices recorded at a supermarket, a railway station, and a dance school, and which recounted discursive practices in those workplaces. The video shows the student entering the installation and uttering Weber's words—taken from the Italian

translation—on bureaucracy. From time to time she stops so that the voices from the everyday world of work can be heard. The students are usually very interested at the beginning. They strain to hear the oral exchanges on the workplaces, they are caught up by the alternation between the two vocal contexts evoked—Weber's text and discursive practice—and with the visual dialogue between the student's movements—only at the end does she emerge from the cage—and the rigid or sinuous parts of the installation. Later some of them grow tired, they begin to fidget, they create sensory distractions and emotional windows in their experience. They make small noises which give others an opportunity to relax the intensity of their emotional-aesthetic concentration on the video of the performance. When the video has ended and the lights have been switched back on, the air entering the opened windows accompanies the return of speech and bodily movement among the students. Their faces turn from the screen to their neighbours, and their gazes become communicative. Someone mutters a comment, and the students slowly abandon the aesthetic-emotional state in which their attention was focused on the screen. When I ask for their 'first impressions' and 'first sensations', there is always someone who answers 'anxiety'. And to illustrate this sensation, the final vocal counterpoint is usually cited (Strati 2005: 34):

Student: Already now, rational calculation is manifest at every stage. By it, the performance of each individual worker is mathematically measured, each man becomes a little cog in the machine and, aware of this, his one preoccupation is whether he can become a bigger cog. [. . .] it is horrible to think that the world could one day be filled with nothing but those little cogs, little men clinging to little jobs and striving towards bigger ones [. . .]. This passion for bureaucracy [. . .] is enough to drive one to despair.

Woman teacher at the dance school: Please take care with these movements because otherwise they become mechanical, and end themselves and they become . . . sort of sad. Please, let things start from within, from your soul, from your body, from your heart. And always filter, always, mind, heart, body. You.

The aesthetic experience of the performance has therefore generally evoked the aesthetic category of 'tragedy', with its heroes and innocent victims; and so it was with the students on the organizational aesthetics course. In this case, too, discussion of this sensation and the other feelings aroused centred on Weber's description of the functioning principles of bureaucracy. However, even when a performance is transformed into an enduring audio-visual artefact like the video, it is still an ephemeral experience that begins and ends with it. I have never backtracked the video to the Weber extracts to discuss them with the students, although I could have done so, given the audio-visual support technology: the performance, even if video projected, has always been absorbed and experienced in its totality. Also the sensations—of seduction or anguish, for example—have always been related to the totality of the didactic experience acquired with the projection of the video, and not apart from it, even when it has been highlighted by indicating some part of

it—for example, the above-mentioned final vocal counterpoint. The intensity of the aesthetic experience of the performance-based didactic device has generally subdued rational discourse therefore. And it is to this aspect, though projected against the background of doing research, that I have directed the students' attention: representation of the results of their empirical analysis could draw on the evocative process of knowledge gathering and not rely solely on the analytical-rational one.

Representing Aesthetic Observation

The co-presence of very different styles in the same account—the style which elicits the evocative process of knowledge gathering and the one inspired by richness of analytical detail—was much discussed by the students on the organizational aesthetics course, right from the first write-up of their field notes. Indeed, representation of their ethnographic study of the Faculty of Sociology—admittedly limited to observation alone, but using their capacities for aesthetic-sensory understanding—was perhaps the issue that provoked most debate in the classroom, and in relation to:

(a) the perceptions of each sense, isolating it from the others and then re-merging it with them, as well as the sixth sense, which is better able than the others to intuit what to do and when;
(b) the coexistence of several languages—those of images, sounds, and speech—and their aesthetic canons;
(c) constant redefinition of their objects of enquiry, so that what was singled out at the beginning was gradually reconfigured until it assumed the form of a plastic, malleable, collectively constructed object.

The process of experiential learning was marked by cadences and stages so that progress enriched the experience, but also to ensure that enthusiasm did not wane and that the appeal of self-conducted research and collective debate did not diminish. After the first observation, when the students themselves selected the organizational and work practices to study, they were invited to explore the faculty further for aspects unknown to them. Finally, they were asked to focus their observations on only one of the various settings selected by them and considered.

This required a change of classroom, because the students' initial observations were overlapped by the considerations, discussions, and operational choices produced by their being grouped, on a voluntary basis, into small groups or pairs according to the setting or phenomenon selected. Moreover, some sort of dialogue began between what the students were observing and their required reading texts. To be stressed is that the core of the course was still the experience of conducting the observations and representing them, not the literature. The latter furnished further

participants in the dialogue, besides the students and the lecturers with whom they regularly reflected and discussed, as well as the materials for the oral examination that followed discussion of a paper produced by the students.

At the end of the course, a comment by a student further highlighted the distinctive nature of the learning experience: it was different from other kinds of workshops; the good thing about this experience was that, instead of deepening research made by others, it was the students themselves who were the protagonists of the research.

Inclusions

On rereading this chapter, and on reliving, once again with pleasure, both the contentment and the delicate tragicality of certain features of these didactic experiences, I have been struck by the fact that their *dominant tonality is the performance* of teaching and learning. This has its roots in the arts, rather than in organizational theories and managements studies, although these too have dealt with performances.

The performance has gained recognition and accreditation in the arts only recently, in the 1970s during the golden age of conceptual art (Goldberg 1988/2001). It is a form of expression which *mobilizes* understandings, intuitions, and ideas in *everyday life*—of organizations in our case—where *acting and knowing are intimately bound up with each other*: two features which, as we have seen, are crucial for aesthetics in the teaching of organization studies. But there is a third, and equally important, feature of artistic performance which resides in experiences of aesthetics-based experiential learning. Since its origins in Italian futurism, in fact, the central purpose of the performance has been to involve and to surprise the audience so that it reinterprets its conceptions of art and culture. It has enhanced, that is to say, the interaction between the humans and artefacts involved in the artistic process—as did the riddle, the 'Iron Cage Performance,' and the aesthetic field observation.

But a performance requires not only active participation in altering the focal points of the interaction among the students and between students and teachers, but also careful didactic supervision by the teachers, because it turns everyday routine into something exceptional. The image that best conveys the idea is that of 'learning in the face of mystery' (Gherardi 1999), which highlights both reliance on individual aesthetic capacities to activate processes of experiential learning, and the non-prescriptive nature of learning. As the papers by the students on the Sociology of Organizations course stressed, at the beginning you do not know what is going to

happen, and this causes anxiety; it is only in the course of its 'doing' that aesthetics-based experiential learning allays fears and displays knowledge richness.

References

Barry, D. (1996). 'Artful Inquiry: A Symbolic Constructivist Approach to Social Science Research', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 2/4: 411–38.

Gagliardi, P. (ed.) (1990). *Symbols and Artifacts: Views of the Corporate Landscape*. Berlin: de Gruyter.

—— (1996). 'Exploring the Aesthetic Side of Organizational Life', in S. R. Clegg, C. Hardy, and W. R. Nord (eds.), *Handbook of Organization Studies*. London: Sage.

Gherardi, S. (1999). 'Learning as Problem-Driven or Learning in the Face of Mystery?', *Organization Studies*, 20/1: 101–24.

—— and Strati, A. (eds.) (2003). *The Iron Cage: Dialogues from Max Weber about Loris Cecchini's Installation 'Density Spectrum Zone 1.0'* [DVD/VHS, 19′]. Performance by Anna Scalfi, 2 Apr. Trento: Faculty of Sociology.

Goldberg, R. (1988/2001). *Performance Art from Futurism to the Present*. London: Thames & Hudson.

Martin, P. Y. (2002). 'Sensations, Bodies, and the "Spirit of a Place": Aesthetics in Residential Organizations for the Elderly', *Human Relations*, 55/7: 861–85.

Simmel, G. (1908). *Soziologie. Untersuchungen über die Formen der Vergesellschaftung*. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot (partial Eng. trans. by K. H. Wolff, *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*. New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1964).

Steyaer, C., and Hjorth, D. (2002). 'Thou Art a Scholar, Speak to it . . . ': On Spaces of Speech: A Script', *Human Relations*, 55/7: 767–97.

Strati, A. (1999). *Organization and Aesthetics*. London: Sage.

—— (2000). 'The Aesthetic Approach in Organization Studies', in S. Linstead and H. Höpfl (eds.), *The Aesthetic of Organization*. London: Sage.

—— (2005). 'Organizational Artifacts and the Aesthetic Approach', in A. Rafaeli and M. Pratt (eds.), *Artifacts and Organizations*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc.

Zucker, L. G. (1977). 'The Role of Institutionalization in Cultural Persistence', *American Sociological Review*, 42/5: 726–43.

PART II

THE DIVERSITY OF CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE

This page intentionally left blank

CHAPTER 5

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING WITHOUT WORK EXPERIENCE

REFLECTING ON STUDYING AS 'PRACTICAL ACTIVITY'

KEIJO RÄSÄNEN
KIRSI KORPIAHO

Introduction

When business school students do not have previous experience in professional work, which is the case in many European master's programmes, the users of experiential methods meet a serious problem (cf. Reynolds and Vince 2004). What is the 'experience' that is supposed to be reflected on and learnt from? One answer to this question is that the students' lives are full of experiences, including the experiences of studying in the business school. However, the students are inclined to say that

'the real world' is outside the university and there is nothing worth reflecting on in their pre-real-work life. Even if teachers wanted to make studying experiences an object of reflection, their students might find this an unworthy effort. This chapter reports on a partially successful effort in solving this problem.

This story is an account of a course experience in the Helsinki School of Economics (HSE). We authors organized the course, called 'Professional Development' (in Finnish *Ammattitaidon kehittäminen*, hereafter PD) in January–March 2005. What was locally exceptional in this course was that the students actually did some work in examining their own studying practices, and found the exercise meaningful. Our previous attempts to accomplish similar events have more or less failed.

The key to this partial success was the conceptual ideas that guided the way in which we organized the learning process throughout the course. This was surprising to us teachers, because we had previously believed that the learning methods are the crucial and sufficient means in accomplishing learning from experience. In this case, the success cannot be wholly attributed to the working methods of cooperative and enquiry-based learning, although they were applied in the spirit of experiential learning.

Our account suggests that both teachers and students need also suitable conceptual resources for engaging in experiential learning (cf. Cunliffe 2004). In particular, when the relevant experiences concern student life, teachers need a suitable approach to, and understanding of, studying activities and experiences. We report here what our conceptual points of departure were and how we used them in creating a space for reflection. Practice-based understandings of studying as 'practical activity' seemed to work in this case, once we found a way to translate researchers' ideas into a form that was meaningful to the students.

The Event in Context

The PD course has had a crucial position in the curriculum of the subject organization and management.[1] The students, aiming at the master's degree in the norm time of four years, have chosen their major during the second year of studies, in December. Those who have chosen organization and management have had to first participate in the obligatory PD course. This course was launched in 2001 to serve as a key, introductory part of the discipline's programme.[2]

Since the first round, the purposes of the course have been many-sided and somewhat ambiguous. Teachers have agreed that it should work as an introduction to the discipline-specific studies and 'community', especially in regard to working methods, and also aid the students in planning their studies. The originators' idea was also that the course would serve students in approaching

professional jobs and tasks, that is, the development of professional skills for further use after their studies. Several members of the staff believed that the concept of 'reflective practice' covered some of the skills needed, and they hoped that the course would teach the practices of reflection. In addition, quite a few teachers wanted to teach critical stances to managerial practice, although the staff never made an overall decision to educate the students into a 'critical management studies' approach. The ambiguity concerning the purposes has partly been due to the unit's diversity in terms of research and teaching interest, but it was also due to the originators' inability to design such a new and different course.

The PD course has been run by a varying combination of teachers. Keijo Räsänen[3] was one of the three teachers who planned and organized the first round in 2001. For him, the first round confirmed the need for this course, but the team did not really find a proper concept for it. The teachers did not doubt the learning methods used, because they had been involved in bringing in various new methods since the mid 1990s. After the first round, other teacher pairs developed the course, but they also did not quite come to a satisfactory idea of what the focus and content of the course should be. In the late 2004 Keijo Räsänen and Kirsi Korpiaho started to plan the 2005 course round, and they got a new idea.

The teachers of the PD course had been struggling with the basic problem of experiential learning methods with students who come to the business school directly from the high school. They do not have experience from 'professional' jobs, but value such experience highly. Consequently, they devalue academic studies as something 'theoretical' and out of touch with 'the real life'. Previous attempts to lead them into a reflective stance concerning their own experiences and studies have met attitudes of indifference or even resistance. The students ask: 'Why should we waste time in talking about our own studies and business-school experiences, when we want to learn tools that are needed in real work and valued by the employers?'

The question has been especially difficult for the teachers of organization and management, because the subject is not respected highly by the younger students as to its 'practicality' and value in terms of the managerial labour market (cf. Burke and Moore 2003). Most of the graduates from the subject have been happy with their choice, but newcomers raise serious questions of what they can actually learn and gain by choosing this particular field of study. The doubts are supported by the students' moral order in HSE, that is, the stories students circulate on what they consider 'good' and 'bad' in studying (Leppälä and Päiviö 2001; Päiviö 2005). In these accounts, keen interests in reflection, serious thinking, research, and theory are rather presented as vices than virtues. However, in certain majors like economics and management, students need to develop modifications to the general beliefs, making vices reminiscent of virtues. The PD course could, in principle, provide a good site for starting or advancing this slow process.

Thinking Underpinning the Event

The new concept for the course was based on research work in progress. The two teachers have been members of a researcher group called Management Education Research Initiative—MERI. The group had just been keenly interested in 'theories of practice' (see, for example, Nicolini, Gherardi, and Yanow 2003; Schatzki 2001; MacIntyre 1981; Räsänen et al. 2005), and Keijo and Kirsi came to the conclusion that they would apply this line of thinking to the PD course. That is, studies and studying would be treated from a practice-based approach.

The basic idea and approach can be summarized in the following way. (a) Students' activities at the university are understood as participation in 'study practices'. Instead of framing studying merely in terms of a learning rhetoric, this view presents studying first and foremost as practical activity, that is, concrete doings and everyday experiences. (b) Students' learning is approached in terms of 'situated learning' (Lave and Wenger 1991). This conception of learning is congruent with the basic view: learning means entry into and engagement in new, specific practices and relationships. (c) Professional development means entry into and participation in consequent sets of practices, ranging from study practice to subject-unit-specific 'academic practices' and business graduates' 'professional practices' in other workplaces. (d) In studies, one can learn to rehearse 'reflective practice', which will help in learning the professional practices when entering new workplaces and jobs later on.

Taken together, the propositions suggested a new way of framing what the PD course is about and how it serves the students'—and the teachers'—interests. It is important to notice that the teachers did not assume that the students are engaging in similar practices to the members of the local academic unit in organization and management. Quite the contrary, the teachers wanted to create a space where the students could think through and discuss if and how they want to become involved in what the academics do, that is, engage in practices that may be considered morally questionable or at least 'useless' by some other students. Hence the *distinction between studying practices and academic practices* (see Figure 5.1). This distinction signalled a point of reflection and choice for the students. Concretely, do they want to approach and trust the teachers and let them lead in the process of learning disciplinary practices?

As to the method of experiential learning, the distinctions between various sets of practices opened up the possibility to choose what is to be reflected on in the course. While only a few of the students at HSE have experience of professional practice typical of business graduates, they are all practitioners in 'doing their studies'. *Thus, the study practices are the only shared basis of experience and possible object for joint reflection.*

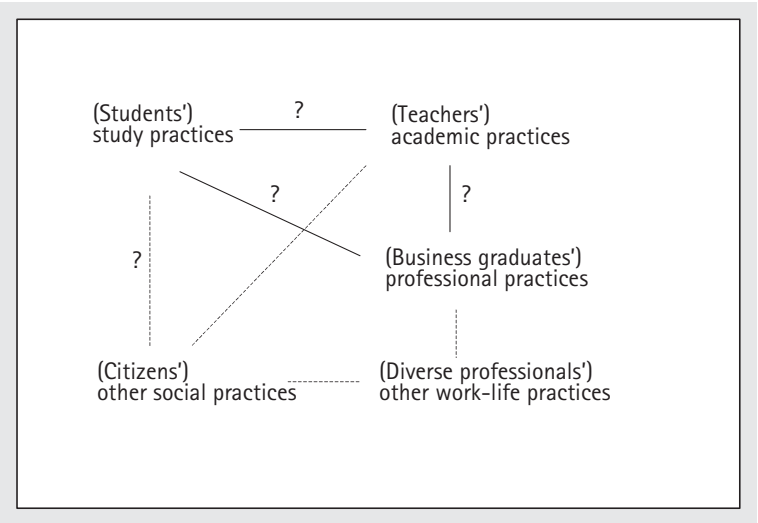


Fig. 5.1 Which practices are we talking about?
Source: Material of the PD course translated from Finnish.

There remained three difficult questions as to the use of this basic idea in organizing the course. First, how to translate the difficult 'theoretical' concept of practice entertained by the teachers and make it understandable and usable for the students. Secondly, how to teach them what the basic conceptual ideas of the course are, while the perspective is not familiar to them. Thirdly, how the teachers' frame of interpretation can be used in providing students with specific opportunities to study and reflect on their own experiences of studying.

On the basis of ongoing research on academic work and previous research in managerial work (see, for example, Räsänen et al. 2005; Räsänen 2005; Eriksson and Räsänen 1998; Räsänen, Meriläinen, and Lovio 1995), the teachers were able to present a particular version of the concept of practice. In this three-stance construct, any social and embodied 'practical activity' can be understood as dealing with the following three issues: how to do it, what to do, why do it and in this way?[4] These three stances towards an activity were named for the course as the 'tactical perspective' of how, the 'strategic perspective' of what, and the 'moral perspective' of why.[5]

In recent research texts, the teachers have used the term 'stance' rather than the term 'perspective' (in Finnish *näkökulma*), but they believed that the business students find it easier to use the latter term. For the same reason, they decided to label the second perspective 'strategic' instead of 'political'. As it would not serve the purpose of this story, the specific practice concept and the three stances cannot be opened up in detail here. It would require a discussion of the works by Michel de Certeau (on tactics), Pierre Bourdieu (on politics as proper positions), and Alasdair MacIntyre (on morals). In fact, the teachers did not take up the intellectual roots

of the concept during the course either, and they had to invent another way to introduce what the term practice might mean. In HSE one cannot expect that students have read or will read social scientific literature, except for master's theses in a few cases.

Consequently, the course was organized according to the three perspectives to practical activity, which in this case was studying in the business school. The programme was planned to treat the following questions and in this particular order:

(a) Tactical perspective: *How can I perform my studies in organization and management? (That is, how can I pass courses—with satisfactory grade points?)*
(b) Strategic perspective: *What can I accomplish and achieve in my studies in HSE? (That is, what can I study in HSE?)*
(c) Moral perspective: *Why am I studying in HSE and in a certain way?*

The order was considered crucial. The teachers assumed that the students should be interested at least in the first question. They probably want to pass exams, and value the treatment of 'practical' how-questions. The second question may be more difficult. According to the teachers' previous experience, HSE students do not necessarily have clear plans for the studies as a whole, are bound by various practicalities preventing goal-focused action, and talk only about instrumental goals if any. As to the moral issues, the teachers were not at all sure if the students were willing and actually able to share their thoughts with the other students and the teachers. Anyway, trying it felt important. As a whole this order of proceeding seemed possible, realistic, and promising.

As to the problem of how to teach the basic ideas, the duo chose a rather traditional approach. In the beginning of the course they gave a lecture on the basic concepts: practice; situated learning; reflective practice. They also described how the concepts were to be used in the course. Moreover, they asked the students to read a text on each of the basic concepts (Brown and Duguid 1991; Tiuraniemi 1994; Atherton 2003) and search for 'resources' on the approach. The texts and resources were used in the consequent session as a basis for learning tasks, the purpose of which was to check that all the students had got a grasp of the starting points.

Brown and Duguid's article was chosen because it outlines in an accessible and attractive way the concept of community of practice, and thereby introduced a conception of practice to the students. Even if some of the students found this framework attractive, one dilemma remained: the students seemed to be attracted especially by the idea of community, while the teachers wanted to highlight and illuminate the relevance of practices and saw the term community as problematic (Eriksson et al. 1996; cf. Reynolds 2000). Especially when the focus is on relationships amongst the students or teachers, it is problematic to assume, or propagate, the existence of communities in a strict sense, but the teachers chose not bring up

these complications as the point was in making practices worth their attention. And indeed, it turned out that the students found it at first difficult to understand what the teachers were after when they were speaking about practices. However, the next phases of the course made the perplexing starting points more understandable.

In treating the three main issues, one by one, the teachers used roughly the following script: first, they presented an orientation to the issue, saying what was at stake in this particular issue. Secondly, they provided the students with some 'resources' that can help in thinking about the issue, and asked them also to search for and collect their own resources for dealing with the issue. Thirdly, the issues were discussed in the sessions in terms of learning tasks based on preparatory work. And finally, the students wrote (individually): one personal text after each part of the course; a report on study skills (and their development); a study plan (with arguments for their choices); and an essay treating any issue considered personally relevant by a student.

The working methods were based on a combination of lecturing and reading tasks, cooperative learning, enquiry-based learning, and action learning. In this sense there was nothing new in the course in comparison to other courses arranged by the disciplinary unit during the last ten years. However, there was one minor deviation: in the PD course the teachers gave more emphasis on work done individually, i.e. privately, than in some other courses that are based strongly on collaborative work and on the assessment of accomplishments by groups. The assumption was that some of the issues are so difficult and even threatening that the students do not want to discuss them in groups composed of other, so far unfamiliar students. However, this did not solve the problem if they did not trust the teachers either.

Links to Debates About Experiential Learning

While working methods of the course add nothing new to discussions about experiential learning, the specific conceptual solution may help in paying attention to some tricky issues in how to learn from experience in a business school.

The main point is that the idea of experiential learning can work only if it concerns what can be called 'authentic' experiences (cf. Tochon 2000; Edwards 2005: 7). The course concept was an answer to the tricky question of what to reflect on, when the young students do not have work experience in professional tasks. The solution is to draw on the fact that the students have experience of participating in the study practices. As practitioners of studies in higher education they share this common ground of experience, and these experiences are as authentic as any experiences can be.[6] They can also be different within a group of students.

The key problem with this idea is that students may not see the point in focusing on their everyday life as students. It has to be made somehow problematic and interesting for them, before they want to take part in the rather demanding exercises. The proposed solution was to start from the issues that the business school students usually consider relevant by necessity, namely being able to perform in a highly competitive and stressing context. If they feel that they learn something 'useful' in this stage of the course, they will probably be more interested in approaching the two other questions as well.

While reflection is considered an essential moment in experiential learning (Roberts 1996: 67), one can ask: where do the resources needed in reflection come from (cf. Guile 2003: 98)? Especially if the objective is to expand the resource base, how can it be done? During the course, the teachers both told about their ways of understanding studies as practical activity and guided the students in finding themselves new resources on the issues defined by the teachers. However, the success of the concept depends on the reception of the starting points: is the practice-based world-view acceptable, understandable, and interesting enough to the students?

In this case, the teachers relied on their previous experience of what might be possible with the students in HSE. While most students consider any interest in 'theory' morally dubious (Leppälä and Päiviö 2001), some students had already found the communities of practice approach interesting in their master's thesis projects. As a graduate said after finishing her thesis: 'Now I finally have a perspective of my own, from which I can communicate with the engineers in my workplace.' Although the approach questions some of the basic, taken for granted assumptions of a manager-centred world-view, it can be used to advance various interests. The two teachers thus tried to both provide the students with new, usable resources and let them make their own, individual choices as to the tactics, politics, and morals of studying. For instance, a study plan arguing well for specific instrumental or reputational goals could gain high points in assessment.

Experiences of Tutors and Students

Overall the course was received positively, and it seemed to serve its now redefined purpose. However, the course cannot be considered a complete success, because there are better (elective) courses available in the subject's programme, at least according to the student feedback for this first round.

Thirty-four students participated in and passed the course. Students' experiences can be documented in two ways: (a) the kind of insights and conclusions they presented in the written reports—this tells something about the nature of their 'reflective' accomplishments during the course; (b) students' feedback asked for

with two forms—the official feedback form of HSE and a form designed specifically for this event.

As to the teachers' experiences, we can speak for ourselves. For the two teachers the situation was very different in respect to previous experience in teaching tasks. The senior teacher had been teaching in HSE since 1979. He had been involved in a process of bringing in new learning methods, renewing several courses, establishing new ones, and revising the subject curriculum. For the junior teacher this was the first course for which she was fully responsible together with the senior teacher. Consequently, the experiences were different.

Students' 'Experiences'

The teachers have no direct access to the students' diverse experiences. However, it is possible to document what kind of thoughts they expressed in their written reports. In particular, we will give examples of what they presented as new ideas or conclusions from the exercises, and what we teachers found interesting in their reports.

In general, the written reports and essays contained richer and more fine-grained lines of thought than the oral conversations in the classroom. The texts were written individually, knowing that only the two teachers will read them, while in the sessions thoughts were shared with the other students, either in triads or in the whole group. The contents of the reports indicates that the course offered an opportunity to discuss and think about questions that are otherwise left unattended. They actually came to think of their own ways of engaging in the study practices. Here we can give only a few examples of insights and conclusions considered important by the students.

There were interesting differences in the students' ability and willingness to articulate uncertainties and commitments across the three basic issues and perspectives: how, what, and why. Several students gained new ideas from the treatment of the *tactical* issue of how to study and perform in examinations. They became aware of the accessible resources concerning study skills, although there were significant differences in their efforts to search for the resources. They were able to list, and in some cases even frame, the skills needed in studying, as well as choose a skill that was personally critical and in need of development.

In the first assignment on 'how to study', the students chose to write about diverse skills, but the most favoured one was 'time management'. For example, one of the students noticed that the lack of time management is not really the problem but rather a symptom of something else:

Time management alone was too broad a definition to describe my real study problems. And as I ploughed through the 'study skills' pages in the Internet, I came across the term

procrastination. This term appears in several Internet pages and there are even articles written about it. As I read more about this term and got more familiar with it, I realized that, although there surely are lots to improve in my time management skills, my real problem was procrastination. After this long process of getting acquainted with diverse study skills, I decided to choose time management and especially getting rid of procrastination as a focus of my deeper reflection.

However, the students presented very few ideas of how to go about improving a certain skill by themselves, possibly because their expectation has been that this is a task for the teachers. Another interesting point is that the students seemed to be hesitant in revealing to the teachers in detail what tactics they used in passing the courses. This interpretation is based on the fact that a different picture emerges in a study of the students' conversations in 'their own' media, namely the student union's internet forum (Korpiaho 2005).

The *strategic* issues were harder to reflect on. Planning studies is in itself a justified task and expectation in HSE, but there are a few major difficulties in this respect: the students say that any opportunities in the curricula are difficult to grasp, and many students talk only about instrumental, labour market-oriented goals. As the teachers brought in material that opened up the possibility that HE could also serve other than employment interests, several students recognized this view but explicitly argued for their 'practical' interests. This is why they are in the business school. However, there were a number of students who took the opportunity and expressed their feeling of being 'different' from the majority of HSE students.

In the second assignment on 'what to study', students wrote about their own study plans and presented arguments to support their choices. The essays were quite long and many of them very personal. Many of them reported on feelings of being different and trying to find one's own place within the students' circles. The following excerpt is from the essay where a student who feels herself deviant from the mainstream students reflects on her choices. This essay is especially fascinating because a reader can see that the author has revisited the paper and rewritten the end of it.

I have known from the beginning that I am not interested in mainstream business subjects, like accounting, finance or marketing. I knew that I have to find my motivation to perform obligatory courses elsewhere. In the beginning of my studies my goal was to perform these courses with satisfactory grades in order to study later on what I was really interested in. . . .

This year I applied for IDBM (international design business management)—programme. That feels almost too good to be true . . . .

I have learnt that in my lifetime I won't be able to please everyone around me; instead I go crazy and feel exhausted in trying to do so. This is why it is important to me, not for the sake of others, to justify and analyze my own choices. . . .

Now rereading this paper I realize that I really want to continue my studies after graduation and apply for an MBA-programme in Milan, Italy. This MBA-programme feels already like my own thing. After getting this idea, studying, graduating and getting a job doesn't feel

distressing anymore, since now I know that I have an opportunity to continue my studies—and additionally, I know where and when.

In another excerpt, the student reports on difficulties of being and maintaining a sense of 'self' in the relations with other business students.

During the time of major selection everybody seemed to think only about the money they could earn from different jobs. It took long for me to decide what to choose as my major: all the so called hard majors felt somehow false, that is if I had chosen one of those subjects, I would have deceived myself and other people involved in those subjects. The decision that I chose Organization and Management as my major was a concession to me, because I knew I wouldn't be happy working with numbers or curves. Until that moment, I had been convincing myself that I could work as accountant and that I could do brilliantly for example in Finance. Of course this was not the case. . . .

Now I feel I have made a right choice. My goal is not a certain job, company or title. My goal is more like a state of mind, where I, and others, see and feel that I am 'the woman in the right place'. I want to do things in life that I enjoy and appreciate. For me, work is a big part of my identity.

In any case, the 'strategy' part of the course induced the students to think of and articulate their plans for several years ahead, which was the first time for many of them, as formal study plans had not been obligatory in HSE before the academic year 2005/6. Thinking and articulating what one can, and wants to, accomplish and achieve in the degree studies was something new to almost all of the students.

The *moral* stance was inspiring especially for some older students, in contrast to those who had entered the university immediately after high school. What seemed to focus attention and provide a point of reference for saying something about the vices and virtues of studying was a reading used in the course. Leppälä and Päiviö's (2001) report on the moral order in HSE evoked comments, as it has done in many other forums too. Some students want to defend the existing order, while some others are ashamed of, and want to distance themselves from, the instrumental values reproduced in students' conversations.

The following excerpt expresses an insight on how values—both personal and those of business education—are interworen with the process of performing and developing certain study skills and with the participation in educational practices.

I realized that reading for exams is problem to me in many ways. First of all I have troubles in starting to read and concentrating on the text because I cannot make the anxiety and feeling of inadequacy, that hurry creates, go away. My reading also remains often [at a] superficial level because of the mismatch between my personal values and implicit values in required materials. I also fear that if I concentrate too much on studying, it becomes the most important thing in my life again.

Overall, the issue of why to study and in a certain way was not taken with a similar keen interest to the two other perspectives. One obvious reason for this fact may be that writing about the moral questions was not required as were the reports on

Table 5.1 Students' evaluation of the course

	1–2	3	4–5
Conceptual points of departure	1	3	22
Success in treating personal experiences	2	5	19
Improved understanding of studying	0	5	21
Impact on motivation	2	11	12
Implementation of the concept	1	4	21
Need for the course			
O and M	2	1	23
HSE	3	6	17

Questions (with numerical scales, 1–5):

1. The teachers chose to base the course on a conception of 'studying as practical activity' (practice). They said at the beginning of the course what they meant by practical activity, situated learning, and reflective practice. The course proceeded by treating studying from tactical, strategic, and moral perspectives.

   How good was this point of departure in your own experience? (Scale 1–5, from weak to excellent)
2. To what extent did the course succeed in treating things and issues that belong to your own world of experience? (From weak to excellent)
3. Did the course help you in understanding your studies in new ways? (From not at all to significantly)
4. Did the course influence your motivation to study? (From not at all to significantly)
5. How good was the implementation of the course concept? (From weak to excellent)
6. To what extent is there a need for this kind of a course? (From not all to strong)
   (a) In the programme of organization and management.
   (b) In HSE otherwise

Note: Numerical items in the form designed by the teachers of the course; n = 26.

skills and plans. It was an optional topic in the final essay. As one student said in the class: 'I can talk about morals for five minutes, but I don't want to write an essay on them.'

As to the 'feedback' collected in the end of the course, it seems that the course fulfilled the teachers' main hopes. Almost all of the students came to reflect on their studies as a form of practical activity. Answers to the questions posed in the form crafted by the teachers for this particular event show that there were only a small number of students who did not find the concept meaningful (see Table 5.1, reporting responses to four questions). Of the thirty-four students that participated in the course, twenty-six were present in the last session and filled in the form.

According to the numbers, twenty-two of the twenty-six students assessed the concept favourably. Only two of them did not feel that the course touched their lived experience and five others chose to mark the medium value for this question. Moreover, twenty-three of the students seemed to consider the course important rather than useless for studies in the major. This can be considered a success in respect to the teachers' goals, especially when the course was about something that

goes against the moral order; that is, the course was focused on studying practices and on reflective activities (cf. Leppälä and Päiviö 2005).

Those who did not appreciate the course wrote, for instance:

The course was impractical, for example theory of practice?!!

The Tactic dimension was very distressing and unclear.

Those who found the course beneficial wrote, for example:

This course helped me to look for and to find direction to my studies—and to my future choices.

This clarified my own thinking about my studying practices and my goals.

Reflective practice has really been stored in my subconscious. I have noticed that nowadays I tend to reflect on my entire life constantly . . . It is good thing that we concentrated on studying issues, because they are not dealt with elsewhere.

Learning this kind of a reflective practice helped me to question and develop my thinking.

Personally, I want to thank you for giving this wonderful opportunity to stop and reflect upon some of the current and important issues of contemporary life.

However, the course was only a partial success, because (a) some of the participants did not find the course useful and meaningful, and (b) there are (smaller, elective, if not mandatory) courses in organization and management that receive higher points in the official feedback forms. Responses to the formal feedback form used in HSE gave the average points 5.83 (on the scale 1–7) to the question concerning the overall quality of the course. During the academic year 2004/5, the average for all courses in the subject was 5.6, and for all courses in HSE 5.4. There remains work to be done in improving the way the basic concept is used, but the concept itself seemed to be promising.

Tutors' Different Experiences

For the two tutors, the course was an important and meaningful experience. It was meaningful academic work, and an experience of collaboration—and also of joint risk taking that ended rather well. The teachers found it important that they could integrate their research work with the teaching task, and in a way that was also found sensible by the students. They were able to use an emerging conception of practice as a basis for organizing interaction with the students.

However, differences in starting points colour the interpretations. Räsänen et al. (2005) provide two different types of narrative of the teachers' experiences. On the one hand, the course can be presented as a further step in a series of innovative moves in improving local teaching and learning practices. The course added a new theoretical twist to these developments.

On the other hand, the course can be accounted for as a personal experience of working in academia. For the senior colleague, the course tested his motivation to continue a long-term struggle for teachers' autonomous development work, and under increasing pressure from enforced, top-down changes. Although the course was a fresh opportunity to realize his ideals of proper management education, he had to deal with his fatigue and frustration. For the junior colleague, teaching her first course, it was about entering a professionally crucial set of practices. For her, the themes of the course were not only related to her ongoing research project, but also to her situation (and learning) as a novice teacher. Teaching only a few years after her graduation, and as a doctoral student, she was acutely aware of being in the middle of two positions: a student and a teacher. Moreover, she had to pay most attention to the question of 'how' in carrying out the new teacher's role and, simultaneously, facilitate students' discussion on the 'how', 'what', and 'why' questions. Fortunately, the conceptual ideas of the course brought resources that helped her in meeting the challenges of reflexivity. As she wrote afterwards (Räsänen et al. 2005: 260): 'I lived the theory.'

Conclusion

The event storied here pays attention to a specific but important aspect of experiential learning in management education in the higher education context. When the students do not have extended experience from working life, teachers have to consider other sources of experience. One alternative is to focus on students' experiences of studying, and our account reports on an attempt at doing so. The PD course was based on the view that studying can and should be understood as an interesting form of practical activity among others. The art is in how to make their everyday life feel and look interesting and important enough to deserve reflective attention.

The key element in the solution was to apply a particular, three-perspective conception of practice (Räsänen et al. 2005; Räsänen 2005). Even if the construct of tactical, strategic, and moral stances in practical activity is still in a state of emergence, it guided the planning of the learning process well enough. The participants found the course meaningful and useful.

We suggest that theories of practice provide, in principle, a source of resources, when teachers want to create a motivating space for discussions on how, what, and why business school students learn—and want to learn. However, teachers need to find a way to build the theoretical ideas into their course design and into the learning tasks, that is, to practise what they preach.

Drawing on the practice-based approaches may also be an avenue for attempts to meet the ambitions of 'critical management education'. The course experience

evokes two related conclusions in this respect. The first of these concerns the ways in which teachers lead students to approach such complicated and contested concepts as practice. The second concerns ways in which critically oriented teachers can contextualize power issues in various substantive topics.

The decisions to introduce practice-theoretic thinking through the 'community of practice' approach can be considered a matter of pragmatics, of sensitivity as to the local context. We teachers still think that this was a sensible move, because any practice ontology is hard to learn, especially for students who have already learnt to reproduce the theory/practice dualism with its political implications. While the 'communities of practice' stream of practice-based theorizing has recently divided researchers into two camps, one favouring a consulting-oriented rhetoric and the other one emphasizing power aspects (Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder 2002; cf. Contu and Willmott 2003; Vann and Bowker 2001), students who are familiar with the approach are one step nearer to making personal choices in this respect. Once they have questioned the taken for granted premiss that all the wisdom resides in managers' heads, they have stepped away from the 'managerial point of view': they have thought, for a moment at least, that managers are not the only knowers and knowledge is not necessarily in any heads. If the communities of practice vocabulary can aid in this move, why would we not use this particular version of practice thinking in teaching? The vocabulary is accessible just because of this possibility for multiple uses. Once the interest exists, learning can proceed towards more challenging forms of thinking, according to the choices of each individual student and her or his political drives.

Another conclusion in relation to critical management education concerns the applicability of the three-stance conception of practice in other courses and contexts. The course design, based on this conception, allowed for the treatment of tactical, political, and moral issues, and in a way that touched the students' everyday life and left the choices to the students themselves. This should be relevant for those who ask about the ethics of critical management studies and education (Wray-Bliss 2002; Fenwick 2005). Their concern stems from the fact that the advocates of critical management studies have been primarily concerned about political issues and explanations, especially power and social domination. When a part of these scholars have taken seriously the challenges of education and committed themselves to experiments with new pedagogical ideas and practices, they cannot but notice that teaching or any other practical activity is not only about politics (Roberts 1996; Cunliffe, Forray and Knights 2002).

The students, in particular, may experience that they have serious problems with various tactical or technical demands, as well as with various ethical issues that cannot be easily transformed into questions of politics. The same goes for the teachers, too. Therefore, the three-stance conception of practice could be taken as a device for the articulation of tactical, political, and moral concerns, and of complications between them. The advantage of this solution would then be in the

possibility of explicitly dealing with the various stances in relation to each other. For instance, political issues could be related to an actor's skills in doing something specific and to her or his moral concerns or motives. Or, moral issues could be connected to political situations and tactical possibilities. The latter idea might in fact result in a specific way of teaching business ethics. And more generally, various substantive issues in management curricula might benefit from approaching them as 'practical activity' with its moral, political, and tactical issues. Why would this not be worth trying?

Notes

Other members of the MERI researcher group at HSE have influenced this story in various, positive ways. Thank you to Hanna Päiviö, Hans Mäntylä, and Anne Herbert. We are also grateful to the students who participated in the course storied in this texts. A grant (no. 108645) from the Academy of Finland aided Keijo Räsänen's work in writing this piece.

1. Due to the Bologna process, the degree structures and programmes are currently changing. The new rules were followed for the first time during the academic year 2005/6.
2. The subject's curriculum was renewed gradually since 1999, as an autonomous and collective initiative by the unit's staff. The Bologna process, combined with other changes in HSE, destroyed some of the key accomplishments of this movement, and surely delayed many intended improvements. For instance, there is no space for the PD course in the new structure of two separate and shorter degrees (B.Sc. and M.Sc., 3+2 years), while in the old curriculum the students aiming at the master's degree had ahead three to four more years of studies after the PD course.
3. We refer also to ourselves, the authors of this text, in the third person in order to make clear whose experiences, thoughts, and deeds we are representing in each point. In accounting for collective efforts it is important not to assume consensus and shared interpretations, and the term 'we' may obscure differences.
4. The 'why question' is unavoidably twofold: it can concern either the goals or the means of an activity. The classical example of this is the reappearing debates on whether good intentions justify whatever (corrupt or violent) means. Procedural vs. outcomes-based conceptions of justice offer another example of discussions on the same theme. In the course, the teachers let the students focus on what they considered relevant without forcing attention on both sides of the issue.
5. For the sake of simplicity, the teachers only mentioned a fourth issue of 'who I am', that is, the issue of identity. They suggested that the answer to the 'who' question is accomplished by getting to know how to do, what to do, and why to do it in a certain way. They had in mind a 'doing identity' approach to the concept of identity. It was difficult enough to deal with the three questions, and the integration of the identity question to the course concept was left to further experiments.
6. This starting point does not preclude other sources of experience. Studying can be reflected in a way that appreciates what these young adults have gone through in

other spheres of life, and even their orientation towards the 'real', but so far unknown 'working life'.

References

Atherton, J. S. (2003). 'Doceo: Competence, Proficiency and Beyond'. [On-line] UK. Available at: www.doceo.co.uk/background/expertise.htm.

Brown, J. S., and Duguid, P. (1991). 'Organizational Learning and Communities of Practice', *Organization Science*, 12/1: 40–57.

Burke, L. A., and Moore, J. E. (2003). 'A Perennial Dilemma in OB Education: Engaging the Traditional Student', *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 2/1: 37–52.

Contu, A., and Willmott, H. (2003). 'Re-embedding Situatedness: The Importance of Power Relations in Learning Theory', *Organization Science*, 14/3: 283–96.

Cunliffe, A. (2004). 'On Becoming a Critically Reflexive Practitioner', *Journal of Management Education*, 28/4: 407–26.

—— Forray, J., and Knights, D. (2002). 'Considering Management Education: Insights from Critical Management Studies', *Journal of Management Education*, 26/5: 489–95.

Edwards, R. (2005). 'Learning in Context: Within and Across Domains'. Paper presented to ESRC Teaching and Learning Research Programme (TLRP) Thematic Seminar Series 'Contexts, Communities, Networks: Mobilising Learners' Resources and Relationships in Different Domains', Seminar One, Glasgow, 15–16 Feb. Retrieved 29 Nov. 2005 from: crll.gcal.ac.uk/docs/TLRP_ContextSeminars/TLRP_ContxtSem1_Edwards.doc.

Eriksson, P., and Räsänen, K. (1998). 'The Bitter and the Sweet: Evolving Constellations of Product Mix Management in a Confectionery Company', *European Journal of Marketing*, 32/3–4: 279–304.

—— Fowler, C., Whipp, R., and Räsänen, K. (1996). 'Business Communities in the European Confectionery Sector: A UK–Finland Comparison', *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 12/4: 359–87.

Fenwick, T. (2005). 'Ethical Dilemmas of Critical Management Education: Within Classrooms and Beyond', *Management Learning*, 36/1: 31–48.

Guile, D. (2003). 'From "Credentialism" to the "Practice of Learning": Reconceptualising Learning for the Knowledge Economy', *Policy Futures in Education*, 1/1: 83–105.

Korpiaho, K. (2005). 'Students' Curriculum: What Do the Students Learn in the Business School?', in S. Gherardi and D. Nicolini (eds.), *The Passion for Learning and Knowing*. Trento: University of Trento e-books, vol. i. Available in e-form at: www4.soc.unitn.it:8080/dsrs/OLK6/content/e1220/Volume_1_ita.pdf.

Lave, J., and Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Leppälä, K., and Päiviö, H. (2001). *Kauppatieteiden opiskelijoiden moraalijärjestys: Narratiivinen tutkimus kolmen eri pääaineen opiskelusta Helsingin kauppa-korkeakoulussa.* Helsinki: Publications of the Helsinki School of Economics and Business Administration B-34.

MacIntyre, A. (1981). *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory.* Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press.

Nicolini, D., Gherardi, S., and Yanow, D. (2003). 'Introduction: Towards a Practice-Based View of Knowing and Learning in Organizations', in D. Nicolini, S. Gherardi, and

D. Yanow (eds.), *Knowing in Organizations: A Practice-Based Approach*. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe.

Päiviö, H. (2005). 'The Moral Order(s) of Studying at the Business School'. Paper presented to the 18th CHER Annual Conference 'Higher Education: The Cultural Dimension: Innovative Cultures, Norms and Values', University of Jyväskylä, 1–3 Sept. 2005.

Räsänen, K. (2005). 'Rehearsing Meaningful Academic Practice: Mission Impossible?' Paper presented to the symposium 'Universities as Worksites', 4th International Conference on Researching Work and Learning, Sydney, 11–14 Dec.

—— Meriläinen, S., and Lovio, R. (1995). 'Pioneering Descriptions of Corporate Greening: Notes and Doubts on the Emerging Discussion', *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 3/4: 9–16.

—— Korpiaho, K., Herbert, A., Mäntylä, H., and Päiviö, H. (2005). 'Emerging Academic Practice: Tempered Passions in the Renewal of Academic Work', in S. Gherardi and D. Nicolini (eds.), *The Passion for Learning and Knowing*. Trento: University of Trento e-books, vol. i. Available at: htttp://eprints.biblio.unitn.it/archive/00000828/.

Reynolds, M. (2000). 'Bright Lights and the Pastoral Idyll: Ideas of Community Underlying Management Education Methodologies', *Management Learning*, 31/1: 67–81.

—— and Vince, R. (2004). 'Critical Management Education and Action-Based Learning: Synergies and Contradictions', *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 3/4: 442–56.

Roberts, J. (1996). 'Management Education and the Limits Technical Rationality: The Conditions and Consequences of Management Practice', in R. French and C. Grey (eds.), *Rethinking Management Education*. London: Sage.

Schatzki, T. (2001). 'Introduction: Practice Theory', in T. Schatzki, K. Knorr-Cetina, and E. von Savigny (eds.), *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory*. London: Routledge.

Tiuraniemi, J. (1994). 'Reflektiivisen ammattikäytännön käsitteestä'. Publications of the Centre for Extension Education, University of Turku. Available at: http://users.utu.fi/juhtiur/reflektio.htm.

Tochon, F. (2000). 'When Authentic Experiences Are "Enminded" into Disciplinary Genres: Crossing Biographic and Situated Knowledge', *Learning and Instruction*, 10/4: 331–59.

Vann, K., and Bowker, G. C. (2001). 'Instrumentalizing the Truth of Practice', *Social Epistemology*, 15/3: 247–62.

Wenger, E., McDermott, R., and Snyder, W. (2002). *Cultivating Communities of Practice: A Guide to Managing Knowledge*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Business School Press.

Wray-Bliss, E. (2002). 'Abstract Ethics, Embodied Ethics: The Strange Marriage of Foucault and Positivism in Labour Process Theory', *Organization*, 9/1: 5–39.

CHAPTER 6

MAKING A DRAMA OUT OF A CRISIS? 'PERFORMATIVE LEARNING' IN THE POLICE SERVICE

RUTH COLQUHOUN
NELARINE CORNELIUS
MERETTA ELLIOT
AMAR MISTRY
STEPHEN SMITH

Introduction

Police station custody suites are subject to intense scrutiny, particularly through the UK Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE). Custody decisions are governed by myriad mandatory and discretionary regulations. Custody Sergeants must be conversant and comfortable with these regulations. They also need the nous to handle the emotions and the multiple dangers entailed by detention.

All sergeants must work as Custody Sergeants eventually. Although there is good training in the regulations and their interpretation, there is relatively little concerning the lively and complex interpersonal dynamics generated in custody, nor on their impact on decisions. Experience 'at the deep end' and informal knowledge sharing has been the main safeguard of good practice, which partly explains why few officers look forward to their stint as Custody Sergeants. Moreover specialization and accelerated promotion mean that many sergeants come to custody work with incomplete appreciation of the police process, full understanding of which is essential to wise decisions. When the cells are full, the combination of volume, complexity, and speed is intimidating. A 'Q-night' is preferred.[1]

Police cells present officers with a semi-scripted theatre in which they gauge their performance while under the gaze of many others. Get it wrong and the result can be catastrophic in terms of duty of care to detained persons and to justice. The way actors learn stagecraft has special practical relevance to officers. We will explain how 'performative learning' makes immediate sense in enabling Duty Sergeants to excel. This requires a learning laboratory including an imitation *custody suite* in which sergeants get a feel for how to *play* the role. We developed realistic simulations incorporating use of a front desk, four police cells, actual sergeants and arresting officers, with detained persons (DPs) played by actors—drama students who have researched and developed 'back stories' to inform their performances. These facilitate flowing enactment and convincing improvisation. Each 'circumstance of arrest' was devised by one of the authors: a sergeant with considerable custody experience.

The booking-ins were videoed for later analysis. One author undertook non-participant observation of three late shifts in real custody suites, partly to gauge the similarity between live 'booking-ins' (the initial registration of detained persons by the Custody Sergeant) and the simulations. No two booking-ins are ever identical; nevertheless 'life imitated art' closely. The simulations proved realistic in terms of the 'emotion work' performed by DPs and the 'emotional labour' enacted by Custody Sergeants. But reviews of the video coverage showed we had underestimated the impact of arresting officers in cooling down (or heating up) each turn of events. We argue that performative training develops practical appreciation of interactions between diverse DPs, Custody Sergeants, arresting officers, and the complex regulations governing custody. Indeed performative learning offers similar advantages to most front-line professions.

Performative Learning

Experiential learning involves use of the body as an investigative tool and as a repository for felt knowledge known-in-the-bones. Not all experiential learning

involves *doing something to somebody*, *in the company of another*, or *someone doing something back* in a challenging way. Police 'do things to others' with cooperation and resistance; for example, colleagues learn to collaborate when containing a bar-room brawl between twenty angry men. Officers also *embody* the criminal justice system. Learning is also performative because they are on stage.

Jackall's observations of the NYPD (2000) highlight police work as high drama and confounding frustration. Knowledge gained in performing duties is, unsurprisingly, relayed through performances: storytelling, serious joking, and gallows humour (Fineman, Gabriel, and Sims 2005). Cunliffe advocates learning arenas which engage issues from the *learner's* perspective, in their language (2000, 2001). Fenwick (2003) addresses practice-based informal learning and embodiment; Green and Taber (1978) experimentation and experiential learning. Ibarra's research (1999) on identity work and professional selves, Fransella's on personal change through 'fixed-role therapy' (2003), and Kalekin-Fishman on socio-psychodynamic learning (2003) share similar assumptions. All treat experience in and beyond the classroom as a resource requiring courses designed to enable learners to incorporate new skills back into their practices outside the classroom. The test is 'Does this "ring true" and "feel right"?' Cunliffe urges *acting reflexively within circumstances*, rather than taking intellectual or behaviourist approaches to practice development:

> [T]he learning process is . . . complex and non-linear, and encompasses informal ways of sense making that are often taken for granted. We therefore need to focus on singular events and conversations within which we construct practical accounts of our actions, identities and relationships with others, and which may guide our future action. . . . process . . . should be open to reflexive critique, because in helping students create new readings of their experience, we can create possibilities for change in everyday interaction. (2001: 37)

This should enable students to identify what they did-not-know-they-knew: 'responsive and unselfconscious moments in which we respond to our embodied sense of what is happening . . . the tacit knowing/assumptions often deep within us.' (2001: 40). The facilitators involved in custody training were unaware of Cunliffe but adopted similar precepts.

Practice Development in Emotional Labour

Though recent, the use of actors is quite common in police training with few evaluations of theatre techniques applied to practice development.

This is theatre because the officer is an actor; an *emotional labourer* (Hochschild 1983/2003). Emotional labour is 'the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display: emotional labour is sold for a wage and therefore has exchange value' (2003: 7). Police officers engage in varied and complex emotional labours, performed before many hostile audiences, scrutinized by CCTV, colleagues, and institutions beyond the police station, and challenged by DPs and by several constituencies.

Like acting, many branches of emotional labour invite performative learning. For example, Pam Smith's (1992) study of nursing and nurse training suggests to us similarities to (and differences from) police work, and we recommend inter-service dialogue. Like nursing the number of stakeholders with an interest in policing is high. Popular fiction, political, debate and newspaper headlines add faux familiarity with policing, and officers encounter these expectations in those arrested for the first time. DPs also: discovering 'the way it goes' as their own detention progresses.

The performance of a Custody Sergeant in relation to each DP here and now effects the judicial process ever after and many of these 'butterfly effect' outcomes are unforeseeable. The way Custody Sergeants interact with DPs, arresting officers, solicitors, official visitors, jailers, custody nurses, superintendents, and 'responsible adults' will be relayed far and wide, over time. Decent performance may be rewarded with greater compliance and consent when the DP is arrested next time, knowing the score. Good practice is infectious and other officers will incorporate it into their own work, with unknown future benefits, which could be large. 'Regular customers' will require less physical coercion; usually none, their anxiety lessened and easily contained by the sergeant.

Alternatively, events can escalate if the Custody Sergeant is insensitive to warning signs which most DPs 'give out' well before 'kicking off'. The next time *this* DP is in front of *this* Custody Sergeant—or another—the tipping point may come sooner; she or he may kick off quickly, be harder to contain, take longer to book in, and keep arresting officers off patrol for longer; poor use of police resources compromising public safety. The quality of information gathered might be lower, injury risk increased, periodic cell observations increased, confidence reduced in the DP's social circle; and death in custody more likely. Officers acknowledge that some constables manage to antagonize DPs. 'By the time they come in, blue lights flashing, we have got a *load* of work on our hands and it's a case of straight-into-the-holding-cell'.[2] Bad practice spreads too.

The DP, arresting officers, and Custody Sergeants interact, with Custody Sergeant as lead actor (or director) at the centre of transactions, using ingenuity to keep each episode within the plot indicated by the criminal justice system. The system calls for good-quality answers entered on a terminal, observation of accumulated contingent rules, and transparency. Finally, Custody Sergeants should uphold healthy and safe 'emotion regimes' (Hochschild 2001), which were

palpable during field observations.[3] A robust approach to well-being was observed at all three police stations visited, modulated by individual differences between DPs.

Emotional Labour, Emotion Work

For realism, actors playing DP roles need compelling back stories from which informative feelings can be derived, such as anger or vulnerability caused by prior hardship, indignity, or injustice, imagined or actual. This ability to invest a role with the memory of a feeling is known as deep-acting, as distinct from expressions merely painted on ('surface acting').

Hochschild defined emotional labour as the paid work of inducing appropriate feelings in others, in the line of duty. This applies to the effect on clients by flight attendants, debt collectors, Custody Sergeants, and arresting officers alike. But what to call efforts between colleagues or by clients *towards* the emotional labourer? The police are paid to affect others but not especially each other. Hochschild applies the general term 'emotion work' to *any* effort to alter the mood of others (1983/2003) while emotional *labour* is the *paid*, or commercialized, subset of emotion work. Thus officers do emotional labour and DPs do emotion work. The police station is not meant to 'commercialize human feelings', except incidentally through lawyers' fees. Because the point is to uphold the law (not profit), policing has a sacred quality—despite dealing with the dark side of life. This suggests a higher moral benchmark than, say, commercial security work.

Fineman applies *emotion work* to cover all emotional efforts between work colleagues (Fineman 2000; Bannister 2003). Similarly Hochschild, when comparing the all-consuming warm American office with home, which has become colder, stressful, and shows 'care deficit' (Hochschild 1997). Police comradeship was obvious from field observations.

Distinctions apart, the most relevant poles in custody work are deep-acted conviction and surface-acted superficiality; sacred attainment of high standards and profane *losing it*. Custody Sergeants work on DPs' feelings to minimize messing about, provocation, fishing for sympathy, derailing, bargaining, delay, stealing of the initiative, usurping of authority, and to detect false calm which masks private turmoil, hidden ligatures, razor blades secreted inside the cheek. There are scores of risks. Experienced Custody Sergeants treat 'giving-out' as an invitation by the DP to have their mood recognized and to be taken off the path to kicking off. The possibility of losing it is always present, so Custody Sergeants must perceive all relevant goings-on around the custody suite *and* devote exceptional attention to the critical moment, through eyes-at-the-back-of-the-head and 'antennas'.

Making a Drama out of a Crisis

Project Preparation

We began with over eleven hours listening to police officers about what they do. Our key informant and co-author is an experienced sergeant. The theory of emotional labour was explained to enable her to judge its relevance. A performing arts tutor (an experienced actor) was introduced for her expertise in performance-making and especially problem-solving theatre (after Boal). We took to each other's approaches.

Our sergeant scripted several circumstances-of-arrest and preliminary characterizations of DPs. The tutor worked with actors on their back stories, refined through exchange visits and viewing coverage of real booking-ins which illustrated best and worst practice. The roles are fictionalized versions of persons known to the police. A male police officer added 'Victor', an especially dangerous DP arrested for GBH. One of the authors played 'middle-aged male arrested at the scene for criminal damage'. Each role entailed points of law, procedure, degrees of physical and mental illness, and duty of care issues.

Design

Credible representation of a custody suite, insider knowledge, learning and development expertise (practical and academic), and capable actors were needed. The scenarios had to be experienced as real. The convincing enactment of 'regular customers' by actors who had never seen inside a police station was especially creditable. Their back stories left no shortage of things-to-do-next.

Scenarios unfolded in about twenty-five minutes each and debriefings took thirty minutes. Actors debriefed *in role*, then as themselves. Debriefings were initiated by experienced sergeants. Comments were immediate, constructive, and lightened with humour—meeting Cunliffe's ideal of reflection 'within circumstances'. The researchers said little to avoid interrupting conversation between officers.[4]

Staging

The event is reproducible. It continues to run with other actors and is offered to another police authority. The mock-up contains a facsimile of four cells with standard (Victorian) doors, locks, inspection flaps, raised mattresses, and WC. There is a 'front desk' with raised floor giving the Custody Sergeant a height advantage over DPs;[5] a computer terminal built into the desk, booking-in forms, and statements of rights. CCTV is statutory and incidentally enables trainees to

observe each booking-in, live, from another room, where debriefs were completed, immediately afterwards. Again typically, there is no natural light at the desk.

The set is unusual as it includes a sink and cells near to the desk. Normally cells would be off a corridor, away from the desk. There ought to be a back office behind the desk, containing CCTV monitors, VCRs (checked and logged by the jailer), a visual display summarizing circumstances of arrest, time of arrest (vital to obeying rules limiting how long DPs can be kept in custody), and details such as the frequency of periodic inspection of each DP's safety and well-being. This display assists the handover between shifts, when the suite is crowded with all (say) fifteen cells occupied by DPs with different circumstances of arrest, at different stages on their 'PACE clock'.[6] The back room would have phones, police radios, and notice boards extolling new practices and the availability of other agencies (drug referral, translation, mental health teams). Cartoons (ironic observations on police work), postcards, mugs, and tea bags domesticate this space. Field observations showed masses of deliberation, reflection, and advice happening here. Back offices allow Custody Sergeants to rebuke arresting officers discreetly and offer equally confidential praise. Mutual care and counselling is done, generally in an adult, comradely, and direct way; 'collective emotion work' certainly (Hochschild 1983/2003). Finally, the mock-up lacks the *smell* of real custody suites: sweaty-tar-the unwashed smell of fear, it was suggested.

While every custody suites varies, officers would recognize the mock-up as a plausible representation.

Participants

Each intake includes around eight sergeants new to custody suite work and about four with some experience. (The constabulary has about forty-five Custody Sergeants in post.) Two or three observers with considerable experience of custody were involved. One played the role of defence solicitor, another a CPS[7] agent, who presented particular types of challenge. We used between three and six actors, plus 'Victor' and one author as a 'criminal damage'. The arresting officers (usually two per DP) act as they would in practice, though it was agreed that no role would entail use of force. A research assistant provided video analysis.

Iterative Review

Given the dynamic complexity of booking in, they need immediate review while still fresh. This is collective, beginning with the actor, the Custody Sergeant, if necessary the arresting officers, and the trainers. This advice offered between colleagues deserves a separate paper. It addresses *split-second moments*, strategies—successful

or otherwise—and suggested alternatives, with theories offered as to their probable outcomes.

Video reviews led to new questions. What is the Custody Sergeant doing *exactly*? What is the DP doing towards the arresting officers? How are they performing towards the others? Is this the *result* or the *cause* of the DP's behaviour? Ramping up or down? Is the Custody Sergeant being supported or dissipated by arresting officers? Are they wandering off-piste? Who's alert to what *now*? Why did they miss the signs that the DP was going to run down the corridor? Is it always the same episode we see each time? What feelings does this scene provoke? What scope for different understandings?

With Crabtree and Miller (1999), Borkan claims repetitive review is

> invaluable as a qualitative, interpretive process that has the potential to be widely applicable, emotionally and intellectually stimulating, and highly productive. Immersion/crystallisation (I/C) consists of cycles whereby the analyst immerses him- or herself into and experiences the text, emerging after concerned reflection with intuitive crystallizations, until reportable interpretations are reached. . . . [Openness is a] critical tool. (1999: 180–1)

Observers should 'listen deeply'; engage; corroborate and consider alternatives; be patient and have a process orientation; be a mentor, tolerant of repetition.

Interestingly, officers tend towards consensus on the critical moments. They differ on what-could-have-been-done-about-it and between male and female officers' perception of risk (males perceive greater risk from close proximity to DPs). They are quick to cut-to-the-point—this is their pace, their professional *clockspeed*.

Professional theory is alive to these issues: identity work (Mirchandani 2003; Sveningsson and Alvesson 2003), physical attitude, embodiment and its influence on what is communicated and learned (Boal 2000; Boal and Jackson 1994, 2002; Laban 1963; Hodgson 2001), and learning through the role; similarly Kelly on 'fixed role therapy' as a means of 'reconstrual' and 'personal change' (1991) and Stanislawski's (1965) deep emotional reflection as a means of scoping embodied, emotion-informed performance.

After the Event

The videos from the first two sessions were replayed many times. The research assistant settled on:

- Narrative content,
- Non-verbal behaviour,
- Verbal behaviour,
- Emotional labour,
- Movement.

Narrative Content

We detected certain *prototypical* narratives which also fitted field observations:

- loud/agitated/on the edge/desperado/preparing to 'kick off'/obscene/'bring it on!'/roaring bear. (Officers choose from a wide repertoire of de-escalating measures. Place in cell if these fail to work, inspections every ten minutes, and resume booking in later.)
- too intoxicated or mentally distracted for any engagement. (Officers place in cell to await recovery; call for medical expertise if anxious about DP's well-being. Constant watch of cell.)
- bemused/bewildered/seeking orientation/struggling to comprehend, or feigning bewilderment. (Officers try explaining things in several different ways, searching for those that seem to 'catch' the DP's attention. Hold the DP's gaze.)
- lost soul/plaintive/disturbed/unsteady/had enough/agree-to-anything. (Officers try uphold the DP's rights in a meaningful way. Custody Sergeants may decide to place in cells while nursing assistance is called. But many other sympathetic strategies exist.)
- embarrassed/'I'm not really here'/'This is not really happening'. (Custody Sergeant tries to make 'reality dawn' while preserving DP's awareness of rights as 'reality hits', especially by quiet repetition of reminders that the DP can change their mind later about legal representation or having someone informed of their arrest.)
- rage-exhausted/compliant/pleading/quiet/in shock/retreating/apologetic/guilt. (As above; frequent observation.)
- negotiating/coy/messing/latching on to every opportunity/sustained mind games/preventing forward movement. (The Custody Sergeant uses all available mental stamina to stay ahead of whatever game is being played, anticipating each move if possible. Once a threshold is reached, may place in cell with little warning.)
- past caring/out-of-it/catatonic/trance-like/zonked/estranged. (Constant observation; custody nurse called.)
- needy/emanating neglect/lost child/whistling-in-the-dark. (Responsible adult called.)
- exceptional violent rage/DP biting own lips and cheeks/spitting blood and body tissue. (Rare. May call for as many as five officers for restraint.)

Non-Verbal Content

Movement, use of floor space, and gesture underlined narratives: repetitive gestures such as drumming on the desk, shifting weight from foot to foot, head swaying, and flapping the arms like appendages, also freezing. These evolved in relation to

arresting officers' posture, eye contact, as the narrative unfolded. The importance of arresting officers was underestimated originally, but was apparent from reviewing the videos. DPs 'played off them', testing their reactions.

Verbal Content

Prototypes included:

- loud-aggressive
- voice with raised emotional content
- quiet voices, depleted emotional content
- voice launched from the stomach or hissed through teeth
- shouting to the gallery

. . . inviting containing attempts by officers.

We observed pace of voice for each individual; reactions if interrupted, turn-taking gaps (disallowed in the case of high-pitched, resistant, and affronted narratives), and withholding of acknowledgement of the other. More turn-taking gaps offered as the mood comes down.

Emotional Labour

Some officers' performances were

- knowing
- close tracking of every move
- restrained-powerful
- authoritative-but-not-authoritarian
- business-like
- kindly
- patient
- tolerant

These varied according to prototypes (above) to some degree, modified by individual mannerisms, customized case by case, moment by moment.

Movement Analysis

We noted position, posture, and elicited responses; who was talking to whom; the extent of eye contact. We looked at movements[8] and whether or not any individuals were 'near' or 'far' either spatially, or in demeanour. We noted how emotion work transmits bodily. We also marked positions at outset and at completion, pondering

changes in distance. Participants relaxed visibly coming out of role (shoulders relaxed).

These subtleties were debated (in police day-language) during debriefing, particularly regarding *positioning* of both Custody Sergeant and DP at the desk and the conflicting needs for safety and rapport. The language of police work addressed issues precisely, consistent with Cunliffe's studies of what works well at management learning events (2000, 2001). Direct feedback from actors in and out of role (who come from the same age range as most detained persons) about how they felt at each stage gave an important reality check from outside the service. Academic observers could name the concepts which officers had picked up on. Naturally, officers prefer their terminology even where academic and lay concepts are similar.

By giving readers an over-our-shoulders description of a booking-in, followed by comments, they can judge the interpretations we are making:

> *Georgie* scenario with *police commentary* (25 minutes elapsed time). *Camera*: frontal view of Custody Sergeant and arresting officer, back of Custody Sergeant. Circumstances of Arrest: *Georgie* was detained by store personnel, claiming to have observed her leave an M & S store with £79 of smoked salmon without paying, then concealing it on another person. Full circumstances and back story omitted.
>
> A male arresting officer brings the detained person into the suite, guiding her lightly with his left palm on her upper back, indicating to her that she should 'Stand there', which places her about a metre from the Custody Desk. He stands aside, to her right, by a similar distance, having closed the door to the Custody Suite. The female Custody Sergeant's first act is to invite the DP to come forwards to the desk and a little to her right, so that she is now directly before her. Now the DP is nearer to the door than the arresting officer. [*Police comment: this arrangement shows that the officers do not anticipate threats from the DP. Inexperienced officers might be unaware that this is a judgement call that they should make in each case. Another example is when offensive weapons are taken from the DP and placed on the Custody Desk, within easy reach of the DP. This could result in injuries to the Custody Sergeant or arresting officer.*]
>
> Sergeant learns that her name is Georgie, age 21 and turns to the arresting officer for the 'circumstances of your arrest'. She asks Georgie, 'Will you let him speak?' She has been arrested for taking £79 worth of smoked salmon from a supermarket-far more than she could possibly need—without paying.
>
> Georgie does 'not remember any of that at all. I wouldn't do that at all . . .' The Sergeant is struck by this and soon identifies that she is on an anti-depressant, the effects of which, according to the DP, can seem to cause lapses in awareness. [*Police comment: the need to notice this risk and the importance of recording it is part of the Custody Sergeant's role: the novice Sergeant did well to identify signs of a mental health problem very quickly—information that DPs may be reluctant to reveal. The Sergeant found this out without causing any embarrassment or distress to the DP. Good.*]
>
> Georgie reiterates that she is oblivious as to the circumstances of the arrest, complaining of feeling sick; beginning to shift her weight from one foot to the other. She places one

hand on top of the other on the Custody Desk and rests her chin on her hands, head rolling from side to side. In response to some questions, she lifts her head and looks up at the Custody Sergeant. She is of slight build and the Custody Sergeant towers above her.

'I don't feel very well.'

'A nurse will be called.'

The 'authorization of her detention' causes her some distress and there is rising anxiety in voice. It is a delicate moment. Though Georgie is not hostile, the flow of the booking-in is a little awry. [*Police comment: The DP is persisting with many side issues and there are key questions that must be answered for reasons of justice and to identify any other well-being issues. Although there is a need to avoid unsettling the DP unnecessarily, the right balance needs to be struck between drawing things out and keeping control.*]

Some routine questions re-establish the rhythm a little, though Georgie begins a side-conversation with the arresting officer, which the Sergeant 'pulls back'. Georgie offers another conversation on 'using computers' and 'how cold it is'. 'Have you been trained in computers?' 'I like your watch. Is it one of those under-water ones?' 'It wasn't this cold last time.' 'Have you repainted in here?' Coughing, she is offered water; but declines asking after the arresting officer's height to help her judge her own: 'Six foot.' . . . 'Can I represent myself?' she asks. The Sergeant responds with a gentle 'smiling laugh' . . . Georgie is quite talkative. It transpires that she has quit her university course in journalism. She says she is claustrophobic. A Police National Computer Check (PNC) indicates that she has tried to harm herself in the past. 'Did *you* go to university?' asks Georgie.

Having had her rights explained (slowly, the Sergeant checking for understanding) and given a form which gives them in writing, Georgie reaches out with her left hand to flick at the sheet of paper (placed on the desk) spinning it clockwise with the tips of her first and second fingers. Quickly losing interest in this, she rests her chin directly on the desk. Sometimes she reaches out with her left hand, as far as she can across the desk. Her continuing dance seems spontaneous and unaffected. The impression is child-like and charming, suggestive of dependency, helplessness; vulnerability, perhaps. Meanwhile the arresting officer preserves his distance, arms folded, but shadowing her smiles. He rests his own chin on his left hand, supporting his left elbow on his folded right hand. That is arresting officer and DP both rest chin in hands.

In response to questions about special needs, she says 'vegetarian'. . . . 'Do you have any Jelly-babies?' she jokes.

'Can I not just go home?' . . . 'I need to go home for my welfare.' . . .

Georgie is gaining more and more 'air-time' tugging gently at 'who has the initiative?' 'I can't go in there!' Presented with the decision to place her in Cell 1 she suddenly makes a break and runs out and along the corridor. The officers laugh with mixture of shared surprise and bemusement. Brought back by the arresting officer, Georgie makes for the far wall of the Custody Suite as an alternative to going in the cell. 'I really can't. I Can-Not-Go-In-There.' She repeats this several times. This works for her. The Sergeant concedes that the custody nurse can assess her there, pending a decision.

[*Police comment: Georgie, has taken (or been given) some control. Welfare needs have been respected; but we are left with a DP in a semi-open area which could become busy with other 'customers' leading to a bit of a mess in the custody area, with Georgie, complicating the next*

booking in. The DP has managed to charm and divert the officers and takes her opportunity to escape. With a different DP the outcome could have been serious, with harm to the DP, the officers, or both, and a lot of disruption.]

At the collective debrief, asked 'how was it?' the actor, *still in role*, said, 'You were OK . . . I suppose. Yes you were *alright*. You kept looking at me and yes, OK. It was fine, I suppose.'

Could the outcome have been different and by doing what?

Georgie in four categories (5 minute sample)

The arresting officer enters with Georgie, and he tells her where to stand. However the female Custody Sergeant tells her to move closer so she 'doesn't have to shout', suggesting a difference between the male and female officers and that she is not afraid of the DP and offers closeness.

Analysis of 5 minute video recording:

Non-verbal Language Georgie's body language shows that she is comfortable with the Custody Sergeant as she is leaning on the desk, getting closer to the female officer and further from the arresting officer. Georgie's hands are on the table, exploring its surface continuously. The DP and Custody Sergeant have full eye contact. The Custody Sergeant is kind and addresses Georgie's well-being. She is comforting, measured, and seems to acknowledge Georgie's distress.

Georgie takes up the invitation by making conversation with the Custody Sergeant on how to use computers, more typical of friendship than of custody. When the custody officer goes to the computer, Georgie stretches up so that she can look over and continue talking. She doesn't make any efforts to get closer to the male officer and this suggests that she is working at controlling the situation between the two officers.

The male officer seems defensive, arms semi-folded across the chest and positioned at arm's length from Georgie. He spends most of his time looking at her head. Georgie withholds eye contact with him. She seems indifferent to him. He looks a little distant but the Custody Sergeant's questions occupy him briefly. This is routine. Arms across his chest, authoritative, in control. But I feel that this is not what he feels. He looks a bit spare and must look the part despite the tedium, to preserve control. He sways when he is talking to the Custody Sergeant and looks at Georgie when she talks to the Custody Sergeant. He tends to look away when they directly talk to each other. He returns his arms from his side to across the chest, suggesting restlessness. He also occasionally rubs his ear, suggestive of him 'not wanting to hear any lies'.

Verbal exchanges The female Custody Sergeant is reassuring, she has a calm voice and gives Georgie time to talk. She listens. The Custody Sergeant doesn't talk over her as they work through the procedure. They seem close, and not just physically. Honorary Mother and Daughter? The female officer is 'between the toe and the heel' of the job as Hochschild might put it.

She questions Georgie, taking time to listen to the problem and establish whether Georgie's answers are credible. Trust is being built. A male Custody Sergeant could not be Mother and, even as Father, might be more blunt and less receptive. He might look

straight past her and—given the circumstances of arrest-towards the more obvious fact of her guilt. Although the role of Custody Sergeant and arresting officer are scripted, there does seem to be another, male–female dynamic at work. Georgie is very quiet-spoken when talking to the female officer and she seems to curb her annoyance. Georgie knows the custody officer is looking after her because she's been asked if she wants an extra blanket for the cell. The arresting officer also speaks quietly, but the script allows him little to do in any case.

Emotional Labour The Custody Sergeant is deep-acting and uses her experience to control Georgie while keeping her comfortable in unusual surroundings. Georgie sways throughout and is given spatial freedom. In placing her arm on her cheek she seems to be thinking about what has happened and the Custody Sergeant's calm approach invites truthful reflection. The arresting officer's acting shows looser attachment and neutrality. On a few occasions he checks his watch indicating he needs to be elsewhere. He is not very interested and only participates when instructed by the custody officer. This is expected of the arresting officer in this Constabulary.

Movement Georgie talks to both officers. However, she forms a greater bond with the custody officer by eye contact, proximity, and conversation. They talk about other issues besides custody. When Georgie eventually talks to the arresting officers, she makes good eye contact and looks at him whenever it is relevant. The arresting officer offers Georgie less eye contact. Through a good relationship with Georgie and the arresting officer, the Custody Sergeant minimizes potential conflict in connection with asking the arresting officer what she stole. She answers some of his questions for him. The arresting officer is silent when Georgie asks him questions—again as would be expected.

Changes in the distance between Georgie and the male officer are shown to be large when the video is played 'fast-forward'. It shows that the male is always moving back in relation to her. In between, Georgie *hugs* and caresses the custody desk, to get closer to the female Custody Sergeant? This action suggests what a little trust and sympathy from an officer can bring to the relationship between Custody Sergeant and DP. Getting closer may elicit vital information. I also sense that the Custody Sergeant experiments with putting herself in Georgie's position to discover more.

At the start the distance between Georgie and the arresting officer is closer (15–46 cm) but at the end it is a social distance of 1.2 m–3.6 m. The distance between Georgie and the Custody Sergeant is close throughout, starting off social but straight away moving to intimate/confiding. This occurs as soon as the custody officer tells her to 'come closer' and it stays like that throughout the five-minute sample.

Conclusions

Hochschild drew attention to the special labour performed by service workers who stand in front of us. She noticed the emotional labour of the flight attendant and the possible estrangement caused by endless good cheer in the line of duty. What of police officers, required to switch between good cheer and coercion many times

and return home to normal life? Flight attendants report difficulty switching off at the end of a shift and no doubt so do many police officers, especially after a busy custody shift.

Pam Smith (1992) addressed the emotional labour of nursing and of improved performance. By comparing clinical settings, Smith found connections between good emotional labour, reduced estrangement, and better patient care, noticing how different clinical leaders enabled or disabled good nursing. Some wards were happy, explained by senior clinicians; they enabled learning by novices, which worked its way through to improved patient recovery times.

We hinted at how *custody nous* is developed, embodied, and felt. Like Pam Smith, we are interested in how improvement is possible through learning and how a virtuous relationship can be created between *improved* emotional labour (especially improved quality) and *reduced* estrangement, avoiding burn-out. The lack of enthusiasm among sergeants contemplating custody work for the first time and the burn-out of nurses are related phenomena.

While *efficiency* and *estrangement* are not the same, there is usually some relationship between them in both services. Better emotional labour should mean less estrangement, not more; though the danger persists that improved labour means both more labour and more estrangement. We should only countenance improved emotional labour that brings gains for both provider (nurse, police officer) *and* client (patient, detained person). All parties have a stake in good technique. This type of two-way gain comes from good custody practice much as it does from good clinical practice, which nevertheless needs to be learned.

Cunliffe (2000, 2001) stresses 'singular events and conversations within which we construct practical accounts of our actions, identities and relationships with others'. We should 'respond to our embodied sense of what is happening . . . the tacit knowing/assumptions often deep within us'. We think this was happening. Custody training confirms that:

$$\text{improvement} = \text{reduced estrangement} + \text{learning} + \text{client care}.$$

Though police officers could say far more in their own words, *improvement*, *learning*, and *reduced estrangement* can be itemized:

1. Custody should uphold the physical, psychical, and emotional well-being of officer and client and meet public expectations for civility and justice. Custody training contributes in a significant way to these sacred aims. Officers, DPs, and visitors 'know it when they see it'.
2. Conversely poor practice leads to regrettable redirection of resources from public safety to custody control; this can foster righteous resentment.
3. The debriefings picked on immediate and wider consequence. How officers perform towards detainees is likely to be associated with how communities as

a whole, law abiding and law breaking, are viewed and policed. One provides an index for the other and good custody is a sign of good policing 'On Area'.

4. Custody is a marker of civility. To treat DPs as outlaws means unlicensed abuse by law officers and maximum estrangement (and disgrace) of all concerned. The world offers many dreadful examples and civilized practice should be exported.
5. Like senior nurses, the Custody Sergeant is also both emotional labourer and unit manager. In discussion officers stressed the need to be authoritative without being authoritarian—something which officers and nurses do not always achieve.
6. Practitioner involvement in the design and conduct of training events brings concreteness and relevance that would be impossible otherwise.
7. Actors know a great deal about performance know-how. Their nous is invaluable to other emotional labourers.

We think these items indicate reduced estrangement for providers and clients and practical means for achieving them, though the care of detained persons is not always pretty. Detainees who rage in custody are nevertheless vulnerable in many ways and we have been pleased to find that a language of care exists in police stations. Care is expressed in a more robust way by police officers compared with flight attendants, but it seems more *substantive*. And as we saw with Georgie's Custody Sergeant, who is not untypical, many officers express much the same care and concern as the good nurse.

Notes

1. Officers are superstitious about saying 'Quiet night', preferring 'It's a Q. Night, Sarge.' Saying 'quiet night' tempts fate.
2. Ideally, low-threat DPs are brought straight to the desk. The DO will order an appropriate type of body search, at an appropriate point in the process (if this has not been done). However if the DP is difficult to restrain, they are taken straight from the patrol car to the holding cell, restrained, and searched there and then. Any available officers, the 'civilian' jailer, and, if necessary, the DO will cooperate in restraining the DP. There is the space to do this. The holding cell differs from other cells in that the front wall is replaced by bars along its full width (as in cells shown in 'Western' movies) so that everything can be seen from the outside. The holding cells we have seen are positioned immediately opposite the 'yard' entrance to the police station. This means that DPs can be taken directly through the back entrance and into the holding cell, without negotiating difficult corners or narrow corridors. While this does not usually present too much of a challenge, it is certainly not the preferred option for most officers! As for officers who provoke DPs, 'It's really the *last* thing I need.'
3. Hochschild first used the term 'emotion regime' during her public address at Brunel University on 4 Oct. 2001. She used it to identify what it was that the terrorists had

attempted to destroy just three weeks earlier on 11 Sept. 2001. We feel that this is a telling form of words which may be used also to describe any affective social order, for example the good or, for that matter, the bad atmosphere prevailing in a police station. Emotion regimes vary perceptibly from place to place and over time. Thus, in everyday language, people speak of a bar with a 'great atmosphere' or, say, of an intimidating 'no go area, where they are afraid to visit at night'. Feminist street campaigns to 'reclaim the night' may be described as acting to change the emotion regime. In our understanding, emotion regimes have a comparatively long half life, measured in years or decades. Short-term changes in mood (such as a crowd 'turning nasty' and there being 'ugly scenes') do not usually indicate a shift in the emotion regime as a whole. However, in very rare moments a change in emotion regime is indeed marked by a singular change of mood, such as accomplished by exceptional political oratory. The text version of Hochschild's public lecture at Brunel is found in *Soundings*, 20.

4. A mini seminar in 'emotional labour' was tried on the first custody course, but abandoned subsequently because, by common agreement, it 'did not feel right'.
5. Our confederate reported that this extra height can aggravate feelings of persecution in DPs with certain forms of mental illness.
6. PACE governs the maximum length of time of detention without charge.
7. Crown Prosecution Service.
8. The Fast-Forward/Play function makes the rhythm of position changes very clear.

References

Bannister, D. (2003). 'The Logic of Passion', in F. Fransella (ed.), *International Handbook of Personal Construct Psychology.* London: Wiley.

Boal, A. (2000). *Theatre of the Oppressed*. London: Pluto Press.

—— and Jackson, A. (1994). *The Rainbow of Desire: The Boal Method of Theatre and Therapy*. London: Routledge.

—— —— (2002). Games *for Actors and Non Actors.* London: Routledge.

Borkan, J. (1999). 'Immersion/Crystalization', in B. F. Crabtree and W. L. Miller (eds.), *Doing Qualitative Research.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Crabtree, B. F. and Miller, W. L. (eds.) (1999). *Doing Qualitative Research. Thousand Oaks: Sage.*

Crabtree, B. F. and Miller, W. L. (1999). 'The Dance of Interpretation', in B. F. Crabtree and W. L. Miller (eds.), *Doing Qualitative Research.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Cunliffe, A. L. (2000). 'Reflexive Dialogical Practice in Management Learning', *Management Learning*, 33/1: 35–61.

—— (2001). 'Managers as Practical Authors: Reconstructing our Understanding of Management Practice', *Journal of Management Studies*, 38: 351–71.

Fenwick, T. (2003). 'Reclaiming and Re-embodying Experiential Learning through Complexity Science', *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 35/2: 123–41.

Fineman, S. (ed.) (2000). *Emotion in Organizations*. London: Sage.

—— Gabriel, Y., and Sims, S. (2005). *Organizing and Organizations*. London: Sage.

Fransella, F. (ed.) (2003). *International Handbook of Personal Construct Psychology*. London: Wiley.

Green, S. G., and Taber, T. D. (1978). 'Structuring Experiential Learning through Experimentation', *Academy of Management Review* (Oct.): 889–95.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (2002). *Training Matters*. London: HMSO.

Hochschild, A. R. (1983/2003). *The Managed Heart: The Commercialisation of Human Feeling.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

—— (1997). *The Time Bind: When Work Becomes Home and Home Becomes Work.* New York: Metropolitan Books/Henry Holt.

—— (2001). *Emotion Management in an Age of Global Terrorism*. Public lecture, 10 Oct., Brunel University; later published in *Soundings*, 20 (2002).

Hodgson, G. (2001). *Mastering Movement: The Life and Work of Rudolf Laban.* London: Methuen.

Ibarra, H. (1999). 'Provisional Selves: Experimenting with Image and Identity in Professional Adaption', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44/4: 764–91.

Jackall, R. (2000). 'A Detective's Lot: Contours of Morality and Emotion in Police Work', in S. Fineman (ed.), *Emotion in Organizations*. London: Sage.

Kalekin-Fishman, D. (2003). 'Social Relations in the Modern World', in F. Fransella (ed.), *International Handbook of Personal Construct Psychology*. London: Wiley.

Kelly, G. A. (1991). *The Psychology of Personal Constructs.* London: Routledge.

Laban, R. (1963). *Modern Educational Dance*. London: MacDonald & Evans.

Mirchandani, K. (2003). 'Challenging Racial Silences in the Studies of Emotion Work: Contributions from Anti-Racist Feminist Theory', *Organization Studies*, 24/5: 721–4.

Smith, P. (1992). *The Emotional Labour of Nursing.* Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Stanislawski, C. (1965). *An Actor Prepares.* New York: Theater Arts Books.

Sveningsson, S., and Alvesson. M. (2003). 'Managing Managerial Identities: Organizational Fragmentation, Discourse and Identity Struggles', *Human Relations*, 56/10: 1163–94.

CHAPTER 7

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN THE ON-LINE ENVIRONMENT

ENHANCING ON-LINE TEACHING AND LEARNING

JOSEPH E. CHAMPOUX

Pedagogical and education research dating to John Dewey's (1916) foundation work has emphasized student interaction as a key part of an engaging student-centred learning environment. A focus on interaction has continued as a primary concern of contemporary on-line instructional researchers. They see it as a key way of reducing the emphasis on course content or the instructor (for example, Draves 2000; Kearsley 2000).

On-line teaching and learning often has a passive quality when instructors do not include course features that draw students into course content. A course design that features a collection of hyperlinked documents can lead to simple 'page turning'. Such designs do not increase student involvement with course material.

This chapter describes some on-line learning activities that can increase student involvement with course content, other students, and the instructor. Refinements in on-line course delivery and other technologies now allow more involvement and engagement of learners with on-line course material than ever before.

The chapter discusses ways of introducing experiential learning into the on-line environment. It presents some experiential exercises (eExercises) developed for on-line management and organizational behaviour courses. These exercises increase the focus on the learner and can help increase social interaction within an on-line course.

On-Line Management Education Issues

Four on-line management education issues guided the development of the eExercises described in this chapter. Each issue derives from Bloom's taxonomy of learning goals (Bloom 1956) and careful consideration of several learning theories discussed later. The four issues are:

- Learner involvement: increase learner involvement with course content and the instructor.
- Learner self-awareness: design course content that lets a learner become more aware of various aspects of self.
- Learner analytical skills: offer on-line course experiences that help a learner develop her or his analytical skills.
- Practical application of on-line course content: help on-line learners apply course content to practical situations.

A later section assesses each eExercise against this list of on-line management education issues.

Learning Theory and On-Line Experiential Learning[1]

Several learning theories offer some insights about experiential learning in the on-line environment.[2] These lines of research suggest different learning effects of on-line course content. The following summarizes some major learning theories and links them to teaching and learning in the on-line environment.

Behavioural learning theory views learning as happening because of a predictable and reliable link between a stimulus and a learner's response. A person learns from stimulus–response pairing. The connection between a stimulus and response

strengthens the more it is practised. The need to link stimulus and response suggests the importance of the instructor's role in controlling the learning environment to align with an educational goal (Chance 1994; Skinner 1968; Thorndike 1932; Watson 1914).

Cognitive theory also views learning as happening in response to an environmental stimulus. It adds a person's internal mental processing system as a mediator between response and resultant learning. Internal mental states or schemata help a person organize, remember, and learn from environmental events. A person can learn across situations by framing new problems with familiar schemata (Bartlett 1932; Rumelhart and Norman 1981).

Humanistic theory views learning as involving the total person. It includes the person's uniqueness, individual potential, intrinsic motivation, and emotions. A person learns through all aspects of self, not only a reaction to the person's environment. An individual's feelings and views about experiences and behaviour are integral parts of learning. Humanistic theory sees behaviour resulting from human choice. Individuals have the freedom and responsibility to become what they can become (Bugental 1967; Patterson 1973; Rogers 1969).

Social learning theory uses the concepts and principles of operant learning, but assumes cognitive mediation of these associational processes. It adds a social context to learning, including social groups and the larger social order. This theory describes people as learning from observing other people within a social context. Much of human behaviour involves the interaction of people, with multiple stimuli bombarding the individual simultaneously. Social learning theory explains human learning based on the continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioural, and environmental factors (Bandura 1977; Miller and Dollard 1941; Mischel 1973, 1979).

Constructivism or constructivist theory is an umbrella term for diverse views of learning. This perspective assumes learning is an active process of building not attaining knowledge. Learners construct knowledge as they try to make sense of their experiences. The most striking difference from previously described theories is the shift of focus from knowledge acquisition in a content domain to development of skills needed to navigate through the domain. Knowledge is not in the content but in the person's content domain activity. While the learning activity is embedded within the domain context, getting the content is peripheral not central to learning. This approach emphasizes the learning process not the products of learning (Brown, Collins, and Duguid 1989; Bruner 1961; Bruner, Oliver, and Greenfield 1966; Lave and Wenger 1991).

Experiential learning refers to a wide range of learning and teaching practices, policies, and ideologies. It is typically a multiple step process of reacting to experiences with observations and reflection (Brah and Hoy 1989; Jarvis 1987; Kolb 1984; Miller and Boud 1996; Weil and McGill 1989a, 1989b). A person reacts to and learns from experiences based on their cultural origin and a unique collection of

beliefs, attitudes, and emotions—their unique personality. The experiential learner forms concepts and generalizations from the experience that he or she can test and use in new situations. The experience that forms the basis of experiential learning can happen as real life experiences (primary experience) or mediated (secondary experience) in a classroom setting by using exercises.

Each theory summarized above suggests that bringing an experiential exercise approach to on-line instruction can have potentially positive effects. Behavioural learning theory points to the reinforcement of concepts between print and on-line presentations and completing an appropriate eExercise. Cognitive theory strongly suggests that a well-designed eExercise can become a schema by which a person organizes and recalls otherwise abstract concepts. The holistic views of humanistic theory argue that a properly designed eExercise focused on the individual can tap more of the whole person, especially emotion. Using a team-based eExercise can create an on-line social context that supports learning contributions from the interaction of cognitive, behavioural, and environmental factors as argued by social learning theory.

The strongest theoretical support of teaching and learning functions of eExercises comes from constructivism and experiential learning theory. Constructivism implies that exercises are rich targets and activities from which a learner builds understanding and retention of theories and concepts. They represent an activity within a content domain from which a learner builds understanding. Experiential learning theory argues for using experience (eExercises) as the basis of learning. In the on-line environment, eExercises can become the secondary experience from which learners form concepts and generalizations that they take to new experiences. These two theoretical positions point strongly to enhancing the on-line learning experience with an integrated experiential learning approach.

An On-Line Experiential Learning Approach

An on-line experiential approach parallels what a student experiences in a face-to-face class. A major difference is the use of on-line technology as part of the experiential course design. The eExercises described later parallel the design and effect of experiential exercises in the face-to-face classroom.

The experiential exercises discussed in this chapter can give students an engaging and involving learning experience, reducing the passive character of on-line content. One can fully integrate these exercises into almost any on-line management or organizational behaviour course. They become a regular part of a student's on-line activity.

eExercises have two forms: (1) individual exercises for the single learner, and (2) virtual group exercises that teams complete in the on-line environment. The eExercises that focus on individuals ask individual students to assess themselves. Virtual group exercises ask virtual teams to complete the exercise. A unique feature of some exercises is their use of on-line film scenes as the exercise target. This mixture of experiential learning and different media helps enhance the on-line teaching and learning experience.

Experiential exercises can appear almost anywhere in an on-line course. Behavioural learning theory suggests placing the eExercise experience close to the presentation of concepts and theories to which it is related. Such presentations can have many forms: off-line text; on-line text; PowerPoint slides; and E-Lectures (voice-over PowerPoint slides).

Individuals or teams complete the body of the eExercise and identifying information on-line. A student or team enters identifying information at the bottom of the eExercise form. All exercises have the same format. They ask for the student's name, the student's e-mail address, and the instructor's e-mail address. When satisfied with the completion of the exercise, the student clicks the 'Submit Your Answers' button. The completed form passes through a forms processing program that summarizes the exercise contents and sends the summary to both the student and the instructor.

The results of the exercises become part of a course's discussion, either in a scheduled chatroom activity or with postings to a course's discussions area topics. An instructor can analyse the exercise results she or he receives and build those results into the discussion. These discussions are important parts of course design that increase student involvement and engagement with course content.

eExercises: On-Line Experiential Exercises

This section describes four eExercises drawn from a larger project that is developing exercises for many management and organizational behaviour topics. The larger project has exercises focused on workforce diversity, organizational socialization, power, political behaviour, motivation, and the like. The discussion below separately examines individual and virtual team exercises.

Each exercise closes with an identifying information section that includes the student's name, the course in which enrolled, the student's e-mail address, and the instructor's e-mail address. After clicking the 'Submit Your Answers' button, the forms processing program sends the processed form to the course instructor.

Table 7.1 Access and login information: chapter supporting website

URL: http://webct.unm.edu
Click: LOGIN
Login: guest_elol
Password: guest_elol
Click: Experiential Learning—On-Line
Links to each eExercise appear on the Home Page.

Individual eExercises

Individual eExercises focus on the individual learner. Students complete the eExercise alone with no involvement of other course members while completing the exercise. This section presents two individual eExercises. One uses the student as the target; the other uses an on-line film scene as the target. Because of space limitations, the eExercises are not reproduced here. You may view and complete each exercise by going to the website that supports this chapter. Table 7.1 shows the access and login information.

Each eExercise description includes its purpose, typical ways in which to use the exercise, and some results you can expect when using the exercise. Expected results come from several sources, all based on the author's experiences with the exercise. Sources of typical results vary because each exercise is in a different development stage within the larger project. Some exercise results come from on-line course use; others come from face-to-face classroom use. The film-based eExercise results come from the instructor's manual that supports the noted film scene.

Your Conflict Orientations

The 'Your Conflict Orientations' eExercise lets a person assess the conflict orientations the person is likely to use in different situations. This exercise addresses the on-line management education issues of learner involvement and learner self-awareness described at the beginning of the chapter.

The exercise opens with an overview and instructions that orient the student to the exercise. This exercise defines the conflict orientations and presents the student with a set of rating scales to assess her or his conflict orientations. The exercise includes a text box where a student enters notes and makes some observations about her or his likely use of each orientation.

A course's design can require a discussion of each student's conflict orientation during a course's weekly scheduled chat activity. If a student does not attend the scheduled chat activity, a course can require the student to post observations

Table 7.2 eExercise: your conflict orientations

Champoux≫Let's take a look at your/our conflict orientations.
Student A≫different depending on who is involved
Champoux≫Around the room: Primary conflict orientation of each of you?
Student B≫mostly collaborative or compromise
Student A≫dominant with strangers but not with friends—collaborative with friends
Student C≫I am collaborative in most situations
Student E≫I am definitely a compromise-type, though collaborative efforts are always praised
Student A≫accommodative at work
Student D≫Cooperate.
Student F≫same as [Student B] . . . don't like avoidance . . . can be pressed into using dominance at times (usually defensive)
Student A≫definitely—but I think it's important to change orientation depending on who is on the other side of the conflict
Student D≫I agree. Avoidance, in my experience, is never the best approach.
Champoux≫Myself largely collaborative . . . with a dusting of compromise and dominance.

Discussions Area Excerpts

Student X:

I consider myself to be dominant. I enjoy exploring issues and winning debates about the best way to deal with an issues. But, this has overlap with collaborative, since winning frequently requires meeting the needs of many different stakeholders and buiding consensus.

Student Y:

eExercise: This exercise made me consider how I do react when I am in a conflict. I have to fight my natural tendencies of avoidance and accommodation. This would really be hard for me to do if I was in a conflict with another person with a dominance orientation. I do not like dealing with people with strong dominance traits and would prefer to ignore the conflict or make it go away as quickly as possible. However, I realize that this accomplishes nothing. The conflict aftermath will leave room for latent conflict because none of my goals will have been met. This only means that I will have to deal with the same dominant person when the conflict resurfaces. It is better that I deal with the person the first time and focus on collaboration or compromise to solve the conflict. This is something that I am getting better with as I mature and gain more experience dealing with conflicts.

Chat activity and discussions area postings excerpts; chat activity excerpts.

on his or her eExercise results to a specific topic in the course's discussions area.

The upper part of Table 7.2 shows an excerpt of a chat activity discussion of the 'Your Conflict Orientations' eExercise for several students. I disguised students' names but show their observations as they appeared in the chatroom log. The lower part of Table 7.2 has excerpts from student postings to the discussions area. These are different students because they did not participate in the course's scheduled chat activity. The chat activity excerpts show interaction among participants; the discussion posting has no interaction. Both show the introspection produced by the exercise.

Diagnosing and Redesigning Jobs: Reality Bites *(1994)*

The diagnosing and redesigning jobs exercise is a film-based eExercise that uses a scene from the film *Reality Bites*. This scene comes from a film scene collection licensed for internet distribution in on-line courses (Champoux 2005).

Four Generation Xers meet life's realities after their college graduation. Life's realities play cruel tricks on them as they continue developing together. Lelaina Pierce (Winona Ryder) desperately seeks a job after her termination as a production assistant for a morning TV show. She has had three unsuccessful job interviews before the one shown in the 'Wienerdude' scene used for this eExercise. Just before this scene, Lelaina asked her mother (Susan Norfleet) for a loan. Lelaina's mother noted that times are hard and Lelaina should perhaps find a job at a fast food restaurant.

This exercise presents a student with an exercise overview and instructions for accessing the *Reality Bites* film scene. A student first views the film scene on-line. The on-line presentation of the scene includes a brief film description, scene description, scene context within the film, and a link to the film scene. This *Reality Bites* film scene is the exercise target, not the person. This exercise addresses the on-line management education issues of learner analytical skills and practical application of on-line course content described at the beginning of this chapter.

Separate sections of the exercise present various parts of the job characteristics theory of work motivation (Hackman and Oldham 1980). This theory is part of many management and organizational behaviour courses. The sections include the core job characteristics, moderator variables, critical psychological states (internal psychological reactions), and affective and behavioural responses. A 'Navigation Menu' lets a student conveniently move among the exercise's sections.

Students individually complete the form, using it to assess the job and work context they observe in the film scene. A course's design can include the discussion activities described for the previous eExercise.

Students should note in their exercise results several parts of the film scene analysis shown in Table 7.3. The core job characteristics of skill variety, task identity, and autonomy should appear low to most students. They will need to infer levels of these job characteristics from Wienerdude's (David Spade, uncredited) description of Lelaina Pierce's (Winona Ryder) potential job. They also can observe the other workers' behaviour to come to their conclusions. The work context has some negative factors such as closeness of workers, heat, and food odours. Students will vary in what they notice and emphasize. Work context can play a negative role as a moderator variable in the job characteristics theory of work motivation. Students also note low levels of most critical psychological states. As predicted by the theory, affective and behavioural outcomes also should appear low to most students. They also might note some observations from their experiences in a fast food restaurant.

Table 7.3 ***Reality Bites.*** **Film scene analysis**

Despite Wienerdude's fondness for his job and supervisory role, the job for which Lelaina applies likely is low in most core job characteristics. The job has few skill requirements, little wholeness, and does not appear important to almost anyone. This job likely has little autonomy because of well-defined procedures for food preparation and customer interaction. The work context has crowded working conditions, food particles scattered about, food odours, and unenthusiastic coworkers. It likely is a hot work environment, especially in the summer. Wienerdude's supervisory behaviour combines with crowded working conditions to produce a potentially negative work context. If Wienerdude hires her, Lelaina should experience low intrinsic motivation and general job satisfaction.

Source: J. E. Champoux, *Instructor's Manual* for *Our Feature Presentation: Organizational Behavior* (Mason, Oh.: South-Western, a division of Thomson Learning, 2005), 38. Used with the permission of Thomson Learning.

Virtual Team eExercises

Teams of students complete the second group of eExercises. Team members interact using on-line course technologies such as discussion areas and chatrooms. The technologies described for the virtual team eExercises are common features of on-line course delivery and management platforms.

Team members can interact by either of two methods. Asynchronous interaction uses a private discussions area topic set for each team. Only team members can access the topic. Synchronous interaction occurs in a scheduled chatroom activity for team members. This communication method requires coordination among teams and the instructor to assign the course's chatrooms.

Each team posts its results for the exercise to a public discussion topic for the exercise. The results of each team become part of the discussion during the scheduled weekly chat activity or the alternative discussions area postings.

Alternative Social Processes for Decision Making

The 'Alternative Social Processes for Decision Making' eExercise presents two decision-making scenarios to a team. Teams assess each scenario for the type of decision process that best fits the scenario. Decision processes range from individually based processes to a group-based process that asks for consensus.

This exercise is based on the Vroom–Yetton (1973) model that commonly appears in management and organizational behaviour courses. It is a normative decision-making model that guides a person's choices from five alternative approaches to decision making. The approaches are Autocratic (AI, AII), Consultative (CI, CII), and Group Based (GII). The model uses a set of rules that protects a decision's

acceptance and quality. It picks the approach shown by the rules as best for the decision problem under consideration. This exercise addresses the on-line management education issues of learner involvement and learner self-awareness described at the beginning of this chapter.

Students who have completed this exercise usually pick all five approaches to decision making for 'Case I: Oil Pipeline'. Their reasons for choices vary highly. Those who pick AI or AII note that they have the information to decide. Students who pick the consultative approaches (CI and CII) note that they need more information to make a decision. Those who pick GII, the most time-consuming approach, say they want to build commitment to the decision to carry out the decision effectively.

'Case II: Data Collection' has about 90 per cent of a class choosing the GII social process. Discussion usually centres on the ambiguity of the situation, the need for more information, and the need for supervisory commitment described in the case's last sentence. Students often see the importance of this commitment to the decision to get effective implementation, a key part of the Vroom–Yetton decision model.

Organizational Culture Diagnosis: Backdraft *(1991)*

The film-based 'Organizational Culture Diagnosis' eExercise uses scenes from the film *Backdraft* as the exercise target. These scenes come from the collection of film scenes described earlier. Presentation of the *Backdraft* scenes proceeds as described for the *Reality Bites* scene. This exercise addresses the on-line management education issues of learner analytical skills and practical application of on-line course content described at the beginning of this chapter.

Two brothers follow their late father, a legendary Chicago firefighter, and join the department. Stephen 'Bull' McCaffrey (Kurt Russell) joins first and rises to the rank of lieutenant. Younger brother Brian (William Baldwin) joins later and becomes a member of Bull's Company 17. The scene appears early in *Backdraft* as part of 'The First Day' sequence. It shows Company 17 preparing to fight a garment factory fire.

The eExercise form's content follows common discussions about organizational culture and culture diagnosis found in management and organizational behaviour courses. Different exercise sections focus on an organizational culture's visible aspects such as physical characteristics and invisible aspects such as values. Students will typically have the required background from course content to assess the firefighter organizational culture shown in the *Backdraft* scenes. A 'Navigation Menu' allows convenient movement among the exercise's sections.

Virtual teams complete their organizational culture diagnosis of the *Backdraft* scenes. Team members interact with each other using the interaction methods described earlier. Each team posts its results to the exercise's public discussion topic.

Table 7.4 ***Backdraft.*** **Film scene analysis**

The scene shows many cultural artifacts of the Chicago Fire Department. Some are bold symbols such as the fire trucks, loud sirens, fast driving, the bright red fire hydrant, and the roaring fire. Others are equally important cultural symbols but less bold in presentation. For example, nicknames appear on the backs of the firefighter's jackets. Stephen McCaffrey's jacket says, 'Bull.'
In-use values guide much of the veteran firefighters' behaviour. No one told the firemen to smash the windows of the Mercedes Benz so they could get the fire hose to the fire hydrant. Brian quickly learns this value as he stares in disbelief. There is little time while fighting a fire to describe values (espoused values), although Stephen gives his brother some guidance about how to attach his equipment and stay beside him while fighting the fire.
Other aspects of a firefighter's culture appear in the scene. New firefighters ('probies') must accept their subordinate status during their first workdays, and take wanted or unwanted guidance from their more senior firemen.

Source: J. E. Champoux, *Instructor's Manual* for *Our Feature Presentation: Organizational Behavior* (Mason, Oh.: South-Western, a division of Thomson Learning, 2005), 42. Used with the permission of Thomson Learning.

The results of each team become part of the discussion during the scheduled weekly chat activity or the alternative discussions area postings.

Several parts of the film scene analysis in Table 7.4 should appear in submitted eExercises. The visible artefacts of a Chicago firefighter's organizational culture should appear in most submitted exercises. Uniforms, fire trucks, fast driving, status relationships, and language should get the attention of most students. Many students also will note in-use values from the behaviour shown in the scenes. For example, working together and properly attaching equipment appear at different places. Most students will not note any basic assumptions because they are hard for an outsider to see. One exception is breaking the window of the Mercedes Benz. The firefighter broke the window without hesitation, an example of a basic assumption.

Assessment of Each eExercise

This section assesses each eExercise discussed in this chapter against the on-line management education issues and learning theories described earlier. The discussion highlights the role of these exercises in on-line teaching and learning processes. Constructivism and experiential learning theory provide broad support for using the four types of eExercises in the on-line teaching and learning environment.

- *Individual eExercise: Your Conflict Orientations*. This exercise focuses on the on-line management education issues of learner involvement and self-awareness. Asking a student to assess her or his conflict orientations increases involvement with that course content. Self-awareness also likely increases because the

student considers the conflict orientations and some likely occasions when she or he uses them. Behavioural, cognitive, and humanistic learning theories support the use of individually focused experiential exercises.

- *Individual Film-Based eExercise: Diagnosing and Redesigning Jobs*. Learner analytical skills and practical application of on-line course content are the on-line management education issues addressed by this exercise. The film scenes have some varying content that also can increase student involvement. Behavioural, cognitive, and humanistic learning theories support using this exercise.
- *Virtual Team eExercise: Decision Making: Individual versus Group Approaches*. This exercise helps with the on-line management education issues of learner involvement and self-awareness. The virtual team approach of this exercise receives strong support and guidance from social learning theory. Although virtual team members usually have no face-to-face contact, on-line chatrooms and discussion areas form a social context for student learning. Students still 'observe' the behaviour of other students, although they mediate their observations through on-line course technology.
- *Virtual Team eExercise: Organizational Culture Diagnosis*. This exercise addresses the on-line management education issues of learner analytical skills and practical application of on-line course content. Social learning theory lends its support to the virtual team design of this exercise as it did the previous exercise.

Some Notes About On-Line Experiential Course Design

Bringing experiential learning to the on-line learning environment can help engage students with course content, other students, and the instructor. The eExercises introduced in this chapter emphasize a student-focused approach to on-line courses. Blending the exercises with on-line film scenes also brings multiple media and variety to on-line course design.

One also should address other aspects of on-line course design to ensure the desired effect of eExercises. Specifying the eExercise in that part of a course's assignments, and calling it out as a specific item in a discussion agenda, can help engage students with the exercise. Inserting a specific content element for the eExercise helps remind students of its presence and the need to complete the exercise during the required period. Each design element noted here can help increase student engagement with on-line course content.

Notes

An earlier version of this chapter was presented at the Academy of Management meetings, 14 Aug. 2006. Atlanta, Georgia.

1. I thank Dr Kayleigh Carabajal, Executive Director, Organizational Learning, Central New Mexico Community College, for her invaluable help with this section of the chapter.
2. This discussion of learning theories drew from J. E. Champoux and K. Carabajal, 'Media, Cognition, and Learning: A Theoretical Basis for Using Film in Teaching', Albuquerque, N. Mex., the Robert O. Anderson Schools of Management, the University of New Mexico, 29 Sept. 2003, working paper.

References

Bandura. A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Bartlett, F. C. (1932). *Remembering: A Study in Experimental and Social Psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bloom, B. S. (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals*. New York: Longman.

Brah, A. and Hoy, J. (1989). 'Experiential Learning, a New Orthodoxy?', in S. Weil and I. McGill (eds.), *Making Sense of Experiential Learning*. Buckingham: Society for Research into Higher Education and the Open University Press.

Brown, J. S., Collins, A., and Duguid, P. (1989). 'Situated Cognition and the Culture of Learning', *Educational Researcher*, 18: 32–42.

Bruner, J. S. (1961). 'The Act of Discovery', *Harvard Educational Review*, 31: 21–32.

—— Oliver, R., and Greenfield, P. M. (1966). *Studies in Cognitive Growth*. New York: Wiley.

Bugental, J. F. T. (1967). *Challenges of Humanist Psychology*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Champoux, J. E. (2005). *Our Feature Presentation: Organizational Behaviour*. Mason, Oh.: South-Western, a division of Thomson Learning.

Chance, P. (1994). *Learning and Behaviour*. Pacific Grove, Calif.: Brooks/Cole.

Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education.* New York: The Macmillan Company.

Draves, W. (2000). *Teaching Online*. River Falls, Wis.: LERN Books.

Hackman, J. R. and Oldham, G. (1980). *Work Redesign*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley.

Jarvis, P. (1987). *Adult Learning in the Social Context*. London: Croom Helm.

Kearsley, G. (2000). *Online Education: Learning and Teaching in Cyberspace*. Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Thomson Learning.

Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Lave, J. and Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Miller, N. and Boud, D. (1996). 'Animating Learning from Experience', in D. Boud and N. Miller (eds.), *Working with Experience: Animating Learning*. London: Routledge.

—— and Dollard, J. (1941). *Social Learning and Imitation*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Mischel W. (1973). 'Towards a Cognitive, Social Learning Reconception of Personality', *Psychological Review*, 80: 252–83.

Mischel W. (1979). 'On the Interface of Cognition and Personality', *American Psychologist*, 34: 740–54.
Patterson, C. H. (1973). *Humanist Education*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
Rogers, C. R. (1969). *Freedom to Learn*, 3rd edn. Columbus, Oh.: Merrill/Macmillan.
Rumelhart, D. E. and Norman, D. A. (1981). 'Analogical Processes in Learning', in J. R. Anderson (ed.), *Cognitive Skills and their Acquisition*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
Skinner, B. F. (1968). *The Technology of Teaching*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
Thorndike, E. L. (1932). *The Fundamentals of Learning*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.
Vroom, V. H. and Yetton, P. (1973). *Leadership and Decision-Making*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
Watson, J. B. (1914). *Behaviour*: *An Introduction to Comparative Psychology*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
Weil, S. and McGill, I. (1989*a*). 'A Framework for Making Sense of Experiential Learning', in S. Weil and I. McGill (eds.), *Making Sense of Experiential Learning*. Buckingham: Society for Research into Higher Education and the Open University Press.
—— —— (1989*b*). 'Continuing the Dialogue: New Possibilities for Experiential Learning', in S. Weil and I. McGill (eds.), *Making Sense of Experiential Learning*. Buckingham: Society for Research into Higher Education and the Open University Press.

CHAPTER 8

IMPLEMENTING EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

IT'S NOT ROCKET SCIENCE

MARTIN J. HORNYAK
STEVE G. GREEN
KURT A. HEPPARD

Introduction

Experiential learning is a powerful pedagogical tool that recognizes that people learn best from their own experiences. This chapter presents a brief description of experiential learning, its relationship with the changing educational landscape, and insights into why the academic community is embracing it so actively. Experiential education in all of its contemporary forms, including active or participatory learning, self-directed learning, and service learning, to name a few, has been extensively studied and the many merits and shortcomings are well documented in education, business, and management literature (Henry 1989).

A virtual paradigm shift in educational theory is transitioning the focus of educators away from instruction and toward learning (Barr and Tagg 1995). Many feel that for this transformation to be successful, reform should be focused on the types of learning that give students the tools they need for a complex world. Experiential learning is an excellent example of a pedagogy that can answer this call for reform.

It is probably safe to state that teaching students to identify and take advantage of their own styles of learning, as well as recognize their weakness, would be beneficial in preparing them to address the complexities of the real world they will encounter (Berhman and Levin 1984; Luckmann 1996). After all, teachers will not be at their students'sides in the workplace after graduation.

Research supports the contention that more discovery-oriented and student-active teaching methods allow students to discover knowledge on their own (Nilson 1998) and the literature is replete with the avocation of this lifelong learning skill. There has been a groundswell of support for a mix of activities that teach independence and interdependence and interdisciplinary life skills that students will need, and which can be implemented across the curriculum (Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACandU) 2002). Experiential learning is an excellent example of the type of pedagogy that promises to address, in a meaningful and measurable way, the diverse expectations of students, faculty, and future employers by focusing on the learner and recognizing that with learning, one size does not fit all (Weigand 1995).

This chapter provides a brief description of experiential learning along with its relationship with broader changes in education. This is followed by a description of a course with exceptional experiential learning application. In many ways, this course is the quintessence of experiential learning. Not only does it simulate almost the exact engineering and procurement environment that many of the students will enter upon graduation, but it was developed in lock-step with institutional learning outcomes at its foundation while directly addressing assurance of learning issues.

Experiential Learning

The definition of experiential learning varies. Many are descriptive or compare it with traditional learning in that it combines direct experience with guided reflection and analysis and is student centred (Chapman, McPhee, and Proudman 1995). Additional definitions help link theory and practice while building upon established educational philosophies. Still other definitions are oriented toward education at institutions of higher learning, which will be the focus of this chapter.

It should be noted that there are other dimensions of experiential learning which address important educational considerations, but will not be the focus of this chapter. For example, there are many learning opportunities that take place beyond the 'school house' but are still an element of a formal curriculum. From co-ops and internships to international exchanges, many see these experiential learning opportunities as valuable complements to classroom activities. But some critics have viewed these as 'semester-long interviews' or 'on-the-job training' with future employers and post-graduation employment being the ultimate pay-off (Schofield and Caragata 1999). Also, from the business training industry, there are many different activity-based training approaches that incorporate experiential learning philosophies. These experiential learning activities have become increasingly diverse, high-profile, and occasionally controversial as they are applied in more settings by more mainstream organizations (Weaver 1999). This chapter will concentrate exclusively on experiential learning as it applies to classroom education.

Experiential Learning and the Evolving Educational Landscape

While experiential learning is arguably one of the most significant areas for current research and practice for adult education (Michelson 1996), there are also many that critically question and examine its implementation (Pickles 2005). Theoretical models have been developed to help frame experiential learning and explain why this particular pedagogy enhances the educational experience. Most models include the concepts of the actual experience, plus reflection upon that experience. They are usually described in some variation of a process or cycle that includes action, reflection, and application (Kolb 1984). The position of David Kolb, for example, is that while people are exposed to many life experiences, they do not 'learn' from all of them. Learning happens only when there is reflective thought and an internal processing of an experience by the learner in a way that links the experience to previous learning, and transforms the learner's previous understanding in some way (Fenwick 2001). In management education circles, Kolb's theory has been reported as 'extremely influential' and 'is rarely seen as problematic', while there are some critics that question, for example, the need to progress sequentially through the cycle (Beard and Wilson 2002).

In essence, experience alone, or what is often called 'learning by doing', is insufficient to be called experiential learning. While some argue that there must be a deliberate design and systematic implementation to maximize the educational experience of experiential learning, that is not to say there should be rigid rules with no flexibility. For example, while the learning environment may have been painstakingly designed, the actual classroom may even be 'teacher-less'.

Experiential learning, which is focused on capitalizing on experience to enhance learning, is in line with what some refer to as a new paradigm for higher education (Mailen 2000; Svinicki 1990). What was once the traditional dominant educational approach, commonly referred to as the 'instructional paradigm', has shifted to a 'learning paradigm' (Barr and Tagg 1995). The very purpose of the instruction paradigm is to offer courses, while the learning paradigm goal is not to merely transfer knowledge, but to create environments that allow students to discover and construct knowledge and to make discoveries and solve problems on their own (Barr and Tagg 1995). In an institution that has embraced the learning paradigm, the structure of courses, assessment, and the form of pedagogy all become negotiable. There is no one-size-fits-all best learning environment. But experiential learning is an excellent example of the type of pedagogy that promises to address, in a meaningful and measurable way, the diverse expectations of students, faculty, and future employers (Levine and Tompkins 1996).

The learning paradigm requires a constant search for new structures and methods that work better for student learning and success, and expects even these to be redesigned continually and to evolve over time (Barr and Tagg 1995). In addition, course content is very dynamic. What is 'known' twenty years from now will be very different from what is 'known' today (Haynie and Heppard 2005). This means students need to acquire not just knowledge as it currently exists, but also the skills and attitudes necessary to continue learning after they leave school. It is unlikely that they will be able to acquire these skills in a classroom in which they are 'told' everything they need to know.

Consequently, the role of a faculty member is evolving as well. In a learning-centred classroom, the educator is expected to provide a learning environment in which students learn by experience and by interacting with the instructor, as well as other students. In a classroom focused on learning, the students are not sitting passively; they are practising the skills they are learning, monitoring their own learning progress, and developing the adaptive capacities they will need to address the dynamic workplace that awaits them. They are what are referred to as 'intentional learners' who can adapt to new environments, integrate knowledge from different sources, and continue learning through their lives (AACandU 2002). These intentional learners are empowered through the mastery of intellectual and practical skills, informed by knowledge about forms of enquiry, and are responsible for their personal actions and civic values (AACandU 2002).

Educators have also focused attention on the benefits of teaching students to effectively work in teams or groups to satisfy employers' desire for students who can 'hit the corporate ground running' with cross-functional team experience (Chen, Donahue, and Klimoski 2004; Siegel and Sorenson 1999). Educators have embraced a wide range of experiential learning pedagogy attempting to make the classroom experience better reflect the real world as an effective member, or leader, of a team. As a result, instructional methods have shifted from traditional instruction-centred lecturing with a focus on individual effort as described earlier, to a variety

of team-oriented experiential learning approaches (Johnson and Johnson 1974, 1989) including activities such as group projects (Michaelsen, Knight, and Fink 2002), student teams (Stein and Hurd 2000; Vik 2001), and cooperative learning (Ravenscroft and Buckless 1997).

While student learning has always been the central topic of higher education, there has also been a renewed emphasis on assessment, or what is currently referred to as 'assurance of learning', by national accreditation bodies such as the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). Assurance of learning evaluates how well a school accomplishes the educational aims at the core of its activities and the learning process is separate from the demonstration that students achieve learning goals (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) 2005). Institutions must use a well-documented, systematic process that assesses the impact of curricula on learning. Because of differences in missions, student populations, employer populations, and other circumstances, each programme's learning goals will differ (AACSB 2005). AACSB, for example, emphasizes that no single approach to assurance of learning is required and schools are encouraged to choose, create, and innovate learning measures that fit with the goals of the degree programmes, pedagogies in use, and the individual schools' circumstances (AACSB 2005). By any measure, experiential learning is an excellent pedagogy to facilitate achievement of educational outcomes.

In addition, as institutions search for justifications to modify or adapt their curricula to changes in education, and as they prioritize activities or realign resources, experiential learning appears to be very appealing in this regard as well. Experiential learning allows some objective means for ranking or prioritizing implementation decisions or budget allocations. This is in part because many institutions are embracing educational outcomes that are associated with a revised Bloom's taxonomy with respect to learning, teaching, and assessment (Anderson and Krathwohl 2001). These outcomes assure that students are learning what their stakeholders expect and need. Activities that do not directly and measurably support these outcomes may suffer in priority and resources allocation. Because of its promised positive impact on the student's ability to adapt in the workplace, experiential learning is enjoying this emphasis on assurance of learning.

Increased Need for Experiential Learning

Based on Kolb, experiential learning may be more effective when it is integrated with educational objectives and classroom curriculum and activities, and contains opportunities for students to reflect on their experiences and grow intellectually (Kolb 1984). This chapter presents an example of how, through a capstone design

course, a military service academy embraces experiential learning in much the same manner as the private sector and other universities have. However, a major difference is that this course has a final project that not only mimics the real world that many of the students are graduating into; it includes launching a small satellite and placing it into earth's orbit.

This senior capstone course at the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) involves engineering systems design and programme management that almost identically replicates an engineering management environment. It allows students to experience and learn from designing, building, and finally launching a small (micro) satellite.

USAFA, like any other major university, has embraced many different forms of experiential learning including the service component. The widely practised form of experiential learning, service learning, is a method where reasoning, leadership, interpersonal skills, academic content, values, and citizenship are taught through real life community experiences (Katula and Threnhauser 1999). As the military's roles and missions are evolving and changing to new global responsibilities and citizenship, the Department of Defense (DOD), and particularly its service academies, must recognize the need to be able to prepare future officers with increasing agile skills sets.

For example, the Secretary of the Air Force has stated that one of the Air Force's core competencies is translating technology to war fighting (USAF Chief's Sight Picture 2003). The relationship between this core competency and translating technology to 'service' is closely related to war fighting. Developing an experiential learning pedagogy at a service academy helps groom future officers and leaders for new global and domestic requirements that will be expected of them. War fighting and service, such as humanitarian support missions, now draw upon the same human resource pool and officers must be prepared to respond to either diverse requirement.

Even before America embraced a new emphasis on homeland defence and the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the DOD was experimenting with major initiatives associated with 'transformation' of the armed forces in a post-Cold War era (USAF Joint Vision 2020, 2000). With the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1991, Cold War posturing had ended and there was a renewed use of the military in peacekeeping, humanitarian actions, and contingency actions (Callander 1998).

The dynamics of an expeditionary military involved in direct combat in many different theatres, possibly simultaneously, has taken the need for experiential learning to the next level of sophistication. The old adage of 'train the way you fight', with its intuitive understanding of the ability to properly prepare military members for the battle they will encounter, has evolved to 'train while you fight', citing the need for continuation training and experiential learning to adapt to new environments (Haun 2005).

Implementing Experiential Learning in the United States Air Force Academy

The intent of this chapter is to extend the discussion of experiential learning and highlight this powerful methodology's application in USAFA's learning environment. Using USAFA's Small Satellite Program as a case study, its background, project histories, and experiential learning pedagogy are highlighted while showcasing one current project, the building of FalconSat 3. Finally, reasons for programme success are suggested with an emphasis on what aspects other institutions may be able to implement.

Given an apparent need for more experiential learning opportunities that meets the requirements of a modern DOD, it would stand to reason that this pedagogy would be embraced rigorously at all levels of the curriculum, particularly at a service academy like USAFA where its educational mission is to 'Inspire and educate cadets and faculty to serve our nation with integrity in peace and war' (United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) 2005d). This backdrop provides an excellent environment for experiential learning for many reasons including that USAFA can identify the specific functional and operational career fields that its students will enter upon graduation.

USAFA is an undergraduate institution located just north of Colorado Springs, Colorado. Since its first class graduated in 1959, approximately 38,000 graduates have entered the United States Air Force or other components of the DOD (Association of Graduates (AOG) 2004). Currently USAFA has just over 4,000 students (cadets), selectively recruited nationwide. Cadets are commissioned upon graduation as Air Force officers with the daunting, time-honoured challenge of national service. USAFA's Core Values, which mirror the Core Values of the entire Air Force, are 'Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in Everything We Do' (USAF Core Values 1997).

USAFA has been awarded all major institutional accreditations including North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and many discipline-specific accreditations such as ABET (Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology) and AACSB (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) to name a few (USAFA 2005a). Also, USAFA has many examples of external validation of the quality of its education. In 2005, it was ranked as the twelfth 'best overall academic experience for undergraduates' and was ranked Number 1 in 'professors make themselves accessible' by *Princeton Review's* Best 361 Colleges (Frank, Meltzer, and Maier 2005).

Experiential learning has been specifically and deliberately incorporated in several courses at USAFA. Since the mid-1970s, a course entitled Engineering Systems Design (ENGR 410) served as a core curriculum capstone experience addressing a wide variety of community stakeholders in three basic categories: Community

Service, Assisting the Disabled, and USAFA Improvement (Hornyak, Green, and Ciccotello 2000). There currently is a course, Capstone for Operations Research (OR 420), that offers 'consulting' projects for actual public and private organizations in the greater Colorado Springs area, USAFA, and the Air Force at large. Also, recently two new interdisciplinary majors, Systems Engineering (SE) and Systems Engineering Management (SEM), have been initiated that also plan to have capstone courses that will heavily implement experiential learning (USAFA 2005e). But the senior level two-semester sequence course, Small Spacecraft Engineering I and II (ASTRO 436/437), is specifically focused on experiential learning. This course, referred to as the Small Satellite Program, serves as the case study for this chapter.

The Small Satellite Program Legacy

For decades USAFA has pursued the challenge of doing a better job of enhancing not only cognitive skills in the cadets but also their interpersonal, behavioural, and management skills. The Academy instituted its Small Satellite Program in 1993 to motivate cadets toward space by providing 'hands-on' satellite development and operational experience. This is a classic application of experiential learning.

Since 1965, USAFA has offered a major in astronautical engineering, one of the few accredited undergraduate astronautics programmes in the nation (USAFA 2005c). Cadets have developed and flown three student experiment packages on space shuttle missions. They have also been doing rocket propulsion research since 1990 (USAFA 2005c). Over the last decade, the Small Satellite Program has been administered and taught by the Department of Astronautics (DFAS). It was originally created as a dedicated systems analysis and decision-making process course for astronautics majors only. Since 1991, it has evolved into an interdisciplinary project-based course for students interested in synthesizing classroom learning from various disciplines to tackle 'real world' engineering design and programme management challenges. Furthermore, the Small Satellite Program incorporates additional capabilities taught in the Academy's four academic divisions (Engineering Sciences, Basic Sciences, Social Sciences, and Humanities) and has become a prototypical capstone experience replacing some of the previously required capstone courses (USAFA 2005c).

The actual 'products' of the Small Satellite Program are referred to as FalconSats. FalconSat modules enabled students to apply what they have learned in various technical and non-technical courses to find design solutions to problems. All of the FalconSat projects have an experiential learning orientation benefiting multiple facets of the Air Force, education, and space community at large. FalconSat teams are given minimal direction other than background on how technical systems are developed and produced within the Air Force systems acquisition process. In

fact, this 'sink or swim' approach is identical to what students will experience as new officers designing, developing, and procuring major Air Force weapon systems.

However, one institutional stumbling block almost made the experience unachievable. Since a typical FalconSat project life cycle usually lasts more than one year from concept exploration to final production, it was necessary to constantly rotate student programme management teams due to graduation. To generate continuity and maximize the learning experience, the Small Satellite Program enrols interested third-year students (juniors) into the programme, giving them an opportunity to work with fourth-year students (seniors) and instructors over a two-year period. The course operates like any company under government contract, or a government agency charged with a specific programme development and management task. The project team selects a programme manager who is singularly responsible and accountable for successful task completion. Other team members perform functional duties such as finance, production, test, logistics, and documentation depending upon how the team decides to organize. This parallels very closely with how Air Force major weapon system programme offices are organized and operate. An integrated or 'systems' approach is stressed throughout the course.

With respect to assurance of learning, the groups are assessed, measured, and evaluated using specific acquisition milestones marked by graded briefings, demonstrations, and written reports. There are no examinations since milestone briefings are the vehicle for information transfer and assessment. As in the 'real world', a successfully completed project is a time-proven benchmark of excellence. The course emphasizes the economic and managerial aspects of the acquisition process, as well as technical performance. Unprecedented levels of student freedom are allowed in the course. Students determine the schedule, perform all planning, and accomplish all coordination within the milestone schedule.

Each FalconSat project receives funds and resources from customers and government organizations interested in the project's payload. Each project received an official ranking and a National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) manifest number. Originally, FalconSat 2 was rank 21 out of thirty-four essential space payloads by the DOD Space Experiment and Review Board (SERB) and manifested to fly on Space Shuttle *Atlantis* (STS-114) on 16 January 2003 (Martin, Sellers, and Green 2002). The current satellite project, FalconSat 3, is another example of the students demonstrating the adaptive capacity that can be enhanced through experiential learning. FalconSat 3 underwent vibration testing in preparation for an anticipated launch from the Atlas V vehicle (USAFA 2005c).

From many perspectives, the Small Satellite Program is a benchmark for unique experiential learning projects nationwide. It clearly supports and develops the Air Force core competencies of 'translating technology to war fighting and service' as well as directly 'developing airmen', another core competency (USAF Chief's Sight Picture 2003). With worldwide organizational connections needing payload and

launch assistance, FalconSat allows students to learn engineering, management, and acquisition processes through hands-on experience. Regardless of their future career speciality selection, students on the FalconSat team learn essential components of the Air Force systems project development and the acquisition process while assisting external stakeholders. From contracting officers to pilots, many will eventually hold positions designing and procuring major weapon systems, and the FalconSat programme prepares them through experiential learning.

Why Does This Experiential Learning Programme Work?

There are distinct answers to the questions of why an experiential learning approach at this highly technical school is working so well, and what lessons other institutions can learn about developing their own experiential learning projects. The Small Satellite Program course philosophy and implementation have overcome barriers that might reduce the likelihood of successful implementation. First, faculty members from various departments within the Engineering Division, as well as the various departments from the Social Sciences Division, are invited, encouraged, and assigned as instructors/mentors for the projects. Participation is highly recognized, valued, and rewarded by the Dean and department heads. Besides the obvious appeal and 'status' of launching the final project into space, the course's overall significance to the core curriculum minimizes faculty and organizational resistance.

Second, the infrastructure for experiential activities is already in place. USAFA has an established machine and electrical shop with works areas and skilled professional personnel available for advice on design and construction. Most impressive, the Space Systems Research Center (SSRC) has been created and endowed with an impressive laboratory, fabrication site, permanent staff, and office area solely dedicated to the FalconSats and rocket research including a command centre and clean room (USAFA 2005c). Thus many of the 'infrastructure' concerns associated with viable experiential learning activities have been mitigated.

Third, major relevancy barriers are overcome by inexorably tying FalconSat to the Air Force's systems acquisition process in completing design projects. Courses such as ASTRO 436/437 require attention to technical details of systems design as well as the economics, management, and social aspects of the process. The processes used in this course are the identical major weapon system acquisition process students will experience upon graduation from the Academy if they enter the procurement, contracting, or various engineering career fields. Also the realism of managing group dynamics is apparent with teams involving students of a variety of academic majors many of which are non-technical in nature.

Lesson Learned: Linking Experiential Learning and Educational Outcomes

Perhaps the most impressive aspect of the Small Satellite Program's success is the linkage between experiential learning and USAFA Educational Outcomes and the development of Air Force core competencies. The lesson for institutions embracing experiential learning is to start with the educational outcomes you want to achieve. The direct links between the experiential learning pedagogy used in the Small Satellite Program and USAFA's Dean of the Faculty Educational Outcomes are evident. The Educational Outcomes were established to describe the desired intellectual capabilities of its graduates (USAFA 2005b).

- *Officers who possess a breadth of integrated, fundamental knowledge in basic sciences, engineering, the humanities, and social sciences, and depth of knowledge in an area of concentration of their choice.*

As complex as designing a satellite may sound, the students do not require knowledge above what they have achieved in their core classes. Even though some basic core skills have not been used or forgotten, they are re-emphasized in this capstone educational experience. Students should graduate recognizing where to get help, how to teach themselves again, and that people from every discipline can make meaningful project contributions.

- *Officers who are intellectually curious.*

When presented with a problem, or a seemingly unachievable obstacle, students are expected to apply appropriate models to assess the situation and solve the problem. When dealing with small satellites, there are no solutions manuals. Students are expected to address problems using intellectual curiosity as their compass and all their means available.

- *Officers who can communicate effectively.*

The students involved in the Small Satellite Program are not just communicating with peers and instructors. They must communicate ideas to external organizations and customers paying for the service. Students need to understand the immediate project needs/impact and be able to articulate and 'sell' what is being done for multiple clients and customers.

- *Officers who can frame and resolve ill-defined problems.*

By its very nature, the construction of a small satellite is an ill-defined problem. A 'Statement of Work' attempts to qualify and quantify what the user wants. As a

team, they need to further clarify requirements and identify constraints in order to develop a solid understanding for application in design solution. The process may seem ambiguous but if time is taken to understand complexities, ask questions, understand the project requirements, and to develop a useful schedule, it can be done.

- *Officers who can work effectively with others.*

It would be difficult to construct a better opportunity uniting a team of people of different academic specialties to work toward a common goal. While this course offering is only one of many courses taken by cadets, the time, dedication, and tenacity required of individuals would be futile if not for the synergies of the team. Simply put, this is not a one-person job, so survival is predicated on teamwork, leadership, and followership.

- *Officers who are independent learners.*

One of the true course benefits is it challenges the students to teach themselves about their project. For the students, FalconSat offers situations and dilemma that they have never encountered. Answers to questions need to be discovered and independently applied to the solutions because there is literally no single source to rely upon.

- *Officers who can apply their knowledge and skills to the unique tasks of the military profession.*

Regardless of what assignment cadets receive upon graduation, there will always be some aspect of the systems engineering management process involved whether the job is in supply, acquisitions, maintenance, personnel, space operations, or flying. At some point, all Air Force members will be called on to head a major project team with all of its ambiguities (Bruno 1999).

These educational outcomes are crafted toward USAFA graduates becoming military officers. However, other institutions can develop or modify their own educational outcomes and integrate experiential learning opportunities to help accomplish those desired results.

Currently USAFA uses experiential learning in several courses as a vehicle to culminate its undergraduate education and meet its educational outcomes. The Small Satellite Program transitions students from a primarily academic environment to the challenges of 'practice' and the 'real world' they will face as Air Force project officers. By continuing to add new elements associated with the technologically dynamic space environment to its experiential learning pedagogy, the Small Satellite Program continues to succeed in developing excellent students, officers, and citizens. But of course, continuous improvement is also recognized as critically important.

How Can FalconSat Improve Its Experiential Learning?

Having a project actually launched into space has its own positive motivation and organizational inertia. But the reality of risks associated with such a task becomes apparent. In the beginning of each year, much excitement and enthusiasm is exhibited by the team as they meet to discuss the 'client and customers' needs and issues. However, this connection needs to be consistently reinforced as well as the tie to the educational outcomes. As the process moves into the design and fabrication stages, the team focus often fixates on production and meeting critical project milestones. The reality of the project's scope and significance becomes apparent, and, depending on the progress, may become disheartening. Also, many environmental factors, such as launch vehicle availability, intrude into the experiential learning classroom. There is a real and palpable chance of failure in this course. Instead of merely focusing on the deliverable, what may get lost is the sense of the value being added to the community, customers, or individuals through the team's work and effort, and instructors must keep students aware of this.

Also, students are required to make self-evaluations and peer evaluations to be included in the final grade. However, the evaluations rate individuals based on criteria important to the experiential learning's 'practical application'. Job performance, attitude, leadership, management of resources, and communication categories are self-assessed as well as peer rated. These performance categories are oriented toward project tasks, goals, and objectives. If USAFA desires to advance the impact of experiential learning, the students need more time to reflect, analyse, and openly discuss their experiences.

Final Thoughts

This presentation of experiential learning at USAFA suggests the planned and deliberate integration of classroom learning experiences and 'real world' projects can be a very important element in helping meet institutional educational outcomes. It also supports experiential learning arguments that this learning pedagogy is appropriate for a variety of disciplines (Sax and Astin 1997) including engineering and the military profession. Since the programme is directly related to developing Air Force core competencies in cadets, this example also demonstrates to educators how enhancing learning by integrating coursework with practical applications and stakeholder expectations can be achieved through experiential learning.

At the same time, this chapter illustrates the importance of the institutional commitment required for a successful experiential learning programme and the need of balancing any course's focus on both practical and educational aspects.

USAFA is committed to continue the investigation of innovative pedagogy with the ultimate goal of becoming the best educational institution possible (Born 2005). Experiential learning has helped provide real world projects for future Air Force leaders that have helped, and continue to help, accomplish this goal. We are hopeful that educators in other disciplines can find this example useful for their courses and that other educational institutions consider experiential learning as a part of a learner-centred curriculum. The design is replicable across disciplines and gives students the opportunity to experience projects that best imitate those that they will find in their future careers. While experiential learning is not rocket science, we have demonstrated that it certainly can be.

Note

The authors wish to thank Lt-Col. Timothy J. Lawrence, Ph.D., Director of the Space Systems Research Center, Department of Astronautics, United States Air Force Academy, for his invaluable assistance.

Opinions, conclusions, and recommendations expressed or implied within are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of USAFA, USAF, the DOD, or any other government agency.

References

Anderson, L., and Krathwohl, D. (eds.) (2001). *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching and Assessing*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman.

Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) (2005). *Accreditation Standards: Assurance of Learning Standards*. Tampa, Fla.: AACSB International.

Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACandU) National Panel Report (2002). *Greater Expectations: A New Vision of Learning as the Nation Goes to College*. Washington: Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Association of Graduates (AOG) of the United States Air Force Academy (2004). *Register of Graduates of the United States Air Force Academy 2004 Edition*.

Barr, R., and Tagg, J. (1995). 'From Teaching to Learning: A New Paradigm for Undergraduate Education', *Change*, Nov.–Dec.: 21–7.

Beard, C., and Wilson, J. (2002). *The Power of Experiential Learning: A Handbook for Trainers and Educators.* London: Kogan Page.

Berhman, J., and Levin. R. (1984). 'Are Business Schools Doing their Jobs?', *Harvard Business Review*, 62/1: 140–7.

Born, D. (2005). 'On Being Learner-Focused: Are you on Board?', *USAFA Educator*, 13/3: 1.
Bruno, E. (1999). 'Engineering 410: An Experience for Life', *Warrior Update*, 13/4: 8–9.
Callander, B. (1998). 'Dissecting the Tempo Problem', *Air Force Magazine*, 81/4: 76–80.
Chapman, S., McPhee, P., and Proudman, B. (1995). 'What Is Experiential Education?', in K. Warren, M. Sakofs, and J. Hunt (eds.), *The Theory of Experimental Education*. Dubuque, Ia.: Kendall-Hunt Publishing Company.
Chen, G., Donahue, L., and Klimoski, R. (2004). 'Training Undergraduates to Work in Organizational Teams', *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 3: 27–40.
Fenwick, T. J. (2001). 'Experiential Learning: A Theoretical Critique from Five Perspectives'. RIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education, College of Education, Ohio State University, Information Series No. 385:11. Retrieved 19 Sept. 2005, from http://www.cete.org/acve/textonly/mp_fenwick_01.asp.
Frank, R., Meltzer, T., and Maier, C. (2005). *Best 361 Colleges 2006*. New York: The Princeton Review.
Haun, P. (2005). 'Train while you Fight', *Air and Space Power Journal*, 19/2: 37.
Haynie, M., and Heppard, K. (2005). 'From Content Delivery to Metacognitive Education: Using Inductive Pedagogies to Develop Cognitive Adaptability in Students', *USAFA Educator*, 13/3: 3.
Henry, J. (1989). 'Meaning and Practice in Experiential Learning', in S. Weil and I. McGill (eds.), *Making Sense of Experiential Learning*. Milton Keynes: SRHE and Open University Press.
Hornyak, M., Green, S., and Ciccotello, C. (2000). 'Putting Service into Service Learning: A Case Study at a Military Academy', *Academic Exchange Quarterly*, 4/4: 109–19.
Johnson, D., and Johnson, R. (1974). 'Instructional Goal Structure: Cooperative, Competitive or Individualistic', *Review of Educational Research*, 44: 213–40.
—— —— (1989). *Cooperation and Competition: Theory and Research*. Edina, Minn.: Interaction Books.
Katula, R., and Threnhauser, E. (1999). 'Experiential Education in the Undergraduate Curriculum', *Communication Education*, 48: 238–54.
Kolb, D. (1984). *Experiential Learning*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
Levine, J., and Tompkins, D. (1996). 'Making Learning Communities', *AAHE Bulletin*, 48/10: 3–6.
Luckmann, C. (1996). 'Defining Experiential Education', *Journal of Experiential Education*, 19/1: 6–7.
Mailen, A. (2000). 'Towards the Essence of Adult Experimental Learning: A Reading of the Theories of Knowles, Kolb, Mezirow, Revans and Schon'. University of Jyvaskyla, Finland: So Phi Academic Press.Top of Form.
Martin, J., Sellers, J., and Green, S. (2002). 'Learn Space by Doing Space', *Program Manager*, 31/4, DAU 169: 2–6.
Michaelson, L., Knight, A., and Fink, L. (2002). *Team-Based Learning: A Transformative Use of Small Groups*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger Publishers.
Michelson, E. (1996). 'Usual Suspects: Experience, Reflection, and the (En)gendering of Knowledge', *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 15/6, Nov.–Dec.: 438–54.
Nilson, L. (1998). *Teaching at its Best: A Research-Based Resource for College Instructors*. Bolton: Anker Publishing Company.
Pickles, T. (2005). Experiential learning articles and critiques of David Kolb's theory. Retrieved 18 Sept. 2005 from http://reviewing.co.uk/research/experiential.learning.htm.

Ravenscroft, S., and Buckless, F. (1997). 'Student Team Learning: Replication and Extension', *Accounting Education*, 2: 151–72.

Sax, L., and Astin, A. (1997). 'The Benefits of Service: Evidence from Undergraduates', *Educational Record*, Summer/Fall: 25–32.

Schofield, J., and Caragata, W. (1999). 'Learning on the Front Lines', *Maclean's*, 2485739 (15 Nov.), 12/46: 90.

Siegel, G., and Sorensen, J. (1999). *Counting More, Counting Less: Transformation in the Management Accounting Profession*. Montvale, NJ: Institute of Management Accountants.

Stein, R., and Hurd, S. (2000). *Using Student Teams in the Classroom: A Faculty Guide*. Bolton, Mass.: Anker Publishing.

Svinicki, M. (1990). 'Changing the Face of *your* Teaching?', in M. D. Svinicki (ed.), *The Changing Face of College Teaching*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) (2005a). *AACSB Accreditation*. Retrieved 19 Sept. 2005, from www.usafa.af.mil/superintendent/pa/factsheets/academic.htm.

—— (2005b). *Educational Outcomes*. Retrieved 19 Sept. 2005, from http://atlas.usafa.af.mil/df/df_ed_outcomes.cfm.

—— (2005c). *Fact Sheet: The Academy in the Space Age*. Retrieved 19 Sept. 2005, from http://www.usafa.af.mil/superintendent/pa/factsheets/space.htm.

—— (2005d). *Mission*. Retrieved 19 Sept. 2005, from http://atlas.usafa.af.mil/df/df_mission.cfm.

—— (2005e). *Systems Engineering/Systems Engineering Management (SE/SEM)*. Retrieved 19 Sept. 2005, from http://www.usafa.af.mil/df/dfsem/?catname=dean%20of%20faculty.

United States Air Force (USAF) Core Values (1997). USAF Pamphlet.

United States Air Force (USAF) Joint Vision 2020 (2000). USAF Pamphlet.

United States Air Force (USAF) Chief's Sight Picture (2003). USAF Pamphlet.

Vik, G. (2001). 'Doing More to Teach Teamwork than Telling Students to Sink or Swim', *Business Communication Quarterly*, 64: 112–19.

Weaver, M. (1999). 'Beyond the Ropes: Guidelines for Selecting Experiential Training', *Corporate University Review*, 10788638 (Jan.–Feb.), 7/1: 34.

Weigand, R. (1995). 'Experiential Learning: A Brief History', in C. Roland, R. Wagner, and R. Weigand (eds.), *Do it . . . and Understand: The Bottom Line on Corporate Experiential Learning*. Dubuque, Ia.: Kendall/Hunt.

PART III

POLITICALLY GROUNDED EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

This page intentionally left blank

CHAPTER 9

TALES OF ORDINARY LEADERSHIP

A FEMINIST APPROACH TO EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

SILVIA GHERARDI
BARBARA POGGIO

Introduction

Feminist practice and theory have always conferred value on narrative knowledge produced through storytelling, mainly because of its ability to stimulate reflexive thought. In our contribution we intend to present and discuss a training methodology founded on memory work and designed to stimulate an individual and group reworking of the leadership dimension, and of the gender and leadership relationship.

We will describe a narrative workshop conducted with groups of women working in managerial positions and based on the perspective of workplace learning through experiential reflexivity. The training objective was to address the issue of leadership

as situated practice. To this end, narrative stimuli were given to the participants in order to prompt more general reflection about male and female modes of power management (and about the connected practices of domination/exclusion). The purpose was to highlight the social and cultural factors that influence these differences, and to offer perspectives alternative to dominant patterns.

The narrative methodology proved to be a particularly effective tool: it gave the participants a chance to conduct retrospective analysis of their past work experiences (individual and organizational), and it generated—due to the interaction with other stories (those furnished in the training activity and those provided by other trainees)—different interpretative perspectives and new meaning configurations in order to face working life and organizational dynamics.

Reflection, Reflexivity, and Narrative in Feminist Methodology

The concepts of reflection and reflexivity have assumed great importance in the contemporary sociological literature, and especially in studies on workplace learning (Boud, Cressey, and Docherty 2006a).

Reflection concerns the rendering of personal experience amenable to awareness and analysis. It entails the actor's ability to engage in a process of introspection and to impose some sort of self-control on his or her intellectual operations. Its principal purpose is to conduct retrospection appraisal of individual action in order to improve future practice (Schön 1983, 1987). Michael Reynolds (1998: 183) makes a distinction between reflection and critical reflection. The crucial distinction of critical reflection is its confronting the tacit knowledge that underpins individuals' action and their taken-for-granted assumptions. Comparing the main processes of reflection from an individual and social relations perspective, Høyrup and Elkjaer (2006) see reflection as a collective capacity to question assumptions and therefore—from an organizational perspective—it can be understood as an organizing process that creates and sustain opportunities for organizational learning and change. For Vince (2002: 63) the questioning of assumptions is a practice that needs to be thought of as integral to organizing rather than the province of individuals.

Despite the diversity of the literature on reflection and learning at work, reflective practice is conceived as a means of examining and re-examining experience. The focus on re-examining experience is to notice tensions and contradictions in order not to take experience for granted. Uncertainties, discrepancies, and dissatisfactions are said to precipitate reflection and are central to any notion of reflection (Boud and Walker 1998; Boud, Cressey, and Docherty 2006b).

This conception leads to the development of a model for learning from experience that focuses on how reflection might be facilitated as a key element of learning.

Reflexivity, especially in the ethnomethodological meaning of the term (Garfinkel 1967), instead consists in the practices of accountability, observability, and referability of social action. It concerns the close interweaving among symbols, languages, and actions, and their connections with the context. It is the outcome of the separation or breakdown between subject and object and the need for 'accountability'—by which is meant making the world comprehensible to oneself and to the other members of a collectivity. To account for an event or an experience implies language use, narrative practices, storytelling. It is a relational practice, taking place in an interactional context, and it is mainly social and not simply cognitive and emotional.

Reflexivity is therefore a characteristic of all order-producing social activities. Moreover, 'the essential reflexivity of accounts' (Garfinkel 1967: 67) is used to create a sense of orderliness for action but reflexively creates that self-same context. While reflection looks back at the past in order to understand and to alter the future, reflexivity is anchored in present practice, in identification of the assumptions and priorities that shape our interpersonal relations. Introspection is not undertaken with a view to action, but is instead an integral part of it and is embedded in every interaction. Indeed, Rothman (1997) defines the reflexive process as 'interactive introspection'. When we refer to 'reflexive leadership' we wish to point out that the process of narrating leadership creates the context for experiencing leadership and reflecting on its practices.

Reflection and reflexivity perform a central role in the feminist debate, particularly with regard to so-called 'feminist methodology' (Bowles and Klein 1983; Harding 1987). Various writers have emphasized the need for reflexive approaches which enable individuals, and women in particular, to start from personal experience (Roberts 1981; Stanley and Wise 1983) and from self-awareness (Reinharz 1983; Held 1993) to question the traditional paradigms of 'objectivity' and 'detachment' that have supported the hegemony of maleness in the dominant models of science. The main means to foster reflexive thought is indubitably narrative, owing to its ability to enhance retrospective glance and memory work. What is meant by retrospective thought can be illustrated by referring to the story of the stork told by Karen Blixen in *Out of Africa* (1938).

The story runs as follows. A man lived in a small house near a pond. One night he was woken up by a loud noise. He ran out of his house and in the darkness headed towards the pond, repeatedly tripping, falling, and getting up again. Following the noise he found a leak in the pond wall, which he repaired and then went back to bed. When he looked out of the window the next morning, he saw that his footsteps had traced the outline of a stork on the ground. In this short story, retrospective glance is metaphorically represented by the man looking out of the window. His

work of the night is finished, and it is only *a posteriori*, in the marks left on the ground, that he gives meaning to his movements, sees a pattern, and shapes his experience.

It is through recounting that the signs and traces of experience are pieced together and acquire complete meaning. The pattern of a life or an event emerges retrospectively when thought becomes reflexive, when it turns onto itself to compose a narrative, to give shape to what was indistinct.

Besides the backward introspection that induces reflexive thought to appropriate or reappropriate personal history, also of especial importance in feminist methodology is 'memory work'. In the 1980s a group of German women in Hamburg published a collected volume which reconstructed, on the basis of individual experiences, the social processes that construct female sexuality (Haug et al. 1987). The methodology of memory work was then transferred to other contexts, for instance the socialization of women to academic work, or the therapeutic treatment of women victims of abuse. Put briefly, the expression 'memory work' refers to the process by which the historical-cultural self is interwoven with practical/social relations. It looks at the self as a historical product, as an ongoing trajectory, as a cultural product (form of the discourse), and as a relational practice. It is based on the assumption that some change in the present can only be brought about if that past is subjected to 'dispassionate' analysis.

Narrating is a way to reappropriate experience, to're-member' in the sense of reconstructing a 'dismembered' body (Brady 1990), and to gain new awareness. Narrating makes it possible to construct a memory and to retrieve something that would otherwise be lost (Cavarero 1997). It is an opportunity for individuals to acquire renewed projectuality and a more sophisticated ability to interpret and make sense of the events that they encounter (Poggio 2004). In short, it is 'a practice of transformation, reflection, reconstruction, re-cognition and re-structuration of the self' (Gamelli 1995: 116).

Leadership as a Situated and Gendered Practice

Leadership has long been a topic of central concern for organizational studies. However, with the course of time attention has shifted from the role and function of the leader to the practice of leadership, from a personalized and functionalist view to one that emphasizes the relational and constructive dimension of leadership action and the process of the collective creation of meaning and consensus (Alvesson 1992; Piccardo 1998). Among the emergent features of this new view of leadership there are some that we believe to be particularly significant.

The first is the growing awareness that leadership is not so much a personality trait or a natural gift as a relational practice, something that 'one does' by relating to others (Manz and Sims 1991). Thus, a prescriptive approach intended principally to identify categories and models (the charismatic leader, the participative leader, the transactional leader, and so on) is replaced by an experiential one in which the focus is on experiences of leadership, the relational dynamics involved in leadership, its motivational and emotional features, and especially its relationship with power. The interweaving between leadership and power has been stressed by several authors (Kets de Vries 1993; Sievers 1996), but in this case the object of analysis is the subjective relationship with power and its implications for interpersonal relations.

The second emergent feature is connected to the 'situatedness' of leadership (Bruni, Gherardi, and Poggio 2005). Like every practice also leadership has a situated nature, in the sense that it cannot be conceived in absolute and general terms but must be contextualized in specific relational situations and systems. Situated leadership means that it is situated in a physical context, in the dynamics of interactions, in the language, and in the body.

Therefore, leadership is also gendered. It has been historically constructed as a male subtext by producing images of leadership which are difficult to relate to femaleness (Alvesson and Billing 1997) or by describing styles and models of female leadership which stand as alternatives to traditional leadership (Hegelsen 1990; Loden 1985). A frequent finding of these studies is that, whereas men are mainly characterized by a 'transactional' style of leadership (involving the exchange of results for rewards and command through control), women display distinct abilities in 'transformational' leadership: a management style which emphasizes relationality and seeks to foster positive interactions and trust relations with/among subordinates, to share power and information, and to encourage employees to subordinate their personal aims and interests to collective ends.

In short, these studies relate female leadership styles to a specific (natural or socialized) orientation of women towards communication, cooperation, affiliation, and attachment, and to a conception of power as control not over the group but by the group. Some authors explain this distinctive style of female leadership as resulting from the influence of primary socialization (Chodorow 1978), which develops women's affective and relational resources and a propensity to communicate with others, to listen to them, and to concern themselves with their needs. Accordingly, the argument runs, the activities that society has traditionally assigned to women (child raising, care for the physical and psychological well-being of family members, the settlement of conflicts) have developed a culture of responsibility and an ethic of care whereby women constantly endeavour to satisfy the needs of everyone.

A more critical interpretation (Kanter 1977; Beccalli 1991; David and Vicarelli 1994) suggests that, because women have not usually been able to wield formal authority in the organizations for which they work, they have been forced to

develop other strategies to that end, most notably an ability (typical of those in positions of inferiority) to 'feel' and anticipate the reactions of others.

Moreover, analysis of the organizational literature on leadership shows that it is constructed to maintain and reinforce hegemonic masculinity. Images of male sexual functions and of patriarchal paternalism appear to be rooted in the way that the leader's action is described. One observes a seductive game, modulated in the masculine, which seduces those who identify with the stereotypes of maleness and virility (Calás and Smircich 1991).

A Reflexive Workshop on Leadership

In recent years feminist critiques within organization studies (Gherardi 2003) have led to a redefinition of the concept of leadership and a redefinition of training practices. Approaches more oriented to relationality, empowerment, and reflexivity have appeared and therefore courses and methods designed to re-elaborate personal and professional experience, to create sense and consensus collectively, to develop creativity, and to foster autonomy and self-awareness. The aim is no longer to teach efficacious leadership styles or models, nor to define skills to be developed; rather, it is to stimulate individual and collective reflection, for example, through the sharing of leadership stories recounted by the trainees. A reflexive approach to leadership enables individuals, and women in particular, to start from personal experience and from self-awareness to question the traditional paradigms of 'objectivity' and 'detachment' that support the dominant models of knowing in organizations and producing knowledge on organizations.

Reflection and individual or group analysis of situations in which the participants have wielded authority in organizations furnish occasions for self-knowledge or even its redesign which involve not only the cognitive, cultural, and affective dimensions of the individuals concerned but also the strategic and structural ones of the organization. The assumption is that the group is a crucial learning resource because it enables different experiences to be shared and compared.

The importance of leadership learning workshops has been emphasized also outside the feminist approach by various authors, among them Senge (1991), and recent years have seen the growth of a large body of literature on the use of *self case studies* and narratives in learning workshops (Casula 2003; Griffith 1999; Piccardo 1998). During these workshops, accounts of work experiences written by the participants are discussed and analysed, and usually rewritten (Piccardo 1998). Or accounts are exchanged by the participants so as to foster a 'dialogic conversation' which generates multiple points of view, stimulates analysis and deconstruction of the

assumptions of canonical stories, and encourages the creation of alternative plots, thereby fostering a learning process which is at once dialogic, divergent, emergent, and collaborative (Abma 2003).

We now describe a specific instance of a narrative workshop (Gherardi and Poggio 2006)[1] based on some of the assumptions just outlined, and the focus of which was the relationship between leadership and gender. Four editions of the workshop were organized, each of them attended by twelve women with managerial positions in the local administration of a north Italian town.

The course was designed around a number of themes representing the core of leadership in traditional textbooks: rationality, control, decision making, and strategic thinking. Each of them was framed in relation to its opposite (the suppressed term). On this basis, the workshop was divided into five day-long sessions entitled:

- *The retrospective gaze,* in which the temporal dimension in organizational life and in the individual working career seen as planning and anticipation was explored by contrasting it with the idea of looking backward and retrospective sense making. This session started with Karen Blixen's story of the stork.
- *Leadership in the feminine?* The interrogative form was proposed in order to explore the mainstream conception of leadership in contrast with its hypothetical translation 'in the feminine'. This session relied on a story by Italo Calvino.
- *Rationality and emotionality.* The two concepts were played one against the other starting with an excerpt from Daniel Pennac.
- *The myth of control.* Control and being in control is the founding myth of organization studies and it was contrasted with the image of flow and being in the flow of time and things. The image was based on a passage from Michel Tournier's *Friday or the Other Island* which describes the change of relationship between Robinson Crusoe and Friday after the explosion on the island and the end of its rational order.
- *Designing the future.* Strategy and decision making as anticipation of the future action was contrasted with a relational and contextual view of time, power, and future scenarios. The impetus was provided by Tolsto's description of the decision process of General Kutuzof about the Russian Army's retreat.

Each session required the participants to read and to write stories, according to the following schema:

- The facilitator read aloud 'the story of the day'; a literary passage intended to introduce the proposed theme in a imaginative way and in the context of mundane life.

- Following the narrative stimulus, each participant was invited to write a short story relating to her professional experience in the organization and which centred on the topic of the day.
- The stories were told, exchanged, and analysed in smaller groups. The group as a whole worked together in order to bring out shared and divergent views on the experience narrated, the plots used, the processes by which meaning had been reconstructed and attributed, and the underlying cultural models.
- Cutting across the various themes addressed provided the stimulus to reflect on a number of issues intrinsic to the topic of leadership: its relationship with power, recognition of its conflictual dimensions, and the importance of learning to recognize and understand the emotions connected with the exercise of authority in the participants' organizational contexts.

The key component of the workshop was reflexive learning, defined as 'a process which involves dialogue with others for improvement or transformation whilst recognizing the emotional, social and political context of the learner' (Brockbank, McGill, and Beech 2002: 75). Narrating leadership and analysing it collectively and in relation to organizational change is a way of constructing a more or less shared understanding of what leadership is and how it may be 'done' in a shared workplace. Storytelling provides not only the opportunity to discuss 'things that happened or could happen', but also the opportunity of performing one's identity as power holding in situated circumstances.

The Use of Narrative Methodology: An Example

This section presents one day, and one theme, in our narrative workshop, in order to illustrate the process and reflect on managerial education. The subject of the day (the second in the course) was the relationship between gender and leadership.

The stimulus for reflection, narrative writing, and storytelling in groups was a story entitled 'Fanta-Ghiro' taken from Italo Calvino's *Italian Folktales*, of which a summary follows.

A king had three daughters but no sons. The king was of a sickly disposition. One day a Turkish king declared war against his land, but the king was too ill to take command of his army. So his three daughters offered to take his place. The father at first refused, because commanding an army was not women's work. But then, given the seriousness of the situation, he agreed to send his eldest daughter, but on the condition that she dressed and behaved like a man. He warned her that if she started talking about women's things, his trusted squire would bring her straight home. The daughter left for the war, but during

the sea voyage she saw a gaily coloured fish and remarked that she wanted a ball gown in the same colours. So the squire took her straight back home. The same thing happened to the second daughter. During the voyage, when she saw the colourful sails of the fishing boats, she began talking about the fabrics she wanted to decorate her bed chamber. So the third daughter, Fanta-Ghiro, then set off to fight the war, even though she was still so small that her armour had to be padded before she could put it on. The sea voyage passed without incident, and the young princess went to parley with the enemy king. The king was intrigued by the 'iron general' and set traps to see whether he was not really a woman. He took Fanta-Ghiro into the armoury and then into the garden, asking question to catch her out. Fanta-Ghiro passed all the tests until the king invited her to go for a swim. This forced her to find an immediate excuse to return home. But she left behind a letter explaining who she really was. The king, by now in love, followed Fanta-Ghiro and asked her to marry him. Peace was made, of course, and when Fanta-Ghiro's father died he left his kingdom to his son-in-law.

This story was particular stimulating for the participants, owing to various features which emerged very clearly from both the narratives produced during the workshop and the group and plenary discussions. The first of these features concerned the symbolic order of gender apparent in the story, which the participants recognized as an organizational archetype (gender segregation) and a dilemma (adopt male or female behaviour?) that all of them had encountered to some extent in their professional lives.

Added to this was the fact that the plot of the story was substantially ambivalent. On the one hand, an unconventional figure of a woman was presented and valorized; but on the other, the end of the story depicted an absolutely canonical scenario in which the conventional order was restored through matrimony and inheritance by the male offspring, thereby complying with one of the essential principles of narrative: the restoration of the violated order (Bruner 1990).

The co-presence of these features was highly stimulating to the workshop participants. It elicited reactions ranging from admiration, through identification and frustration, to anger, and it generated numerous stories which developed aspects and nuances of the relationship between gender and leadership as experienced by the women. They recounted experiences of discrimination, episodes of revenge and affirmation, introspective analyses of their relationships with leadership and power, anecdotes about when they had to disguise themselves as men, or when they refused to do so.

There follows an example of one of the stories produced.

That morning Allegra climbed the stairs to her office thinking that yet another of those days was about to begin.

Another one of those difficult days in which tiredness due to work (positive) would be accompanied by the subtler, more insidious weariness (negative) that comes from fighting a losing battle.

Once again it was going to be the same old struggle, the one that since her promotion to a position of responsibility she had been fighting in a public organization still trapped in a formal, individualistic and—why not?—male mentality. Absorbed in her thoughts, as Allegra turned the corner she ran into Dr. Nero, her boss, who had always resented her promotion.

She tried to slip past him . . . too late! 'Allegra, good morning! I hope that today we can finally get that matter sorted out . . . '

'Right, that matter . . . for God's sake', thought Allegra.

The 'matter' concerned lessons on theory of organizations and old-style leadership which Nero based on his twenty-year experience of leadership declined in the masculine.

As if leadership can be taught! And then, what leadership? As if there's a universal model of it!

'Remember that personnel management requires an iron fist . . . !' Dr. Nero's voice boomed in the background as Allegra remembered the altercation between them the previous day: 'You give too much importance to others, to personal aspects. You want to understand everything and everyone . . . Set value on differences! What rubbish. And then let me say, all that baloney that you think is so important . . . creating a climate, building a team . . . it's nothing but a waste of time, it's just women's stuff . . . '.

The ringing of her mobile phone saved Allegra from her memories and from Dr. Nero. She rushed into her office slamming the door behind her.

For a moment she teetered towards the idea that Dr. Nero might be right, that there was no place for the emotions in work, no place for caring about others, for valuing differences . . . But then she shook her head, whispering 'But what sort of world would that be?' as she settled into her chair. 'No, I'm not the leader that Nero wants me to be, but what do I care? And then an iron fist would clash with my name!', she said to herself as she smiled and switched on her computer.

The story of Allegra is a mixture of invention and reality. However, when set within the training context and shared with the group, it immediately assumed a situated character and an explicit organizational significance, eliciting shared reflection on individual experiences of leadership and on the leadership models of the organizations to which the participants belonged. The story discloses a rejection of the symbolic order of gender dominant in the woman's organization and awareness that the female is constructed in organizations as the 'other' with respect to a maleness still hegemonic in concrete and discursive practices.

The emphasis on the diversity of leadership styles between men and women, and the reference to valuing differences, prompted the group to discuss the ambivalence inherent in its participants' organizational cultures. The discussion brought out a double-bind situation in which women filling leadership roles are required to behave like men but without abandoning their femaleness.

Finally the group's discussion of the story highlighted that leadership is tied to a person's relationship with power. This relationship is strongly gendered for social-cultural reasons: on the one hand there is the male view of power as power over others; on the other there is the female version of power as power for others, with the dichotomy being resolved by a view of power as with others, in a domain of

relation, exchange, cooperation, and responsibility where gender has citizenship (Parker Follet 1924; Clegg 1989).

Concluding Remarks

In this chapter we have sought to demonstrate the importance of a narrative methodology in generating reflection and reflexivity with respect to working and organizational experience, and to leadership processes in particular. Our treatment has been based on feminist practice and theory, and the emphasis that these have placed on the centrality of reflexive thought and memory, as well as on the need to redefine the mainstream models of leadership aimed at maintaining and reinforcing hegemonic masculinity.

From this perspective, experiential learning is based on the interaction between two processes distinctive of narrative workshops: storytelling and listening. It is, in fact, above all in this interaction that individual indentities, as relational and performative processes, are produced and negotiated and that the meaning of experience is constructed. The collective processing of common experiences elicited in the workshops through the reciprocity of storytelling and listening stimulates the participants to reconsider their positioning in individual, professional, and organizational relations and to redefine the meaning of their experiences, generating transformative practices and processes.

By describing our reflexive workshops on leadership, therefore, we have sought to show how storytelling stimulates reflection and reflexivity, or retrospection and reflective learning from experience, on the one hand, and storytelling as a means to reflect on current practices and to create further contexts on the other.

This comes about in particular when the stimuli used consist of polysemic stories; that is, ones which stimulate different valid interpretations (Boje 1995) or which touch the deepest-lying emotions (Gabriel 2000), as in the case of the story of Fanta-Ghiro. The tale produced by Allegra in response to this stimulus, and its subsequent discussion by the group, furnishes a clear example of experiential learning where listening and storytelling interweave to produce occasions for reflecting upon and transforming leadership practices and power relations, not just at the individual level but within a process of sharing and exchanging.

In fact, the person's unique autobiographical narrative constitutes the occasion for collective experiential learning, since it represents the way that persons understand and act in their organization and how it can be done differently. Experiential learning has a developmental character since it builds agency among participants, confidence that they can act together in meaningful ways and develop their own organizational repertoire of practices for exerting power in future challenges.

Note

1. The reader who wishes to know more about the theoretical foundations of our methodology is referred to our 2006 article in which we explore storytelling within the framework of 'productive reflection at work'.

References

Abma, T. A. (2003). 'Learning by Telling. Storytelling Workshop as an Organizational Learning Intervention', *Management Learning*, 342: 221–40.

Alvesson, M. (1992). 'Leadership as Social Integrative Action: A Study of a Computer Consultancy Company', *Organization Studies*, 13/2: 185–209.

—— and Billing, Y. (1997). *Understanding Gender and Organizations*. London: Sage.

Beccalli, B. (1991). 'Per una analisi di genere nella sociologia economica', in G. Bonazzi, C. Saraceno, and B. Beccalli (eds.), *Donne e uomini nella divisione del lavoro*. Milan: Angeli.

Blixen, K. (1937). *Den Afrikanske Farm*. Copenhagen: Gyldendal (Engl. trans. *Out of Africa*. London: Putnam, 1938).

Boje, D. (1995). 'Stories of Storytelling Organization: A Postmodern Analysis of Disney as "Tamara-Land" ', *Academy of Management Review*, 38/4: 997–1035.

Boud, D., Cressey, P., and Docherty, P. (eds.) (2006a). *Productive Reflection and Learning at Work*. London: Routledge.

—— —— —— (2006*b*). 'The Emergence of Productive Reflection', in D. Boud, P. Cressey, and P. Docherty (eds.), Productive Reflection and Learning at Work. London: Routledge.

Boud, D., and Walker, D. (1998). 'Promoting Reflection in Professional Courses: The Challenge of Context', *Studies in Higher Education*, 23/2: 191–206.

Bowles, G., and Klein, R. Duelli (eds.) (1983). *Theories of Women's Studies*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Brady, E. M. (1990). 'Redeemed from Time: Learning through Autobiography', *Adult Education Quarterly*, 41/1: 43–52.

Brockbank, A., McGill, I., and Beech, N. (2002). *Reflective Learning in Practice*. Aldershot: Gower.

Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of Meaning*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Bruni, A., Gherardi, S., and Poggio, B. (2005). *Gender and Entrepreneurship: An Ethnographical Approach*. London: Routledge.

Calás, M. B., and Smircich, L. (1991). 'Voicing Seduction to Silence Leadership', *Organization Studies*, 12/24: 567–602.

Casula, C. (2003). *Giardinieri, principesse, porcospini: metafore per l'evoluzione personale e professionale*. Milan: Franco Angeli.

Cavarero, A. (1997). *Tu che mi guardi, tu che mi racconti*. Milan: Feltrinelli.

Chodorow, N. (1978). *The Reproduction of Mothering*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Clegg, S. (1989). *Frameworks of Power*. London: Sage.

David, P., and Vicarelli, G. (eds.) (1994). *Donne nelle professioni degli uomini*. Milan: Angeli.

Gabriel, Y. (2000). *Storytelling in Organizations: Facts, Fictions, Fantasies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gamelli, I. (1995). 'La conoscenza di sé e il pensiero introspettivo: la meditazione', in D. Demetrio (ed.), *Per una didattica dell'intelligenza: il metodo autobiografico nello sviluppo cognitivo*. Milan: Franco Angeli.

Garfinkel, H. (1967). *Studies in Ethnomethodology*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Gherardi, S. (2003). 'Feminist Theory and Organizational Theory: A Dialogue on New Bases', in H. Knudsen and H. Tsoukas (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Organizational Theory: Meta-theoretical Perspectives.* New York: Oxford University Press.

—— and Poggio, B. (2006). 'Feminist Challenges to Mainstream Leadership through Collective Reflection and Narrative', in D. Boud, P. Cressey, and P. Docherty (eds.), *Productive Reflection and Learning at Work*. London: Routledge.

Griffith, W. (1999). 'The Reflecting Team as an Alternate Case Teaching Model: A Narrative, Conversational Approach', *Management Learning*, 30/3: 343–61.

Harding, S. (1987). 'Is There a Feminist Method?', in S. Harding (ed.), *Feminism and Methodology*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Haug, F., et al. (1987). *Female Sexualization: A Collective Work of Memory*. London: Verso.

Hegelsen, S. (1990). *The Female Advantage*. New York: Currency Doubleday.

Held, V. (1993). *Feminist Morality: Transforming Culture, Society and Politics*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Høyrup, S., and Elkjaer, B. (2006). 'Reflection: Taking it beyond the Individual', in D. Boud, P. Cressey, and P. Docherty (eds.), *Productive Reflection and Learning at Work*. London: Routledge.

Kanter, R. M. (1977). *Men and Women of the Corporation*. New York: Basic Books.

Kets de Vries, M. F. R. (1993). *Leaders, Fools and Imposters*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Loden, M. (1985). *Feminine Leadership or How to Succeed in Business Without Being One of the Boys.* New York: Times Books.

Manz, C. C., and. Sims Jr., H. P. (1991). 'SuperLeadership: Beyond the Myth of Heroic Leadership', *Organizational Dynamics*, 19: 18–35.

Parker Follett, M. (1924). *Creative Experience*. New York: Peter Smith.

Piccardo, C. (1998). *Insegnare e apprendere la leadership*. Milan: Guerini.

Poggio, B. (2004). *Mi racconti una storia? il metodo narrativo nelle scienze sociali*. Rome: Carocci.

Reinharz, S. (1983). 'Experiental Analysis: A Contribution to Family Research', in G. Bowles and R. Duelli Klein (eds.), *Theories of Women's Studies*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Reynolds, M. (1998). 'Reflection and Critical Reflection in Management Learning', *Management Learning*, 29/2: 183–200.

Roberts, H. (ed.) (1981). *Doing Feminist Research*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Rothman, J. (1997). *Resolving Identity-Based Conflict: In Nations, Organizations and Communities*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Schön, D. A. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*. New York: Basic Books.

—— (1987). *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Senge, P. M. (1991). 'The Leader New Work: Building Learning Organizations', *Sloan Management Review*, 3/1: 7–23.

Sievers, B. (1996). 'Greek Mythology as a Means of Organizational Analysis: The Battle at Larkfield', *Leadership and Organizational Development Journal*, 17/6: 32–40.
Stanley, L., and Wise, S. (1983). ' "Back into Personal" or: Our Attempt to Construct Feminist Research', in G. Bowles and R. Duelli Klein (eds.), *Theories of Women's Studies*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
Tournier, M. (1967). *Vendredi ou limbes du Pacifique*. Paris: Gallimard (Eng. trans. *Friday or the Other Island*. London: Collins, 1969).
Vince, R. (2002). 'Organizing Reflection', *Management Learning*, 33/1: 63–78.

CHAPTER 10

THEATRE IN MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

A CRITIQUE OF CURRENT TRENDS

JOHN COOPEY

This chapter presents a preliminary critique of the recent growth in the use of theatre in management education and training and organization development. It is preliminary in the sense that, because little empirical work seems to have been published on the use of theatre in this way, the review presented here draws mainly on journal and newspaper articles, claims made in theatre company brochures, and two case studies written up by the author.

In the first section of the chapter I try to explain the growth of business involvement in arts generally and in theatre in particular and discuss the services provided by theatre companies within the context of growing business influence on various aspects of UK society. Next, an attempt is made to explain how theatre workshops—depending on how radical is their purpose and form—can be used to create the trust and the physical and emotional space in which learning can be

nurtured through playful experimentation with alternative ways of behaving and living.

The third section reviews some of the current applications of theatre in this mode. First, a conventional form, role-play, is examined, then I turn to consider examples of more creative workshops in the light of claims that they can prompt quite radical change in managers and organizations. Within this category are two specially prepared cases, one of theatre used within an in-company change programme and the other where it is part of an international programme of management education.

Business and Theatre

Several trends have contributed to the recent growth in the use of theatre in management education and training in the UK. First, there has been an ideological shift prompted by central government since the 1980s, continued by recent Labour governments. Increasingly, emphasis has been placed on the economic importance of the arts for the British economy. At the local level the targeting of the arts towards goals of economic development has been particularly marked (Gray 2000). There has also been some diminution of state funding which, when linked to increasing pressures on business organizations to show greater social responsibility, has tended to draw the arts and business sectors together. At the same time companies have been enhancing their capacity to deal with what they perceive as an ever more competitive and turbulent business environment, prompted in part by a growth in the number of consulting firms offering the arts as a way of responding to those challenges.

One important element in this changing context is an organization called 'Arts and Business' (A&B) established to broker the relationship between the two while changing the emphasis from sponsorship to contracts for the provision of arts-based services. A directory created by A&B lists over 160 arts organizations and individuals offering their services. Many are theatre companies delivering 'bespoke training packages' intended to 'influence behaviour . . . accelerate change, improve communications and release creativity'.[1] At least fifty companies in the UK have been involved over recent years.

Hadfield (2000) records that eleven business and management schools were incorporating arts-based materials into their management programmes, including five that made use of theatre in various modes.

Regional arts organizations play their part in brokering arts–business connections, running 'taster' sessions where arts groups display their offerings to

businessmen and managers. One of the actor/directors featured in this chapter demonstrated his company's workshop approach at such a session just as he and his partner were reappraising how the company might survive: how 'with integrity we could augment what we are earning . . . and find a better way of not going under'. The relevance of financial issues is shown by the admission that the two partners were 'really worried about . . . teaching people who were earning so much'. Ambivalence about working with business is also revealed in the remark that 'it is of interest [but] sometimes I'm frustrated if I commit myself to this and nearly give up a year of what we do . . . but you can't do everything'.

Conversely, non-business organizations where theatre has been used to nurture learning processes are feeling the pinch, in schools, prisons, and young offenders institutions. For example, the use of theatre in UK education took off in the early 1970s when various companies created drama as an educational tool. Campbell (1994), whose theatre company was involved in this work, argues that the 'idea of theatre as a universal language through which young people can be empowered to explore and express their own experience' became more controversial in a more politicized education system. For him, Margaret Thatcher's goal was to empower not individual pupils, but the business system comprising 'UK plc'. Hence, funding for experimental work in collaboration between actors and teachers was in short supply. It was only by adapting an existing form of radical theatre that his company was able to continue working effectively with school groups despite financial constraints.

The situation today is probably much worse for those involved in theatre in education given the more intense pressure on timetables exerted through governments' attachment to rational and examinable parts of the curriculum. Much of the impetus for this trend comes, again, from a need to serve the interests of British business in order to maintain its competitiveness. So the scope of business influence and power over aspects of cultural and political life has been extended into the arts and, in parallel, has increased within education.

As yet the situation does not approach closely that in the USA although the trends continue in the same direction. Over a long period, as noted by Bourdieu and Heeke (1995), these have led to such a growth of private patronage in the USA that it is used to 'justify the abdication of public authorities . . . with the extraordinary result that citizens still finance the arts and sciences through tax exemptions'. Meanwhile the act of business funding 'appears as an example of the disinterested generosity of the corporations [through] an extremely perverse mechanism which operates in such a way that we contribute to our own mystification' (p. 16). For the corporations this process is a form of 'symbolic bank account': the donations made serve to accumulate symbolic capital of recognition, assuring a 'positive image that . . . will bring indirect profits' (p. 18).

Theatre and Learning

The focus in this section is on the learning potential of theatre workshops; any reference to more traditional stage-based theatre is used by way of comparison. In a theatre workshop participants are both performers and audience, fluctuating between two roles: a *liminal* role, similar to that experienced by participants in rituals, placing them 'betwixt and between' more permanent social roles, able 'to accept that the events of the production are *both real and not real*', and a *ludic* role in which they 'participate in playing around with the norms, customs, regulations, laws which govern life in society'. Then, as the two roles are played more vigorously and openly, more progress can be made in constructing new understandings as a basis for action (Kershaw 1992: 24; author's emphasis).

Trust and Learning Space

Progress is difficult without trust which stems from people's shared concern about a common good. A person's trust grows with the confidence, based on experience of relating to others, that they will take care of something he or she values. Crucial therefore is the belief that no harm comes from trusting and being trusted.

However, whether someone is able to tolerate his or her vulnerability in the face of the other's use of discretion in safeguarding a valued object may well depend on the relative power of the two people. Hence, the surest foundation for trust is mutual love, where power is unlikely to be an issue for as long as the loving relationship lasts. Perhaps the next best basis for trust is equality of power as part of which each partner to the trusting relationship has free access to knowledge of the other's motives and reasons (Baier 1992: 374).

Creating theatre between people who participate voluntarily and on equal terms provides a 'learning space' where trust can flourish, enabling participants to act and interact such that the relationships they shape contain the potential for deep learning. Slowly, people offer more freely their representations of experiences and the emotions which memories evoke, especially fear. Learning happens as other actors draw on their own personal history in interpreting, elaborating, and creating new insights out of the others' offerings (Fulop and Rifkin 1997). In effect, the series of episodes of mutual self-disclosure serve as a vehicle for learning and for building up trust. The deeper the trust as each participant obtains freer access to the motives and reasons of the others, the deeper the learning.

The deepening of trust between members of a group is also a function of the success they achieve in fulfilling the task which confronts them: in a theatre workshop the performance itself. When all members of the group judge that they have been

successful the shared experience of completing the task then tends to improve their relationships further. Opportunities given in the workshop for retrospective monitoring of what has happened, and for appraising the learning that has taken place, increase the strength of commitments and enhance relationships further. Hence, 'two distinguishable but strongly related levels of experience are interwoven: the socio-relational level concerning how the parties shape their mutual relationships, and the content-domain levels' concerning the task's meaning (Steyaert, Bouwen, and Van Looy 1996: 72).

This is how theatre creates an 'aesthetic space' in which participants can become visible and find their voice, allowing them to rediscover and revalue their experience, to overcome others' attempts to dismiss how they make sense of their lives, and to realize that technocrats and managers are not the sole sources of valid knowledge.

Conventional or Radical Workshops?

Now I consider how theatre workshops are used in practice and try to establish some broad criteria as to whether they might be considered as more or less radical in form and process and, therefore, more or less likely to foster radical learning on the part of workshop participants.

In professional playhouses workshops are used to develop actors' general skills and their approach to a specific play, and in exploring and shaping themes for a new play. Workshops have also been used for many years in education, personal therapy, and the rehabilitation of adult prisoners and young offenders. Clearly, given some of these uses, there may be quite radical purposes concerned with the promotion of personal change (for example Feldhendler 1994).

In stage-based theatre companies workshops help the ensemble prepare for a performance. The conventional workshop form involves reworking an existing text in order to put a contemporary gloss on it and to perform it well enough to ensure favourable reviews and high box-office receipts. Even so, the reworking process may well last many days and provide opportunities for some degree of learning on the part of the ensemble and its members.

More radical forms of workshop are found in the work of certain playwrights, directors, and companies of actors who develop both a text and the mode of its performance. For example, the highly acclaimed 'Theatre de Complicité' improvise a performance by working on some 'universal theme' during months of argument, rehearsal, and research. This allowed them in *Help! I'm Alive* to 'speak for the urban dumbos, deadbeats and dispossessed in a world where ugliness is endemic and dignity a luxury confined to the rich' (Ratcliffe 1995).

For the Brazilian theatre director Augusto Boal, this is insufficient: though the performances which emerge might 'create an opening for a critical consciousness'

on the part of the audience, the power still rests with the character. So Boal uses his own form of workshop—called Theatre of the Oppressed or Forum Theatre—which he evolved during a programme to increase literacy in Peru. He placed theatre at the service of those on the programme so that, by using its language, they could take the protagonist role and express possible modes of living through which they could escape the meanings in which their oppression was grounded. In the process they moved beyond enquiry into a form of 'rehearsal theatre' for worlds that had to be created if people were to survive (Boal 1979).

Preliminary exercises are used to build trust and overcome participants' inhibitions as they devise one or more 'plots' from their own raw material based on real life modes of thought and behaviour which, though perceived generally as 'normal', they find oppressive. Each plot is then played out by some of the group, without interruption. The remainder are, in Boal's terms, 'spect-actors' who, in the unfolding of the drama on subsequent runs through, are encouraged to say 'stop' and take the part of one or more of the original 'actors' in order to change the course of the action. They strive to create 'a new vision of the world' in opposition to the original actors' attempts to maintain the original script.

Not surprisingly the difficulty and pain of this process can be such that participants may be driven to accept simple or comfortable answers (Jackson 1992). So workshops are 'led' not by a conventional 'director', or the 'facilitator' of training sessions, but by a 'Joker' whose role is to discourage the 'quick-fix'. A Joker serves 'as a "difficultator", undermining easy judgements, reinforcing our grasp of the complexity of a situation, but not letting that complexity get in the way of action or frighten us into submission or inactivity' (pp. xix–xx).

Workshops as used by Complicité and Boal provide a mirror image of the ideas of commentators such as Mangham and Overington (1987). Whereas the latter, using a dramaturgical metaphor, suggest how work in organizations is a form of theatre, Complicité and Boal demonstrate how theatre workshops can be used to change how life is lived, including organizational life. They too are aware that in every situation there are implicit texts on which we improvise our actions, texts that are 'often structured by the thoughts, words and actions of playwrights long dead' (Mangham and Overington 1987: 173). They also acknowledge that a successful interpretation of a text involves a mode of enactment that takes it well beyond that which is current, but their vision of the world that might be created is likely to be very different from those of the senior executives used as exemplars by Mangham and Overington, such as 'the Gambles, the Hewletts, Sloans, Geneens and Fords'. The approach taken by Complicité and Boal would produce a radically new reading of the texts which govern business life so as to take account of the interests of a multiplicity of stakeholders and the fragility of the ecosphere in the face of demands to yield up ever greater 'shareholder value'. When, in the final part of the chapter, I ask how radical are the interventions reviewed, this is the benchmark against which that question is posed.

In Fulop and Rifkin's (1997) terms such learning 'is potentially anti-foundational, anti-the system, and not easily orchestrated' (p. 58), a potential that is recognized by St George, Schwager, and Canavan (1999) in their 'consumer's guide [*sic*] to the use of drama in corporate training' in the USA. In this they warn companies that, 'inasmuch as drama has the potential to create poignant and highly successful learning opportunities, it may also have the capacity to manipulate, distort, and compromise training goals and participant integrity'. Hence, consistent with their concern with such goals as 'reducing the potential for litigation', they give this 'health warning': 'Those using drama-based training have an ethical imperative to ensure its appropriate application' (p. 79).

Alternatively, it could be argued that the current state of the world economy and environment requires training that is 'anti-foundational and anti-the system'. It would then be appropriate to use theatre workshops within a much more radical programme of training and development designed to encourage and help participants to imagine and experiment with creating 'a much more radical economic and business model of human development than that favoured in the 20th century', i.e. 'materials-intensive, driven by fossil fuels, based on mass consumption and mass disposal, and oriented primarily to economic growth—with insufficient regard for people's needs' (Worldwatch Institute, 2002: 4).[2] The new model might, as suggested by the New Renaissance Group, be more relevant to the achievement of 'a sustainable human future' implying a 'stable human population of diverse societies, living at peace with one another and within the Earth's carrying capacity . . . and a more rewarding quality of life for all human beings with benefits more evenly and fairly distributed'.[3]

A Review of Some Current Applications

In this section I consider the use being made of theatre within business organizations mostly in the UK, including two cases studied in more detail for this review. The sources of information about other examples are journal or newspaper articles and brochures of theatre companies.

The critique which emerges from this review is based on a preliminary assessment of how conventional or radical are, first, the form and process of the actual workshops—assessed in a broad-brush way against the criteria discussed earlier—and the aims of those who design and manage the programmes of which the workshops are part.

Role-Play

One long-standing use of theatre in management training is role-play in helping, for example, to assess the role competence of candidates for jobs and of employees

chosen to attend development centres, and to practise and explore strategies for playing work roles in various circumstances.

One of the biggest providers of role-play workshops in the UK is Role Call Limited: fifty actors on its books coach managers to enhance their capability in dealing with difficult situations such as breaking bad news to subordinates. The constrained form of theatre workshop employed is very unlikely to prompt any radical positive change either in the participants or their organizations. On the contrary it seems designed to induce greater conformism especially when the role acted out is a defensive one, as in dealing with redundancies.

Such a role can require a person to perform 'emotional labour', managing their feelings so as to 'sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others' (Hochschild 1983: 7). The interviewing of people to be made redundant, for example, requires the adoption of an 'emotional style' intended to ensure that they do not feel as upset as, in the circumstances, they are probably entitled to feel. In this encounter a manager may well experience feelings of empathy which the training helps to suppress, at least outwardly, in order to produce the desired effect on the other party. However, the recipient of bad news may have the sense of being dealt with well by both the manager and—via a process of transference—the company for whom that manager is 'fronting'

In behaving regularly in this way 'to reflect the company's position', the role incumbent may not find it easy to disengage other aspects of self and emotions. If repeated many times such behaviour can tend to estrange the person not only from their 'performance' in role but from their deeper sense of self. Such an experience may be quite disturbing for them whilst risking that those with whom they deal then become convinced of the manager's insincerity.

Workshops that Prompt Change and Creativity

A freer form of theatre workshop is used as part of change programmes as described by Arkin (1998), Caulkin (2000), and Hadfield (2000). They provide many examples including how members of a theatre ensemble coached managers in staging their own performance, how the use of the RSC's 'rehearsal room techniques of presentation, ensemble building and ideas generation' were borrowed 'as a powerful problem solving methodology', and how a theatre group helped to bring about a successful merger of two large companies by directing and coaching several hundred employees in a three-day workshop in which they mounted dance and theatre presentations, hence demonstrating the potential of the newly created company.

Certainly, such programmes may produce far-reaching outcomes, but without the opportunity for evaluation it is difficult to comment on their effects. On the other hand, it is perhaps illuminating to comment on claims that such programmes are intended to help companies to:

- cope with the speed of change;
- use the world of theatre as 'a paradigm for organisational structures and ways of working' relevant in the business world;
- achieve an 'injection of imagination and creativity' to increase companies' competitiveness;
- gear up for 'modern weightless economies' in which it will become possible 'to recombine resources in a way that redefines whole industries at a stroke' (*sic*);
- 'provide work that engages (employees') hearts and minds' now that old loyalties have been swept away in 'the earth-moving upheavals in employment relations' (Caulkin 2000; Coyle 1999; Handy 1997).

Despite the promise of radical change which this list might imply, several of the reasons suggested as to why organizations would choose to use theatre workshops for management development are quite traditional. What does seem different of late is that these needs have become much more pressing as a result of a spate of mergers, takeovers, downsizing, and managerial initiatives intended to undermine long-standing employment relations in order to introduce flexible working. In parallel, change programmes have been implemented, sometimes to help achieve these outcomes and, in others, to deal with their unexpected consequences. So managers and other employees have been subjected to a stream of 'fads' from 'Quality Circles' in the 1970s to 'Just-in-Time', 'TQM', and 'Search for Excellence' in the 1980s and programmes of 'Empowerment' and 'Business Process Re-engineering' most recently.

Turnbull (1999) comments on the effect of these interventions on middle managers who 'are required to manage the interface between the *authors* of the latest fads (the senior managers) and the *recipients* (the employees)'. Deeply involved in emotional labour, through a requirement to exercise emotional control while displaying the enthusiasm expected of them, they are in danger of 'entering into self-deception and inauthentic behaviour', a mode of behaviour that can begin to blur 'the boundaries between their own identities and those of the organization' (p. 3; original emphasis).

So it may take more than theatre—even alchemy—to undo pernicious effects of this period of corporate activity on the attitudes, beliefs, and sense of commitment of both managers and rank and file employees. Alchemy may certainly be needed in the creation of 'modern weightless economies'. If such a notion merits theatre at all, most fitting might be the modern 'theatre of the absurd' or, from the seventeenth century, Ben Jonson's play *The Alchemist*, in which a fake alchemist-cum-astrologer fleeces gullible characters fooled by his promises of bizarre ways to enrich themselves.

But there may be potential in some of the examples considered above to help participants to become more playful and self-questioning of behaviour and identity in ways that reinforce their personal values and other strengths and talents. In Hopfl's

(1994) terms, out of the unsettling experience of workshop activities participants may emerge with a nascent sense of self which promises to undermine the rhetoric on which organizational 'reality' is based and yet is more resistant to subjection and appropriation.

Also potentially radical at the organizational development level is the suggestion by both Arkin (1998) and Caulkin (2000) that managers can be coached by leading actor/directors to learn from the speed with which theatre companies use workshops to put on a new play. It is not clear, however, to what extent this facility to move quickly from rehearsal to performance can be transferred to other work organizations. Perhaps this is possible in some sectors such as communications where there are similarities between business firms and theatre companies in the sense that both are 'putting on a performance'. However, in numerous other sectors—such as nuclear energy, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and insurance—where error in implementation can incur widespread damage to people and other elements of the natural environment, a lengthy period of planning, development, and testing is probably essential.

But when Caulkin (2000) refers to the use of theatre to enhance the creative potential of an existing group's member companies or to speed up the shaping of a creative culture in a company newly created from a merger of existing organizations, these events may yield somewhat more radical effects than could be achieved through traditional management development techniques.

Even so, a more elegant, much less costly prophylactic response to the latter issue may be to avoid mergers or acquisitions (M&As) in the first place. The great stream of M&As which have been a feature of global business in recent years have, time and time again, been shown to result in considerable disbenefits for many stakeholders, including shareholders (for example KPMG 1999; NEF 2002). Such outcomes merit not the application of 'doses of theatre' or any other form of panacea administered by boards of directors, but the imposition of constraints by stakeholders on boards themselves in order to prevent at least the worst of corporate excesses that lead to decisions to engage in takeovers and mergers (Girma, Thompson, and Wright 2002).

Two Case Studies

Finally, I describe and comment on two case studies in the UK which illustrate some of the potentially more radical uses it is claimed can be made of theatre workshops in management development. Information about these initiatives has been gleaned from various documents provided by their main sponsors and interviews with those sponsors, colleagues, and the actor/directors who were contracted to design and direct the workshops.

Case 1: International Executive Master's Programme

Here, a theatre workshop is part of an international executive master's programme run collaboratively by business schools in five countries including the UK. The programme's design is dictated by a desire to escape the fragmented functional focus of the traditional MBA and to concentrate on the processes and practice of managing. The learning mode emphasizes the contributions of an international group of mature executives from the five countries and the importance of drawing on and sharing the meanings each gives to managerial work.

A programme 'cycle' takes place over an eighteen-month period. At regular intervals during this time five two-week modules are spent in a classroom or similar environment, each devoted to a specific topic or 'mind-set'. Each collaborating school is responsible for designing and running one of the modules in that school's facilities. The cycle starts in the UK with a module linking general notions of managing with a *reflective* mind-set. The other modules are, in sequence: managing organizations with an *analytic* mind-set, managing context with a *worldly* mind-set, managing relationships with a *collaborative* mind-set, and managing change with an *action* mind-set.

The first part of the opening module is taken up with an introduction to the themes of the programme as a whole. After that, apart from the drama workshop—titled 'Players in a Game'—the remaining time is devoted to reflecting on self and identity, managing knowledge and self, the completion and review of a cultural audit, and a very brief introduction to issues concerning the natural environment.

In earlier cycles the drama session stretched over one and a half or two days but for the most recent, the cycle that started in 2002, this was restricted to one day. The session starts with simple physical warm-up exercises, in silence, so that participants can get to know the space and how to use it. Then they work in small groups on quite trivial tasks designed to build up trust even though an 'edge of competition' may be induced. All are encouraged to act as 'players in a game' and to express their pleasure through laughter which also helps relieve any stress invoked by the unfamiliar. They are 'kept at it', encouraged to 'go with the flow and suspend belief', given few opportunities to interpret and rationalize their experiences.

At this point the first piece of 'acting' is introduced in which small groups create for each other a mimed piece expressed through visual images. Following this they make up and tell stories often related to organizational life before moving on to 'produce the beginnings of theatre' when groups are given carte blanche to prepare quickly a piece for performance based on a story with a focus on leadership in organizational life. Rehearsal space is provided and a time limit set in which to try out their ideas. Finally, in turn, each group performs its piece to an audience, followed immediately by the director's initial comments. Once all have performed, a feedback session allows substantive issues to be commented on as a prelude to a discussion of what the performers have learned and how it might be useful in 'real life'.

Case 2: CompCo

Here, a theatre workshop was introduced as an element of an intervention made by a small consultancy firm specializing in facilitating executive and organizational change. One of their consultants was contracted to work with CompCo, a company created through the privatization and splitting up of a public utility. The board of CompCo had already worked with a major international consulting firm to develop a strategy designed to capitalize on opportunities to run part of the company as a fully competitive enterprise even though the bulk of its business is regulated. The role of the consultant in the case examined here was to help disseminate that strategy through the organization so that local policies and practices could be aligned with the company's overall goals.

This task is being addressed through individual and group work with the top cadre of executives below CompCo's board. The aim is to change the organization's orientation from one of public service to commercially based competitiveness. A central part of the intervention is a series of development programmes, each extending over a year and catering for a group of twenty-five executives. The programme is built around three 'core' modules in which conceptual and experiential approaches are linked. Participants are charged with carrying the learning process forward such that, by the end of the programme, they are expected to have produced their own personal development plan against which their performance and progress can be assessed.

In the first core module the emphasis is on leadership capabilities, the development of strategy, and its integration with operations. A major business simulation forms the second module concerned with market appreciation, benchmarking, and growing a new business. The final core element, of which the theatre workshop is part, is about 'shifting mind-sets', helping participants change from a set of public service values, beliefs, and practices to those appropriate to a more commercial, competitive environment.

The focus of this third element is both more personal and political in the context of a new set of stakeholders who are involved with the company. It affords opportunities for experimentation which takes participants out of their 'comfort zones' in order to help them build self-confidence, become less risk averse, and perform with more spontaneity in public.

Within this core element the form of the theatre workshop is very similar to that in the first case but with one difference which stems from the contrasting nature of the two groups. It seems that the in-company groups of executives are older, more inhibited, and more homogeneous than those on the international business school programme. So whereas the latter seem generally able and ready to perform a role behind their own faces, the in-company set is happier behind masks, using shadow puppets to create often powerful metaphors which tell their stories of leadership and life as it is lived on their shared home territory. To allow them to get to this point the workshop runs over a full three days.

Commentary

The form of workshop in the two cases is very similar in many respects to that used in other contexts including those run by Augusto Boal. However, the majority of those who attend his workshops are probably already amateur or professional actors, who may well intend to incorporate aspects of his Forum Theatre into their own work. Despite this, and the cost constraints most of them face, the programme runs over four days. This is consistent with the emphasis that ensembles such as Theatre de Complicité place on both the power of the radical learning process which is played out in workshops and, hence, on the time they are prepared to spend in workshops to capitalize on this.

However, in CompCo three days may well suffice to help executives realign their values, beliefs, and performance in support of the intervention's limited aims. There seems no intention of prompting any radical, thoroughgoing rethinking of personal and corporate values but merely to integrate into their business lives those values relevant to the sectors which their board of directors hope to penetrate.

What is more, the assumptions which frame the intervention seem very conventional in managerial terms: firmly top-down, aimed at helping 'the organization do things better' within the current business and market paradigm. The 'strategy work' completed prior to the phase in which the change consultant is involved enables him to design the intervention so as to turn key aspects of the emergent strategy 'into leadership capability'. As part of this process executives who participate are encouraged to consider how, once they have shifted their own mind-sets consistent with the strategy, they propose to go out and 'shift the organization' for which they are responsible.

In dramaturgical performance terms, this is similar to Mangham and Overington's (1987) view that, in business organizations,

> much of the responsibility for the provision of a guiding interpretation . . . lies with senior managers often with the chief executive. Beyond all else, the leader . . . is the person to whom others look for the provision of a sub-text; once provided, the individual structures and processes which support it can be put in place by lesser mortals. (175–6)

But those lesser mortals, including middle managers up to the level of the board, may well experience the unsettling effects of the emotional labour they will have to perform to achieve these ends. In this they risk having to indulge in 'self-deception and inauthentic behaviour' of which Turnbull (1999) speaks, and experience the resultant threat to self-identity.

As for the business school programme, the use of theatre is consistent with the academic director's belief that the act of theatrical performance provides people with novel ways of relating to each other. This encourages them to engage with their experience in a non-analytical, more expressive mode, reflecting freely about things they may not have noticed from within their usual rationalist frame. It is

hoped that this form of learning will be useful in the rest of the programme and when they are back at work.

However, given that only one day is devoted to theatre, it is difficult to believe that, of itself, it has more than a passing effect within the programme as a whole, even given that the executives enrolled on the programme are young, uninhibited, and heterogeneous relative to those in CompCo. The actor/director who runs the workshop believes from a professional standpoint that it would be better to devote more time to it and suggests that the programme director acknowledges this too, but is also concerned to do justice to all the other material 'they've got to pack into the time'.

A short workshop may still help to encourage the reflective mind-set of the first module. But it is surely insufficient as a way of preparing the group to slip easily into workshop mode—as theatre ensembles might do—when they work on the later externally focused themes with faculty who are not necessarily familiar with this approach. All in all it seems a missed opportunity in a very innovative programme.

So how do I explain the results of an informal poll among participants in the second cycle of whom all but one—who was unsure—agreed that the programme had been a 'life changing experience'? This response is credible only if we accept the two main promoters' argument that, apart from the tone they set and the venue and creative inputs they provide, 'the natural dynamics of a collection of bright, experienced and interested people from around the world takes over, and a remarkable learning experience results'.[4]

As for any radical effects on the sponsoring organizations, the promoters are disappointed that insufficient change has been induced '*by virtue of what takes place during the program*'. They are working on this issue.

But what sort of change do they have in mind? Is it akin to that favoured by those of London's West End theatre directors who use workshops so that they and their ensemble can rework an existing text in order to put a contemporary gloss on it and to perform it well enough to ensure favourable reviews and high box-office receipts? Or is it more like Theatre de Complicité's attempts to create and perform new radical texts from diverse sources that challenge and even trouble their audiences? Or, yet again, is it similar to the change which Schutzman (1994) managed to achieve using a Boal Forum workshop with middle-class Americans? Though expressing no sense of their own oppression they acknowledged that they belonged to a privileged group which oppressed members of other groups. Then, by sharing their feelings of impotence and complicity, workshop participants managed to create a 'map' to aid them in dealing with their 'non-prescriptive, unchosen, social positions within that oppressive territory' and with 'the cultural forces that so humiliated their wills and appropriated their differences' (p. 140).

In this latter sense, how does the programme help participants to produce their maps for dealing with oppression others might suffer at the hands of the companies they work for and for overcoming the cultural forces that may humiliate their own wills in such situations?.

Finally, do boards of directors of direct sponsoring companies really want radical change to be produced by their executives? Perhaps directors' views on this issue are better reflected in the reservations expressed by St George, Schwager, and Canavan (1999), noted earlier, about the potential risks they see in the use of drama in corporate training such that 'those using drama-based training have an ethical imperative to ensure its appropriate application' (p. 79). If one takes their position, the conventional theatre director's approach will probably suffice after all.

Conclusions

In the first part of the chapter it is suggested that growth in the use by UK-based companies of theatre in training and development programmes is best seen as part of a larger movement which has increased business influence over aspects of social, cultural, and political life in order to strengthen the competitiveness internationally of 'UK plc'.

Claims that such programmes can prompt change and creativity in participants and, through them, in the organizations they manage are designed to resolve problems which seem little different from those perceived as targets in the earlier history of initiatives designed to engineer management and organization development. Nowadays, there may be more urgency, created by changed perceptions of competitiveness and organizational failings. Ironically, though, some of these stem from ill-considered corporate strategies such as 'downsizing' and mergers and acquisitions. However, it is possible that some of the uses of theatre referred to in the literature may produce more creative and radical outcomes than is possible using traditional approaches.

As for the two specially prepared cases, they are examined for evidence that they fit this more radical scenario. In the CompCo case it is concluded that the inclusion of a theatre workshop in the programme of in-company executive training and development may have produced worthwhile outcomes for the organization. However, though some may also label those outcomes as 'radical', this seems to ring true only within the conservative framework of existing dominant economic and business paradigms. What is more, the use of workshops as part of change programmes may increase the pressures on the participants to perform emotional labour in ways that could have pernicious effects on their sense of self and the esteem that is associated with it.

As for the international business school programme, it is possible to infer from material produced by its main sponsors that their objectives are radical. These are probably realized in terms of the effects of the participants' experience within the programme on their own learning and, possibly, the transfer of this to their in-role behaviour back at work. However, even the promoters accept that it is doubtful how far this applies to the executives' potential to change their organizations.

The commentary suggests that, in any case, any such outcomes are likely to have been due only in small part, if at all, to the inclusion of a one-day theatre workshop. Much more important are other aspects of the very innovative design of the programme and the orientation and mix of participants. Even within the first reflective module the value of the workshop seems more as an 'ice-breaking' activity rather than one designed to fit participants to adopt easily a playful workshop mode of experimentation throughout the programme and back in the workplace.

Taking as a benchmark the practice of professional theatre companies, I conclude that, if workshops for managers are to help significantly in the process of producing more radical and lasting outcomes in both personal and organizational terms, two conditions are necessary. First, much more time and effort needs to be devoted to the use of workshops within training and development programmes. Second, if—as the promoters claim—those programmes can help participants to imagine how 'the world can be seen differently', perhaps the ideas introduced by faculty into a programme, and the way the theatre workshop is used in relation to those ideas, need to be responsive to the 'more radical economic and business model' proposed by the Worldwatch Institute (2002), directed to the 'sustainable human future' described by the New Renaissance Group.

Notes

1. Quoted from Arts and Business website.
2. The Worldwatch Institute is a non-profit public policy research organization based in Washington, USA, dedicated to informing policy makers and the public about emerging global problems and trends and the complex links between the world economy and its environmental support systems. For each of the last nineteen years, including 2002, the Institute has published an assessment of the state of the world with special emphasis on the state of the environment, including human beings, and steps needed to protect it.
3. The New Renaissance Group, formed recently in the UK, is made up of a set of experienced people of established reputations drawn from a variety of fields. The quotation cited is from a statement that arose from a meeting of an International Multi-disciplinary Workshop organized by the NRG held at the Royal Society of Edinburgh, 4 to 6 July 2001.
4. From 'The Education of Practicing Managers', a paper posted on the programme website http://www.impm.org.

References

Arkin, A. (1998). 'Treading the Boards', *People Management*, 13 Aug.

Baier, A. (1992). 'Trust and Antitrust', in J. Deigh (ed.), *Ethics and Personality: Essays in Moral Psychology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Boal, A. (1979). *Theatre of the Oppressed*. London: Pluto Press.

Bourdieu, P., and Heeke, H. (1995). *Free Exchange.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Campbell, A. (1994). 'Re-inventing the Wheel: Breakout Theatre-in-Education', in M. Schutzman and J. Cohen-Cruz (eds.), *Playing Boal: Theatre, Therapy and Activism.* London: Routledge.

Caulkin, S. (2000). 'Performance!', *Management Today*, May: 62–7.

Coyle, D. (1999). *The Weightless World.* Oxford: Capstone Publishing.

Feldhendler, D. (1994). 'Augusto Boal and Jacob L. Moreno: Theatre and Therapy', in M. Schutzman and J. Cohen-Cruz (eds.), *Playing Boal: Theatre, Therapy and Activism.* London: Routledge.

Fulop, L., and Rifkin, W. D. (1997). 'Representing Fear in Learning in Organizations', *Management Learning*, 28/1: 45–63.

Girma, S., Thompson, S., and Wright, P. (2002). 'Merger Activity and Executive Pay'. Paper presented to the Annual Conference of the Royal Economic Society, Mar.

Gray, C. (2000). *The Politics of the Arts in Britain.* London: Macmillan Press.

Hadfield, C. (2000). *A Creative Education: How Creativity and the Arts Enhance MBA and Executive Development Programmes.* London: Arts and Business.

Handy, C. (1997) 'The Search for Meaning', *Leader to Leader*, 5 (Summer): 14–20.

Hochschild, A. (1983). *The Managed Heart.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Hopfl, H. (1994). 'Learning by Heart: The Rules of Rhetoric and the Poetics of Experience', *Management Learning*, 25/3: 463–74.

Jackson, A. (1992). 'Translator's Introduction', in A. Boal, *Games for Actors and Non-actors.* London: Routledge.

Kershaw, B. (1992). *The Politics of Performance: Radical Theatre as Cultural Intervention.* London: Routledge.

KPMG (1999). *Unlocking Shareholder Value: The Keys to Success: Mergers and Acquisitions.* London: KPMG, Global Research Report.

Mangham, I., and Overington, M. (1987). *Organizations as Theatre: A Social Psychology of Dramatic Appearances.* Chichester: John Wiley.

New Economics Foundation (NEF) (2002). *Five Brothers: The Rise and Nemesis of the Big Bean Counters.* London: NEF.

Ratcliffe, M. (1995). 'Collusion between Celebrants', in *Theatre de Complicité*: *The Three Lives of Lucy Cabrol*. London: Methuen.

St George, J., Schwager, S., and Canavan, F. (1999). 'A Guide to Drama-Based Training', *Employment Relations Today*, Winter: 73–81.

Schutzman. M. (1994). 'The Political Therapy of Augusto Boal', in M. Schutzman and J. Cohen-Cruz (eds.), *Playing Boal: Theatre, Therapy and Activism.* London: Routledge.

Spry, L. (1994). 'Structures of Power: Toward a Theatre of Liberation', in M. Schutzman and J. Cohen-Cruz (eds.), *Playing Boal: Theatre, Therapy and Activism.* London: Routledge.

Steyaert, C. R., Bouwen, R., and Van Looy, B. (1996). 'Conversational Construction of New Meaning Configurations in Organisational Innovation: A Generative Approach', *European Journal of Work and Occupational Psychology*, 5/1: 67–89.

Turnbull, S. (1999). 'Emotional Labour in Corporate Change Programmes: The Effects of Organizational Feeling Rules on Middle Managers', *Human Resource Development International*, 2/2: 125–46.

Worldwatch Institute (2002). *State of the World, 2002: Progress towards a Sustainable Society.* London: Earthscan Publications.

CHAPTER 11

WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE IN EDUCATION FOR ECOLOGY

PETER REASON

At least since the 1980s, and possibly long before that, humanity has been running an ecological deficit with the earth. The activities of humans are fast overwhelming the self-regulating capacity of the planet of which we are a part (see, for example, WWF 2004: 2–4). The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005) reveals that approximately 60 per cent of the ecosystem services that support life on earth—such as fresh water, capture fisheries, air and water regulation, and the regulation of regional climate, natural hazards, and pests—are being degraded or used unsustainably and that this 'could grow significantly worse in the next 50 years'. The ecological footprint, a measure of humanity's use of renewable natural resources (Wackernagel et al. 1997), grew by 80 per cent between 1961 and 1999, to a level 20 per cent above the earth's biological capacity. The challenge of sustainability faces us now, not in some distant future. David King, Chief Scientific Adviser to the UK government, has described climate change as the greatest challenge facing the world in the twenty-first century (King 2004a, 2004b). James Lovelock has issued the grim warning that we are too late for 'sustainable development' and must make 'a well-planned sustainable retreat' (Lovelock 2006).

This chapter explores how wilderness experiences, as part of education for ecology, can be part of management education designed to address these issues. For the challenges we face are not simply economic and technical—although they have economic and technical dimensions. Rather the crisis is primarily one of mind and of how we perceive ourselves in relationship to the planet of which we are a part. As David Orr argues,

> The crisis we face is first and foremost one of mind, perceptions, and values; hence, it is a challenge to those institutions presuming to shape minds, perceptions, and values. It is an educational challenge. More of the same kind of education can only make things worse.
>
> (Orr 1994: 27)

The M.Sc. in Responsibility and Business Practice at the University of Bath seeks to address these educational challenges (see http://www.bath.ac.uk/carpp/msc.htm). It looks at the complex relationship between business decisions and their impact on local and world communities, economies, and environment, and helps participants develop management practices that are responsive to pressures for greater awareness in these areas. Many people would like to bridge the gaps between their beliefs and hopes as human beings, and the reality of their working lives. This course aims to equip participants with the skills, knowledge, and awareness to review their own practice and play an active part in moving organizations towards a more values-aware orientation.

Judi Marshall has described the educational design of this programme as 'matching form to content' (Marshall 2004). She argues that 'pedagogy matters . . . that we need to develop educational forms that are robustly congruent with the issues addressed' (2004: 197). Our pedagogy recognizes that there are no formulaic solutions to these issues; we invite participants to engage in active reflection and experimentation, and so become explorers and potentially pioneers in responsibility and business practice. Thus our educational model is both appreciative and question posing.

The programme is part-time and comprises eight intensive, five-day residential workshops over two years. Each workshop explores a content area in depth—the first two open the territory, looking at 'Globalization and the New Context of Business and New Economics'; the third workshop, the subject of the current chapter, explores the ecology of the planet of which business is a part; while the fourth brings participants back to the practices of 'Sustainable Corporate Management'; in the second year workshops develop these themes. We weave other, ongoing, strands of learning throughout the programme: systemic thinking, acting for change, power, gender, diversity, and leadership.

Our question-posing education practice is based on action research (Reason and Bradbury 2001). We invite participants to develop skills of reflective practice (Marshall 2001; Schön 1983; Torbert 2004), cooperative enquiry (Heron 1996), and large-scale change (Gustavsen 2001). For example, the programme is structured

overall as cycles of action and reflection, with each workshop offering space for reflection in learning groups, and the periods between workshops as cycles of action. We bring into the classroom exercises which encourage reflective capabilities here and now—such as individual and group process reviews; and 'tools' to enhance off-line reflection such as the 'learning pathways grid' (Rudolph, Taylor, and Foldy 2001). The assessment process encourages learning through enquiry. Maybe most important and challenging is our attempt as staff to model a practice of enquiry moment to moment in all our engagements with students.

Wilderness Experience

The staff team, when they originally designed it, were adamant that the programme, while clearly a business programme in a prestigious business school, should attend to questions of meaning, value, spirit, and in particular that students should be exposed to radical thinking about the nature of the planet earth as the originator of all human and non-human wealth. We wanted to explore deep ecology and Gaia theory and, as far as possible in the overcrowded British Isles, offer students a 'wilderness experience', an opportunity for a direct experience of the wildness of the natural world.

To this end we have teamed up with colleagues at Schumacher College in Devon,[1] and in particular with the resident ecologist Stephan Harding. Together we designed

Box 11.1 The Deep Ecology Platform

- All life has value in itself, independent of its usefulness to humans.
- Richness and diversity contribute to life's well-being and have value in themselves.
- Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs in a responsible way.
- The impact of humans in the world is excessive and rapidly getting worse.
- Human lifestyles and population are key elements of this impact.
- The diversity of life, including cultures, can flourish only with reduced human impact.
- Basic ideological, political, economic, and technological structures must therefore change.
- Those who accept the foregoing points have an obligation to participate in implementing the necessary changes and to do peacefully and democratically.

This version of the Deep Ecology Platform was formulated by those attending the Deep Ecology course at Schumacher College, May 1995 (Harding 2006: 241–2).

Box 11.2 Gaia

Gaia Theory proposes two radical departures from the conventional view [of life on earth]. The first proposal is that life profoundly affects the non-living environment, such as the composition of the atmosphere, which then feeds back to influence the entirety of the living world. The second property emerges out of this tight coupling between life and non-life. This 'emergent property' is the ability of Gaia, of the Earth System as a whole, to maintain key aspects of the global environment, such as global temperature, at levels favourable to life, despite shocks from both with and outside itself.

This sort of ability, which scientists call 'self-regulation' is exhibited by all living things. . . . So, according to this theory, Gaia is in some sense alive . . .

Source: Adapted from Harding (2001: 17–19; see also 2006: ch. 3).

a week-long experience which includes lectures on deep ecology (Devall and Sessions 1985; Naess 1990) (see Box 11.1); Gaia theory (Harding 2006; Lovelock 1979, 2006) (see Box 11.2); and the state of the natural world, but where a lot of time is spent outside. We take participants on a night walk through woodland and spend an afternoon meditating by the River Dart. We summon the Council of All Beings, the ceremony developed by John Seed and Joanna Macy (Macy and Brown 1998; Seed et al. 1988) in which participants come to the council circle to speak as the many diverse beings of their concern for the state of the world. And we spend one whole day in a hike along the upper reaches of the River Dart, along what must be one of the last remaining stretches of wilderness in England. On this walk we leave the footpaths and scramble over rocks and under branches; we help each other through bogs and over torrential streams. And under Stephan's guidance we experiment with deep ecology exercises which shift our experience of the more than human world.

Through ten years of reflective practice conducting this workshop we have learned that education for ecology cannot be based solely on propositional knowing: it must be an experiential and aesthetic process. As Gregory Bateson argued in his essay 'Conscious Purpose vs Nature' (in Bateson 1972), the conscious rational human mind—what we in academia are proud to inculcate in our students-is itself antipathetic to natural ecological processes. He argues that the human mind, driven by rational conscious purpose, separates itself from the wider Mind embedded in the self-regulation of ecological systems. Consciousness as a 'short-cut device to enable you to get quickly at what you want' (1972: 443), when coupled with powerful technology, cuts through the balancing circuits of Mind and undermines the ecosystem's stability. Bateson wanted to find a way of accessing the lost sense of interconnectedness and intimate interdependency; and he calls this the recovery of 'grace', the sacred dimension of our being (for a fuller review of the implications of Bateson's ideas for ecological education, see Reason forthcoming 2007).

Experiential Enquiry

I have described the educational model of the M.Sc. programme as drawing on action research as a basis for learning, and throughout the programme there is an emphasis on enquiry processes and skills. The deep ecology workshop draws on the model of cooperative enquiry by inviting participants to engage in cycles of action and reflection in their exploration of the natural world. Cooperative enquiry is a form of collaborative action research-research *with* rather than *on* people—in which all participants contribute equally to the design of the enquiry and engage in the activities being researched (Heron 1996; Reason 2003). While, in traditional research, the roles of researcher and subject are mutually exclusive, cooperative enquiry is based on reciprocal initiative and control, so that all those involved work together as co-researchers and as co-subjects. It is argued that for a truly human science of persons, those involved in the enquiry process must engage as persons rather than as passive objects, contributing with awareness to both the ideas and the action that are part of the enquiry endeavour. It is important to emphasize that the workshop is not an example of a full practice of cooperative enquiry: the staff team retain a significant degree of (hopefully authentic and legitimate) hierarchical control of the design: we want to offer the cooperative enquiry model to participants and 'walk them through it'; and we want to offer activities which may open participants to a range of new experiences. However, within the overall design there is plenty of space for individual autonomy and collaboration among participants.

An important part of the cooperative enquiry that we want participants to understand and experiment with is the idea that our 'reality' is subjective-objective and involves an extended epistemology. As human persons we participate in and articulate our world in at least four interdependent ways: experiential, presentational, propositional, and practical. These four forms of knowing can be seen as aspects of human intelligence and ways through which we dance with the primal cosmos to co-create our reality.

Experiential knowing is through direct encounter, face-to-face meeting: feeling and imaging the presence of some person, place, process, or thing. It is knowing through participation and empathic resonance with what is there. As knower I am open to other and distinct from it. Experiential knowing is the foundation for the co-creative shaping of our world through mutual encounter, and thus articulates reality through inner resonance with what there is. It is the essential grounding of other forms of knowing.

Presentational knowing emerges from and is grounded on experiential knowing. It clothes our encounter with the world in the metaphors and analogies of aesthetic creation. Presentational knowing is profoundly embodied and draws on expressive forms of imagery, in movement and in visual, musical,

vocal, and verbal art forms, and is the way in which we first give form to our experience.

Propositional knowing is knowing in conceptual terms; knowledge by description. It is knowing expressed in statements, theories, and formulae that come with the mastery of concepts and classes through language and number. Propositions themselves are carried by presentational forms—the sounds, or the visual shapes of the spoken or written word or number—and are ultimately grounded in our experiential articulation of a world.

Practical knowing is knowing how to do something, demonstrated in a skill or competence. It presupposes a conceptual grasp of principles and standards of practice, presentational elegance, and experiential grounding in the situation within which the action occurs. Practical knowing is based on and fulfils the three prior forms of knowing, brings them to fruition in our practice.

The process of cooperative enquiry draws on cycles of action and reflection which draw on the extended epistemology and thereby present the possibility of addressing Bateson's concerns. At each stage of the cycle a different way of knowing holds primacy. In Phase 1 a group of co-researchers come together to explore an agreed area of human activity. In this first phase they agree on the focus of their enquiry and the questions or propositions they wish to explore. They agree to undertake some action, some practice, which will contribute to this exploration, and agree to a set of procedures by which they will observe and record their own and each other's experience. Phase 1 is primarily in the mode of propositional knowing.

In the deep ecology workshop the focus of enquiry is established as part of the course content. The questions posed for the week are 'What is the experience of deep ecology?' and 'What activities and disciplines aid its development?' Within these broad questions individual participants are invited to develop their own specific questions as the week progresses. The enquiry is based propositionally in the ideas about deep ecology and Gaia theory offered by Stephan.

In Phase 2 the co-researchers now also become co-subjects: they engage in the actions agreed and observe and record the process and outcomes of their own and each other's experience. In particular, they are careful to notice the subtleties of experience, to hold lightly the propositional frame from which they started so that they are able to notice how practice does and does not conform to their original ideas. This phase involves primarily practical knowledge: knowing how (and how not) to engage in appropriate action, to bracket off the starting idea, and to exercise relevant discrimination.

Starting with the night walk the evening we arrive at Schumacher College, participants are invited into the range of activities outlined above. As faculty we have designed activities through which they can bracket their preconceptions and engage with the natural world

in novel ways—to enter into relation with trees, to walk on the earth as a living being, to meditate with the River, to speak as a slug or as an oak tree . . .

Phase 3 is in some ways the touchstone of the enquiry method. The co-subjects become fully immersed in and engaged with their experience. They may develop a degree of openness to what is going on so free of preconceptions that they see it in a new way. They may deepen into the experience so that superficial understandings are elaborated and developed. Or they may be led away from the original ideas and proposals into new fields, unpredicted action, and creative insights. Phase 3 involves mainly experiential knowing, although it will be richer if new experience is expressed, when recorded, in creative presentational form.

For many participants it is this experiential knowing that is the key to the workshop experience. For many, living for a week in community in an area of amazing natural beauty, having time just to sit by a river, and being given permission to open themselves to the voice of the more-than-human world is a great significance.

In Phase 4, after an agreed period engaged in Phases 2 and 3, the co-researchers reassemble to consider their original propositions and questions in the light of their experience. As a result they may modify, develop, or reframe them; or reject them and pose new questions. They may choose, for the next cycle of action, to focus on the same or on different aspects of the overall enquiry. The group may also choose to amend or develop its enquiry procedures—forms of action, ways of gathering data—in the light of experience. Phase 4 is primarily the stage of propositional knowing, although presentational forms of knowing will form an important bridge with the experiential and practical phases.

The course community is divided into small groups (who also work together each day on simply household tasks to maintain the ecology of the College) which meet at the end of each day to review and make their sense of the experiences. We invite participants to help each other articulate what has been important for them, to write reflectively, to draw or otherwise create visual images.

In a full enquiry the cycle will be repeated several times. Ideas and discoveries tentatively reached in early phases can be checked and developed; investigation of one aspect of the enquiry can be related to exploration of other parts; new skills can be acquired and monitored; experiential competencies are realized; the group itself becomes more cohesive and self-critical, more skilled in its work. Ideally the enquiry is finished when the initial questions are fully answered in practice, when there is a new congruence between the four kinds of knowing. It is of course rare for a group to complete an enquiry so fully.

The deep ecology workshop is designed with three cycles of enquiry: discussion of the philosophy of deep ecology followed by an afternoon in meditation with the River Dart;

an introduction to Gaia theory and the state of the world followed by the Council for All Beings; and the day-long eco-walk down the River Dart with mini-talks and exercises. Each of these cycles of followed by a review in small groups, and on the final morning we meet as a whole group. Each person is given 'post-it' stickers and asked to write three answers to each of the two questions of the enquiry: 'What is the experience of deep ecology? And 'How do you get there?' Participants take it in turn to present their answers to the group, and to place their stickers on a wall chart, with the aim of clustering them into meaningful groups.

This process of enquiry, based in experiential knowing, parallels and amplifies the learning cycle of deep ecology, which involves deep experience, deep questioning, and deep commitment.

Deep experience is 'often what gets a person started along a deep ecological path' (Harding 1997: 14); it often involves a spontaneous recognition of the interconnectedness of all things and thus the value of all things in their own right.

A key aspect of these experiences is the perception of gestalts, or networks of relationships. We see that there are no isolated objects, but that objects are nodes in a vast web of interconnections. When such deep experience occurs, we feel a strong sense of wide identification with what we are sensing. This identification involves a heightened sense of empathy and an expansion of our concern with non-human life. We realize how dependent we are on the well-being of nature for our own physical and psychological well-being. (Harding 1997: 16)

This sense of belonging to an intelligent universe revealed by deep experience often leads in the deep ecology framework to 'deep questioning'

which helps to elaborate a coherent framework for elucidating fundamental beliefs, and for translating these beliefs into decisions, lifestyle and action . . . By deep questioning, an individual is articulating a total view of life which can guide his or her lifestyle choices . . . In questioning society, one understands its underlying assumptions from an ecological point of view. (Harding 1997: 16)

Deep experience combined with deep questioning leads to deep commitment:

When an ecological world-view is well developed, people act from their whole personality, giving rise to tremendous energy and commitment. Such actions are peaceful and democratic and will lead towards ecological sustainability. Uncovering the ecological self gives rise to joy, which gives rise to involvement, which in turn leads to wider identification, and hence to greater commitment. This leads to 'extending care to humans and deepening care for non-humans'. (Harding 2001: 17)

By linking the process of cooperative enquiry to the perspective of deep ecology we hope to emphasize the importance of question posing in education. We are not offering deep ecology as a monolithic normative view to which all must conform. But we are saying, there is something really important in this view of a deeply

interconnected world, please engage in an exploration of what this means for you in your life; use the enquiry process to make it your own.

Wilderness Experience

Schumacher College is located on the edge of Dartmoor which, while by no means a pristine wilderness, contains pockets of land where the modern human imprint is minimal. One of these is a corridor along the River Dart in its higher reaches, where the river is swift flowing, tumbling over rocks and through narrow gorges as it falls off the moor. While we introduce participants to outside activities throughout the week, the 'ecohike' down the Dart on the fourth day is the major event. We take a coach up onto the moor, and walk downstream for about six hours. For most of the distance there are no paths: we scramble up and down, through boggy areas, over rocks, through oak woods; sometimes walking confidently on secure ground, while at other times cautiously on slippery rocks by the river's edge; sometimes walking alone, and at others helping each other up steep cliff climbs and over swollen streams where they join the main river. We have walked this route ten times now in many different weather conditions—on several occasions in pouring rain. I have found myself moved almost to tears as I watch group members look after each other, the stronger helping the less able over difficult patches—it is clear that as well as providing an education in ecology, the experience is emotionally bonding for the group.

We encourage participants to walk with open minds and hearts, to be aware of the world around them. We encourage them to walk with an attitude of deep ecology-that the world they are walking through is of intrinsic value; and of Gaia-that the world is in some sense a living being. We ask people to avoid everyday chatter as much as possible—for how can we hear what the trees might be saying if we don't listen to them? We invite them to try walking meditatively with a mantra on their lips—one of my favourites I learned from Joan Halifax, 'walking the green earth . . . Ah!' which is repeated in time with one's walking pace. From time to time on this walk we stop to hear from Stephan about ecological features—we can see directly the erosion of granite rocks by water and plants which is fundamental to the carbon cycle. At others we stop to invite participants to engage in 'deep ecology exercises'—simple activities which may radically shift perception.

Typically at our first stop, in a particularly wet and mossy glade overhung with ancient oaks growing improbably out of crevices in the granite, we invite participants to walk around in silence, touching the moss, rocks, and trees while

exploring the sense that as they touch, these beings are touching them; and more broadly that as they see the world, the beings in the world are—in an entirely different way—'seeing' them. We are here drawing on anthropological evidence from hunter gathers (see Harding 2006: 48–9); and on David Abram's (1996) interpretation of Merleau-Ponty that we can touch because we ourselves are physical beings capable of being touched, so that touching is a transaction, 'certain ways the outside has of invading us and certain ways we have of meeting the invasion' (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 317).

Our second exercise is a variant of the 'blind walk' with the emphasis placed not on qualities of interpersonal trust but on the perception of the world with our primary sense of sight inhibited. Participants work in pairs to help each other experience the roughness of bark, the stickiness of mud, the delicacy of fungi, the coldness of rock—yet these qualities are experienced directly rather than described verbally. Later we may express them through poetic form such as haiku:

> Water drop on leaf
> a tear rolls down for times lost
> and new beginnings. (Ruth Townsley)

In the third formal exercise we invite participants to find a quiet spot and imaginatively identify with a part of the more than human world and how it partakes in the cycles of Gaia: *How a tree expires water, creating clouds which form rain which feeds the river which, amplified by the roots of the tree, erodes the granite releasing calcium which links with carbon to form calcium carbonate which sediments as chalk. . . .*

> The last time we did this, I was sitting against a tree in a particularly lush and damp piece of woodland. I relaxed against the tree, experienced my body against the wood and the earth, and looked around me. As I quietened my thoughts, and looked at those beings I call trees, earth, stones, birds . . . and opened my imagination to include fungi, insects, bacteria . . . and then the various chemical substances, the elements and molecules . . . and then again the quantum reality of the particles that lie underneath even that . . . I realized everything I could see and imagine was in the process of becoming something else, that everything was participating in everything else. I realized quite suddenly that to see the world as separate things or beings was to have already abstracted from this ongoing process of being. And I think I understand what Whitehead and the Buddha might have meant.
>
> (Reason 2002: 19)

We end the walk pretty exhausted, footsore, and 'full up' with experiences. However, participants usually have the energy for further reflection that evening. During the week we have introduced participants to creative ways of recording experience—freefall writing (Turner-Vesselago n.d.), poetry and haiku, drawing—and following the walk we encourage people to reflect together on their experience and to use these approaches to gather their reflections. We end the enquiry process with a round of sharing, usually centred about questions such as 'What is the experience of deep ecology?' and 'What activities and disciplines aid its development?'

What is the Experience of Deep Ecology?

Student Responses

This workshop is experience as both deeply moving and challenging. Looking directly at the state of the world through statistics and through the eyes of other Beings can be deeply disturbing. And the workshop can challenge deeply held views of those with a scientific education and those with strong religious commitments. On the whole, it opens new perspectives on the world we live in. The fourth M.Sc. group made a tape recording of their final enquiry cycle which formed the basis of a journal article (Maughan and Reason 2001). The following give some sense of the nature of the experience (the quotation marks indicate participants' actual words).

The experience of deep ecology started for most of us with a true appreciation, as if for the first time, of the simple beauty of the more-than-human world versus the human-made urban world many of us live in. This experience is one of profound joy expressed by one participant as 'post human exuberance, when you sit on a rock and feel happy, it's not like when you're happy because you've had a birthday present, it's a different, more profound sort of happiness'.

We found beauty in 'the wonder and magic of nature's complex cycles'. Through cycles of birth, death and re-use we became aware that 'everything is related in one way or another' and deep ecology provides us with an 'understanding of the intimate relationships which exist and which we have with nature as well'. Our 'connectedness to the rhythms of the natural world' is something which our urban lives allow us to forget and the experience of deep ecology places us back within our most fundamental context: 'we are nature'. One participant elaborated on this: 'I thought the core experience was to actually feel myself as part of the natural world. I don't think we normally actually feel that.'

We found our experience was particularly heightened by the exercises during our day long wilderness walk when we were invited to close our eyes, touch our surroundings and sense our surroundings touching and feeling us in reply. One participant spoke of 'the blur between me and the moss I was touching, it was difficult to know where I ended and the moss began. Then there was the exercise where we really probed our surroundings, I almost felt like asking permission of this other living entity, "May I?" and "Should I?" and "I've never done this before". I really experienced a wonderful balance between the blur and the sense of otherness, in our existence, our relationships with the living world, our very being.' This notion of otherness was also expressed in this way: 'Now I know the earth and everything on it has a heart and has feeling.' Throughout the week we felt welcomed by the more-than-human world and many of us shared this participant's feeling 'of coming home, of being accepted by the place like when I've had a really happy home, I've just walked in and been embraced. . . ' (Maughan and Reason 2001: 21–2)

From the experiences of our students over many cycles of enquiry, we can summarize the experience of deep ecology as in Box 11.3.

Box 11.3 What is the experience of deep ecology?

- The experience of deep ecology is a feeling of joy and awe at the beauty of the more-than-human world
- It is an appreciation of the delicate balance between chaos and order
- It is the acknowledgement of the interconnectedness of all living beings, including ourselves, in the endless cycles of the planet
- This acknowledgement leads to the direct identification of ourselves with other living beings and a redefinition of our place, no longer dominating nature but one equal part of it
- It is a sense of the consciousness of other living beings and the reciprocal relationship between us
- The experience is both of the moment and of eternity
- The experience is that of a spiritual quest to reconnect with our true human nature and break down the artificial barriers we have erected
- It is the feeling of home-coming
- It is the celebration of the creator

Source: Maughan and Reason 2001: 21

So What?

The deep ecology workshop is for many a turning point on the programme. Our experience as staff is that participants join the programme with a strong value orientation toward making a difference but sometimes with a quite narrow view of 'responsibility and business practice' based, understandably, in their own career and experiences. For many, the first two workshops open their eyes to the extraordinary range of issues—economic, political, personal, and spiritual—that are presented when questions of justice and sustainability are placed at the centre of the curriculum; and the urgency of the ecological challenge. For many this is a daunting realization which modern humanist values do not prepare them for. In many ways the programme deeply challenges the assumptions and values of the modern capitalist world.

The experience of deep ecology can, we would argue, provide a new grounding in an earth-centred ethic. Not to say that as the result of a week's experience participants all become radical deep ecologists. But the experiences of the workshop do open the possibility of a different way of addressing what Thomas Berry (1999) calls the Great Work of our times—learning how to move from a devastating presence on the planet to a benign presence. How participants actualize this is highly individual, but the thread of the Schumacher College experience can be traced through their work on the rest of the course and into their final projects. I trace three examples.

Jane Brown worked as an equal opportunities adviser in the Fire Service. Her job, and her passion, is to open the service to women, people of colour, and other minorities, to promote equality. She writes of how she was moved and inspired by the ecology workshop and concludes that:

> The claim that there is a deep interconnectivity at all levels of life . . . gives me a feeling of relief but also an increasing sense of responsibility. It lets me rest and releases me from taking on everything myself . . . It invites me to trust both the greater intelligence that is the universe and to myself as part of that universal intelligence. It also obliges me to take action and engage in . . . the 'real work' of becoming a whole person . . . My understanding of what 'equality' meant is fundamentally different . . .

Ian Nicholson is an engineer who has worked extensively in the construction and water industry. He recounts how the experience at Schumacher gave him a sense of unity with the natural world, 'because I was part of it and not different to it'. While these fundamental values are at the heart of his practice, he struggles with how to integrate this with the needs of his nascent environmental consultancy. It is tough going.

Christel Scholten works for a large international bank seeking a way toward sustainable banking. She writes of how the deep ecology perspective came to life for her on the ecology workshop in her experience of both the pain and the beauty of the planet. This informs her world-view that we can learn to live in harmony with nature, each of us unique yet part of one living system. She applies this to her practice as a 'tempered radical' (Meyerson and Scully 1995) in her bank, using her informal power to bring people together in different forms of dialogue to create a 'change community'.

The challenge of learning about deep ecology and Gaia theory offers a profound challenge to programme participants. For many, it changes their sense of who they are as humans in relation to the earth which penetrates and deeply challenges their practice as organizational members.

Note

1. Schumacher College is an international centre for ecological studies offering a range of educational opportunities including short courses and an M.Sc. in Holistic Science. http://www.gn.apc.org/schumachercollege/.

References

Abram, D. (1996). *The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More than Human World*. New York: Pantheon.

Bateson, G. (1972). *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. San Francisco: Chandler.

Berry, T. (1999). *The Great Work: Our Way into the Future*. New York: Bell Tower.

Devall, B., and Sessions, G. (1985). *Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered.* Salt Lake City: Gibbs M. Smith.

Gustavsen, B. (2001). 'Theory and Practice: The Mediating Discourse', in P. Reason and H. Bradbury (eds.), *Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice*. London: Sage.

Harding, S. P. (1997). 'What is Deep Ecology'?, *Resurgence*, 185: 14–17.

—— (2001). 'Exploring Gaia', *Resurgence*, 204: 16–19.

—— (2006). *Animate Earth*. Totnes: Greenbooks.

Heron, J. (1996). *Co-operative Inquiry: Research into the Human Condition*. London: Sage.

King, D. (2004a). *Global Warming: The Science of Climate Change, the Imperatives for Action. Greenpeace Business Lecture.* Retrieved Dec. 2004, from http://www.ost.gov.uk/about_ost/csa.htm.

—— (2004b). 'Responding to Climate Change', *Science*, 303: 5655.

Lovelock, J. E. (1979). *Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth*. London: Oxford University Press.

—— (2006). *The Revenge of Gaia*. London: Allen Lane.

Macy, J. R., and Brown, M. Y. (1998). *Coming Back to Life: Practices to Reconnect our Lives, our World*. Gabriola Island: New Society Publishers.

Marshall, J. (2001). 'Self-Reflective Inquiry Practices', in P. Reason and H. Bradbury (eds.), *Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice*. London: Sage.

—— (2004). 'Matching Form to Content in Educating for Sustainability: The Masters (MSc) in Responsibility and Business Practice', in C. Galea (ed.), *Teaching Business Sustainability*. London: Greenleaf Publishing.

Maughan, E., and Reason, P. (2001). 'A Co-operative Inquiry into Deep Ecology', *ReVision*, 23/4: 18–24.

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962). *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. C. Smith. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Meyerson, D. E., and Scully, M. A. (1995). 'Tempered Radicalism and the Politics of Ambivalence and Change', *Organization Science*, 6/5: 585–600.

Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005). *Experts Say that Attention to Ecosystem Services is Needed to Achieve Global Development Goals*. Retrieved Aug. 2005, from http://www.maweb.org/en/article.aspx?id=58.

Naess, A. (1990). *Ecology Community and Lifestyle: Outline of an Ecosophy*, trans. D. Rotherberg. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Orr, D. W. (1994). *Earth in Mind*. Washington: Island Press.

Reason, P. (2002). 'Justice, Sustainability and Participation: Inaugural Professorial Lecture', *Concepts and Transformation*, 7/1: 7–29.

—— (2003). 'Doing Co-operative Inquiry', in J. Smith (ed.), *Qualitative Psychology: A Practical Guide to Methods*. London: Sage.

—— (2007). 'Education for Ecology: Science, Aesthetics, Spirit and Ceremony', *Management Learning*, 38/1: 27–44.

—— and Bradbury, H. (eds.) (2001). *Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice*. London: Sage.

Rudolph, J. W., Taylor, S. S., and Foldy, E. G. (2001). 'Collaborative Off-line Reflection: A Way to Develop Skill in Action Science and Action Inquiry', in P. Reason and H. Bradbury (eds.), *Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice*. London: Sage.

Schön, D. A. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner*. New York: Basic Books.

Seed, J., Macy, J. R., Fleming, P., and Naess, A. (1988). *Thinking like a Mountain.* London: Heretic Books.

Torbert, W. R. (2004). *Action Inquiry: The Secret of Timely and Transforming Leadership*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Turner-Vesselago, B. (n.d.). *Freefall: Writing without a Parachute*. Toronto: The Writing Space.

Wackernagel, M., Onisto, L., Linares, A. C., Falfán, I. S. L., García, J. M., Guerrero, A. I. S., et al. (1997). *Ecological Footprints of Nations: How Much Nature do They Use?—How Much Nature do They Have?* Retrieved July 2004, from http://www.ecouncil.ac.cr/rio/focus/report/english/footprint/.

WWF (2004). *Living Planet Report*. Retrieved Dec. 2004, from http://www.panda.org/downloads/general/lpr2004.pdf.

CHAPTER 12

BLUE-EYED GIRL? JANE ELLIOTT'S EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND ANTI-RACISM

ELAINE SWAN

Introduction

It has become commonplace in many different academic disciplines to suggest that 'experience' is socially and culturally mediated. Thus, it is argued that our recalling of experience does not provide us with neutral access to 'raw' reality and to authentic selfhood. Given that experience isn't what it used to be, what does this mean for the category of experience in experiential learning, pedagogies? In this chapter I explore this question through an examination of race equality pedagogies. In particular, I discuss the 'equivalences' that are set up in one popular, but controversial form of race equality experiential learning, that of the 'Blue-eyed, brown-eyed' experiment of the North American primary school teacher, now consultant and public speaker, Jane Elliott, more of which later. In all forms of experiential learning method, assumptions are made about the relationship between the activity and reality. In this chapter, I ask what assumptions are made about the relationship

between the experience created in the Blue-eyed, brown-eyed experiment and the realities of racism. Although there is a long history of anti-racist and equal opportunities education in the USA, and in the UK, there are relatively few examinations of these interventions within organizational and HRM studies. Perhaps this isn't surprising given that issues of race, racialization, and racism get very little coverage, as Stella Nkomo has consistently argued (1992; Nkomo and Cox 1999). But it is a major omission, particularly given the recent history of policy makers' intensified focus on multicultural and anti-racist training (Arora 2005; Bhavnani 2001; Penketh 2000).

Experiential Learning

In the various models of multicultural and anti-racist training, the use of experiential learning methods has been significant. Experiential learning, of course, is a 'diffuse concept' denoting a diverse range of practices, ideologies, and disciplines (Wildemeersch 1989; Fenwick 2003). It can refer to a whole range of practices from the political to the mainstream. For example, it is used by practices at the centre of different social movements—anti-colonial, feminist, or worker movements—whilst at the same time, albeit under different terms, it is being increasingly used in neo-liberal marketized, vocationalized, and consumerist approaches to education across the education sector (Brah and Hoy 1989; Usher, Bryant, and Johnston 1997). There are also different politics underpinning experiential learning from a bottom-up radical valuing of 'lived experience' as a challenge to top-down codified academic discipline knowledge, to a very different model: a more mainstream, neo-liberal technicist approach in which the consumer is sovereign. In general, the experience part of experiential learning therefore either refers to some model of lived experience or orientation in life, or to a present here-and-now sensing. In both, experience is taken to involve more than simply cognition and include emotions, bodily senses and sensations, and memories. Of course, as Tara Fenwick (2003) notes, there is a danger in all models that experience is idealized and romanticized, and that even in so-called radical models, only some types of experiences are seen as legitimate. Experience, particularly in its emotional and bodily representations, is sometimes presumed to be unmediated and unideological, as emotions and bodies are often thought to be more real, more natural, and more true than rationality or cognition.

As mentioned above, the category of experience has come under much critical scrutiny, particularly in feminist, post-structural and critical race studies (Scott 1992; Brah and Hoy 1989). The debates on humanism, universalism, essentialism, foundationalism, and epistemology in these studies have rendered the category of

experience problematic in a number of ways leading to what Caroline Ramazanoglu and Janet Holland call 'the politics of the construction of experience' (1999: 387). In essence this politics suggests, as Ali Rattansi succinctly puts it, that 'experience . . . is *produced*, rather than simply *registered*' (1992: 33). Rattansi goes on to expand on this notion of the politics by arguing that the 'empiricism of . . . [the] notion of direct immediate experience . . . writes out the significance of the complex interpretive frameworks through which events, processes and facts are constructed' (Rattansi 1992: 33; Reynolds and Vince 2004). Experience cannot then be seen as raw material, a 'river of thoughts, perceptions and sensations into which we decide, occasionally, to dip our toes' (Brookfield 1995 cited at http://www.nl.edu/academics/cas/ace/facultypapers/StephenBrookfield_AdultLearning.cfm). It is culturally framed and shaped, and what we make of our experience depends on interpretative frames, discourses, and categories of analysis. And as Avtar Brah and Jane Hoy (1989) write, all experience is shaped by concrete social conditions, for example being black or white working class, and the significance and making sense of this experience is determined by how and by whom it is interpreted. In this view, this means that the pedagogical project is:

> to enable all students to develop analytical frameworks within which to examine and interrogate experience. In other words, the aim is to *critique* rather than *criticize* 'commonsense' understanding of experience. Depending on the context certain experiences may need to be valued while others may need to be challenged. (Brah and Hoy 1989: 72)

Experience in experiential learning cannot then be simply accessed or recalled as pure or special knowledge but must be understood as arising out of and produced within political relations.

This does not mean, however, throwing the proverbial baby out with the bathwater. As some recent feminist and post-structural writing indicates, there can be a rapprochement in relation to experience (Ramanzanoglu and Holland 1999). This does not mean a simple resurrection of experience as innocent or natural, but a recognition that lived and embodied experience cannot be simply condensed down to discourse and that the interpretative frameworks used to represent our experience themselves can contribute to a political agenda (Ramazanoglu and Holland 1999). Enabling us to make sense of our experience and its relation to power relations, this kind of politics of experience also allows us to find new concepts to make new sense of old experiences and to 'recognise that the experience of others can constantly disrupt our acceptance of what is the case' (ibid. 391).

Perhaps not recognizing some of these rapprochements, discussions of what experiential learning is and does has stalled somewhat in educational theory. Drawing upon a research study on 'diversity work' (Ahmed et al. 2006), in this chapter I want to pick up some of these themes to explore how social reality is being understood in experiential methods. In particular, I want to examine what version of the social, and what version of experience are being imagined in experiential methods for race

equality. Using Michael Reynolds and Kiran Trehan's phrase (2001), what type of 'real world' is being conceptualized and how are complex processes of racialization and racism being seen as part of this 'real world'? What kinds of experiences, emotions, and ideas are imagined to produce anti-racism and social change?

Race Equality Training and Experiential Learning

Of course, experiential learning is not the main means of achieving social change. There are many ways in which black and minority ethnic women and men find ways to live with and against racisms. For some writers such as Alastair Bonnett (2000) these strategies and tactics can be understood as forms of anti-racist practice, but for others such as Paul Gilroy (1992) to call them anti-racist narrows down our understanding of their purpose and effects; for him, many of these activities are better understood as forms of emancipation. Thus, there have been innumerable formal and informal activities led by different parts of black communities: black mothers; black churches; black intelligentsia; grass roots black power groups; black trade unions and industrial action (Gilroy 1987, 1992). This chapter will not focus on these experiences but on more institutionalized forms of anti-racism in the form of training interventions. This is because in recent UK policy, training has been seen as one of the major problems in relation to institutional racism in public institutions and also one of its most promising solutions (Penketh 2000). Training as a field of power is important, involving a highly influential network of organizations, consultancies, agencies, policy makers, business schools, and authors, and is relatively under-researched and theorized (Swan 2004).

Writers who do discuss race equality training interventions in the UK suggest that there are three main clusters of practice which follow in chronological order: multicultural awareness training, anti-racist training, and diversity training (Bhavnani 2001; Arora 2005). In practice, these overlap and are more internally contradictory than the following overview will describe, but this simplification will give a sense of the differing theoretical, political, and pedagogical underpinnings around differing and contested notions of social reform, power, learning, and racism.

Multicultural Awareness Training

The first cluster of training practice that writers identify then is multicultural awareness in the 1980s. It can be found in school education but also in organizational

training in schools, local authorities, social work practice, and universities (Penketh 2000). Related to discourses of relativism, cosmopolitanism, and anti-colonialism, and away from policies of assimilation and integration, according to Alastair Bonnett (2000), and spurred on by the Swann Report (1985), the main aim of multicultural education was to promote knowledge, recognition, and respect for different cultural traditions in the UK. Reproducing an idea that racism is the product of individual prejudice, and the result of ignorance or faulty knowledge of other cultures, the pedagogic approach was one of providing 'facts and empathy' (Rattansi 1992: 33). Cultures were understood as something which didn't 'melt' into the melting pot and therefore needed to be understood, experienced, and protected (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992).

Although there was much debate within education and local authorities, the predominant educational practices became focused on 'celebrating' cultural diversity. In her analysis of teaching training, Ramjit Arora refers to this as 'diversity of the festive kind' (2005: 22). This approach was largely based on experiential methods in schools and organizations which involved what Bonnett (2000) calls 'mini-ethnographies'. These involved children being involved in experiences that were imagined to represent 'other' cultures: the participation in eating 'different' foods, trying on 'different' dress, playing different music, watching different customs; the purpose of which was to enable white people to interact with people from different backgrounds, to learn from 'others', to see things from 'their' view, and to be 'at ease' with black and minority ethnic people (Bonnett 2000; Pederson, Walker, and Wise 2005). These experiential methods have been referred to, somewhat pejoratively, as the 3Cs (calypso, carnival, cricket) and the 3 Ss (saris, samosas, and steel bands) (Gaine 1995). The main learning technology was understood to be empathy, which was seen as the means through which prejudice could be reduced or eliminated by enabling white children to share in 'other cultures'.

Critiques of Multiculturalism

The multicultural approach has been criticized by black and minority ethnic activities and a wide range of academics on a number of counts. I will focus on two of the main criticisms. The first major criticism is that the model of racism as the product of ignorance and prejudice is an impoverished account of the processes and relations of racism. It reduces cultural and structural analyses to individual psychological matters (Macdonald et al. 1989). Vikki Bell summarizes the tenor of this critique in her assessment of multicultural education as a pedagogy which was based on the erroneous assumption that

all that would be required to be rid of racism was knowledge of other cultures. Such a stance ignored the fact that knowledge does not automatically result in respect, and that the politics of racism needs an analysis that does more than see racism as the result of ignorance. (2002: 510)

In terms of experiential learning, then, the relations between experiences in the classroom, subsequent actions, and social reform are not linear or guaranteed.

The second main criticism focuses on the assumptions about cultures that underpin much multicultural training and education. It assumes a narrow definition of multicultural, that cultures are static, that it is 'other ethnic' cultures that need exploring, not white cultures, and that white cultures are not already constituted through relations with black and minority ethnic people (Gilroy 1992). In spite of these weaknesses, Laura Penketh argues that it 'provided an important 'break from the violent and brutalising racism' (2000: 24).

Municipal Anti-Racism

The approach that emerged in the mid- to late 1980s, to some extent a reaction to the multicultural approach, was what Gilroy calls 'municipal anti-racism' (1992: 136). As a formalized and institutionalized set of practices, this form of anti-racism grew from the response to the UK governmental reviews on racism, including Lord Scarman's report (1981) in local authorities and schools, grass roots dissatisfaction with multiculturalism as an approach to racism, and the growth of 'the race relations industry' and the 'race professional' (Cohen 1992: 62). The focus on the 3Cs and the 3Ss was seen as superficial in their analyses of structures and relations of power, and processes of racism. As Chris Gaine writes, anti-racism as an approach is summarized in the slogans 'life chances not life styles' and 'we don't have culture riots' (1995: 42). Municipal anti-racism, funded by the government, developed into the setting up of race units, race experts, and practices such as positive action, ethnic monitoring, community engagement, contract compliance, and, of course, anti-racist training (Gilroy 1992).

Race Awareness Training

There were different forms of anti-racist training. Some were focused more on information exchange, so more facts than empathy in Rattansi parlance, comprising discussion on legislation, organization change, and equality policies

(Penketh 2000). But one approach called Race Awareness Training, also known as RAT, has become the stuff of infamy, generating a lot of 'heat and noise' (Brown and Lawton 1991). As Colin Brown and Jean Lawton write, RAT has 'generated more words than any single issue in the literature' (1991: 23). Drawing from the practice of an influential anti-racist trainer in North America called Judith Katz, who had developed a white awareness programme in 1978 and subsequently detailed it in her book *White Awareness: A Handbook for Anti-Racism Training*, the focus shifted from white people learning about other cultures to them learning about their own privilege, racism, and power (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992). This draws upon experiential learning as encounter group. Based on humanistic psychology and 'here and now' learning through technologies of confrontation and challenge which were aimed at getting white people to face up to how they had internalized racism (Lasch-Quinn 2002), it resembled the experiential method of encounter groups from the human potential movement. In this method, the expression of emotion—anger from black and minority ethnic participants and guilt from white people—was imagined as an authentic and purifying means of learning about the self and its effects on others. Racism was conceptualized as a disease of the white mind and soul that needed purging and eliminating through catharsis (Bonnett 2000). The training was seen therefore as an exorcizing and healing process through which challenge, confessions, witnessing, and revelation could banish irrational fears and raise white people's consciousness through involving white people emotionally as well as cognitively (Bonnett 2000). This is not to say that discussing emotions, including anger, doesn't have its place in race equality training but to question the pedagogies and frameworks that are used to make sense of these.

RAT was critiqued by left and right. It was seen by some black activists as a 'liberal sop to black demands' which led to 'white breast beating and learning the right rhetoric' (Gaine 1995: 128) and a 'perverse lust for guilt and the ritual cleansing of exposure' together with 'wallowing in white middle class guilt' (Brown and Lawton 1991: 26). For others, it was a highly moralistic, accusatory, and dangerous approach in which all white people were seen as 'baddies', a rotten barrel of apples not just a few rotten ones (Brown and Lawton 1991). In their account of their enquiry into the Burnage High School murder, Ian Macdonald et al. (1989) conclude that RAT as a form of race equality training was an unmitigated disaster, which caused white backlash, defensiveness, and guilt, and no real addressing of material inequalities.

With increasing government criticism and cutbacks in funding and growing media backlash, municipal anti-racism, and with it RAT, went into decline during the 1980s only to resurface in the form of diversity during the 1990s and 2000s. This was the time of a political climate of the 'loony left, race spies and green sheep' (Gaine 1995: 129) in which anti-racism and political correctness were, in the words of Gideon Ben-Tovim, ridiculed and exaggerated as 'authoritarian, illiberal, dogmatic or absurd' (1997: 209) and the discourse of tradition, moderation, and common sense was drawn upon by right-wing media and politicians to denounce

what was seen as the extremism and excesses and professional obscuration of race professionals (Walker 2002). For some on the left, some of these criticisms were justified; thus for Gilroy (1992) municipal anti-racism was moralistic and dictatorial, applying what he calls a 'coat of paint theory of racism' in which racism is seen as an 'unwanted blemish' or 'unfortunate excrescence' which with the 'right ideological tools and political elbow grease, racism can be dealt with once and for all leaving the basic structures and relations of British economy and society unchanged' (1992: 52). Anti-racism in the form of corporate activity seemed to be coming to an end.

Diversity Training

In the 1990s and 2000s, anti-racism has been replaced, in name at least, by the concept of diversity, and anti-racist training with diversity training. The politics of this shift has been hotly debated, with some arguing that diversity is a dilution of anti-racism and equality, others arguing that it is a rejuvenation, and yet others suggesting that the concept of diversity can work in different ways, both radical and domesticated (see Ahmed et al. 2006 for more discussion). Derived more from the private sector and human resource models than legislation and policy, diversity is a concept that was first introduced to go 'beyond' what was seen by some as the narrow sectarianism of equal opportunities, and anti-racism. Referred to as a model 'beyond race and gender' by Thomas Cox, the leading influential 'academic-consultant' in North America on diversity in the 1990s, it was seen to broaden out the focus from collective differences such as race or gender to include all the ways in which individuals differ including, for example, personality and work style, thus offering 'less fractious analytical categories than race' (Mir, Mir, and Wong 2006). It seemed to offer a more celebratory narrative of the multicultural workplace (ibid.) which included white men and was therefore imagined to be more sustainable. As Pushkala Prasad and Albert J. Mills (1997) suggest this growing 'diversity industry' seemed to offer a more upbeat, happy new mood after anti-racism in the UK and affirmative action in the USA. This industry, which US diversity critic Frederick Lynch (2002) also refers to as the 'social policy machine', includes books, articles, lectures, workshops, videos, networking and conferences, consulting firms, board games, university courses, and training workshops (Prasad and Mills 1997; Lasch-Quinn 2002; Jack and Lorbiecki 2003). The latter, Elisabeth Lasch-Quinn suggests, is aimed at 'attitude change through workshopping' (2002: 166) and is the focus for the case study in this chapter.

Diversity training comes in many different forms, using different methods and eclectic content. In the UK in a recent survey, Taylor, Powell, and Wrench (1997)

suggest that there are three main approaches, providing information, changing attitudes, changing behaviour, but that all have been influenced by the experiences or myths about the confrontational approach of RAT and therefore a more 'softly softly' pedagogical style is typical. Content can include aspects from multiculturalism awareness, racism, legislation, sexism, homophobia, disability awareness, cross-cultural competencies, stereotyping, communication skills, and attitude awareness (Kossek, Lobel, and Brown 2006). There is also some variety in the length of training from short two-hour sessions to one-week workshops. Experiential methods are still a core component in diversity training, although there is much less consistency of approach than in RAT.

Having given a brief, necessarily schematic overview of training interventions in promoting anti-racism, I now turn to a case study, which focuses on one particular approach to experiential approach to anti-racism used for over thirty years in North America, Australia, and the UK, to examine emotional pedagogies and their specificities in relation to anti-racism. What analogues are being presumed? What similarities seen to be created?

Experiential Eye

The case study examines the experiential approach used by Jane Elliott, a white North American diversity training consultant. Jane Elliott, however, is no ordinary diversity consultant. She has appeared on North American television shows such as the Oprah Winfrey, Donahue, and Johnny Carson television programmes, has won US awards, and is famous—some might say infamous—for an experiment called Blue-eyed, brown-eyed which she claims teaches people about discrimination. First used by Elliott in 1968 when she was a primary school teacher on her school class in Riceville, Iowa, after the assassination of the Reverend Dr Martin Luther King, this experiential learning method has been widely used as a tool for innumerable workshops over the past thirty years with public sector workers, educationalists, students, university workers in North America, Australia, and the UK. Thus, her work has straddled all three stages of race equality training described above: multiculturalism, anti-racist, and diversity.

Called 'bold and ground breaking' by some and 'dangerous and unethical' by others, the experiment has been described by Elliott and commentators as teaching white people what racist discrimination feels like. In the original experiment based in her classroom, teacher Elliott divided her class into two groups on the basis of eye colour, blue-eyed and brown-eyed, and Elliott proceeded to set against the blue-eyed children and favour the brown-eyed children. The group of blue-eyed children was designated the 'inferior' group and wore a collar to denote that they

were the 'oppressed' group; the brown-eyed children were the 'privileged' group, who witnessed, and joined in, the oppressive treatment of the blue-eyed children. After a couple of days, the roles were reversed. In her role as main oppressor Elliott criticizes and humiliates the blue-eyed children and praises and encourages the brown-eyed children, and eggs them on to also criticize the blue-eyed children. Very quickly the children treated as inferior appear dejected, sad, and distraught. Their academic work suffers. This is then understood to show how easily prejudiced behaviour can be initiated and how arbitrary it is. Subsequently, Elliott has repeated this experiential method with adults with whom she is even more confrontational.

Elliott's approach has received widespread publicity through TV documentaries and training videos, the latter used in much diversity training and teacher training. The initial experiment was documented in the ABC programme *The Eye of the Storm* (1970), and available as a video. Since then, many follow-up documentaries and replays of the exercise have taken place with college students and public sector workers in the USA, Australia, and the UK. At the age of 73, Elliott still runs a number of different workshops for public sector and private sector organizations. These include: 'The Anatomy of Prejudice', a three-hour presentation which introduces and discusses the *Eye of the Storm* video at a cost of $6,000; 'A Collar in my Pocket', a one-day workshop in which the Blue-eyed, brown-eyed experiment is run, discussed, and the video *Eye of the Storm* watched.

I first encountered her work when I attended one of her workshops based on 'The Anatomy of Prejudice' as part of a study on diversity training. In this case study, I draw upon my participation in the workshop, Elliott's videos, training manuals, and advertising. In relation to debates on experiential learning and anti-racist pedagogy, I want to examine what kind of real world is being produced by Elliott. What kinds of experiences are being created and how are they seen to be related to the real world? To start answering these questions, I shall describe and analyse a number of equivalences that are set up by Elliott between racism and the experiences produced through her pedagogical work.

Whose Eyes?

Elliott's approach is akin to the type of experiential learning Susan Warner Weil and Ian McGill (1989) call 'personal growth' in which emotions are imagined to be the most important means and outcome for learning (Swan 2004). It is a recognizable approach in anti-racist training as Stella Dadzie notes (2000).

The most important equivalence claimed by Elliott and her supporters is between the social aggression experienced by the participants in the exercise and the lived

experience of black and minority ethnic people. Hence, Elliott assumed that it is possible to recreate racism in such a way that the white participants can experience it and do so emotionally. For example, in the first video of the initial school experiment *Eye of the Storm*, Elliott is shown talking to the classroom of the white young schoolchildren and asking them: 'How do you think it would feel to be a Negro [*sic*] boy or girl? It would be hard to know, wouldn't it, unless we actually experienced discrimination ourselves?' Thus, for Elliott, the experiential activity of Blue-eyed brown-eyed reproduces the real lived experience of black and minority ethnic children. This is based on the assumption that black and minority ethnic experience is saturated by discrimination and can be reduced to matters of feeling. As Gilroy points out, this kind of approach reduces the 'rich complexity of black life by reducing it to nothing more than a response to racism' (1992: 60). This view, he argues, presents the black person as a victim whose identity and experience add up to nothing more than an answer to racism.

There are many examples of Elliott's take on the 'real world' produced in her experiential methods. One of the main websites that advertises her services suggests that her pedagogy enables the tables to be 'turned on white students so that they are forced to experience the racist treatment African American and other minority students have been receiving for years'. In some of her advertising, she suggests that the method enables participants on her workshop to live 'for one day as other people live for a lifetime'. In essence, she is claiming that the experiential approach she used enables dominant groups to 'get a taste' of discrimination (Burbules 2004: p. xxi). As with the mini-ethnographies of multicultural training, empathy is seen as a learning technology which produces white identification with black and minority ethnic groups. In contrast to multicultural mini-ethnographies in which sharing food or music is imagined to bring about empathy, in Jane Elliott's method a condensed feeling of discrimination, a sharing of suffering and pain not food and music, is seen to produce this learning technology of empathy. Through this empathy, then, it is imagined that white participants are offered a means of identification with black and minority ethnic people in which it is believed that they assume the place of the 'other' and replicate their thoughts and emotions. As a result they are imagined to have access to epistemic privilege into the experience of racism. This, in turn, privileges and reproduces the knowing and feeling white person.

This empathy is not simply an affective empathy but a 'cathartic empathy' which is believed to lead to self-transformation and social transformation (Woodward 2003). As Nicholas Burbules writes, her method of experiential learning is 'based on the idea that making people experience what it feels like to be discriminated against is a key step in transforming their attitudes about racism' (2004: p. xx). Pain and suffering are the emotional mechanisms which are seen to provide this step. In therapeutic cultures, and some related forms of experiential learning, pain is imagined to be a very special and effective means of learning because it is seen having an embodied clarity, unadulterated by the intellect.

It is Elliott's pedagogic style that brings about the empathy, pain, and suffering. Seen as a role, or performance, rather than authentic behaviour, Elliott's teaching style, in stark contrast to many race teachers who advocate reflective and dialogic styles, is confrontational, aggressive, and brash (Erickson 2004). Her approach is not what would be seen as progressive but rather is consciously oppressive, and is understood to be her simulating prejudice (Erickson 2004). Her unrelenting and unforgiving approach is seen to be part of the learning process, bringing with it a form of cathartic identification in which intense emotions of being on the receiving end of social aggression are seen to reproduce feelings of being subject to racism, and to act as a catalyst to exorcizing an individual's prejudices. This kind of intense masculine performance is counter to traditional feminized models of teaching and can also be read as a providing a shock to learners, potentially enhancing strong emotions in them. This kind of self-presentation and audience management cannot be an easy performance to muster, taking consider emotional labour on her part.

During all workshops she insults, badgers, belittles, and blames the blue-eyed participants. She began the workshop I attended, as she does in many of the workshops and videos, by declaring, 'I'm J. E. Elliott. I am your blue-eyed bitch for the day.' One of her recent videos is sold on the basis that she is 'mean and nasty' in it. The training manual accompanying some of her videos praises her use of sarcasm and humiliation as pedagogic techniques (Lasch-Quinn 2002). After a gruelling two-and-half-hour confrontation, participants are reduced to being angry, bewildered, tearful, and distraught, to which Elliott shows no sympathy. In fact, she silences belligerently any participant who tries to challenge her or tries to express their feelings. She reminds them that their suffering is nothing compared to that of black and minority ethnic people: 'If you have so much trouble accepting this kind of treatment for only a few hours, when you know it isn't even real, how do you think people of colour feel during a lifetime of treatment?' (Erickson 2004: 6).

Critical to this approach is a problematic notion of racism as something which is one-off, spectacular, and sadistic. In producing this conceptualization of racism, Elliott ignores other types of racism that are everyday, mundane, and repetitive (Essed 1991). Not underestimating the existence, harm, and inequality of the trauma model of racism, the latter type of banal racism is what many black and minority ethnic people have to live with. This type of one-off trauma racism also presumes a one-off shock solution in the manner of trauma/reparation narrative, which ignores the repetitiveness of racism and the need for ongoing recuperations (Berlant 2000).

Some of her academic supporters, Gregory Jay and Sandra Jones, argue that 'her manner is a far cry from the therapeutic, feel-good multiculturalism of many American workshops' (2005: 6). In light of what some might see as technologies of sadism, Jay argues that she 'wants her blue-eyed to really feel the pain of discrimination and inequality' (2005: 6). Somewhat more critically, Ingrid Erickson (2004) suggests that Elliott provides 'confrontation not education'. This leads on

to the question of what Elliott is producing through these strategies of emotional surrogacy.

Central to these assumptions is the idea that emotions are a technology of self- and social transformation. This has been subject to considerable debate within educational studies, critical race studies, feminism, and cultural studies. In social science the main debate centres on the question of whether shared emotion, in particular, suffering, is the most productive foundation for collective politics (Berlant 2000). In relation to educational studies in management, therapeutic cultures such as personal development and humanistic psychology have been critiqued for naturalizing and over-psychologizing emotions, privileging them as the most truthful form of knowledge about the self and its place in the world (Vince 1996; Swan and Bailey 2004). In critical race studies, the focus for attention has been the effects of white people's emotions and their fantasies of affective identification with black and minority ethnic people as a form of pedagogy for race equality. I will discuss these in more detail in relation to Jane Elliott's work but first I want to outline the view of academics who support Elliot's emotional approach.

One such example is Justin Infinito (2003) who uses Elliott's technique in his own classroom. For him, Elliott's approach using empathy can bring about a 'deeper understanding of the indignity that comes with racist oppression' that then leads to participants coming 'to a level of caring about injustice so it can be eradicated from classroom and from the world' (Infinito 2003: 68). This works for Justin Infinito in a number of related ways: first, for him, sympathy with others is a higher order of knowledge than cognition; secondly, the experiential method of Blue-eyed provides a more direct and immediate route into an individual's emotions and reflections; thirdly, the group sharing the same experience enables communal, critical, and diverse reflection. In providing the opportunity for discussion in which different theoretical models are used to examine the 'politics of construction' around this experience, Infinito's pedagogy differs from Elliott's. The 'eye' at the centre of the storm for Elliott is the feeling of emotion, not the theorizing or discussing of those emotions. It is not clear which theoretical models Infinito uses, and as Brah and Hoy (1989) point out, therein lies the rub.

In both approaches, empathy is seen as a significant mechanism for white participants to get intimate with racism. As mentioned above this brings about a number of effects which have been problematized by some social and critical race theorists, which can help us understand some of the issues around Elliott's work. A key problem raised by critical race theorist Sara Ahmed (2005) in a discussion of the politics of good and bad feelings in relation to anti-racism is whose feelings become seen as important—those of white people, or those of black and minority ethnic people? One of the dangers for Ahmed of this is that in feeling bad on behalf of black and minority ethnic people, white people reduce black and minority ethnic people to being the object of their feelings. According to Ahmed this not only involves a fantasy that one can know how the other feels but also it can become

a form of appropriation, in which 'the pain of others becomes ours' (2005: 74). In 'taking on' this feeling of pain, we can then start to feel good about our capacity for empathy, identification, and feelings of shame in relation to the other. As a result, white people can become absorbed in their own emotions rather than the material conditions affecting black and minority ethnic people (Ahmed 2005; Hytten and Warren 2003). As Audrey Thompson writes, 'the white pleasures of identification and empathy and redemption or guilt can lead to self-absorption' (2003: 17).

In a related discussion Sarit Srivastava (2005) argues that white women's attachment to feeling good about doing good to others can again lead to self-absorption. In this view, many white women, in particular white feminists, have an image of themselves as good, non-racist, kind, and caring. Emotions such as empathy as an anti-racist response uphold this self-image through the production of introspection and self-examination, a 'personalized antiracist ethic' of confession (2005: 31). Requiring techniques of purification or salvations by others, anti-racism becomes a white performance of anger and guilt at racism which is performative. These displays become proof of an individual's goodness as they prove themselves less ignorant and less racist and, hence, anti-racism in this form becomes a matter of an individual's moral self-development rather than organization change (2005: 44). According to Srivastava, with empathy, anti-racism becomes a character reference rather a form of political analysis. In her summary, Srivastava questions whether these forms of empathetic anti-racism, in which white people know better, feel better, and become better people, really mean that white people actually *do* any thing that is better.

These critiques relate to Elliott's work in a number of ways. First, it seems that it is white people's empathy and suffering that is the focus for the workshop and video. Although she silences any white participant who attempts to discuss her feelings, the narrative of the whole workshop is around whites feeling better. One of the ways that this operates is that Elliott is herself white. In fact, she is blue-eyed. In essence, she offers the white participants the therapeutic promise of progression. Presenting herself as a point of 'heroic identification' through embodying the good white person that they can become if they hang in there under the pressure (Woodward 2003), her aggression is seen as permissible because it will be transformative for the white participants. The intensity and unrelenting nature of her aggression is evidence of both her moral outrage and her crusading wish to purify them of racism and prejudice. Jay and Jones (2005) argue that Elliott does not work with a model of humanist empathy which results in complacency or congratulation, but I want to suggest that in presenting herself as enlightened, her performance is a congratulation of the white saved self, and her crusade to save other white selves. In contrast, the black and minority ethnic participants have no way out of the racism of which they are on the receiving end in life. Although there is room for them to express emotions of anger, frustration, and sadness during the workshop about the racism they encounter, the focus for the narrative is the fate of white people. There

is no transformational narrative for the black and minority ethnic participants as theirs is not the main feature.

Conclusion

In summary, then, I have argued that experience in all forms of experiential learning cannot be taken for granted. This is particularly the case with emotional experiences which have been understood within some experiential philosophies and therapeutic cultures as the most raw, natural, internal, and therefore most authentic of experiences. I am not suggesting that this means that emotions are not important either to learning or politics. Using a case study of Jane Elliott's Blue-eyed, brown-eyed experiential method, I have examined some of the effects of using emotion, and, in particular, empathy and suffering, as technologies for race equality. One of the key questions for experiential pedagogy is what kind of microcosm is being created through experiential methods—what is the activity a miniature copy of? In drawing upon a representation of racism as simply about spectacular suffering, Elliott offers a reductionist model of racism. As many critical race theorists argue, racism is complex, fluid, plural, mundane, and dynamic: it cannot be reduced simply to matters of spectacularized suffering. Mobilizing the notion that empathy through white on white social aggression is the same as racism again trivializes the operation and experience of racism. Furthermore it is assumed that the emotions produced are to do with learning about racial discrimination not to do with any new humiliation that might be peculiar to the aggressive pedagogy and the experiential exercise itself (Lasch-Quinn 2002). I have argued then that instead of Blue-eyed, brown-eyed being a microcosm of racism, it stands more for the problems of empathy as a technology of white benevolence, salvation, and crusades. Finally I suggested that Blue-eyed, brown-eyed is actually about blue-eyed people, offering as it does a therapeutic narrative of catharsis and self-transformation for the blue-eyed in that it does not facilitate a real role reversal—where black and minority ethnic people have white power and privilege: indeed it cannot ever do this kind of work—but offers a therapeutic narrative of catharsis and self-transformation for the blue-eyed.

Of course teaching about anti-racism is complex and challenging. As critical race theorist Stuart Hall comments, it is full of 'pedagogic difficulties' because the subject is complex and therefore difficult to teach clearly (1981: 58). It is also emotionally charged and what he calls emotionally combustible (ibid.). Rattansi (1992) also draws our attention to the importance of the unconscious in understanding and education around racism. This suggests that an affective approach to teaching about race equality and anti-racism is important but we must be aware

of the complex politics of construction needed around how emotion is conceptualized and theorized in relation to experiential learning and anti-racism. In the words of Hall again, 'racism is deeply resistant to attempts at amelioration, good feeling, gentle reform and so on' (1981: 61). As Ahmed (2005) and Berlant (2000) both point out, emotions, and empathy *per se* need not necessarily be apolitical, but neither should they be seen as a self-contained, self-explanatory form of politics.

Note

Thanks to Sara Ahmed and Shona Hunter, the UCLAN MA in Promoting Equality class 2005–6 especially Andrew, Arun, James, and Jules, and also to Rosemary Crawley for support and helpful comments on this work. Thanks to the editors for their insightful comments and their patience. This chapter is based on research funded by the Centre for Excellence in Leadership but does not necessarily reflect its views.

References

Ahmed, Sara (2005). 'The Politics of Bad Feeling', *Australian Critical Race and Whiteness Studies Association Journal*, 1: 72–85.

—— Hunter, Shona, Kilic, Sevgi, Swan, Elaine, and Turner, Lewis (2006). *Integrating Diversity: Final Report.* London: Centre for Excellence in Leadership.

Anthias, Flora, and Yuval-Davis, Nira (1992). *Racialized Boundaries: Race, Nation, Gender, Colour and Class and the Anti-Racist Struggle.* London: Routledge.

Arora, Ranjit (2005). *Race and Ethnicity in Education.* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Bell, Vikki (2002). 'Reflections on the "End of Antiracism" (P. Gilroy)', in Philomena Essed and David Theo Goldberg (eds.), *Race Critical Theories.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Ben-Tovim, Gideon (1997). 'Why "Positive Action" is "Politically Correct" ', in Tariq Modood and Pnina Werbner (eds.), *The Politics of Multiculturalism in the New Europe: Racism, Identity and Community.* London: Zed Books.

Berlant, Lauren (2000). 'The Subject of True Feeling: Pain, Privacy, and Politics', in Jodi Dean (ed.), *Cultural Studies and Political Theory.* New York: Cornell University Press.

Bhavnani, Reena (2001). *Rethinking Interventions in Racism.* Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books.

Bonnett, Alastair (2000). *Anti-Racism.* London: Routledge.

Brah, Avtar, and Hoy, Jane (1989). 'Experiential Learning: A New Orthodoxy?', in Susan Warner Weil and Ian McGil (eds.), *Making Sense of Experiential Learning: Diversity in Theory and Practice.* Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Brookfield, Stephen (1995). 'Adult Learning: An Overview', in Torsten Husen and T. Neville Postlewaite (eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Education.* Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Brown, Colin, and Lawton, Jean (1991). *Training for Equality: A Study of Race Relations and Equal Opportunities Training.* London: Policy Studies Institute.

Burbules, Nicholas C. (2004). 'Introduction', in Megan Boler (ed.), *Democratic Dialogue in Education: Troubling Speech, Disturbing Silence.* New York: Peter Lang.

Cohen, Philip (1992). ' "It's Racism What Dunnit": Hidden Narratives in Theories of Racism', in James Donald and Ali Rattansi (eds.), *'Race', Culture and Difference.* London: Sage.

Dadzie, Stella (2000). *Toolkit for Tackling Racism in Schools.* Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham.

Erickson, Ingrid M. (2004). 'Fighting Fire with Fire: Jane Elliott's Antiracist Pedagogy', in Megan Boler (ed.), *Democratic Dialogue in Education: Troubling Speech, Disturbing Silence.* New York: Peter Lang.

Essed, Philomena (1991). *Everyday Racism.* London: Sage.

Fenwick, Tara (2003). *Learning through Experience: Troubling Orthodoxies and Intersecting Questions.* New York: Krieger.

Gaine, Chris (1995). *Still No Problem Here.* Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham.

Gilroy, Paul (1987). *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack.* London: Routledge.

—— (1992). 'The End of AntiRacism', in James Donald and Ali Rattansi (eds.), *'Race', Culture and Difference.* London: Sage.

Hall, Stuart (1981). 'Teaching Race', in Alan James and Robert Jeffcoate (eds.), *The School in the Multicultural Society.* London: Harper & Row.

Hytten, Kathy, and Warren, John (2003). 'Engaging Whiteness: How Racial Power Gets Reified in Education', *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 16/1: 65–89.

Infinito, Justen (2003). 'Jane Elliot Meets Foucault: The Formation of Ethical Identities in the Classroom', *Journal of Moral Education*, 32/1: 67–76.

Jack, Gavin, and Lorbiecki, Anna (2003). 'Asserting Possibilities of Resistance in the Cross-Cultural Teaching Machine: Re-viewing Videos of Others', in Anshuman Prasad (ed.), *Postcolonial Theory and Organizational Analysis: A Critical Engagement.* Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Jay, Gregory, with Jones, Sandra (2005). 'Whiteness Studies and the Multicultural Literature Classroom', *Journal of the Society for the Study of the Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States*, Spring.

Kossek, Ellen Ernst, Lobel, Sharon A., and Brown, Sharon (2006). 'Human Resources Strategies to Manage Workforce Diversity: Examining "The Business Case" ', in Alison M. Konrad, Pushkala Prasad, and Judith K. Pringle (eds.), *Handbook of Workplace Diversity.* London: Sage.

Lasch-Quinn, Elisabeth (2002). *Race Experts: How Racial Etiquette, Sensitivity Training, and New Age Therapy Hijacked the Civil Rights Movement.* Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield.

Lynch, Frederick (2002). *The Diversity Machine: The Drive to Change the 'White Male Workplace'.* New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

Macdonald, Ian, John, Gus, Khan, Lily, and Bhavnani, Reena (1989). *Murder in the Playground.* London: Longsight Press.

Mir, Raza, Mir, Ali, and Wong, Diana J. (2006). 'Diversity: The Cultural Logic of Global Capital', in Alison M. Konrad, Pushkala Prasad, and Judith K. Pringle (eds.), *Handbook of Workplace Diversity.* London: Sage.

Nkomo, Stella M. (1992). 'The Emperor Has No Clothes: Rewriting "Race" in Organizations', *Academy of Management Review*, 17/3: 487–513.

—— and Cox, Taylor (1999). 'Diverse Identities in Organizations', in Stewart Clegg, Cynthia Hardy, and Walter R. Nord (eds.), *Handbook of Organization Studies.* London: Sage.

Pederson, Anne, Walker, Ian, and Wise, Mike (2005). ' "Talk Does Not Cook Rice": Beyond Anti-racist Rhetoric to Strategies for Social Action', *Australian Psychologist*, 40/1: 20–31.

Penketh, Laura (2000). *Tackling Institutional Racism: Anti-racist Policies and Social Work Education and Training.* Bristol: Policy Press.

Prasad, Pushkala, and Mills, Albert J. (1997). 'From Showcase to Shadow: Understanding the Dilemmas of Managing Workplace Diversity', in Pushkala Prasad, Albert J. Mills, Michael Elmes, and Anshuman Prasad (eds.), *Managing the Organizational Melting Post: Dilemmas of Workplace Diversity.* Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage.

Ramazanoglu, Caroline, and Holland, Janet (1999). 'Tripping over Experience: Some Problems in Feminist Epistemology', *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 20/3: 381–92.

Rattansi, Ali (1992). 'Changing the Subject? Racism, Culture and Education', in James Donald and Ali Rattansi (eds.), *'Race', Culture and Difference.* London: Sage.

Reynolds, Michael, and Trehan, Kiran (2001). 'Classroom as Real World: Propositions for a Pedagogy of Difference', *Gender and Education*, 13/4: 357–72.

—— and Vince, Russ (2004). 'Introduction', in Michael Reynolds and Russ Vince (eds.), *Organizing Reflection.* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Scarman, L. G. (1981). *The Brixton Disorders 10–12 April 1981: Report of an Inquiry*. London: HMSO.

Scott, Joan W. (1992). 'Experience', in Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (eds.), *Feminists Theorise the Political.* New York: Routledge.

Srivastava, Sarit (2005). ' "You're Calling me a Racist?" The Moral and Emotional Regulation of Antiracism and Feminism', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 31: 29–62.

Swan, Elaine (2004). 'Worked up Selves: Personal Development, Self-Transformation and Therapeutic Cultures', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Lancaster University.

—— and Bailey, Andy (2004). 'Thinking with Feeling', in Michael Reynolds and Russ Vince (eds.), *Organizing Reflection.* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Swann Report (1985). *Education for All.* London: Department of Education and Science.

Taylor, Paul, Powell, Diana, and Wrench, John (1997). *The Evaluation of Anti-discrimination Training Activities in the United Kingdom.* International Migration Papers 21. Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, University of Warwick.

Thompson, Audrey (2003). 'Tiffancy, Friend of People of Color: White Investments in Antiracism', *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 16/1: 7–29.

Usher, Robin, Bryant, Ian, and Johnston, Rennie (1997). *Adult Education and the Postmodern Challenge: Learning beyond the Limits*. London: Routledge.

Vince, Russ (1996). 'Experiential Management Education as the Practice of Change', in Robert French and Christopher Grey (eds.), *Rethinking Management Education.* London: Sage.

Walker, Hilary (2002). *A Genealogy of Equality: The Curriculum for Social Work Education and Training.* London: Woburn.

Weil, Susan Warner, and McGill, Ian (1989). 'A Framework for Making Sense of Experiential Learning', in Susan Warner Weil and Ian McGill (eds.), *Making Sense of Experiential Learning: Diversity in Theory and Practice.* Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Wildemeersch, Danny (1989). 'The Principal Meaning of Dialogue for the Construction and Transformation of Reality', in Susan Warner Weil and Ian McGill (eds.), *Making Sense of Experiential Learning: Diversity in Theory and Practice.* Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Woodward, Gary C. (2003). *The Idea of Identification*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

CHAPTER 13

CHOOSING EXPERIENTIAL METHODS FOR MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

THE FIT OF ACTION LEARNING AND PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING

ANNE HERBERT
SARI STENFORS

Introduction

The process of changing from traditional teaching methods to experiential methods is not easy. Institutional forces make change challenging, even when a university signals that it wants to change. We provide a framework for choosing an experiential

learning method that takes into consideration institutional forces in the form of restricted resources. We argue for conscious comparison of methods for the best possible fit in a specific context.

As instructors in an established business university we reflect on our use of action learning (AL) and problem-based learning (PBL) that are not traditional nor widely used in our university. Our efforts are consistent with the university's publicly stated strategic intentions, yet the necessary institutional support for using experiential learning methods is not always readily available. This situation is typical for many instructors currently employed in ambitious business schools and universities.

The available management education literature does not address sufficiently the choice of learning methods. In practice, the choice of a method often is rendered secondary to considerations of content, and depends on institutional traditions and pressures, professional interests and abilities, fads and serendipitous circumstances. The choice between learning methods does not get the reflexive attention it deserves. But clarity about the details and distinctions of different teaching and learning methods allows clear descriptions of expectations for students and instructors and alignment of appropriate institutional support for teaching and learning. Understanding the distinctions also gives an opportunity to choose the methods that best answer the aspirations of the university and its curricula. Our case shows that the differences between experiential methods are important to acknowledge because different methods address different needs, and also that the demands and constraints of the teaching and learning context matter. The fit of a particular method in a specific course with the overall curricula, the goals of the teaching modules, the resources available to the instructors, and the individual learners' needs and readiness for a particular method, all play an important part in the choice to adopt new learning methods, and the effective implementation. In other words, choice in our study means selecting methods that match aspirations and available resources.

We suggest a framework of three questions for comparing learning methods before choosing:

1. How does the method help the learners orient to the course and the learning objectives?
2. What type of teaching and learning processes does the method encourage and support?
3. What type of material and non-material resources and support are needed for successful implementation of the method?

Answering these questions reveals opportunities and challenges that in turn allow us to examine the relative fit of the methods to the institutional context and the available resources offered by the business school, instructors, and learners.

First, we will provide a brief description of our university, Helsinki School of Economics (HSE). Then, we offer answers to our three questions above, based on AL and PBL as examples. The answers are initially drawn from literature and then from instructor and student comments on the experience of using these methods. The output is a description of differences between the AL and PBL in the business school context. Finally, we make recommendations about practical issues to be considered when choosing these particular methods and discuss the choice of learning methods in general.

The Institutional Context

Helsinki School of Economics is an ambitious business university which 'seeks to develop dynamic teaching programmes that are competitive and comparable internationally . . . We train students for independent and interactive study and also in holistic *problem-based learning* . . .' (HSE Strategies 2006; italics added).

Pedagogic methods vary throughout HSE and, until the publication of the strategy statement cited above, no preference for a specific teaching method had been stated. The traditions and disciplinary structure of the university best serve theory-focused teacher-centred methods, privilege individual learning concentrating on theory and reading books, and reward learners who compete to pass supervised written exams under time pressure (Leppälä and Päiviö 2001; Korpiaho 2005). Recently HSE has signalled that it intends the faculty to adopt more 'modern teaching methods' and increasingly 'involve students' in the teaching-learning process (HSE 2003). HSE has also invested in developing some on-line capacity for delivering course information, course material, and on-line discussion of course content. However, it has not provided any guidelines to faculty about exactly what constitutes desirable modern teaching methods or how appropriate teaching methods that involve students should be chosen and adopted.

Two recent external evaluations of the M.Sc. programme at HSE noted the apparent mismatch between the mission statement and the actual practice of teaching and learning at HSE. One of them specifically suggested, 'A more systematic use of internships, *action learning* . . . would highly benefit the students' development, giving them the practical skills needed and the specific skills and knowledge appreciated by the recruiting companies' (Cavalle et al. 2003: 12; italics added). Both evaluation reports called for the development of theme-based study modules and teaching methods accenting teamwork and interpersonal skills, and curriculum design processes that would be more visibly and effectively responsive to corporate needs (Cavalle et al. 2003; Kettunen et al. 2003).

Based on our understandings of PBL and AL, elaborated below, and supported by the references cited above, we maintain that AL and PBL are in line with the

published mission and strategies of HSE. Yet, in practice, these methods do not fit so readily at HSE because they require new kinds of teaching and learning competencies and different use of time and material resources. For example, AL and PBL learners and instructors need to collaborate rather than compete, student teams require space to work together at convenient hours, extensive library resources for reference, the critical information skills to use the resources, and responsive, cross-disciplinary learning support as specific needs emerge. Furthermore, the assessment and evaluation systems at HSE are designed more for assessing theoretical rather than practical knowledge, and tend to encourage competition between individual learners.

The current institutional arrangements at HSE most effectively support teacher-centred and lecture-based teaching methods. For example, all applicants for faculty positions are required to give a lecture as a means to assess their teaching. Also, instructors are implicitly discouraged from using time to experiment with new learning methods, as most of the instructors at HSE are primarily researchers whose accomplishments are measured by academic publication outputs. Being an instructor at HSE is often a secondary occupation because the tenure criteria, especially for higher-level positions, reward research not teaching. The recently introduced performance management system assesses both research performance and teaching, but has not provided any obvious increase in appreciation of teaching so far. At HSE, historically, individual instructors are the 'sole owners' of their individual course and its content. In many disciplinary areas, teaching is a personal and private matter, conducted behind closed doors. While there may be some discussion with peers of extraordinarily brilliant or difficult students, there is little public discussion of how to encourage learning. The standard course feedback form that students are invited to complete focuses on disciplinary content and the instructor as the 'transmitter' of content, and does not ask about group work, nor about other learning processes.

Despite the institutional barriers, we used AL and PBL methods to teach strategic management. A set of favourable circumstances made this possible. First, at HSE, there is no 'strategy department' and at each department the strategy courses are different. The subject of strategic management invites cross-disciplinary learning as it demands understanding of various functional areas. Secondly, individual instructors at HSE can decide the teaching methods they use. Generally, as long as the students do not complain too much about teaching, the instructors are left to concentrate on research work. The overall arrangement allows independence but little practical, material, or peer support for instructors who choose non-traditional methods. There is a small 'Centre for Innovative Education', providing technical support for eLearning and managing eLearning systems, and organizing briefings on broader teaching and learning issues when it can. In addition, HSE provides small grants for novel teaching efforts and sometimes hires instructors with skills in new teaching methods. We received some funds for a short introduction to PBL.

So, small changes are taking place, but institutional forces still hinder change (see, for example, DiMaggio and Powell 1991), for example continuing to align resources with traditional teaching methods, while offering a short course for teachers on PBL methods. Nonetheless, the changes can be advanced by individuals who create positive experiences with new methods (for example DiMaggio 1988; Garud, Jain, and Kumaraswamy 2002; Maguire, Hardy, and Lawrence 2004), so it is important to identify and throw light on learning methods that will lead to success.

Comparing PBL and AL Methods

Our argument is based on our experiences with PBL and AL at HSE. There is little literature that specifically compares AL and PBL, but from articles on the individual methods and their use, we have made some comparisons.

The methods have different roots. PBL was largely conceived and developed in the academy, initially for training clinical practitioners and lawyers, and subsequently adopted for other professional courses (Savin-Baden 2000). AL was developed in workplaces with managers, first in the mining industry, then in other industries and for other levels of workers. Subsequently AL has also been adopted in business schools, but its domain remains largely work-based learning (Pedler 1997).

PBL and AL are both enquiry-based experiential methods that privilege practical knowledge, put the 'instructor' in a facilitating role, and emphasize learners' active role in taking responsibility for their own learning, most often working in teams. The students have to make choices about the contents and goals of their learning, and are forced by the demands of practice to reintegrate elements that are often separated in the disciplinary silos of management education. Both methods develop learners' capacity for new theory building through interaction around the learning problem. Academics sometimes debate the place of presentation of existing theories and ownership of the learning problem, yet both AL and PBL are generally described as valuable for management education curriculum. PBL and AL offer learners practice and support in business situations and in turn, employers gain well-prepared, or at least less naive, graduates.

The following discussion highlights the similarities and differences based on the three-question framework introduced at the beginning of this chapter.

Orientation to the Learning Objectives

Both AL and PBL achieve learning by engaging learners from the outset with the messy problems of working life that transcend academic disciplinary boundaries.

These complex learning problems present the learners, both as individuals and in groups, with challenges about their own resourcefulness, capacity to think creatively and critically, and their personal organization for finding, storing, and integrating information.

The choice of the problematic situation in PBL usually rests with the instructor or 'tutor'. The PBL literature discusses the choice of appropriate problems (for example Schmidt 1993), and the adequate design of problem situations (for example Stinson and Milter 1996) to ensure encounters with current theories deemed important in the academy. The learners are assumed to be inexperienced and unfamiliar with the complexity of the situations that are the focus of learning in PBL.

In AL, the participants are asked to bring problems to the learning process, to describe the problem with which they wish to work in the group, and to limit the problem so that learning outcomes will be achievable and discerniable (Marquardt 1999). The problem upon which learning is focused exists in the living world where the learners typically are employed, or otherwise actively trying to make an effect. Generally, AL learners are assumed to be the most expert people available regarding knowledge of their current context and the dimensions of their particular problems. Their role as a learner comes from the desire to act more effectively in their situation (Revans 1983, 1985; McGill and Beatty 2001). Thus, the discussion about the problematic situation in AL literature revolves around the suitability of the problems. Highly technical problems with little ambiguity are seen to be inappropriate (Revans 1983; Herbert 2002), and established theory is not typically in focus when choosing the problem.

Learning Process

In both AL and PBL the learners have to take an active role and responsibility for their own learning. They are expected to develop the ability to define their own learning needs and goals, and identify appropriate sources and relevant information to meet the goals. When most learners have been trained in an educational system where instructors have told them what needs to be learned, and with discipline-based textbooks to structure the content, the literature acknowledges that AL and PBL participants can find difficulty adapting to the responsibility and freedom (for example Duch, Groh, and Allen 2001; Raelin and Raelin 2006).

Learners in AL and PBL collaborate in small groups to share their perspectives, questions, and insights, with the intent to learn from one another about the presenting problem and possible solutions. Between group meetings, individuals are pursuing information or action that they have agreed with the group to pursue in order to achieve agreed goals with respect to the problem situation in focus. Learners encourage one another to delve more deeply, articulate more clearly, and justify claims more convincingly. Such group work provides space for the public

expression of emotion that is not available in traditional lecture-based courses. Group work also provides space for interpersonal power dynamics among participants. Forming, storming, and norming in groups have to be anticipated and managed until the desired performance emerges.

Terms such as AL 'adviser' and PBL 'tutor' emphasize the facilitating role of the instructor. Instructors might provide input on certain skills such as listening, critical questioning, and problem analysis if required. A difference between the AL adviser and PBL tutor roles can be the degree of disciplinary expertise provided. The literature suggests that the PBL tutor is often a source of expert disciplinary input, where an AL adviser is more a process facilitator. Successful action learning depends on the participants having within themselves the experience, the knowledge, skills, and understanding necessary to engage in, and direct, their own learning. Revans (1983, 1985) even advocated that AL groups work without the 'interference' of any external adviser. Apart from the emphasis on theory in the orientation phase, PBL also offers a structured step-by-step process for group meetings (for example Wood 2003) which is not so common for AL.

Both AL and PBL stress the importance of ongoing iterative learning and assessment of learning at different points in time. The learning outcomes from AL and PBL are in some ways also less predictable than for some other methods. Often the assessment tasks concentrate on practical and functional abilities; however the PBL learners may also be tested for theoretical knowledge.

Evaluations of the effectiveness of PBL in use have focused more on the acquisition of disciplinary knowledge than evaluations of AL. Evaluations of AL more usually focus on the workplace effects and outcomes, and often comment on the balance of action and reflection in the learning process.

Resource and Support Requirements

In PBL, where problems are designed or chosen so that external multidisciplinary information will be required to address the problem, a team of teaching staff working together is preferable to ensure the breadth of information can be provided. This multidisciplinary teamwork is also an important difference between traditional case approach (for example Christensen and Hansen 1987) and PBL, although problem situations may be somewhat similar to traditional cases in management education. PBL goes well beyond the typical case by emphasizing the learners' acquisition of skills to seek and identify relevant information and to structure the situation to permit analysis. PBL manuals suggest ensuring the availability of the predictably required information and in addition training learners to seek, analyse, and use additional information from various sources (for example Duch, Groh, and Allen 2001). The learning materials are ideally tailored to the process, with resources and support to gain access to specialist knowledge and disciplinary theory. In many

universities, institutional rearrangements are required to ensure support for instructor teams, recognition of the roles and work of instructors in PBL, training on information and critical literacy for learners, access to adequate learning resources, and arrangements for appropriate group work spaces (for example Duch, Groh, and Allen 2001; King forthcoming).

Compared with PBL, in AL the learners are expected to be more in charge of the learning problem and take greater responsibility. Effective AL requires management to sponsor action about the chosen problem (Marquardt 1999). The instructor's role is to facilitate the participants' learning from their action on the chosen problem, which includes limiting and framing the problem with regard to learning goals that can be linked to the curriculum. Instructors do not need to work in teams to achieve this focus, but instructors do often have to refer the participants to other scholars for assistance on particular cross-disciplinary issues. Like PBL, AL is more effective if there is institutional support for interdisciplinary work, literacy training, and provision of a wide variety of learning resources.

To briefly sum up this section comparing AL and PBL, we affirm that there are many similarities in these methods, and the main differences seem to be the assumptions about the amount of experience the learners bring with them, and the amount of prescription about the learning process for the participants.

Instructor and Learner Responses to PBL and AL

PBL and AL strongly appeal to our professional and academic commitments to cross-disciplinary, enquiry-based, experiential learning for the living integration of management theories and practices. We wanted to encourage the development and use of lifelong learning skills, for example taking responsibility of own learning, team working, debating, constructively challenging one another, and reflecting. These skills are ones that employers seek, so we expected that motivating learners to practise and demonstrate the skills would be easy, and that the learners with working experience would quickly recognize their usefulness. What was not apparent from the literature was the effect of overall institutional constraints that in our case manifested as lack of support for experiential learning methods. These alignment problems were evident for example in how strongly the traditional ways of teaching conditioned the students' learning routines. We will elaborate on the effects more fully below.

The PBL was used in an elective course for M.Sc. and D.Sc. students. The course focuses on teaching management tools for strategy processes. The participants are a heterogeneous group, many with work experience, and at different stages of

their studies in different disciplinary majors. The PBL participants have to attend meetings with the instructor each week and in addition are required to attend lectures, observe presentations, and produce short preliminary essays weekly on topics chosen by the instructors. Their schedule is structured around the weekly activities and requires outputs that lead to the main output of the course, the final essay.

The AL was used for a mandatory strategy project in the Executive MBA programme (EMBA). The participants are executives from a wide variety of educational backgrounds and business organizations. The project is a major element of the EMBA. There are three key deadlines and three compulsory workshop periods (eight days) with the adviser where project proposals, interim, and final reports are presented and discussed. Otherwise participants are responsible for organizing their own schedule of meetings, work, and production of required outputs.

We draw on the instructors' comments and the participants' post-course feedback to make sense of their experiential learning experiences at HSE in 2003. The data is:

1. Semi-structured feedback from all thirty AL participants and from twenty of the thirty-three PBL participants.
2. Twelve additional e-mail survey responses from the PBL participants.
3. Reflective discussions and interviews with other teachers using AL and PBL at HSE.

The course participants' and other instructors' identities have been protected by anonymity.

The course participants did not compare AL and PBL, but they compared, often implicitly, AL or PBL to the other methods they had experienced. We focus on our three guiding questions: first, on experiences of orientation to the learning objectives of the subject; secondly, on experiences of the learning process; and thirdly, we reflect on the resources and support available.

Orientation to the Learning Objectives

Both the PBL and AL participants reported uncertainty about defining the problem situation in the beginning, uncertainty about how to work with the instructor and other co-participants, and uncertainty about various aspects of the project and the processes:

At first the free-form way of working in PBL was a bit confusing and it felt like you couldn't get anything out of it.

One AL participant wrote:

The instructor's support was very good, even if we did not know how much we should ask and what better not. So we maybe did not ask enough, in order to avoid difficult situations.

Different assumptions about the learners' pre-existing expertise led to different approaches to theory and practice in PBL and AL. The PBL instructors did not anticipate that the participants would understand the complexities of the studied subject at the beginning of the course. The problem was introduced by a CEO describing everyday work issues. Course material included a number of theories and guest speakers from other companies discussing how these theories had been used by their companies. In contrast, at the AL course, the participants were seen as experts on the practical issues in their local situation, and were set to solve live practical problems in business. Each chose a practicable problem where they could extend their knowledge and skills while making a visible practical difference in a living business situation. The participants were expected to demonstrate stretching their understanding of the interdependency of management functions and market forces in an industry. They were also assumed to note and monitor the variety of possible ways to address and communicate key issues in a complex problem. The participants themselves had to arrange to consult people connected to the workplace sponsoring their learning project.

The different ways of setting the learning problems in AL and PBL have been reflected in the participants' comments. The AL participants' feedback expressed satisfaction and excitement regarding their ability to make decisions that affected the directions and outcomes of their chosen project. The AL course participants showed ownership of their learning problem, for example:

> The assignment . . . was interesting and offers great opportunities in the near future. The scope of the project, taking a view of an entity in . . . business, was very interesting given my background, and relates to several other topics I am working with.

In contrast, the PBL participants showed frustration with the learning problem. Outlines of the problem were provided, but the participants themselves had to focus the problem. Some of the PBL participants were confused about the incomplete information about the case company and they longed for the extra background information and clearer learning objectives.

> Defective information about the problem and its background caused a lot of confusion and wondering . . .

and

> [We] didn't know the case company well enough to really solve problems. On the other hand, that was also good, because otherwise your free thinking would have been too bounded.

The confusion of the PBL participants may have partly been due to the participants' familiarity with solving cases in case method courses and relative lack of familiarity with enquiry-based learning methods.

The PBL instructors reflected on the participants' confusion and initial reluctance to engage with some feelings of inadequacy: not being able to manage and learn everything that the participants learned or would have needed to learn. They were anxious that so much time was used to orient to the subject. They commented on the need to limit learning objectives in order to adhere to HSE assessment procedures. For example, the final essays that concentrated on describing a solution to the course problem were instructed to cover certain theoretical parts to ensure that the course also met more traditional learning objectives. Overall, orienting the participants to the learning objectives was a major concern to the PBL instructors.

In contrast, the AL instructor reported no problems with the learning objectives and confidently assumed that the learners were experts in their fields and that the companies would assess the end product. The AL participants seemed to follow learning routines already used at their workplaces and the instructor reported paying attention to activating individual participants' learning processes by mainly helping to define the problem, aiding group work, brushing up research skills, and developing thinking. In sum, the AL instructor's main role was to facilitate the learning process.

Learning Process

In spite of the distinction identified above, the participants' comments on the role of the instructor were similar for both methods. The 'instructor' appeared as a facilitator, organizer, motivator, and an expert resource. The participants took responsibility for their own learning and understood that the instructor had a supportive role in this process. The learners' feedback showed a clear commitment to the learning process and the instructors talked about the importance of motivation as the key success factor with these learning methods.

Both the AL and PBL participants were clearly conscious that these methods integrate practice and theory. The AL participants' comments emphasized the excitement of putting theories into practice; whereas the PBL participants described reaching practice from a theory-oriented view:

> The best parts of the course were the 'ah-ha!' experiences that occurred both during groupwork and in situations where you could apply the given material . . . to the guest company.

Where the PBL participants' feedback talked about theories, the AL participants described actions. Particularly, in dealing with unclear issues the AL participants looked for practical ways to proceed with work, and PBL participants resorted to theoretical concepts and readings often provided for them to help finding the problem. This orientation showed also in the instructors' descriptions of the difficulties they experienced. When the PBL instructors worried about supplying theories and

practice views that would help students accomplish learning objectives, the AL instructor talked about the challenge of being able to support the learners and their process so that the host company directly benefited from the project.

The collaborative aspect of both AL and PBL generated many comments. The instructors worried about learners' group work skills and best ways to facilitate them. Both participant groups acknowledged their dependence on collaborative work to succeed in individual learning.

> The work in the [PBL] group depended on everyone's commitment and effort, so it was important that everyone did the preparatory work well and was ready to present it and to learn from others in the group and take others' perspectives into account.

The participants often commented on the importance of the work processes and the positive impact of individual differences. The challenges with teamwork seemed to be slightly different between the AL and PBL groups. AL participants indicated challenges in effectiveness of teamwork such as division of tasks, doing one's share, and managing difficult team members. The PBL participants commented on the challenges and difficulties of new ways of learning, and especially unfamiliarity with learning as a team, working collaboratively and reflectively in a group. For example, one PBL participant noted:

> The worst experiences were in teamwork sessions, when it felt like the discussion or problem-solving did not proceed or that other people were thinking in completely different ways about the matter.

But the teamwork also helped some participants reflect. The AL participants often described reflecting on the situation in practice whereas in PBL the participants emphasized the reflection in the team.

> Teamwork helped me develop my ideas further and increase perspectives based on ideas and thoughts made by other students.

In our context we saw that the PBL participants struggled with the group work more painfully and stressfully than the AL participants. This can be explained by the greater experience of the AL participants working in diverse groups, usually in their workplaces, that typically require collaborative working and learning.

The engaged, interactive collaborative learning in AL and PBL aroused emotions that were different from those in the lecture-based or book-exam courses. Both learning methods also provided space for expression. At HSE, emotions are usually kept private, separate from classes. Unprecedented public expression of frustration and stress during a course, in turn, stimulated emotions in the instructors who had to manage both themselves and the participants, at least to some extent. The repeated necessity to interact and work in groups meant that many participants of both AL and PBL courses learnt new interpersonal skills, and management of emotions in the group—skills needed well beyond university.

The instructors and the participants in the AL and PBL courses gave positive evaluations of the courses, acknowledging that the learning process enabled them to cross boundaries between different subjects, use different study methods from in other courses, appreciate diversity and diverse points of view, integrate different theories, increase critical, deep, and independent thinking, and practise lifelong learning skills. Also the companies reported high satisfaction with the outcomes of the courses. Both methods clearly contribute to HSE's stated aspirations to develop new practical knowledge and skills needed in the community.

Resources and Support

The HSE allowed the instructors the freedom to use AL and PBL methods, and the access to information technology provided support for communication on the content and the process of learning.

The university's business partnership programme did not readily provide teaching resources. The practical cooperation with business organizations for teaching purposes relied on the initiative and connections of the individual instructors and learners. The EMBA learners were able to provide this resource themselves, and identified the practical projects for action learning from their workplaces. The PBL instructors used their personal business networks to introduce speakers with living problems from Finnish businesses to the class.

The learners and the instructors of both courses would have benefited from support for handling feelings and emotions that emerged during the courses. PBL tutors and AL advisers do not need such well-honed lecturing skills, but must be able to handle enthusiasm and frustrations, mediate conflicts in groups, and be able to maintain their sense of professional and academic integrity even when they cannot answer all the students' questions. These sorts of skills can be developed, but are best sustained in a peer support group. Such peer support does not come easily in a business school where teaching is a private matter and secondary to research.

AL and PBL participants and instructors reported that the courses took more time than traditional courses at HSE, and a disproportionate amount of time without recognition. Although the courses were more labour intensive to administer and teach, the instructors were paid no extra, and in the financial accounts these courses look like any course taught with traditional methods. The expectation is for a course to require a student to work a set number of hours, and the course design and methods should be adjusted to the standard.

Despite both the courses being taught at HSE, they have somewhat different curricular settings. The M.Sc. and D.Sc. curricula provide a discipline-focused

education teaching relevant theories to inform disciplinary practice and decision making. Being an optional course, the PBL instructors reported spending time marketing their course to students with different majors and making deals with different departments to accept the PBL course credits in their programmes. In contrast, strategic management is compulsory in the EMBA curriculum which is more practically oriented by design, without any option for a disciplinary major. An integrative method like AL that is very practical fits reasonably well with the overall intent of the EMBA general management curriculum.

Overall, the participants' and instructors' comments help us see that resources and support for AL and PBL come from the institutional context, and also from the instructor's personal knowledge, skills, and networks, and the learners' readiness. Whilst all were required for both methods, the balance was somewhat different. The PBL course relied very heavily on the instructors' resources, whereas the AL relied on the participants' commitment to the project and their team and the sponsor's interest in the project.

Choosing Experiential Methods

Our case study has looked at the use of PBL and AL in a traditional business school that aspires to be more internationally competitive and involve students in modern teaching methods. We compared the use of PBL and AL because they were specifically mentioned in public documents referring to the desired improvements. We described how in our context, which we think is rather common, instructors have relative freedom to choose the teaching and learning methods they use, but limited practical support for experiential methods such as AL and PBL. The data generated was small scale and there were differences in the weighting and timing of the courses in the overall curriculum. The question of fit to topic areas is beyond the scope of this chapter, although it can be argued that the area of strategic management lends itself especially well to experiential methods. Additionally, we are well aware that the participants were given little choice about the use of these methods, and were not asked whether they prefer these methods to others. More case studies and more enquiries are needed, but this study contributes to establishing a discussion about the choice of experiential methods in management education.

Based on our case, we suggest key issues to consider when choosing an interactive, enquiry-based experiential and integrated method like AL or PBL at HSE or another comparable business school. Initially we began with a framework of three questions, respectively about the method orienting the learners to learning, the teaching and learning processes important in the method, and the material

and non-material support required. Our approach could be used for comparing any learning methods. Based on our reflections and consideration of data from instructors and participants, we see that considerations regarding resources and support are of concrete practical importance. The main considerations that have emerged in this study are university support, instructors' resources, and learners' readiness.

Although experiential methods at first may look very similar, there are important differences. Table 13.1 points out the important considerations when choosing between AL and PBL. Note that Table 13.1 does not pay attention to considerations that are common to AL and PBL (for example access to a wide range of theoretical resources, information literacy skills to identify and critically assess appropriate resources, university recognition of the instructor's time to support the process, to name a few). The considerations in Table 13.1 become meaningful only after the university has indicated that collaborative enquiry-based experiential learning

Table 13.1 Differences in AL and PBL considerations

Considerations	Choose AL when	Choose PBL when
University support	Demonstration of practical outcomes is valued.	Learning of explicit theories and understanding of their practical use is important.
Instructor's resources	Practical experience, management consulting experience may help. Means to recognize unmanageable project proposals quickly. Ability to flexibly allocate his or her own time to support the learning process. Good process facilitation skills to encourage and guide the projects.	Means to find a relevant messy problem area and also organize introduction of it for the class. Ability to arrange input about relevant theories. Skills to control the learning objectives and to facilitate the learning process. Preparedness to face unpredictability and not being able to have all the answers. Willingness to cope with struggle and frustration.
Learner's readiness	Ability to bring live workplace problems to class. Practical experience and some theoretical knowledge. Social and management skills to handle a project with a business organization. Listening and feedback skills for constructively challenging group members about action and its effects.	Interested in new learning challenges, and taking responsibility for their own learning. Not easily deterred by struggle and frustration. Team working skills or time to develop them.

methods are consistent with its goals, and a decision has been made to compare the fit of AL with the fit of PBL.

When the final choice of the adoption of learning method is left to the instructor, the choice is best made consciously. Where the institutional context privileges theoretical knowledge in disciplinary silos and teacher-centred inputs, an instructor choosing between experiential methods must consider to what extent they will be working against the norms, and what that will require from themselves and the learners. Our study illustrates that much is expected from the instructor, yet points to the differences between methods that may help an instructor to choose a method that can succeed in meeting the educational purpose and not set oneself up for insurmountable challenges. The abilities to identify the available choices, to make and follow through with choices, take responsibility for one's choices, and face the consequences of those choices, are as fundamental to successful teaching practice as they are to management practice.

Conclusion

Choosing experiential methods, like AL and PBL, means facing the challenge of working with complex problems and in unfamiliar groups of co-learners, as indicated both in the literature and in our experience. Our comparisons developed our awareness of the demands of experiential methods; for example, the importance of institutional emphasis on achievement of learning objectives rather than time served in classes, the need for instructors to be willing to work across and beyond disciplinary silos, and the significance of learners' responsibility for their own learning. Thus, the university, the instructors, and the learners all contribute elements that are necessary for a method to succeed.

In business schools, traditions are difficult to change. Support for a change and understanding of its intended purpose are needed from the entire organization. Overall, AL and PBL methods work most effectively when designed with an overview of the whole curriculum in mind. Thus, explicit plans and decisions regarding the use of experiential methods should be made and implemented, and their effects evaluated. The participating teachers need to have development plans, training, and encouragement, otherwise they will feel overburdened. And not only the faculty, but also the learners and the business organizations should be involved in the process of making methodological choices explicit. There is a need to orient the students effectively to these different methods, to prepare, train, and support them to learn effectively in teams, and to identify and fulfil their individual learning needs. Responding to such needs sends waves through the entire organization of the degree programme.

Note

We gratefully acknowledge Mari Simola's help in data collection and early discussions for this chapter.

References

Cavalle, C., de Leernyder, J. M., Verhaegen, P., and Nataf, J. G. (2003). 'Follow-up Review of the Helsinki School of Economics: An EQUIS Re-accreditation'. Helsinki: Edita Prima.

Christensen, C. R., and Hansen, A. J. (1987). *Teaching and the Case Method*. Boston: Harvard Business School.

DiMaggio, P. J. (1988). 'Interest and Agency in Institutional Theory', in L. B. Zucker (ed.), *Institutional Patterns and Organizations: Culture and Environment*. Cambridge, Mass.: Ballinger.

—— and Powell, W. W. (1991). 'Introduction', in P. J. DiMaggio and W. W. Powell (eds.), *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Duch, B. J., and Groh, S. E. (2001). 'Assessment Strategies in a Problem-Based Learning Course', in B. J. Duch, S. E. Groh, and E. D. Allen (eds.), *The Power of Problem-Based Learning*. Sterling, Va.: Stylus Publishing.

—— —— and Allen, E. D. (eds.) (2001). *The Power of Problem-Based Learning*. Sterling, Va.: Stylus Publishing.

Garud, R., Jain, S., and Kumaraswamy, A. (2002). 'Institutional Entrepreneurship in the Sponsorship of Common Technological Standards: The Case of Sun Microsystems and Java', *Academy of Management Journal*, 45/1: 196–214.

Herbert, A. (2002). *Paradoxes of Action Learning*. Helsinki: HSE Print.

HSE (2003). EQUIS Self Assessment Report.

HSE Strategies (2006). Accessed on 14 May 2006 at http://www.hse.fi/EN/abouthse/introduction/mission.

Kettunen, P., Carlsson, C., Hukka, M., Hyppänen, T., Lyytinen, K., Mehtälä, M., Rissanen, R., Suviranta, L., and Mustonen, K. (2003). *Suomalaista kilpailukykyä liiketoimintaosaamisella. Kauppatieteiden ja liiketalouden korkeakoulutuksen arviointi* (Finnish Competitiveness through Business Knowledge. Assessment of University Level Business Education). Helsinki: Edita (in Finnish).

King, S. (forthcoming). 'The Emotional Dimension of Radical Educational Change'. Ph.D. dissertation, University of South Australia.

Korpiaho, K. (2005). 'Student's Curriculum: What Do the Students Learn in the Business School?', in S. Gherardi and D. Nicolini (eds.), *The Passion for Learning and Knowing*. Trento: University of Trento.

Leppälä, K., and Päiviö, H. (2001). 'Kauppatieteiden opiskelijoiden moraalijärjestys: Narratiivinen tutkimus kolmen eri pääaineen opiskelusta Helsingin kauppakorkeakoulussa' (Moral Order of Business and Economics Students: Narrative Research about Studying Three Different Majors at Helsinki School of Economics). Helsinki School of Economics Masters Thesis B-34 (in Finnish).

McGill, I., and Beatty, L. (2001). *Action Learning: A Guide for Professional Management and Educational Development*, 2nd edn. London: Kogan Page.

Maguire, S., Hardy, C., and Lawrence, T. B. (2004). 'Institutional Entrepreneurship in Emerging Fields: HIV/AIDS Treatment Advocacy in Canada', *Academy of Management Journal*, 47/5: 657–79.

Marquardt, M. (1999). *Action Learning in Action*. Palo Alto, Calif.: Davies-Black Publishing.

Pedler, M. (ed.) (1997). *Action Learning in Practice*, 3rd edn. Aldershot: Gower.

Raelin, J. A., and Raelin, J. D. (2006). 'Development Action Learning: Toward Collaborative Change', *Action Learning: Research and Practice*, 3/1: 45–67.

Revans, R. (1983). *The ABC of Action Learning*. Bromley: Cartwell-Bratt.

—— (1985). *Action Learning: Its Origins and Nature*. Aldershot: Gower.

Savin-Baden, M. (2000). *Problem-Based Learning in Higher Education: Untold Stories*. Buckingham: Society for Research into Higher Education and Open University Press.

Schmidt, H. G. (1993). 'Foundations of Problem-Based Learning: Some Explanatory Notes', *Medical Education*, 27: 422–32.

Stinson, J., and Milter, R. (1996). 'Problem-Based Learning in Business Education: Curriculum Design and Implementation Issues', in *New Directions in Teaching and Learning in Higher Educatio*n. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Wood, D. F. (2003). 'ABC of Learning and Teaching in Medicine: Problem-Based Learning', *British Medical Journal*, 326: 328–30.

PART IV

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND SYSTEMS PSYCHODYNAMICS

This page intentionally left blank

CHAPTER 14

PICTURES FROM BELOW THE SURFACE OF THE UNIVERSITY

THE SOCIAL PHOTO-MATRIX AS A METHOD FOR UNDERSTANDING ORGANIZATIONS IN DEPTH

BURKARD SIEVERS

A university should, I believe, provide an experience of living as well as an opportunity for learning.

(Sloman 1964: 51)

> The university Business School is not a seat of learning and does not pretend to be. It is a factory run on Tayloristic principles of standardisation, measurement and control.
>
> (Höpfl 2005: 65)

> Thinking psychoanalytically means disturbing adjacent disciplines with a new method.
>
> (Figlio 1996: 22)

Introduction

The following is a first account and reflection on an experience with a 'Social Photo-Matrix' (SPM) as a method for experiential learning 'in the making'. I recently invited students from our department of economics and business administration at Bergische Universität Wuppertal in Germany to focus on the unconscious dynamics of the university by using photos. During this one-term event, students were asked to make their own photos of the university (with digital cameras) and to send them by e-mail to provide an 'archive' from which they would be selected and shown during a SPM. Since a majority of the fifteen students who attended this seminar had already taken previous ones, they were experienced with other approaches to experiential learning, for example Group Relations Conference, Organizational Role Analysis, and Social Dreaming.

Referring to my own lifelong experience with taking photos, I mentioned in the invitation that *making* pictures with a camera often allowed me to see 'things' with a different eye. Just as Magritte's picture *Ceci n'est pas une pipe* actually 'is' not a pipe—but 'just' a picture of a pipe—the students might have similar experiences that 'objects' in their pictures are not identical to 'objects in reality'. Like the experience of working with dreams in the context of Social Dreaming (Lawrence 1998, 1999a, 2003, 2005) and Bion's (1962/1967) notion of 'thoughts in search of a thinker', the work with photos might lead to the experience of 'photos in search of a photographer'.

From these first thoughts the following *working hypothesis* for this seminar was derived: the photos of the university taken by the participants would allow access to the 'unconsciousness of the university' to the extent that associating and amplifying the photos would allow the thinking of thoughts which had not been thought so far. The stated *aim* of the Social Photo-Matrix as an experiential learning method was to experience—through visualization (and subsequent associations, amplifications, and reflection)—the hidden meaning of what in an organization usually remains unseen and unnoticed.

In face of the almost endless amount of photos taken since the invention of photography and the innumerable photos one has seen (or even taken) during one's lifetime, one does soon recognize that what one is experiencing in a seemingly immediate individual experience of the world actually is mediated long since by schematism and clichés that are passed on by the mass media. Or, as Viola (2004: 265) put it, 'most of the pictures we encounter in everyday life are disposable articles'.

Stated differently, despite our often desperate longing to make photos and create pictures that are 'new' and an expression of our own creativity, more often than not our photos are actually 'replicas', in the sense that they capture something on film, paper, or chip that we already have seen in other photos taken either by others or ourselves. Such an insight may at first appear humiliating. It reaches a further, different meaning, however, if we bear in mind that, especially for fine arts, if not for art, science, and the humanities in general, progress 'does not mean anything else but increasing realization of the past' (Brock 2004: 323). The new in fine arts actually is a new view of the old and the familiar. In this sense, our photos of the university would certainly contribute to viewing and understanding what appeared to be familiar in a new, unfamiliar way.

The Social Photo-Matrix as a newly developed method for understanding organizations in depth has not least grown out of my experience with action research and group relations work over some decades. There are mainly three roots that had a particular major impact in imagining and conceptualizing this method: (1) an increasing awareness of the meaning of artefacts in organizational contexts, (2) the experience of working with drawings in the context of Organizational Role Analysis (for example Newton, Long, and Sievers 2006), and (3) Social Dreaming.

The actual design of the SPM sessions was quite similar to the one we used in a seminar on Social Dreaming: a one-hour SPM was followed by an hour of reflection and application of the thinking generated in the previous session to the university context and experience. The photos were projected on a screen. During both the SPM and the following reflection session, one of the students took minutes, which, together with copies of the photos from the last matrix, were sent to the participants before the next meeting in order to help us make links between sessions.

Some Associations from the Social Photo-Matrix

In retrospect, it seems that the six photos from the first SPM session and the very first picture in particular somehow set the tone for most of the following sessions. All photos of this session showed parts of buildings and were empty, sterile, mainly

frightening spaces. The very first picture showed a view through a glass door with a sign asking to keep it closed in order to prevent, in case of a fire, smoke extending into further parts of the building, opening up the view into an empty part of a hall in front of an elevator. Like most of the subsequent photos, it raised associations of prison, clinical laboratory, and psychiatric hospital and fantasies of persecution and annihilation:

'This is a zone of high danger. The atmosphere is precarious.' 'Maybe the students are already evacuated.' 'The wire grid in the door adds to the feeling of being imprisoned.' 'The picture reminds me of the movie "One flew over the cuckoo's nest" '—'or "The Cube" in which people were trying to escape.' 'The photo is mirroring two decisive dynamics: you have to take care of either not going mad or not getting an infection.' 'Smoke and fire alarm are the only security and safety devices the university does provide.'

The second picture showed part of an iron fence in the parking lot, which was erected in front of an area that was under construction:

'It's like the view from a prison cell.' 'The grid is re-painted again and again in order to let it appear bearable.' 'To cover up the blood and the escape attempts.' 'Is this the place where the women have been ambushed?' 'Corpses in iron cages.' 'Cages of the Anabaptists hanging at a tower of a church in the city of Münster.' 'The cage in the fairy tail of Hansel and Gretel where the witch is keeping the boy in captivity and controls whether he has gained weight.' 'Maybe this is the place where it will be decided whether one will be admitted for examinations after one has put one's test through the grid.'

The two last associations, in particular, indicate how, as Stein (2004: 27) described, 'the teaching and learning situation is frequently fraught with various anxieties. Students may worry a great deal about whether they will get through their course; they may feel inadequate when they struggle to understand new ideas and recall new information; and they may have all kinds of worries about whether they are really accepted by their teacher and their fellow students' (cf. French 1997; Salzberger-Wittenberg, Henry, and Osborne 1983).

Thoughts, Insights, and Learnings from the Reflection Sessions

The subsequent session provided space for reflection on the associations during the preceding first SPM. It raised the following thoughts:

'Taking photos is an unconscious process. There is a difference between what one wanted to catch and what actually has been caught.' 'It is interesting to notice that others have seen things differently to those I wanted to present.' 'The photos are almost always mirroring how ugly the building actually is.' 'They have simply chosen what was cheapest in the 1970s.'

'There are no spaces to linger.' 'It is like in a factory.' 'It well may be that the depression that is there is privatised. One does not have a choice. Why grumble? And thus it disappears.'—'Towards the end of the session we no longer talked about the photos. But a lot about the university.' 'Yes, and would we have been able to do so without the photos?'

As the frame of this chapter does not provide the space to go through all of the sessions to the same extent, what follows is a summary of the main issues and thoughts we were able to address: the experience and anxiety of being imprisoned raised the question to what extent the totalitarianism ascribed to the university and the buildings in particular were actually a projection of one's own inner totalitarian tendencies that usually do not become conscious. Referring to the fact that Bergische Universität is not a campus university but one with a high number of students commuting on a daily basis, the university was referred to as a *drive-in university*. In other associations it was a bunker from the Second World War, a factory, a Fata Morgana, a laying battery, or a wrapped mausoleum. As one participant put it: *This university was built for science—not for people!*

The fact that both students and members of staff quite often disappeared without a word (in the case of the former either as dropouts, changing to another university, or finishing their studies; the latter either due to new appointments at other places, retirement, or death) nurtured the fear of sharing a similar fate—of just disappearing from the book of life.

The lack of containment fuelled many associations throughout the various sessions. Contrary to the traditional symbol of a (German) university as *alma mater*, the big mother, many photos showed the lack of anything that could be perceived as motherliness. This reconfirms what Höpfl (2003: p. xvii) states, i.e. that 'without an image of the mother . . . the textual matrix becomes a mechanism for male reproduction and regulation'. Though women as professors are highly underrepresented in German universities in general and extremely so in our department, female professors were perceived as tough men lacking any capacity for support, sponsoring, or warmth. This is paralleled by the experience that being a student in our department means to perceive oneself and co-students as sexually neutral.

With its primary emphasis on the teaching of knowledge for future (business) careers, the department does not acknowledge and therefore cannot provide containment for the inner 'incompleteness' and immaturity of the students. Personal development and growth of students are considered at best as a private matter—while apparent imperfection and deficiency is at the same time met by faculty's contempt. The department apparently does not 'provide an experience of living as well as an opportunity for learning' (Sloman 1964: 51). 'It is a factory run on Tayloristic principles of standardisation, measurement and control' (Höpfl 2005: 65).

That none of the pictures actually showed one of the professors also confirmed the above impression and reinforced the idea that *there is no relatedness between students and professors*. Members of staff are perceived as depreciating

their teaching assignments. That they are not supposed to take students seriously and are contemptuous is paralleled by the fact that students often carry contempt both towards their professors and the content of study presented in their teaching.

Taking the role of a student more often than not may be a painful process. The extent to which students' ego ideal might be shattered was expressed by one participant: *When I first went to university, I felt free like a bird—but had to realize at the beginning day-in, day-out that I could not fly.* The first part of this contribution nicely catches in everyday language what for example Schwartz (1993: 194) describes as the function of the ego ideal in a more abstract way: 'The ego ideal pictures us as perfectly at home in the world, without anxiety, sure of ourselves, certain of the validity of our behaviour, without doubt or marginality.' While the predominance of the ego ideal, nurtured by (the fantasy of) love, is related to the mother, it is quite obvious that a university 'under the psychology of the ego ideal . . . functions . . . as a maternal imago' (ibid. 202). 'Within the psychology of the superego, the university is an arena of competition for respect based on achievement. Here the university functions as a father, who prepares students to achieve something in the world' (ibid.).

As students experience a high degree of anonymity, lack of identification with the university or a department, and loneliness, they are very much the singleton as described by Pierre Turquet (1975). As if they are saying: *All we have in common is to feel lonely!*—or: *the knowledge that the other one is equally just learning on his or her own. As everyone is a lone wolf amongst strangers all we have in common is this consciousness and experience—which itself has to be privatized and turned into 'private misery'*. And as others cannot be made out nor be related to, it is not too much of a surprise that the enormous threat students experience is but anonymous too.

This was further confirmed by the fact that there were extremely few photos showing people. This raised the question of what it might elucidate about us, the photographers. The fact that only one photo explicitly showed 'nature', i.e. a tree on top of a hill, led to the remark that the university apparently had a way of viewing (and thinking) in which living objects were either not well regarded or even useless. Students were timid about taking pictures of their co-students and felt ashamed to make 'real life' pictures of working and learning people.

As the work with photos in the SPM progressed from session to session, the photos gained another meaning: they were increasingly seen as means for new ways of thinking about the university: *We are just thinking the university through the pictures.—The photos actually are not what we are interested in, what really counts is disclosing our inner pictures.—There is no room in traditional science (and the humanities) for this kind of work and for free associations in particular.*

The Photo-Matrix allows speaking out what cannot be expressed officially. There is also an acknowledgement that the thinking initiated by the SPM creates awareness

for those processes and connections that are not supposed to become known or obvious. This work is seen as giving access to the university's (and department's) shadow.

The Social Photo-Matrix as a Means of Experiential Learning and Management Education

The use of photos and photography in experiential learning for management education or organizational analysis is, as such, obviously not new. Warren (2002, 2005, 2006), for example, describes how she uses photos in her work with organizations. Whereas most approaches resemble that of an ethnographer or anthropologist insofar as they are based on the perception of an outside observer, SPM is a method of action research that uses the very eyes (hearts and minds) of organizational role holders. They have the direct experience with the organization and are the genuine source for giving meaning to the photos through free associations, amplifications, and reflection. While the photos of an external observer, researcher, or consultant can be a means of telling the client what the photographer sees at the very moment they are taken and/or a way of encouraging the client to find its own meaning, the photos in the SPM, so to say, speak for themselves and to those who 'collectively' have made them.

What follows is my effort to put what we attempted to accomplish with the SPM into a broader context and to reflect on the experience of this first SPM in order to derive further learning from it—for the participants of this SPM, the reader of this chapter, and not least for myself.

Underneath the Surface of the University

The first part of this chapter's title 'Pictures from below the Surface of the University' is derived from the title of Wim Wenders's (2001, 2004: 299) recent photo exhibition *Pictures from the Surface of the Earth.* Many of his photos are not only very fascinating, but are also an expression of what he stated in a presentation relating to his work as film director some ten years earlier: 'My dreams and my nightmares are not only part of my life as "Artist", if you want so, they equally are part of my daily life as man, just like for everyone of you too' (Wenders 1992b: 94).

Even though dreams are not the immediate focus of this experiential method, there was sufficient evidence during this seminar that many of the photos had a dreamlike quality. Many appeared as nightmares that either had been

ignored or had been too private to be addressed openly as a constituent part of what it means to hold a role in the university and the department in particular.

Instead of reviewing the 'theory of photography' for how various authors have conceptualized the 'function' and meaning of photography and its relatedness to the unconscious, I would like to confine myself, on this occasion, to some thoughts of Roland Barthes, Wilfred Wiegand, and Wim Wenders.

Though in our daily experience we tend to take what we see as an expression of reality—often a reality in the present even though we know all too well that every photo is a picture from the past—every photo actually is 'but' an image of what we are accustomed to perceiving as reality. Not only is what we 'see' in a photo seldom the same as what the photographer had intended to show when she or he took it, it also often differs from what others see. 'The PHOTO . . . cannot say what it shows' (Barthes 1980/1985: 111). In a sense, photos are like metaphors and dreams. They give access to a variety of social meaning. For Barthes (ibid. 17, cf. 22 f., 102 f., 108) photos—and portraits in particular—always have the uncanny hint of 'the return of the dead'—of a death that either has occurred in the past or will occur in the future. This may have a double meaning: It literally can refer to the object(s) of a photo as well as to the photographer who is either already dead or has changed significantly since the photo was taken. But 'the return of the dead' can also be related to the death of one's own remembrance, to the displacement of previous experience, thoughts, and emotions that once had been related to the object(s) shown on a photo.

Taking—or actually making—a photo may, from this perspective, mainly be seen as a defence against mortality, both on the side of the object and the photographer. Even though photographers (like their objects) disappear and ultimately die, through their photos they gain at least a temporary immortality insofar as they mostly survive the actual moment the photograph has been taken. Wiegand (1981, as quoted in Molderings 2005) observed: 'It is not fantasy which is the uppermost instance in the creative process of the photographer, but remembrance.' Remembrance since Freud 'is not only a supplier of raw materials of phantasy but its sister of equal rank, chained to the unconscious like the former' (ibid.). A photographic image, according to Wiegand, must represent beauty in order to serve as remembrance. To the extent that amateur photos more often than not are actually remembrances of other photos they are mere remembrances of remembrances (ibid.) and thus mainly lack the unconscious content and quality related to the original object.

Wiegand's emphasis on remembrance as the uppermost instance of the creative process is reminiscent of what Wenders (1992a: 24) stated about his film work: 'One cannot invent what has not been in oneself before.' Applying these thoughts to the photos of our SPM, it occurs to me that—despite the fact that they primarily show ugly, nasty, and uncanny parts of the university buildings—most of them were

captivating in their beauty. In mirroring their own 'poetry of images' (Gombrich 1972: 94), they brought back participants' remembrances of their role as student, in particular, and most likely of earlier roles as well. The making of photos thus can be seen as taking place in a potential or transitional space (Winnicott 1967, 1971), a space between the 'inner' world of the photographer and the 'outer' one of the 'object' which mainly unconsciously catches not only 'a picture' but, above all, the remembrance of earlier experience.

As already mentioned in the above sketch of the SPM, the vast majority of photos did not show people as objects but artefacts. Though we usually tend to regard artefacts as part of the non-human world and environment, the work with these photos frequently gave convincing evidence that the normal differentiation between the human and non-human world was not valid.

The American psychoanalyst Searles (1960) was the first who questioned taking for granted this differentiation between the human and non-human environment and showed that the latter actually 'constitutes one of the most basically important ingredients of human psychological existence' (ibid. 6). Though Searles mainly focuses on the individual and does not explicitly refer to the non-human world of organizations, his thoughts on the meaning and function of the non-human environment for our culture are significant in the present context. As members of our culture, we 'tend to *project* the "nonhuman" part of the self and perceive it as a nonhuman thing which threatens the conscious self with destruction; it is too threatening to let oneself recognize the extent to which the nonhuman environment has, as it were, already invaded and become *part* of one's own personality' (ibid. 397).

The psychic and social implications of our relatedness to the non-human environment and 'things' or artefacts in particular have, since Searles's pioneering work, received increasing attention in the social sciences and in psychoanalysis, in particular (for example Habermas 1999; Heubach 1996; Guderian 2004; Jüngst 2002; Lütkehaus 2002; Selle 1997). Some of these authors explicitly emphasize its relevance and meaning for the context of organizations (for example Beumer 1998, 2005; Gagliardi 1990; Mersky 2005; Warren 2002, 2005, 2006). As Beumer (1998, 2005) indicates, artefacts always have a double function, an instrumental one referring to their potential use as 'tools' and an expressive one related to emotions, memories, former or present owners, etc. They have an important impact on the unconscious relatedness between people and organizations and provide at the same time unique possibilities and doorway for understanding their reciprocal exchange processes, awaken and stimulate pre- and unconsciousness, and at the same time represent or dispose of individually and socially unconscious material. The use and representation of artefacts in organizations are potential means both for providing containment, integration, and development for organizational members as well as for their colonization, exploitation, and subjugation (cf. Mersky 2005).

The SPM Offers New Awareness and Experience of the Social

In a similar way as the Social Dreaming Matrix questions the predominant assumption that dreams are the property of an individual and are to be interpreted respectively, the SPM is based on the assumption that a photo is not owned by the photographer. It became obvious that photographers in the context of the SPM are making different kinds of photos from those published in an official university brochure. What is characteristic for dreams, i.e. that they are always related to the *context* of the dreamer, is equally valid for photos. In the case of this SPM it was obvious that the photos were explicitly made to throw light on the participants' 'working place', i.e. the university and the department in particular. They were part of a collective venture to grasp at the hidden meaning of one's quotidian and long-standing experience with an organization of which one is a member.

While the university as the 'object of investigation' was the foreground, the particular photographer was in the background; it usually was not even asked who had taken a certain photo. The photographers somehow were all interchangeable. One student expressed this: *Even though I actually didn't, I myself easily could have made many of the pictures we have seen.* The SPM experience is suggestive of what Viola (2004: 275), the video artist, describes in relation to his own work. Once he had been able to give up what he had learned at the art academy, i.e. that pictures and ideas are the private property of an individual, his 'studio became a social space of work in common'. For the participants in this seminar, the experience of the photos as something 'social' and something they had in common apparently was quite a rare if not a totally new phenomenon in the context of the university; an experience of 'we-identity' as opposed to 'I-identity' as Norbert Elias (1987), the sociologist, puts it.

I invited participants to a Social Photo-*Matrix*—and not to a 'group'—based on my experience with Social Dreaming. Unlike a group, which is often preoccupied with the maintenance of its identity, rivalry about power and reputation, and, particularly with a work group in an organization, pursuing its task,

> the matrix, on the other hand, is a collection of minds opening and being available for dwelling in possibility. It demands a different kind of leadership—one inspired by the recognition of the infinite, of not-knowing, of being in doubt and uncertainty, as opposed to knowing and repeating banal facts. (Lawrence 2005: 40)

A 'matrix is also to experience a democratic environment' not least because of the fact that 'free association means saying what comes to mind; it is not subject to rational control' (ibid. 38). While a group often tends to be dominated by tyrannical dynamics or individuals, in a matrix everyone can feel free to associate without a need for agreement or the obligation to reach a predominant opinion.

The SPM thus did not only give space for a variety of new thoughts and thinking about the university, it also provided an experience of learning quite different from

the traditional rational and cognitive way of learning in a university. While the latter is mainly based on a 'transmission' of knowledge and theories accumulated by individual scientists (scholars or 'common sense') into the 'brains' of students as individuals, the SPM fosters a kind of action research learning that emphasizes thinking on the basis of not-knowing, of being in doubt and uncertainty, and thus of being available for new thoughts that have not been thought before—either by the participants themselves or by thinkers in general.

As with Elias's (1987) 'we-identity', these thoughts are the result of a kind of 'we-thinking' that is quite contrary for example to the Cartesian axiom '*I* think, therefore *I* am'. Often enough the thinking in the SPM revealed part of the 'unthought known' (Bollas 1987, 1989) of the university and its role holders, i.e. that which 'is known at some level but has never been thought or put into words, and so is not available for further thinking' (Lawrence 1999b: 6). In analogy to Bollas's unthought known, the SPM provides opportunities to make an organization's 'unseen visible' noticeable and available for further thinking.

The thinking in the SPM was, in addition to the unthought known, also to a major extent related to the uncanny and the organizational shadow. There were actually several explicit references to the uncanny in both the SPM and the reflection sessions. As one student stated, 'While it may be the "job" of dreams to get in contact with the tragic, the "job" of photos may be to get in contact with the uncanny.' Freud (1919) circumscribes the uncanny as 'that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar'. The SPM made obvious that not only movies (for example Arnzen 1997) but photos in particular have a high affinity for the uncanny. It also demonstrated what Vidler (1994) describes in his book *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely*. If it is true that to the extent that the experience of dread can be allowed, 'the uncanny announces the destruction of the canny, the removal of the familiar' (Pfreundschuh 2003), this seminar may be said to have destroyed much of what had been taken for granted about the university in order to allow new ways of seeing and thinking.

Most of what we explored would, from a Jungian perspective, be part of the realm of the organizational shadow (Denhardt 1981; Bowles 1991; Sievers 1999a). The organizational shadow refers to those parts which organizations wish to deny about themselves, due to the threat posed to self-image and self-understanding and, more generally, the need to be viewed in a favourable light by others. The shadow is repressed, and, as unconscious content, projected onto others, often onto those who are incapable of resisting it. All organizations possess a shadow, and its intensity will be unknown until confronted. As long as the organization shadow is not confronted, it can be assumed that an organizational psyche is at war with itself. The experience with this SPM suggests that a prominent way this university deals with its shadow is to cast it on its students.

The SPM Allows Access to Some of the Anxieties (and Defences) that Are Part of the Organizational Psychodynamic

From a Kleinian and Bionic point of view it can be assumed that both the photos and the setting of the SPM provide some kind of container for the process of transformation of 'mental raw material' into thinking and thoughts (Bion 1970). As the threatening, paranoid, annihilating, persecuting, and despairing fantasies in the various SPM sessions can be seen as expressions of the psychotic part of the organization (cf. Bion 1957/1967; Sievers 1999b, 2006), these containers provide a means of experiencing, reflecting, and digesting the psychotic dynamic as something that is induced by the organization. While getting in touch with the psychotic parts of the organization or its 'normal madness' stimulates feelings and emotions such as inadequacy, shame, rage, abandonment, and despair, the attempt to learn from this experience would, in the present context, be futile in the frame of individual psychopathology. As these experiences predominantly belong to the realm of the organization, they require a social way of working with them.

The SPM as a New Way of Seeing the University and Department

Though some of the new thinking which we were able to reveal in the SPM certainly may be unique insofar as it is related to this particular university and department, some of these thoughts may be of a more general relevance for contemporary universities in general and for business schools in particular.

The thinking during the SPM often referred to changes in the university that have occurred since its founding in the early 1970s. The buildings of Bergische Universität were erected as prefabricated constructions in order to reduce costs—but also with the side effect of creating a certain uniformity. Lecture rooms and staff office equipment and furniture are at least 'minimalist'; almost no rooms were included for formal or informal meetings or gatherings.

Quite in line with the vast majority of German universities, which are (federal) state universities, some 800 new students are enrolled in our department every year. As opposed to the Anglo-American system, students are not in certain class cohorts, but choose their lectures and seminars freely in accordance with a broad syllabus. As the number of students in a classroom varies from some 60 to 450, no space or effort seems to have been provided to build sentient boundaries. The more recent reorganization of Bergische Universität, guided by the primary aim of increasing efficiency while reducing costs, has sadly made traditional values, ideas, and visions obsolete. The new organization appears to be mainly driven by the

conviction that new wine requires new wineskins—or to reflect the present context, plastic containers (cf. Weiler 2004; Sievers 2005).

Many of the thoughts in the SPM and the subsequent reflection sessions reflected the disillusion felt by a majority of both students and faculty. They also indicated that studying in the same department of the same university is not really experienced as having something in common. Gaining new knowledge, new thoughts, and new insights is not seen as something that grows out of a common 'search and production process'—as in the matrix—but is predominantly seen to be transmitted and accumulated by books or computers. According to the underlying frame, knowledge thus has become a commodity—which sooner or later may turn universities into mere production centres or warehouses (cf. Chattopadhyay 2005; Long 2004: 11f.). Studying at the university with the intention of getting a degree is exclusively regarded as an individual matter. This mirrors 'a denial of the importance of the collective' (Long 2004: 103) and the broadly unconscious attitude described by Lawrence, Bain, and Gould (1996) as basic assumption 'me-ness'. The perception of oneself as self-made man (or woman) apparently seems to fit all too well into what broadly is assumed to be required for a successful management career.

The lack of a more substantial 'vision' can be understood as the lack of a primary task for both the university as a whole and its respective departments. Though learning from experience may not be part of the *primary* task of a university but rather a *secondary* one (Long 2004: 133), Habermas's (1971) warning three decades ago requires even more attention today. He pointed out 'the dangers of the university fulfilling only a part of its task—that is, the generation and transmission of technologically exploitable knowledge—and losing that part of the task that engaged students in genuine critical reflection' (Long 2004: 119). Not knowing that one actually does not know what the task of the university is, is not only a defence against experience—and thinking—but ultimately leads to the result that hatred of experience and thinking will be regarded as normal because this hatred is understood as an indispensable prerequisite both for scientific learning and research and both for making a management career.

Participants realized that, unlike what they experience in their roles as students at the university, the experience of the SPM made them a 'partner in participating in the task of the system' (Chattopadhyay 2005: 1). As long as faculty and students predominantly perceive a university, as a production line, the experience of being partners in the common attempt of creating new knowledge through new thinking may only survive in certain niches. A primary task for the university, as, for example, suggested by Chattopadhyay, would certainly foster further initiatives for experiential learning. As he articulates 'the primary task of an educational institution is engaging in activities that will create new knowledge, which in its turn can be transformed into wisdom by those engaged in the task. This would be a valid task for both students and teachers' (ibid.).

The experiential learning of the SPM is in major contrast to what Hoggett (1992) calls 'cultural autism' 'in which objects are emptied of their symbolic content and so lose their capacity to contain meaning' (Newton 1999: 161). The SPM is apparently a possible way to perceive a whole variety of symbolic content in our non-human environment and organizational artefacts and encourages through new thinking and thoughts the possibilities of finding existing meaning as well as finding new meaning.

It apparently has been of great advantage that a majority of participants in this first SPM already had experience with various other methods of experiential learning aimed at understanding organizations in depth. Despite all the difficulties we had in attempting to contain and digest the emotions, feelings, and fantasies during the process of this action research project, I hope we all developed a certain passion for this kind of work.

Note

For W. Gordon Lawrence who has introduced me to this kind of thinking. This chapter could not have been written without the work and thinking of those who took part in the Social Photo-Matrix during the winter term 2004/5. I am very grateful to them and also want to thank Arndt Ahlers-Niemann, Gilles Arnaud, Alastair Bain, Larry Gould, Larry Hirschhorn, Rose Mersky, Gerard van Reekum, Russ Vince, and Simon Western for their help in writing this chapter.

References

Arnzen, M. (1997). 'The Return of the Uncanny', *Paradoxa*, 3: 3–4, http://paradoxa.com/excerpts/3–3intro.htm.

Barthes, R. (1980/1985). *Die helle Kammer. Bemerkungen zur Photographie*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.

Beumer, U. (1998). ' "Schläft ein Lied in allen Dingen . . . ". Dingliche Objekte und räumliche Szenarien in der psychoanalytischen Organisationssupervision', *Freie Assoziation*, 1: 277–303.

—— (2005). 'Symbols and Artifacts in Organisational Life' Symbole und dingliche Objekte im Leben von Organisationen. Workshop presentation, Coesfeld, Germany, 15 Apr. 2005—MS.

Bion, W. R. (1957/1967). 'Differentiation of the Psychotic from the Non-psychotic Personalities', *International Journal of Psycho-analysis*, 38: 266–75 (repr. in W. R. Bion, *Second Thoughts: Selected Papers on Psycho-analysis*. London: Heinemann, 1967).

—— (1962/1967). 'A Theory of Thinking', *International Journal of Psycho-analysis*, 43: 306–10 (repr. in W. R. Bion, *Second Thoughts: Selected Papers on Psycho-analysis.* London: Heinemann, 1967).

—— (1970). *Attention and Interpretation*. London: Tavistock.

Bollas, C. (1987). *The Shadow of the Object: Psychoanalysis of the Unthought Known*. London: Free Associations Books.
—— (1989). *Forces of Destiny*. London: Free Associations Books.
Bowles, M. L. (1991). 'The Organization Shadow', *Organization Studies*, 12: 387–404.
Brock, B. (1986). *Ästhetik gegen erzwungene Unmittelbarkeit. Die Gottsucherbande. Schriften 1978–1986*. Cologne: DuMont.
—— (2004). ' "Quid Tum". Was folgt aus dem Iconic Turn?' in C. Maar and H. Burda (eds.), *Iconic Turn. Die neue Macht der Bilder*. Cologne: DuMont.
Chattopadhyay, G. P. (2005). 'Effectiveness as Manager Depending on Managing Self in Role'. MS, Institute of Management Development and Research (Pune) Convocation Address 15 Feb.
Denhardt, R. D. (1981). *In the Shadow of Organization*. Lawrence: Regents Press of Kansas.
Elias, N. (1987). 'Wandlungen der Wir–Ich-Balance', in *Die Gesellschaft der Individuen*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
Figlio, K. (1996). 'Thinking Psychoanalytically in the University,' in M. Stanton and D. Reason (eds.), *Teaching Transference: On the Foundation of Psychoanalytic Studies.* London: Rebus Press.
French, R. (1997). 'The Teacher as Container of Anxiety: Psychoanalysis and the Role of the Teacher', *Journal of Management Education*, 21/4: 483–95.
Freud, S. (1919). *The Uncanny*, ed. James Strochey et al., Standard Edn. xvii. London: Hogarth Press.
Gagliardi, P. (ed.) (1990). *Symbols and Artefacts: Views of the Corporate Landscape*. Berlin: de Gruyter.
Gombrich, E. H. (1972). 'The Visual Image', *Scientific American*, 227/3: 82–96.
Guderian, C. (2004). *Die Couch in der Psychoanalyse. Geschichte und Gegenwart von Raum und Setting.* Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.
Habermas, J. (1971). *Toward a Rational Society*. London: Heinemann.
Habermas, T. (1999). *Geliebte Objekte. Symbole und Instrumente der Identitätsbildung*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.
Heubach, F. W. (1996). *Das bedingte Leben. Entwurf zu einer Theorie der psycho-logischen Gegenständlichkeit der Dinge. Ein Beitrag zur Psychologie des Alltags*. Munich: Fink.
Hoggett, P. (1992). 'A Place for Experience: A Psychoanalytic Perspective on Boundary, Identity, and Culture', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 10: 345–56.
Höpfl, H. (2003). 'Introduction', in H. Höpfl and M. Kostera (eds.), *Interpreting the Maternal Organisation*. London: Routledge.
—— (2005). 'Indifference', in C. Jones and D. O'Doherty (eds.), *Manifestos for the Business School of Tomorrow*. Åbo: Dvalin Books.
Jüngst, P. (2002). *Territorialität und Psychodynamik. Eine Einführung in die Psychogeographie*. Gießen: Psychosozial-Verlag.
Lawrence, W. G. (ed.) (1998). *Social Dreaming @ Work*. London: Karnac.
—— (1999a). 'The Contribution of Social Dreaming to Socio-analysis', *Socio-analysis*, 1/1: 18–33.
—— (1999b). 'Thinking Refracted in Organisations: The Finite and the Infinite/the Conscious and the Unconscious'. Presentation at the 1999 Symposium International Society for the Psychoanalytic Study of Organizations, Toronto (pub. as: 'Thinking Refracted', in W. G. Lawrence, *Tongued with Fire: Groups in Experience*. London: Karnac, 2000).
—— (ed.) (2003). *Experiences in Social Dreaming*. London: Karnac.

Lawrence, W. G. (ed.) (2005). *Introduction to Social Dreaming: Transforming Thinking*. London: Karnac.

—— Bain, A., and Gould, L. (1996). 'The Fifth Basic Assumption', *Free Associations*, 6, 1/37: 28–55.

Long, S. (2004). 'Building an Institution for Experiential Learning', in L. J. Gould, L. F. Stapley, and M. Stein, *Experiential Learning in Organizations: Applications of the Tavistock Group Relations Approach.* London: Karnac.

Lütkehaus, L. (2002). *Unterwegs zu einer Dingspsychologie. Für einen Paradigmenwechsel in der Psychologie*. Gießen: Psychosozial-Verlag.

Mersky, R. Redding (2005). 'Lost in Transition: A Psychoanalytic Exploration of Object Attachment in Today's Post-modern Organizations'. Paper presented at the 2005 Baltimore Symposium: 'New Psychoanalytic Responses in our Work with Organizations and Society', International Society for the Psychoanalytic Study of Organizations.

Molderings, H. (2005). 'Gefundene Schönheit des Augenblicks. Dem Klassischen auf der Spur: Wilfred Wiegand, Sammler, Kritiker und Interpret der Fotografie', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Dec. 24/300: 40.

Newton, J. F. (1999). 'Clinging to the MBA "Syndicate": Shallowness and Second Skin Functioning in Management Education', *Socio-analysis*, 1: 152–75.

—— Long, S., and Sievers, B. (eds.) (2005). *Coaching in Depth: The Organizational Role Analysis Approach.* London: Karnac.

Pfreundschuh, W. (2003). 'Das Unheimliche', in W. Pfreundschuh (ed.), *Kulturkritisches Lexikon*, http://kulturkritik.net/Begriffe/u.html.

Salzberger-Wittenberg, I., Henry, G., and Osborne, E. (1983). *The Emotional Experience of Learning and Teaching.* London: Routledge.

Schwartz, H. (1993). 'Narcissistic Emotion and University Administration: An Analysis of "Political Correctness",' in S. Fineman (ed.), *Emotion in Organizations*. London: Sage.

Searles, H. F. (1960). *The Nonhuman Environment in Normal Development and in Schizophrenia.* Madison, Conn.: International Universities Press.

Selle, G. (1997). *Siebensachen. Ein Buch über die Dinge*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus.

Sievers, B. (1999a). 'The Organization Shadow'. Workshop MS.

—— (1999b). ' "Psychotic Organization" as a Metaphoric Frame for the Socio-analysis of Organizational and Interorganizational Dynamics', *Administration and Society*, 31/5, Nov.: 588–615.

—— (2005). ' "It is new, and it has to be done!" Socio-analytic Thoughts on Betrayal and Cynicism in Organizational Transformation'. Paper presented at the 2005 Baltimore Symposium: 'New Psychoanalytic Responses in our Work with Organizations and Society', International Society for the Psychoanalytic Study of Organizations; *Culture & Organization* (forthcoming 2007).

—— (2006). 'Psychotic Organization: A Socio-analytic Perspective', *ephemera*, 6/2: 104–20, http://www.ephemeraweb.org/journal/6-2/6-2sievers.pdf.

Sloman, A. E. (1964). *A University in the Making*. London: British Broadcasting Corporation.

Stein, M. (2004). 'Theories of Experiential Learning and the Unconscious', in L. J. Gould, L. F. Stapley, and M. Stein, *Experiential Learning in Organizations: Applications of the Tavistock Group Relations Approach*. London: Karnac.

Turquet, P. M. (1975). 'Threats to Identity in the Large Group', in L. Kreeger (ed.), *The Large Group: Therapy and Dynamics*. London: Constable.

Vidler, A. (1994). *The Architectural Uncanny: Essays in the Modern Unhomely.* Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Viola, W. (2004). 'Das Bild in mir: Videokunst offenbart die Welt des Verborgenen', in C. Maar and H. Burda (eds.), *Iconic Turn. Die neue Macht der Bilder*. Cologne: DuMont.

Warren, S. (2002). ' "Show me how it feels to work here": Using Photography to Research Organizational Aesthetics', *ephemera*, 2/3: 224–45, http://www.ephemeraweb.org.

—— (2005). 'Photography and Voice in Critical Qualitative Management Research', *Accounting, Auditing and Accountability Journal*, 18/6: 861–82.

—— (2006). 'Hot Nesting? A Visual Exploration of Personalised Workspaces in a "Hot-Desk" Office Environment', in P. Case, S. Lilley, and T. Owens (eds.), *The Speed of Organization.* Copenhagen: Copenhagen Business School Press (forthcoming).

Weiler, H. N. (2004). 'Neuer Wein braucht neue Schläuche. Organisationsformen und-reformen im deutschen Hochschulwesen'. Keynote anlässlich des Symposiums zum zehn-jährigen Bestehen des Centrums für Hochschulentwicklung (CHE) in Berlin, 29 Apr. 2004, http://www.stanford.edu/~weiler/Vortrag_CHE.pdf.

Wenders, W. (1992a). 'The Act of Seeing', in *The Act of Seeing. Texte und Gespräche*. Frankfurt am Main: Verlag der Autoren (Eng. trans. W. Wenders and M. Hofmann, *The Act of Seeing: Essays and Conversations*. London: Faber & Faber, 1997).

—— (1992b). 'High Definition', in *The Act of Seeing. Texte und Gespräche*. Frankfurt am Main: Verlag der Autoren.

—— (2001). *Bilder von der Oberfläche der Erde. Photographien von Wim Wenders*. Munich: Schirmer/Mosel.

—— (2004). 'Auf der Suche nach Bildern. Orte sind meine stärksten Bildgeber', in C. Maar and H. Burda (eds.), *Iconic Turn. Die neue Macht der Bilder*. Cologne: DuMont.

Wiegand, W. (1981). 'Was ist Photographie?', in *Die Wahrheit der Photographie. Klassische Bekenntnisse zu einer neuen Kunst.* Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer.

Winnicott, D. W. (1967). 'The Location of Cultural Experience', *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 48: 368–72 (repr. in *Playing and Reality*. London: Tavistock/Routledge, 1971).

—— (1971). 'The Place Where We Live', in *Playing and Reality*. London: Tavistock/Routledge.

CHAPTER 15

Becoming Better Consultants through Varieties of Experiential Learning

JEAN E. NEUMANN

Organizational consultants help their clients understand difficulties, address problems, and anticipate challenges by applying social science theory and methodology. Depending on their consultancy domain and requests brought by their typical clients practitioners evolve approaches that work sufficiently to enable continued practice (Neumann 2004). At some point in their careers, most consultants experience frustration and dissatisfaction with the state of their own consultancy. When this happens, they might turn to education for help.

Educational design for the professional development of organizational consultants needs both to reflect the nature of consultancy work in general and to exemplify the characteristics of an organizationally oriented consultancy in particular. Expressed concisely, consultants relate theory to practice in ways that make clients feel motivated and enabled. They help clients to connect suggested models and practical reasoning with experienced difficulties and challenges. Organizationally oriented consultants, by definition, do so with an implied concern for the

complicated social, political, emotional, and relational issues that affect progress on enterprise goals.

Since 1993, the Tavistock Institute in London has offered professional development for practising consultants, entitled the Advanced Organizational Consultation (AOC) programme. Faculty have used experiential learning methodologies from the beginning, embedding different varieties throughout the educational design. Experiential learning brings 'real life' consultancy work into the classroom, and serves as a basic strategy for teaching and learning about the dynamics of organizational analysis and intervention. Combined with theoretical inputs and analytical tasks, the AOC provides consultants with opportunities to reflect on experience in order to integrate theory and practice in a way that works for them and their clients. In 2001, the Institute undertook a process of validation for the AOC, adding the option of studying for a master's degree via City University, London, to the retained outcome of the Institute's qualification. Thus, AOC became subject to the legal processes and related bureaucratic procedures intended to ensure compatibility across British and European higher education. In 2006, a postgraduate diploma was added to the AOC offerings.

Education for Scholarly Practitioners

The Tavistock Institute accepts candidates to its Advanced Organizational Consultation (AOC) programme whose roles require their continuous improvement in group development, organizational change, or technological innovation. Participants come from a wide range of occupational backgrounds and current positions (Czerniawska 1999), for example: senior HR and training and development specialists; freelance organizational development consultants; managerial consultants from niche firms; change managers in public and private agencies; individual coaches and group process specialists from service sectors; and systems development personnel in medium to large commercial firms.

Designed for participants who are mature learners, AOC candidates enter with substantial experience related to at least one of the three main theoretical orientations emphasized in the programme: organizational theory, consultancy competence, and systems psychodynamic perspectives. During the time period covered by this part-time course, participants undertake self-generated projects that can be understood as 'organizational consultancy', 'change management', or 'social systems development'. These consultancy requirements underpin the formal course structure, which is made up of a twenty-four-month educational process combining seven residential modules, five application days, self-directed learning, and written assignments.

Both the Tavistock Institute's history and current preoccupations demonstrate commitment to practical theory drawn from across the social sciences. The AOC exemplifies this commitment. Publicity documents state explicitly: an advanced organizational consultant enacts a high degree of consultancy competence, integrated with a lively understanding of organizational theory and psychodynamic perspectives. 'Advanced' refers to a practical necessity for organizational consultants to undertake self-directed learning in relation to their consultancy activities with clients. A consultant committed to such action-related learning (Argyris, Putnam, and Smith 1985) can be understood as developing a 'scholarly practice'—one that works towards an integration of theory and practice in support of a consultant's domain and typical clients' agenda (Marrow 1984).

Experiential learning stands as an integral component of AOC strategy in educating for scholarly practice (Argyris and Schön 1974). Five varieties of experiential learning operate within the educational design. Each will be described in terms of how they are used educationally, the theories and intentions that inform their use, the broad arena of social science theory each addresses, and some indication of participants' and faculty reactions. The varieties are:

- Curriculum and module design;
- Experiential activities and reflection;
- Consultancy experience and reflection;
- Vicarious learning;
- Institutional reflexivity.

These varieties of experiential learning are complemented and contained by theory and reflection—two other integral components of AOC considered necessary for educating practising consultants. For all seven modules, faculty selects theory for input and recommends reading based on their judgement of relevance to organizational analysis and consultancy practice. By the second module, participants begin to swap their own articles and suggest useful reading to each other. Reflection processes are woven throughout every aspect of the AOC course. The purpose of such reflection is twofold: to learn from experience, generalizing from a particular instance to others, and to make explicit connections between theory and practical experience.

Variety One: Curriculum and Module Design

The AOC curriculum overall, and each residential module, has been designed according to experiential learning approaches rooted historically in the Tavistock Institute (Miller 1990) and NTL Institute (Benne et al. 1975). From the 1940s to the

1970s, both organizations developed experiential learning as innovative laboratory research about social-psychological dynamics of groups and organizations. The enquiry methodology evolved rapidly into strategies for normative, re-educative change (Chin and Benne 1976). The original developers aspired to education that involved participants simultaneously in cognitive understanding about social systems, while providing direct emotional and relational experience in 'here and now' dynamics to connect understanding with behaviour.

Within AOC, the overall content flow of the curriculum mirrors a normative process for professionally planned organizational development (Neumann 1997). Theory and practice corresponding to different sizes and complexity of social system ground detailed work on organizational analysis and intervention. The initial approach to programme planning came directly from adult education theory (Knowles 1970). Thus, educational designers pay close attention to the interests and needs of practitioners and their organizational clients. Faculty feel equal concern that participants develop as self-directed learners in order to be able to combine their consultancy careers with lifelong learning.

Faculty match the content of a module to the anticipated stage of development for a particular cohort. Some matches are obvious: beginning with a client matched to beginning the AOC programme; ending with a client matched to ending classroom time with AOC colleagues. Faculty intend to maximize the likelihood that theoretical inputs can be studied both cognitively and in the light of predicted 'here and now' experiences at residential modules. Thus, the second module addresses early in the AOC life cycle the content issues of diagnosing and intervening in small social systems—the size which most closely approximates the size of the AOC learning community. Similarly, a module on 'consulting to messes and impossible tasks' appears towards the end of participants' time together when they are likely to be experiencing some recurring frustrations with themselves, their progress, and their learning institution.

Other aspects of the combined approaches from the two institutes are not readily apparent to the uninitiated. Faculty use their accumulated knowledge of applied social science and adult learning theory in order to develop trust and enhance willingness to learn. For example, the systems model applied to experiential learning requires that participants are prepared for input into each module, have the time and space necessary to become engaged in the more challenging learning during the middle of the module, and then are gradually prepared for exiting the module (Rice 1965). Combining that orientation with progressive group development (Gibb 1978) emphasizes the need for participants to be included with each other before being challenged with learning likely to stir up competition and power struggles. Anticipating and responding to emerging moments of affection (positive, negative, and neutral) are part and parcel of normative, re-educative learning strategies (Schultz 1969). While these elements of the design demonstrate good educational practice with adult learners, they also enact practical theories that can make or

break an organizational intervention. The design models good practice supported by theoretical inputs and recommended reading.

Generally, both faculty and participants appreciate the flow of the overall curriculum and the designs for each module. Faculty find it possible to update and otherwise improve on the modules within the established patterns, as well as responding to the demands of university validation procedures. Participants regularly comment on the quality of the overall design. They speak about the degree of interconnection across the programme and how learning builds on preceding elements. This strength, however, makes changing the overall educational design difficult. Programme managers would like to open participation on modules to others outside of AOC; and, occasionally, AOC participants would like more flexibility about when they attend. The current curriculum and module design work against these options.

Variety Two: Experiential Activities and Reflection

Faculty choose a handful of topics around which they finalize module designs. Typically, learning opportunities include a theoretical input for each topic, with experiential or analytic activities, followed by structured reflection for all participants and faculty. Faculty ensure that each module incorporates all three AOC orientations—organizational theory, systems psychodynamics, and consultancy competence. Experiential exercises are used to keep the learning content and processes flowing between and within the three orientations. As teaching strategies, they are intended to stimulate different aspects of participants' intelligence (Gardner 1993).

Again, faculty use adult education methodology for selecting and incorporating specific experiential activities (Knowles, Holton, and Swanson 2005). Such exercises provide participants with a 'here and now' experience of the complexity inherent in a particular topic under consideration, However, these AOC experiential activities should not be confused with techniques that one might experience in basic human relations training (Pfeiffer and Jones 1986). While personal development of participants may result, the AOC focus is very much on professional competence. Therefore, the complexity under consideration refers to the social, political, emotional, and relational issues inherent in the practice of organizational consultancy.

Faculty have evolved the use of experiential exercises to illustrate critical management and organizational theories. As AOC faculty are required to practise as consultants themselves, they can select their own real life cases for simulations, role-plays, and case studies that enact pivotal moments. Multiple stakeholders,

plurality of opinions, diverse identities, and conflicts of interests (for example while negotiating a contract, understanding resistance to particular developments, deciding who to involve in an evaluation meeting)—these are a few of the normal, practical challenges that AOC participants need to 'take in'. This sort of experiential exercise can run between two to five sessions on the same day or spread over two days. Despite their cognitive understanding, participants usually amaze themselves with the speed and intensity with which they recreate political and psychological dynamics.

Other experiential exercises tend to be 'here and now' use of particular interventions (for example process consulting, intergroup relationship clearing processes), or partial simulations of longer-term interventions or those for larger systems (for example STS design of repetitive jobs, future search conference). While more analytical in nature, some exercises focus on applying scientific methodology to consultancy tasks (for example writing a working note, developing meaningful codes for qualitative data during diagnosis, and feeding back data to clients).

Experiential exercises are only used alongside corresponding opportunities for reflection. Shorter experiential exercises have at least one session of reflection, called a 'plenary distillation'. Longer simulations will have been timed to incorporate reflections that start with a plenary distillation, and then revisit the experience as needed via other mechanisms spread over subsequent days (for example consultation groups and module reviews). Participants are taught an explicit model for reflecting on experience in order to learn, and plenary distillations are used to practise the model, roughly based on discovery learning (Bruner 1977).

Generally, participants find the experiential activities useful and compelling. Moving from debriefing experiences to reflecting on the experience, however, can be difficult. Experiential learning captures deep feelings and reactions, and the time needed to distance from those 'here and now' feelings in order to analyse the experience varies. The mental ability to identify aspects of the experience, analyse them, and generalize comes hard to most participants. The preferred pull tends to be in the direction of asking for 'real life' details, justifying one's own behaviour, and confronting one's colleagues. Participants typically strain to turn the plenary distillations into small study groups or t-groups. They put energy into avoiding the collective experience, and thus actively resist learning how to work with the complexity of collective dynamics.

Faculty hold the boundary on the primary task of reflecting on the experience, linking it to the selected theory (wherein the collective cannot be avoided), and considering implications for practice. Basic assumption behaviour tends to be very strong during these sessions. Participants often ask theoretical questions, complain about the design, or make evaluative comments about faculty. It is not unusual for some to feel overstimulated and shut down. That said, this form of

experiential learning tends to stay with participants. The capability to learn from practice is crucial for the scholarly practitioner. All participants need to demonstrate 'good enough' proficiency by graduation. Faculty recognize that collective learning from experience, as a methodology for learning how to diagnose and intervene in collective dynamics, demands much from themselves and participants. Indeed, organizational consultancy makes the same demands on client and consultant.

Variety Three: Consultancy Experience and Reflection

Mechanisms are built into the AOC course structure—both during and between the modules—for reflecting on past and current consultancy practice. Faculty intend such reflection to assist participants in incorporating learning from modules, reading, and structured reflection into their practice with clients. During each module, a minimum of three consultation groups are set aside for individuals to work with colleagues and one member of faculty. Between modules, regional groups perform the same function but within a different timeframe. In the regional groups, participants often feel less prepared and messier in their practice: thus, the readiness to learn tends to be stronger, more immediate and the gap between meeting and application time shorter.

All participants must complete, during the time they are studying on AOC, one full cycle of planned development with an organizational client plus be well under way with a second project. Cases are plentiful for full-time internal and external consultants. Those working as change managers need to learn to conceptualize their practice in consultancy terms; those who are building up a new or different type of practice need to focus early on attracting suitable client systems.

Faculty assert that active engagement in the practice of organizational consultancy, from whatever occupational role the participant holds, develops and otherwise educates the consultant (Neumann 2004). Interacting with potential and actual organizational clients motivates the participant's felt need for self-directed learning. Consultancy processes teach the consultant as well as providing the client with assistance: attracting clients, negotiating entry into social systems, building relationships good enough for collaborating on an organizational issue, diagnosing and agreeing a plan of intervention for that issue, intervening with representatives of the client system, conducting a process of critique, reviewing with the client system and with one's professional colleagues.

Participants introduce for group reflection that which they 'want to work on' (for example a particular issue with an existing or potential case, the frustrations

and joys of work development, expressions of a mismatch between self and client systems). The ability to articulate the nature of such concerns, proficiency in the frameworks and conventions of applied social science, develops over time. Colleagues and faculty work with whatever the participant brings, relating to the individual as 'client' to their consultancy. Results might include: selection of promising theoretical models, suggestions for suitable intervention approaches, insights about political and psychological dynamics, clarification of the consultant's role, confrontation about 'blind spots' and collusions, and study of 'parallel processes' that emerge in the room related to the topic under consideration.

Participants can choose to offer the same consultancy site repeatedly (common for those working as change managers or internal consultants of large and medium-sized enterprises). Or, they use cases that speak to the topic of the module or bring a case for immediate action or pressing concern. All participants must choose one case to present for a full session to the entire learning community, which is also written up in a final case analysis. Those who are working for the master's degree will have selected an actual consultancy challenge or change management case around which they will shape their thesis. Additional written assignments are tied to topics within each module, and often call on case reflection as well.

Thus, the more emergent and informal reflection of the module-based and between module groups complements structured verbal and written reflection. The written reflection explicitly requires participants to select theory relevant to their practice. Faculty intend these requirements to assist participants in the formation of consultancy identity, and in asserting their consultancy domain. Their ability to report generalizations emerging for their consideration of practice in light of theory (and vice versa) meets course requirements while improving their ability to offer such learning for use to client systems.

Participants benefit greatly from consultation and application groups, gaining enough confidence to work without faculty involvement during the times when such groups are not scheduled. At least one regional group from each cohort has continued to meet on its own after graduation. Faculty benefits from closer work with individuals and observing participants as they consult with each other. Such information often improves the quality of feedback for professional development that faculty can offer individuals; such feedback itself takes place in these groups. As both faculty and membership of these groups change a few times throughout the programme, repetitive patterns can be worked with in different ways in different groups.

Reactions to written reflection, in the form of assessed assignments, get bad press all around. Both participants and faculty complain about the workload. Since requirements for written reflection have been increased, however, participants' capability to generalize from experience in a way that links practice and theory has improved noticeably.

Variety Four: Vicarious Learning

During the small groups designed for reflection on consultancy cases, identity formation, and practice development, AOC participants learn vicariously from their peers' practical concerns. Their inner worlds are stirred by listening to their colleagues' emotionally intense stories. Usually without conscious intent, they imagine themselves in one or more positions within or otherwise in relation to their colleague's story. Through established psychological mechanisms like identification and projective identification (Horwitz 1985), they discover themselves taking up roles in relation to their colleague. As they react and interact with their 'client' colleague, they both help and hinder their colleague's progress in working through their concerns. The others within the group are doing the same. Multiple levels of learning become possible in this context.

These dynamics mimic what happens when working with 'real life' organizational clients. Participants discover their own and their colleagues' ideological biases and unresolved feelings about status and power (for example being aggressive towards executives, treating the needs of front-line staff as irrelevant, ignoring internal HRM personnel). They grow irritated with overuse or avoidance of particular frameworks or methods in relation to typical clients (for example complaining about tenders without crafting an entry approach consistent with one's values, continually offering workshops as a solution without diagnosis for fear of being rejected by clients, over-structuring interventions without involving appropriate representatives of the client system).

Sometimes, the dynamics of these consultancy groups can be studied directly as 'parallel processes' for insights and understanding related to the particular case. Different faculty work with such processes differently and at different times with the same or different groups. These are not t-groups or small study groups, although issues of group formation and defensiveness against the primary task may need to be addressed at some points. Faculty model feedback processes targeted at professional development, and mostly avoid that which might be understood as personal or interpersonal feedback. Equally, they are not solely problem-solving groups although solving immediate problems for the participants' practical concerns emerges during the work and often afterwards in the corridors and over meals. The experience of the group concentrating together on the organizational issue becomes the 'medium' through which 'the message' is communicated.

Observing someone else learn as a substitute for having to go through it oneself takes place during other times in the AOC programme. Notably, the times when the entire learning community gathers for reflecting on the course become points when individuals feel compelled to speak. The space tends to be constructed as 'public' because faculty and participants are together. All participants are struggling with the choice to speak or not, and how they use the opportunity for self-reflection, for

study of 'here and now' dynamics, for disclosing excitement and confusion related to theory, for demonstrating learning and reading, for confronting norms with which they are dissatisfied. Despite explicit assistance from faculty, insights about how such struggles characterize client systems come slowly to some.

Participants often speak of the usefulness of learning from each other. They readily identify the consultation and application groups as places in which this happens. However, faculty would counter that projective identification, parallel processes, and the refusal to learn from each other rarely get mentioned. This does not mean that learning about enacted resistance does not take place; but that shame and envy militate against admitting it. Plenary distillations and collective review processes are fraught with the avoidance of being seen to learn openly from each other and faculty. Further, using others as substitutes for one's own learning has downsides that cannot be openly addressed. Even when faculty attempt to study how these dynamics might relate to organizational development and change, they often feel ignored or critiqued. Participants learn intimately that one cannot expect clients to embrace revelations about the downsides of their organizations, even if clients do learn and develop from such study.

Variety Five: Institutional Reflexivity

Processes of mutual reflexivity for all members of AOC as a learning community require participants and faculty to reflect on the dynamics between them and in relation to the Tavistock Institute, City University, and other aspects of their work and lives. Within hours of entering the first module of the AOC programme, participants are put into experiential activity that begins institutional reflexivity. Participants enact many preconceived and idealized notions about the people and processes they expect to encounter within professional development, university education, consultancy services, and client relationships.

Faculty understand that their and participants' judgements of AOC—and each other—begin earlier than the first module, and continue throughout the time, space, and tasks that constitute the total programme. Faculty persistently work to expand participants' notions of what 'being in the programme' and 'reforming their consultancy identity' means. This usually involves consulting with participants about how to manage their boundaries in such a way that their consultancy practice, their reading, their assignments, their attendance at modules and application days can be balanced with other demands and desires in their lives.

While this has always been a part of the experiential learning within AOC, the introduction of the master's degree has changed dramatically the institutional context for the course. Many stakeholders can be understood as invested in the AOC

programme: the Tavistock Institute, the participants' occupational context, the faculties' occupational context, organizational clients, publication outlets, personal and social relationships, competitors, the university, etc. Going from being solely informal professional development, wherein participants typically knew about and identified with the Tavistock Institute, to incorporating a formal educational credential seems to increase the 'victim' mentality of both faculty and participants.

Actively working through the political and psychological dynamics of the institutional context, as it is enacted and experienced and avoided within the programme, seems to be difficult. The study of authority dynamics, disclosure of social comparison, work with other social psychological mechanisms, and defences against learning—these and other aspects of institutional reflexivity are central to the experiential elements of the AOC programme. The perceived risk in engaging in this process, however, has always been difficult; with the MA element, it seems to feels impossible.

Thus, more formal mechanisms for institutional reflexivity have had to be introduced. Participants now design and conduct their own evaluation of the programme, sending their representative to the Institute's AOC Board of Studies. A record of the evaluation is then sent to the University's AOC Course Board. This formal process lays the groundwork for 'here and now' organizational change within the AOC programme itself. Reflecting on this experience of institutional reflexivity is still a new element of the programme. Intriguingly, some unreconstructed 'shoulds' about the people and processes within professional development, university education, consultancy services, and client relationships are resurfacing, having persisted unchallenged from the first module.

Experiential Learning Essential to Becoming Better Consultants

These types of experiential learning make a crucial contribution to educating AOC participants in organizational change and development. They become better consultants to the extent that they take up the role of learner: within the modules, in relation to their self-study and individual assignments, with their colleagues on small group assignments, and in relation to their active practice with organizational change and development. Regardless of their particular consultancy domain, the institutional environments in which they work present numerous opportunities and challenges to think about the application of social science theory and methodology to systems change. How they practise organizational change and development, and their role within that practice, varies depending on where they are located in relation to their organizational client: internal consultant, external consultant from

a firm, established within the sector, new to the sector, recognized as experienced, carving out a new patch, sole practitioner, etc. The variables that any one participant juggles to craft a better consultancy practice are numerous. It is possible, however, to identify patterns for how each type of experiential learning contributes to the education of consultants, their institutional contexts, and to organizational changes within the systems with which they work.

Curriculum and module design. Experiential learning underpins this approach for normative, re-educative change based on adult learning theory. Direct experience of 'here and now' dynamics, or reflection on 'there and then' experiences, help connect emotions and behaviours of self and others with cognitive understanding about social systems and how they change and develop. Within AOC, curriculum content mirrors prescriptive processes for planned organizational development and change. For example, entry and contracting is taught during the first module, ending with a client taught during the last. Modules match anticipated stages of individual and group development within the student body with specialized content. For example, diagnosis and intervention is introduced sequentially from small to larger to interorganizational systems, incorporating progressively more complex concepts and practices. These are timed as students' capability increases. Attention to trust, readiness to learn, and emotions pervade academic content.

In most institutions, rational-empirical and power-coercive approaches to change predominate. The need for normative, re-educative strategies might be neglected, mishandled, and discredited. Commercial pressures for rapid evidence of successful change and development can coexist with, and be contained alongside, a practical appreciation for the non-linear and less predictable reality of how people participate in their own processes of changing themselves and their organizations. AOC participants gain confidence in this contradictory social fact by having lived through it themselves, with their clients, and with their colleagues.

Experiential activities and reflection. The word 'experiential' defines this approach for relating theoretical inputs, experiential or analytic activities, and reflecting on both in order to generalize to other situations. The ability to reflect on experiences across many aspects of organizations requires concepts to articulate that reflection. Such an ability lays the groundwork for professionally applying social science theory and methodology to practice. Being able to work with others (for example one's clients and colleagues) as they reflect on experience to learn enhances an action research orientation to planned change. Within AOC, emphasis is placed on integrating organizational theory, systems psychodynamics, consultancy competence, and self-directed learning. Case simulations based on 'real life', practising interventions, using data analysis techniques, learning how to use disciplined reflection tools—all aid integration when combined with relevant theoretical inputs. Plenary distillations and module reviews provide additional opportunities to revisit that which confuses, catches one's attention, or otherwise niggles at the conscious mind. Differences between espoused theory and theory-in-action become apparent.

These issues are important to the institutional environments in which the students work. Norms about time, cost, and control tend to deny that organizational changes and developments present unique challenges and opportunities. Modern pressures embedded in social systems and institutional contexts need customized approaches flexibly evolving over time, space, and task. Understanding multiple levels within, across, and between social systems can be uncovered from the smallest to largest projects. An action research methodology begins with limits set early on by organizational leaders and evolves into something unique and customized as more organizational members become involved. Through this type of experiential learning, AOC participants grasp the idea that the best-laid plans go awry and that striving to know and take everything into account from the beginning is futile and not particularly desirable. The impact of multiple stakeholders, as well as new possibilities emerging as states of readiness develop, means that organizational change can—and perhaps should—be a movable feast.

Consultancy experience and reflection. Working with organizational clients provides the most compelling developmental experiences that consultants encounter. Reflecting on these experiences through the lens of theories, methodologies, and the eyes and ears of experienced colleagues and faculty brings insights and understanding that suggest different practical actions (and help work through feelings from the past). Within AOC, numerous opportunities for face-to-face reflection repeat throughout the programme: consultation groups, application groups, distillations, reviews, and case simulations. Written case analyses require the application of theory and methodologies to one's own experienced successes and failures.

Experiential learning of this type is of direct importance to the institutional environments in which the students work. Understandings from 'real life' examples—past, current, and potential—translate directly into changes in behaviour, actions, and recommendations to clients. Social systems and institutional contexts usually have a preferred approach to comprehensive change, including project management processes for incremental developments. Leaders enact such approaches regardless of repeated experiences with the downsides. Indeed, they often hire consultancy firms that cooperate with re-enacting their unsatisfactory approaches. Change agents, change managers, and consultants with exposure to a wide range of available theories and methodologies carry hope for something different to happen. The ability to combine and create interventions, working collaboratively with stakeholders through a planned cycle of change and development, has immediate impact. Short-term incremental projects as well as multiple, simultaneous initiatives benefit from consultants who reflect on their experiences and assist clients to do so.

Vicarious learning. Observing someone else learning as a substitute for having to go through it oneself provides opportunities to discover values and attitudes critical to consultancy practice. Participants sense biases and unresolved issues more easily in others than themselves, for example: that which might help or hinder a consultant's ability to include or work with groups with differential status

and power; difficulties with cases due to gaps in understanding or methodological ignorance; neglecting to take in concepts readily taken up by others; and, patterns of conflict and frustration that repeat across cases. Vicarious learning takes place when participants are present while colleagues and faculty present cases, disclose issues in forming their occupational identities, report on successes and trials with commercial and business issues.

Comparisons happen naturally between the institutional environment in which the students work and the ones apparent in their colleagues' stories. Institutional routines and industrial or sector cultures carry within them often unexamined and otherwise taken for granted assumptions about how change should happen. The nature and methodology of that change, who gets included and excluded, and the roles necessary to make the change successful (and whose fault it is if it fails) pre-exist in the organization prior to the start of new initiatives. Working while keeping an eye and ear open for such routines and cultures becomes possible for a consultant who has clarified their own domain and their own preferred learning and development processes for re-engaging hope and creativity. The more influence a consultant feels over domain—with its sector or types of sectors—the more desire and patience he or she may have for understanding and working with biases, attitudes, and assumptions that may be preventing effective organizational change and development.

Institutional reflexivity. This experiential element of educational design structures time and space for when faculty and participants reflect together. Focus combines dynamics between and amongst them, and in relation to the sponsoring organizations, the university, other aspects of their work and life, and consultancy as an industry. Participants internalize models for structuring conversations for 'working through' thoughts and feelings during development and change. At AOC, participants study authority relations between themselves and faculty, considering how similarities between themselves and clients might operate. The role of judgement gets concentrated treatment during a mid-programme module on 'evaluating organizational change', when participants design and implement an evaluation of AOC. Their representatives present the results to university and institute governance boards.

An argument could be made that understanding political and psychological dynamics within and across organizations, and between organizations and their environments, constitutes 'institutional environment'. This level of cognitive development—both in systems psychodynamic and organizational theory terms—is a unique value added for any consultancy. Regressive dynamics that excite political and psychological anxieties and conflicts substantially delay or block many strategically important changes and developments in organizations. Competence in working effectively with such dynamics needs to be more broadly distributed within organizational systems to discover what progress is possible. Certainly AOC participants have been presented with experiential learning opportunities that

confront their own and their colleagues' motivation and cooperation. Constructing and consulting to processes for 'working through', consultants help bring about unpredictable benefits.

Concluding Thoughts

Both reflecting on experience in order to learn—and connecting that experience to social science theory and methodology—have moved from background to foreground as an essential ability over these fourteen years of the Tavistock Institute's Advanced Organizational Consultation programme. Experience for experience sake does not guarantee that a participant becomes a better consultant. Reflecting on experience without reading social science theory, and without using that reading as a basis for analysing consultancy cases, does not guarantee that a participant becomes a better consultant. The two need to be present and practised together in relation to consulting with organizational clients.

Jerome Bruner's EIAG model (short for experience, identify, analyse, and generalize) has been useful in teaching students a disciplined approach to reflection (1977). Combining that idea with Matthew Miles and Michael Huberman's levels of qualitative analysis (1994) shows students a way to move from identification and description of experience, through analysis of qualitative data, to making interpretations based on theory. Developing interpretations for process consultation (Bion 1959; Schein 1987) echoes similar concepts and mental abilities. Indeed, core faculty consider the possible need to be even more explicit in educating for this ability to reflect on experience in order to learn. Robert Kegan's (1994) research on mental organization of meaning and cognitive development may provide some assistance in taking this further. Educating for mental development 'across categories' and 'trans-categories' resonates with some of the challenges presented by the AOC aim of integrating organizational theory, systems psychodynamics, consultancy competence, and self-directed learning.

Note

This chapter has been written in association with a programme of work entitled 'Refreshing the Tavistock Institute's Traditions'.

References

Argyris, C., Putnam, R., and Smith, D. M. (1985). *Action Science: Concepts, Methods and Skills for Research and Intervention.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Argyris, C. and Schön, D. A. (1974). *Theory in Action: Increasing Professional Effectiveness*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Benne, K. D., Bradford, L. P., Gibb, J. R., and Lippitt, R. O. (1975). *The Laboratory Method of Changing and Learning: Theory and Application*. Palo Alto, Calif.: Science and Behavior Books.

Bion, W. R. (1959). *Experiences in Groups*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Bruner, J. S. (1977). *The Process of Education*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Chin, R., and Benne, K. D. (1976). 'General Strategies for Effecting Changes in Human Systems', in W. G. Bennis, K. D. Benne, R. Chin, and K. E. Corey (eds.), *The Planning of Change*, 3rd edn. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Czerniawska, F. (1999). *Management Consultancy in the 21st Century*. West Lafayette, Ind.: Ichor Business Books.

Gardner, H. (1993). *Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice*. New York: Basic Books.

Gibb, J. R. (1978). *Trust: A New View of Personal and Organizational Development*. Los Angeles: The Guild of Tutors Press.

Horwitz, L. (1985). 'Projective Identification in Dyads and Groups', in A. D. Colman and M. H. Geller (eds.), *Group Relations Reader 2*. Washington: A. K. Rice Institute.

Kegan, R. (1994). *In over our Heads: The Mental Demands of Modern Life*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Knowles, M. S. (1970). *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: Andragogy Versus Pedagogy*. New York: Association Press.

—— Holton, E. F., and Swanson, R. A. (2005). *The Adult Learner: The Definitive Classic in Adult Education and Human Resource Management*. London: Elsevier, Inc.

Marrow, A. J. (1984). *The Practical Theorist: The Life and Work of Kurt Lewin*. Annapolis, Md.: BDR Learning Products, Inc.

Miles, M., and Huberman, M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis*, 2nd edn. London: Sage.

Miller, E. J. (1990). 'Experiential Learning in Groups I: The Development of the Leicester Model', in E. Trist and H. Murray (eds.), *The Social Engagement of Social Science*, i: *The Socio-Psychological Perspective*. London: Free Association Books.

Neumann, J. E. (1997). 'Negotiating Entry and Contracting', in J. E. Neumann, K. Kellner, and A. Dawson-Shepherd (eds.), *Developing Organisational Consultancy*. London: Routledge.

—— (2004). 'Reforming Consultancy Identity in Relation to Discontinuities with Clients'. Paper presented at the meeting of the Academy of Management on Creating Actionable Knowledge, New Orleans, Aug.

Pfeiffer, J. W., and Jones, J. E. (1986). *Handbook of Structured Experiences in Human Relations Training*, vols. i–x. San Francisco: Pfeiffer Wiley.

Rice, A. K. (1965). *Learning for Leadership: Interpersonal and Intergroup Relations*. London: Tavistock Publications.

Schein, E. H. (1987). *Process Consultation: Lessons for Managers and Consultants*, 2nd edn. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley.

Schultz, W. C. (1969). *Joy: Expanding Human Awareness*. New York: Grove Press.

CHAPTER 16

BALANCING THE ON-LINE TEACHING OF CRITICAL EXPERIENTIAL DESIGN

A CAUTIONARY TALE OF PARALLEL PROCESS

ELIZABETH CREESE

Lonely desperate and desolate
That's how it feels—words needing to be got from another—
To want help.

Children, students, people
Tug at my 'holding'
Well-practised disconnection
From my feelings
To bear uncomplainingly theirs.

I need your help
So that I can really listen and hear
Without rejecting or being overwhelmed
By others' feelings
While staying connected to mine.

(Extract from one of Creese's first truly reflexive diary entries, Wed., 9 Nov. 2004)

This chapter tells a cautionary tale—the danger of 'not really knowing' what on-line experiential design we are teaching—until we have been able to be critically reflexive. Reynolds (2000) has similarly warned of problems such as adopting a critical curriculum approach when a more traditional pedagogical basis might belie this. The tale of my gap between theory and practice is based on my critical action research (Kemmis and McTaggart 1988). It is a story about a Tavistock School of Group Relations 'struggle' to learn from experience (French and Vince 1999) about my on-line teaching practice. To tell it I take a deliberate focus not upon the wider systemic issues, but my internal responses to them: hence the microscopic prism of self-scrutiny.

My Class as Virtual Learning Organization (CAVLO) adapted Tyson's (1999) Class as Learning Organization (CALO) model for the on-line environment. In this design I sought to encourage students to learn along critical experiential lines. It is with the benefit of five action research cycles that I have been subsequently able to recognize a gap between the theory I espoused in my design and on-line moderation and my actual practice of it (Argyris and Schön 1974, 1978).

Tyson based his design on Cohen's (1976) seminal work in America using the classroom experientially as a domain of organizational study. To this he added a teaching role informed by the Group Relations idea of anxiety containment (French 1997). In a previous study (Creese 2001) I had found that the dual role of on-line teacher as designer and moderator naturally aligned with such a notion. Extending Group Relations thinking to virtual group space I considered the psychological place, bounded by the teacher in which learning can occur, to be comparable. Within the virtual classroom containment of learning anxiety becomes possible through the complementary roles of on-line teacher: task boundaries can be potentially maintained both by the social 'here and now' presence, albeit virtual, and articulated in the design.

Technological breakthroughs have enabled the recording of the virtual interactions which occur in this bounded space via Computer Mediated Communication (CMC). CMC occurs both through synchronous networks in real time and asynchronous in delayed time. I use archives of CMC to tell the story of the parallel processes between the students' and my own resistance to reflexivity (Creese 2005).

For me reflexivity is critical self-reflection. This by definition is about self-in-relation and involves the collective theory–practice interplay integral to the Group

Relations notion of experiential learning. Such a process is capable of producing knowledge about internal group dynamics and relatedness that can be practised and by definition improved. Through the collective processing of the 'here and now', the emergent group dynamics, or ebbs and flows of emotional energy, can be processed, thereby containing anxiety about the task of learning. It is in becoming collectively aware of, reflecting on, and theorizing about the emotional and relational issues, both conscious and unconscious, that groups can adapt and transform their behaviours.

Framing the teacher role as one of containment of student anxiety assumes that theory and practice of this process are in tandem. My own experience shows, however, that espoused focus on reflexivity was not matched with theory supportive of it. In actuality the CAVLO design used a model of reflection that does not extend to the creation and practice of internal, often assumptional-level, emotional and relational knowledge encompassed by Group Relations theory. Instead it used Kolb's (1984) experiential learning model, with its emphasis on reflection upon past experience rather than the 'here and now'. In contrast to the Group Relations model Kolb's framework lends itself to theories that are external to the behavioural experience.

As my story will demonstrate, and with the benefit of hindsight, the disconnection between the espoused model of reflexivity and the practice of Kolb's was due to separation, albeit unconscious, within me between reason and emotion. It seems that when much of my emotional energy was expended in resisting reflexivity, there was little remaining for rational recognition of what I was actually doing. While Group Relations aims for a balance between reason and emotion its theoretical basis is able to encompass such emotion–reason imbalances. As Vince (1998) points out, unconscious emotional reactions are most likely to occur in the reflective observational part of Kolb's cycle.

It seems that I, despite my best intentions, unconsciously projected my own fear about reflexivity onto the students. I did this by increasingly focusing in my design and moderation the need for this type of reflection. A concurrent emphasis upon Kolb's model paradoxically ensured that the student group reflection, like my own, would be unable to capture the internal 'here and now' dynamics between myself in relation to them and them in relation to one another. Rather student group reflection would consequently be limited to reflection on past or asynchronous interaction, external to, and distanced from, the 'here and now' teacher–student group inter–relationship. It seems as if by operating largely from Kolb's asynchronous feedback on students' anxiety about reflection, I was then able to deny my own.

As I became more anxious this was reflected in my on-line design and moderation and it in turn impacted upon my students. Over time our collective resistance to reflexivity intensified as did our simultaneous inability to think. As I became more aware of the students' reactions to meaningful reflection, perhaps

as a deflection, my denial and projection of both parts deepened. The students similarly followed suit. When the maintenance of our collective resistance became too emotionally exhausting, as it surely will, the defences eventually collapsed with neither party attempting any type of reflection or critical use of theory.

My story embodies the problem of splitting parts that are integral. The divide between reason and emotion can, as the case of my CAVLO design demonstrates, have the unfortunate tendency for idealization of one and a concomitant denigration of the other (Krantz and Gilmore 1990). Our behaviours then end up oscillating between defensiveness and non-defensiveness. It is those parts that we might not be able to bear or contain, that we may find it easier to deny or project onto others. Krantz and Gilmore (1990) have showed how these defences can operate at the organizational, societal, and even global level.

My story also highlights the enormity of the challenge relationally and emotionally of actually bringing theory and practice, in critical experiential design, even 'well-enough' together to use Winnicott's (1971) term. We might recognize intellectually the importance of such a balance, which is possibly the greatest challenge for managers and management educators today. Krantz and Gilmore (1990) call this a paradox of the New Order. We may in fact have underestimated the difficulties for us, and our students in partnership, of actually being reflexive. Such are the layers of anxiety involved in learning, in groups and group learning, and organizational life, let alone innovative experiential on-line design, that the containment of ours and our students' anxiety may be a charge that initially is too great for some if not most educators.

The story does however have a happier ending, with the moral being that in this case, critical experiential design can, after much 'struggle', produce the transformational organizational learning it promises. Eventually my increasing denial of anxiety and its projection onto students accelerated into what Maiteny (2000) calls 'creative regression to dependence'. No longer able to bear the increasingly unsettling feeling that something was severely amiss, I started to be receptive to the help and feedback offered by a peer. The sharing of reflexive space acted as sufficient anxiety container for me to reanalyse my research data. Hence I came to the recognition that the problem was not just the students' anxiety, as I had reported earlier (Creese 2003). Students' anxiety was not separate from mine as I suggested at the time. Rather the ability for students to be reflexive is in part related to me and my role as on-line teacher. I was forced to at last begin to acknowledge the emotional learning relationship or partnership with students that had hitherto remained hidden from my conscious awareness.

So it is with the help of another, and through the nature of the virtual teaching environment, that I am learning to take up my teacher role as anxiety container. It is through appreciating my students' behaviour—and in particular their emotional responses to such a process of collective scrutiny in the 'here and now'—that I eventually learnt about mine—in parallel.

The chapter ends with a description of some of the subsequent changes in the CAVLO design, and my facilitation within it, that have assisted transformational learning also in students. It seems once I was able to practise reflexivity so were students. In this way the theory–practice interplay is based on a connection, rather than a separation, between our collective reason and emotions. Such a separation is comparable to the positivist phenomenology divide that Kolb's (1984) traditional experiential model of learning seems to embrace (Vince 1998). Before illustrating the story of this assisted experiential journey I outline some background to the dynamics of the collective learning experience.

Background to My Split between Reason and Emotion

Before teaching Organization Behaviour (OB), I worked in the performing arts where I was promoted from the practice of the art to its management. I was faced as a manager, within a context of ongoing and silent revolution against perceived rationalization and privatization of the public sector, with the challenge of no longer being required to be creative but to be rational. The split I identified in performing arts organizations (Creese 1998) is comparable with the emotion–reason divide that I explore here. My introduction to experiential management education, which enabled such discovery, was not within an MBA, but serendipitously, in a postgraduate management course in OB run along the lines of Group Relations. In contrast to the ivory towers in which I had originally studied 'pure' academic concepts, largely separated from the real and, by implication, dirty world, the course was in a working man's university of technology. Such are the paradoxical challenges it seems for managers of all organizations of the New Order including universities and management schools within them.

My resistance to the emotional and relational aspects of learning can be seen in my defensive flight (Bion 1961) from both this university and research area. I can only now acknowledge fully that my entrée into on-line education at my current university enabled my continued defence against the Group Relations theory that might implicate me emotionally and relationally.

I could now add to this defence by aligning with my new university's own emotional investment in flexible delivery. Whereas improvement in student learning was espoused as the real concern, in practice the university seemed to be preoccupied with its growing financial difficulties. These were in part due to the need to offset nearly 50 per cent reduction in government funding. At some level the university wanted to believe that having a Strategic Flagship, such as the on-line Bachelor of Commerce (B.Com.), of which OB was a first-year core subject, would somehow magically (Krantz and Gilmore 1990) solve all their problems. Both the

organization and I can be seen to be similarly operating defensively rather than actually facing painful realities. For the university the belief seemed to be that not only would the quality of education be improved, but the programme could be flexibly delivered to multiple contexts. My ongoing process of cyclical design changes seemed to be based on an assumption that these in themselves would be able to address the fundamental issues.

The university's belief in on-line education has subsequently proved to be based, however, on insufficient consideration of what on-line learning actually entails. The reality is that, due to the resource intensity of on-line design, teaching hours necessarily must increase rather than decrease if Laurillard's (1993) conversational framework is to be realized.

It is in this context that I adapted Tyson's CALO design for on-line teaching. I simultaneously emphasized the process parts of the Group Relations approach while disregarding, or at least putting into shadow, its theoretical underpinnings. This *pre-existing separation between reason and emotion* is the first stage in the story of *increasing split between reason and emotion* before the foreshadowed *escalation of the split between reason and emotion* mirrored by the students.

To tell the story that now follows I use these stages of the intensification of our parallel defences against reflexivity. The final stage of *my regression to creative dependence and good-enough maintenance of the tension between reason and emotion* culminates in the student learning now possible within the CAVLO.

It should be noted that the CAVLOs were subdivided into groups of four or five. This is because of the communication difficulties of keeping track of multiple randomly typed synchronous entries. Asynchronous organizational-level announcements, comprising discussion boards and e-mails, however, were retained and managed accordingly. The virtual groups were allocated dedicated group spaces within the Classroom or organizational shell, which contain devices making up CMC, namely chatroom, discussion board, file exchange, and e-mail facilities. To distinguish between synchronous and asynchronous communication in the extracts from the group electronic communications, I have identified virtual chat with date, time, and message indented and threaded discussion with date and message only indented.

Pre-Existing Separation between Reason and Emotion

When team teaching the CALO with Tyson I had been unaware of a shared gap between our theory and practice. We espoused the CALO's primary task as that of a Group Relations focus on 'becoming aware of the here and now'. Our shared

preoccupation with the surfacing of others' unconscious assumptions enabled us to remove ourselves from any connection we might have to the Group Relations theory. This was informed by an unconscious fear of what might be revealed about us. For example the theory used to justify the CALO model was not from Group Relations, but rather the fields of adult, self-directed learning. Integral to this more traditional theory was Kolb's model of experiential learning.

Again unknowingly, it was this pre-existing separation between reason and emotion that I extended to the CAVLO. The virtual nature of the setting enabled me first to put the mainstream OB lectures into the on-line ether conveniently removing me from them. I knew that such commercially available lectures, like their text bases, comprised the more traditional OB theories, none of which matched Group Relations theory. However it seemed that it was emotions rather than reason that were my driving force.

In the initial design the primary task of the CAVLO, as with the CALO, was reiterated as becoming aware of the 'here and now'. At this stage however there was no overt design requirement for the more objective kind of reflection possible within Kolb. Busying myself with the design of the group activities, I delegated to a colleague assisting the design team the composition of an introductory on-line lecture. Here the suggestion was that students keep a voluntary individual learning journal on their individual and group learning experiences. Kolb's model was presented as an example of how a student can have an experience, think about it afterwards, and find some theory 'out there' in the weekly topic-by-topic on-line lectures to explain it.

This defence of separating me from theory generally, and a theory of reflexivity in particular, meant that I could deny my own fear of reflexivity by passing it on to my students. Groups like Blue Angels understood clearly from my on-line moderation that my passion was for the reflexive processing of the 'here and now'. During a face-to-face interview Blue Angels, members described this as *having a group experience, looking at how this operates as it happens and using ourselves as means of study*. Milly, chair of the Blue Angels pragmatically articulates this task for the group's first meeting as:

23 July 09: 22: 08 . . . evaluate each team member and how they are perceived within the team, and respond as you see it in our meetings

This is sufficient to raise, albeit unconsciously, group member Stella's fears about reflexivity. The on-line dynamics of Blue Angels outlined now show how Stella is able to pass her fear on to the group, as I seem to have passed mine on to her.

Stella admits that she is

23 July 09: 04: 23 very wary of people who will make personal comments about me in a public forum especially when I think they are not correct. I do not feel safe, I feel vulnerable and I don't enjoy that.

Stella's fear is about the process of reflexivity I have espoused both in my moderation and design. It is her fear that leads to the unceremonious dumping of Chair Milly. It happens like this. At the meeting on 23 July Stella has made it clear that she does not want to reflect. Milly nevertheless at the next meeting echoes me and insists on process feedback. Stella now moves to deflect the group from any attempts the chair makes towards this. Stella does this by butting in and changing the subject continuously. When Milly becomes more adept at stopping Stella's constant interruptions Stella tries another tack and begins doodling on the virtual whiteboard. This is a blank group space above the chat facility. When no one notices her visual doodles Stella draws the words: *we need a new chairman*.

Milly tries initially to ignore this but eventually it becomes too much for her and she screams back at Stella in capitals:

9 Aug. 09: 06: 16 . . . one of the norms of the team was that the chairman would control it and ask questions, . . . BUT YOU DON'T GIVE ME A CHANCE.

Milly now seems to have had enough. She is becoming increasingly isolated in the group and is now clearly in need of the type of containment that, at this stage, I am not yet emotionally able to provide. While being possibly over-responsive to students by being timely and available, it seems that my facilitation has not yet been able to model the provision of the required psychosocial support. In addition the design has not provided theory that equates with Blue Angels' experience or a model of the type of reflection I have nevertheless emphasized. I can rationalize the problem, as I did in my yet-to-be-reflexive diary in 2000:

When involved in the action I get emotionally involved and react defensively and judgmentally. It would be great if I could develop the ability to observe [rationally] as I do [be emotionally, relationally].

The bracketed comments have been added, now that I am able to be reflexive. But at the time, it is as if I was powerless to bridge the gap between my emotions and reason. The morning after Milly is dumped I phone both Milly and Stella to talk for several hours about what I have read in the archive. However, this seems insufficient in the containment of Stella's fear about reflexivity now shared by the group. Milly is absent for the next meeting in which Stella denies that her challenge to Milly is a 'coup', as the other group members describe it. From then on Milly, lacking sufficient support, takes a low profile. By 16 August there is group agreement for

16 Aug.
08: 24: 02 . . . no personal comments . . .
08: 24: 07 . . . no judgements . . .
08: 24: 16 . . . no negative apologies.

It is in this way that student groups like the Blue Angels defend against any type of reflection. So you must ask, how did I respond at the time? It seems to me that the considerable logistics of on-line served sufficiently as 'objective stressors' (Ledford 1985) to cloud the real issue. I continued with the redesign process but the collective separation between reason and emotion, demonstrated by the Blue Angels dynamics, was now only to increase.

The Increasing Split between Reason and Emotion

My immediate concern in the next two designs was with a permanent repetitive strain injury developed while teaching the initial design. While seemingly unable to provide sufficient anxiety containment in our shared struggle with reflexivity, I had, as suggested above, attempted to support the students in my accustomed manner. This was by being over-responsive to students, as implied by the reflexive poem quoted at the beginning of the chapter. It is almost as if an 'unthought known' that something was amiss was propelling me into over-compensatory behaviour.

At the external level I attempted to redress the communication imbalance that resulted from being overly available via CMC twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. I introduced more intra-student-group interaction and teacher-to-organization-level communication. However, beginning to surface from my unconscious was a realization that there was an issue about anxiety and reflection. Increasing awareness of this problem led to the growing split between reason and emotion as I moved to further remove myself from the possibility that I too might be anxious about reflexivity. I reasoned that I could continue to give students Group Relations type feedback including that about their reflection anxiety. The asynchronous typing of my responses to students, after reading their virtual 'here and now' electronic archives, meant, however, that I could remain separate.

My design reinforced this individual asynchronous feedback both with a requirement for reflection and also the prescription of both its type and content. The increasing emphasis on the Kolb cycle meant that reflection was restricted to external matters and theories that might explain these. The organizational experience was now limited to set group exercises and review questions as outlined by Gibbs's (1994) more traditional learning in teams. The design explicitly interwove each part of Kolb's model into the Gibbs group activities. For example the 'concrete experience' was linked to the exercises and the

'reflective observation' to review questions such as 'What difficulties did the group encounter?'

As an afterthought I added to Gibbs and Kolb what I knew was missing from the design. This was a Process Consultancy Sheet with Group Relations-type trigger questions. However the centrality of the Gibbs exercises and review-type questions, now so inextricably interwoven with Kolb, overshadowed the process sheet in the weekly CAVLO instructions. Groups struggling to complete the schedule of weekly group tasks had therefore little remaining energy for the type of processing that might reveal unconscious emotional and relational issues.

The design had the effect I unconsciously desired, which was denial of an increasing separation between my reason and emotion. The summary of the Yay team's dynamics illustrates this. Clarissa has had a long discussion with me about the need for reflexivity. She pushes for this, but on the Yay team's discussion board.

21 May I know I have been harping on about CONFLICT of late but find Liz's point that our team seems to avoid conflict quite interesting.

Clarissa analyses the reasons for their avoidance, a lack of trust and the limitations of on-line communication. She adds a final question:

21 May Can you think for any other possible reasons?

Two members respond but simply echo Clarissa's analysis. She brings up the issue again on 30 May. When no one responds, she suggests a solution with which the group feels comfortable. She suggests that each member post to the discussion board a Kolb reflection about one of the issues flagged in the formative feedback I have given. Clarissa's suggestion is eventually endorsed by Chairman Cliff, but at the last meeting, when it is too late for a group discussion. The group has eventually fulfilled my requirement for reflection and, like me, carefully managed to keep themselves removed from it.

So the Yay team did to one another as I did to them: asynchronous individual reflective feedback on others through typing. The fact of reflection of any kind may appear to be a progression from the first stage when no reflection of any kind occurred. At the time I liked to think so. But given its disembodied nature this type of reflection was more of a regression. The enforced reliance upon Kolb meant the Yay team was restricted to reflection on conscious and rational matters. Given that such feedback was individual it appeared separate from and unrelated to the sender. It was also delivered in a manner where any response was inevitably delayed, again providing distance for both sender and receiver. Students and I seemed now incapable of being emotionally or relationally involved with others. This regression seems now only to intensify.

Escalation of the Split between Reason and Emotion

Such impossible repression
With its emotional outbursts
Tired, worn out and down
I am literally eaten up
Simply unable
To re-erect the regime of control

This other extract from my Wednesday, 9 November 2004 journal highlights the eventual learning breakdown that can and did occur in the CAVLO. When so much emotional energy had been expended in our collective defence against reflexivity there was little remaining for learning. The inevitable emotional collapse highlights the importance of the internal support of anxiety containment for both teacher and students. This is especially in critical experiential learning that is also on-line.

As my split between theory and practice deepened, the direction of defensive emotions eventually became too much to bear. Rather I gave in to the student complaint that there seemed never to be enough time for reflection. In the fourth and fifth designs, I radically reduced the weekly group activities to four phases. These comprised team formation/reflection, team building/reflection, team production/reflection, and overall team reflection. Phase two consisted of only four of the Gibbs activities based around team roles, goals and norms, and definition of the team task. While I simultaneously intensified in my facilitation the need for reflection, I countered its possibility by reinforcing theory unrelated to it. Kolb's model was mandatory in specific reflection meetings now required at the end of phases two and four. As evidence of their occurrence electronic archives of these meetings were to be attached to the two reflection reports.

I further removed students and myself from any theory that might be connected to our collective emotional behaviour by also giving in to the student request for a task perceived to be more tangible than that of reflection. A Learning Resource could actually allow students to make a virtual presentation on conflict resolution based on the critique of external traditional OB theories entirely unrelated to their group experience of conflict or reflection about it.

Not only was I seemingly giving in internally but also externally. The requirement for reflection meeting archives was in contrast to the previous one for electronic archives of all interactions. Similarly my constant, possible over- communication with students was now slashed to the requirement of my participation at only one group meeting at the end of phase two. It is almost as if, in a process paralleling my flight from my previous university, I was again in flight from the CAVLO.

The collapse of my emotional energy seemed to coincide with the increase in the number of contexts to which the B.Com. was now being delivered and over which I had design responsibility. I had previously been accustomed to a genuinely collaborative relationship with instructional designers. However, by the fourth and fifth designs the spread of funds meant that there was only time for electronic communication about design changes.

Student groups like Virtual Co-alition now lacked not only my external over-support, but as well the internal anxiety containment mechanisms we both increasingly needed. The following summary of Virtual Co-alition's (VC) own regression to denial of both reflection and theory mirrors my own.

VC held obsessively and defensively onto the belief that attendance was the reason why they were unable to reflect. Lyn, chair of VC, tries in their first meeting on 25 March to get the three group members present to agree to at least

25 Mar. 02: 14: 53 give apologies for non-attendance.

With six members operating from different time zones in Australia it is difficult but not impossible to find a mutually convenient time. Lyn however delays reflection until Thursday as she does

1 Apr. 02: 44: 05 not know if reflection will be very useful with only three of us,

Some members arrive late for the required reflection meeting on 3 April and others leave early, one *for a work/client dinner* (3 Apr. 10:07:00), another to complete his *individual assignment* (3 Apr. 10:12:46). One member's father has *passed away* (3 Apr. 09:30:51). These seem to be legitimate stressors. It is also possible however that the technical logistics of on-line serve to cloud the real issue of a breakdown between emotion and reason.

There is some attempt to set a future norm of having

3 Apr. 09: 52: 03 people log in on time within the first five minutes or risk???

But the group seems reluctant to impose any 'penalties' for non-attendance

Only two male members log on for the meeting on 8 April. By May, the group is resorting to what they think needs to be done. The rest of the semester is spent in continuing to avoid the task of any type of reflection. Occasionally someone mentions that they have not yet reflected. When 90 per cent of the group actually logs on simultaneously Lyn types:

8 May 09: 35: 14 FIVE OF US AT A MEETING!!!! QUICK ALERT THE MEDIA

The use of capitals suggests both the level of desperation about getting people together and the possibility therefore of being able to reflect. Even now Lyn points out that

8 May 09: 19: 51 it is also difficult to reflect upon a meeting when we have never had a meeting where we are all present . . . therefore we can only reflection upon certain interactions and relationships within the group.

At the 29 May meeting Lyn mentions that

29 May 09: 20: 09 we will need to do some reflection as well as this the end of both phases for the course . . . we may need to schedule another meeting early next week so that we can get everything done.

But the next meeting never happens nor does the required group reflection meeting. Our shared emotional collapse seems now to be complete. So having given up, how did our collective regression lead to bridging the gap between our theory and practice? How is it that I can now contain my own and students' anxiety sufficiently so that together we can learn through collective reflexivity? Let us turn now to the final stage in the story.

My Regression to Creative Dependence and Good Enough Maintenance of the Tension between Reason and Emotion

As suggested above, I eventually began to emerge from working in isolation and to be receptive to the help offered by others. This was after having spent a further year seemingly unable yet to recognize my own anxiety and reiterating my thesis that students' defensiveness was unrelated to me (Creese 2004). Clearly, I had reached a stalemate. I was dismayed that the radical reduction in design to phases had not only produced less quantity but also less quality learning. I was also in disbelief that there seemed to be no sign even of the individual typed asynchronous reflection in the previous weekly design. But at this time I was still unable to offer further rational explanation. It is almost as if I had run out of excuses.

It was the sharing of reflexive space with a colleague, with a Group Relations background similar to mine, that finally enabled me to feel sufficiently emotionally supported to begin to re-examine my findings. Her feedback suggested that the reason that I seemed almost apologetic about my use of Group Relations theory for students might be perhaps that this theory could also apply to me. As I continue to reflect it emerged that disconnection from my own feelings was a defence against being in relation, as the extract from my journal quoted at the beginning of the chapter suggests. Once I was able to recognize 'me' (Klein 1959) emotionally in relation to my students, I could begin to take up my on-line teaching role more fully. This has entailed bringing into balance my theory and practice of reflexivity,

a process of constantly maintaining the tension between my tendency to separate emotion from reason.

I trust that the story of my vivid 'struggle' over the years demonstrates the challenge critical experiential on-line design can be not only for some management educators but also for students. This is no matter how good our intentions and within management schools that seem to continue to reinforce individual organizing while espousing the need for collective reflexivity (Reynolds and Vince 2004). As a finale, I share some of the changes in design and on-line facilitation that have helped critical learning through meaningful reflection by students.

Balancing the On-Line Teaching Role

I have kept the phased approach in keeping with trends in on-line design. Within the constraint of the on-line teaching model within my university, the first two phases give time for students to manage some of the stressors that might otherwise be managed more easily with the addition, for example, of face-to-face orientations. These include the vagaries of enrolment, access to the course site, and acquaintance with and practice of the various types of CMC. Much of the task preparation for example for a virtual meeting can be via asynchronous communication. This is so members can focus their attention on the processing of the 'here and now' within their virtual group meetings. Other issues that might impact on the motivation for, rather than anxiety about, collective reflexivity such as the feeling of isolation need to be identified and constantly managed. As technological breakdown remains a reality there is also ongoing need for contingency plans. This is so that technological problems do not become a convenient excuse.

I have removed the end of phase and overall reflection meetings as they encourage reflection after the event. The required virtual meeting with groups by the end of the first phase allows for facilitation of the processing of the 'here and now' generally in a discussion about definition of the team task. In containing student groups' resistance to reflexivity and modelling for them the processing of inter-and intragroup dynamics I can use the example of my own similar emotional struggle. This helps to highlight how such difficulties can in fact be turned around rather than defended against. Kolb's model has been replaced with Vince's (1998) revision. My modelling of reflexivity is reinforced explicitly in the articulation of the on-line instructions both for reading on screen and to be heard via audio. The learning resource has become a mapping of groups' learning. Demonstration of a group's ability to critically process the 'here and now' is possible also by cutting and pasting from their electronic archives. Examples of previous groups' learning resources can be posted on the web as the current ones are for peer assessment learning and feedback from other groups within the CAVLO.

With my increased emotional robustness it now feels right to expect more of my students. Previously my over-responsiveness, constant availability, and valency for in taking on, rather than containing, students' anxiety may have provided some false sense of security. In Group Relations terms my ability now to hold the task boundaries more strongly in both design and moderation assists on-line student groups to take up their collective authority.

However, not all student groups have deepened their learning as a result of such teacher improvements. Some like Group J continue to take defensive flight (Bion 1961) from the course, first fighting everything from learning, on-line, the course, to other courses and universities. Group J seemed to start with the best of intentions and with my facilitation could begin to process the 'here and now'. However, once I was unable to be present, their collective shared fear of failure after previous negative experiences of tertiary study seemed soon to take over. Group J's subsequent virtual chats regressed to discussion focusing on a shared love of sport. It seems that, constrained by a teaching model that fails to recognize even the equivalent of face-to-face teaching hours, there was little I could do to turn Group J's dynamics around.

In contrast, however are the Global Warriors. This group is made up of equally motivated and hard-working middle managers of considerable experience. Accustomed to balancing, in addition to family, full-time work and part-time study, group members also run their own extremely successful small businesses. They also pride themselves on being able, as at work, to take responsibility for supporting one another, in being reflexive, without the need for a facilitator. Having the requisite organization skills for the effective management of electronic communication assists this. Global Warriors were able immediately to see the benefit of reflexive practice, not only to their virtual group but their own work organizations. They valued the opportunity of a safe space to experiment and learn away from the pressures of work. Many Global Warriors members have reported on subsequent promotions.

Most virtual groups, however, continue to fall somewhere between Group J and Global Warriors. As a first-year course, and with the imposition by the university of an inadequate on-line teaching model, I am now satisfied that CAVLOs are at least introduced to a critical and collective way of operating. As I continue to critique my practice collectively with students, I am now more accepting that what students do with this knowledge is ultimately up to them.

Note

I would like to acknowledge friend and colleague Peliwe Mnguni as it is through sharing reflexive space with her that my learning and this chapter were made possible.

References

Argyis, C., and Schön, D. A. (1974). *Theory in Practice: Increasing Professional Effectiveness*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

—— —— (1978). *Organizational Learning: A Theory of Action Perspective*. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley.

Bion, W. R. (1961). *Experiences in Groups*. London: Tavistock.

Cohen, A. R. (1976). 'Beyond Simulation: Treating the Classroom as Organisation', *Teaching of Organizational Behaviour*, 2/1: 13–19.

Creese, E. (1998). 'The Balance of Arts and Management Culture in Performing Arts Organizations'. Unpublished master's thesis, Australian Graduate School of Entrepreneurship.

—— (2001). 'From Dependency towards Self-Direction via Virtual Chat: The Case of One TAFE Class', in G. Kennedy, M. Keppel, C. McNaught, and T. Petrovic (eds.), *Meeting at the Crossroads*. Short Paper Proceedings of the 18th Conference of the Australian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education. Melbourne: Biomedical Multimedia Unit, the University of Melbourne.

—— (2003). 'Group Dynamics and Learning in an Organization Behaviour Virtual Learning Community: The Case of Six Virtual Peer Learning Teams', *Ultibase*, Nov., http://ultibase.rmit.edu.au/Journal/journal.htm.

—— (2004). 'The Impact of Group Dynamics in an Online Learning Community: A Class as Virtual Learning Organization', *Proceedings of International Conference on Computers in Education* (ICCE2004).

—— (2005). 'The Parallel Processes between Teacher and Students in Tacit Knowledge Production in a Class as Virtual Learning Organisation in Organization Behavior', *International Journal of Knowledge, Culture and Change Management*, 5.

French, R. B. (1997). 'The Teacher as Container of Anxiety: Psychoanalysis and the Role of the Teacher', *Journal of Management Education*, 21/4: 483–95.

—— and Vince, R. (1999). 'Learning, Managing and Organizing: The Continuing Contribution of Group Relations to Management and Organization', in R. French and R. Vince (eds.), *Group Relations, Management and Organisation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gibbs, G. (1994). *Learning in Teams: A Student Manual*. Oxford: Oxford Centre for Staff Development.

Kemmis, S., and McTaggart, R. (eds.) (1988). *The Action Research Planner*. Geelong, Victoria: Deakin University.

Klein, M. (1959). 'Our Adult World and its Roots in Infancy', *Human Relations*, 12: 291–301.

Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential Learning*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Krantz, J. (1995). 'Anxiety and the New Order', in E. Klein, F. Gablenick, and P. Herr (eds.), *Dynamics of Leadership*. Madison: Psycho-social Press.

—— and Gilmore, T. N. (1990). 'The Splitting of Leadership and Management as a Social Defense', *Human Relations*, 43/2: 183–204.

Laurillard, D. (1993). *Rethinking University Teaching: A Framework for the Effective Use of Educational Technology*. London: Routledge.

Ledford, G. R. (1985). 'Transference and Countertransference in Action Research Relationships', *Consultation*, 4/1: 36–51.

Maiteny, P. (2000). 'The Psychodynamics of Meaning and Action for a Sustainable Future', *Futures*, 32: 339–60.

Reynolds, M. (2000). 'Bright Lights and the Pastoral Idyll: Ideas of Community Underlying Management Education Methodologies', *Management Learning,* 31/1: 67–81.
Reynolds, M., and Vince, R. (eds.) (2004). *Organizing Reflection*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
Tyson, T. (1999). *CALO—the Class as a Learning Organisation: The CAO model Revisited and Revitalised*. Human Resource Management/Organisation Behaviour, Working Paper Series, School of Business, Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne.
Vince, R. (1998). 'Behind and Beyond Kolb's Learning Cycle', *Journal of Management Learning*, 22/3: 304–19.
Winnicott, D. W. (1971). *Playing and Reality*. London: Penguin.

CHAPTER 17

INTEGRATING EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING THROUGH 'LIVE' PROJECTS

A PSYCHODYNAMIC ACCOUNT

PAULA HYDE

Introduction

Recent critiques of management education programmes have suggested that they are failing to develop appropriate technical and personal skills in their graduates, thus failing to prepare them for organizational life (Mintzberg 2004; Gabriel 2005; Whitley 1984). It has been suggested that radical changes are needed to programme content and modes of delivery to address these criticisms and to better prepare management graduates of the future. Whilst this view is not held universally, several writers have suggested means by which students may be better prepared. They have advocated reassessment of MBA curricula and the establishment of closer links with

businesses (Mintzberg 2004). Such proposals require students to encounter and work with organizations as part of an experiential programme of study. Educators have also been challenged to encourage students to integrate theory and practice without succumbing to uncritical absorption of managerialist values (Burgoyne and Reynolds 1997).

In this chapter, one means of engaging students in experiential work with organizations is explored. 'Live' projects offer students the opportunity for involvement with organizations as an integral and experiential part of their management education. Some of the challenges of running this type of project are discussed. Live projects form part of a management programme involving a series of projects sponsored by, and taking place within, real organizations, and offering the opportunity to incorporate previous learning in future project experiences. Students take increasing responsibility for acquisition and organization of project groups and project management over the course of the programme. Rather than representing an innovation in management education this approach has been used over many years in an attempt to integrate experiential features into the programme as a whole (Rickards, Hyde, and Papamichail 2005).

The longevity of the programme (over forty years) offers the opportunity to illuminate the relationship between 'live' projects and experiential learning, whilst recognizing the continuing tensions and problems inherent in such pedagogic systems. In the past, collaboration across academic disciplines within the business school at Manchester has been an important component in the development of the approach. However, in recent years, the business school has adopted a more traditional subject-based approach both to organizing academics and to programme content. Organizational structures such as these are common to universities and their effect upon access to experience for students and tutors is considered here using psychodynamic ideas about containment of anxiety. Whilst this chapter will focus on the use of live projects in management education, it will conclude by exploring the challenges involved in attempting to integrate experiential approaches to management education in university settings in order that students might move between 'not knowing', 'knowing', and 'established knowledge' as part of their experience of learning.

Experiential Learning in Management Education

The possibility of accounting for what is learnt during an 'experiential event' remains elusive. Moreover the simple reality of failing to learn from experience is a common personal phenomenon. Kolb perhaps came closest to simplifying the

cyclical and iterative process of experiential learning for individuals, groups, and organizations (Kolb 1985). He described a process that begins with an experience occurring in a planned or accidental way. The capacity to observe and reflect upon the experience is required, followed by the ability to theorize including both the application of concepts to the phenomena and being able to construct theories that suggest how specific or generalizable the theories are. Finally, there is a further process of experimentation whereby the practical implications of such learning are explored. This makes experience and action critical components in learning from experience (Stein 2004).

Whilst Kolb's learning cycle is frequently presented to students as a means of learning and whilst universities ought to be able to offer a potential site for learning from experience, the process is not simple. Susan Long suggests that access to experience in universities is authorized and enacted or, indeed, made impossible through various structures and processes experienced by teachers and learners alike;

> the authorization of experience by the institution occurs predominantly through its organization—that is through the ways in which boundaries are created for work or, conversely, for non-work. The structure and dynamics of the institution give out strong messages to members, both at conscious and unconscious levels about what to think, feel and express. (Long 2004: 107)

University organization and structures commonly create boundaries around subject areas as well as around specialist courses units. Such conscious boundaries are created for task performance. These boundaries can lead to abuses of power, for example, where one subject claims a dominant position on a generalist course. The provision of boundaries, then, as containers for experience, may preclude or enable learning to take place, by enabling containment of anxiety to the extent that one may live in an experience and learn from it (Thomas 1982).

There are many accounts of diverse approaches to experiential learning in preparing management students for organizational life (see Wankel and DeFillipi 2005), many of which have some grounding in the group relations approach (see Gould, Stapley, and Stein 2004). Yiannis Gabriel (2005) described an innovative experiential leadership programme where participants were provided with the opportunity to experience leading their fellow group members. The programme was designed to enable the students to experience, reflect upon, theorize about, and experiment with their leadership experiences. Far from claiming this approach produced leaders, he illustrated the many ways participants manoeuvred themselves into acting as followers. He concluded that MBA programmes are fundamentally flawed as they continue to educate followers rather than leaders. In coming to this depressing, but convincing, conclusion he suggested that leadership students seek simple solutions, 'the vibrant vision, the motivating mission, the merger, the techno-fix, the new appointment and so on' (p. 159), whereas, in reality, problems may only be overcome by multifaceted, unpredictable, and highly varied solutions.

Furthermore, he acknowledged that some problems defy resolution through any device. It is at these moments that leaders are called upon to be able to contain their uncertainty and doubt through a capacity that has been termed, by the poet John Keats, 'negative capability': where a person is capable of experiencing 'uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason' (H. F. Bartlett in Gabriel 2005: 160).

It is this capacity for containment of anxiety in the face of uncertainty that is an important feature of experiential learning. Anxiety can arise from conflicts at an unconscious level as well as conflicts generated by the work task itself. Such anxiety can lead to a range of psychological defences aimed primarily at reducing anxiety and possibly at reducing uncertainty, the paradox of creativity being that the mind that can think about unbound experiences is also the mind that defends against them (Long 2004). Such defences have been described elsewhere and include rationalization, regression to more childlike behaviours, projection, and displacement (Klein et al. 1970). Mark Stein described his experiences of teaching a group of MBA students and illustrated how his own responses to anxiety influenced the experiences and reactions of the student group. As he sought to reflect upon and revisit events, he experimented with different interpretations and ideas about their meaning, offering him alternative means of dealing with them. He detailed the interdependencies of learners and facilitator as each projected their anxieties onto the other. His account illustrates how both learner and facilitator need to be actively engaged in thinking about their experiences to enable learning from experience. This interdependency between learner and facilitator is another important feature of experiential learning (Stein 2004).

Not only is experiential learning influenced by emotions, but it is also influenced by social phenomena. Stein also recognized how the content of the work itself may generate anxiety leading to particular group or organizational defences. Bion's work with groups explored task and fantasy as features of group life (Bion 1968). According to Bion, groups engage in what he called work group mode for only a minority of the time where they deal with work issues in realistic manner. He observed the tendency of groups to be driven by unrecognized emotionally powerful fantasies, which he referred to as basic assumptions. Specifically he identified three forms of basic assumption: dependency; fight-flight; and pairing. Each assumption relates to a fantasy state, which affects group function through the formation of unhelpful coalitions, member–member, or leader–group dynamics, which perpetuate the fantasy that some future resolution will overcome the unpleasantnesses of the present. Similar defensive processes have been described in organizations (Hyde and Thomas 2002; Menzies 1970). These individual defences, and basic assumptions in groups, enable participants to avoid experiencing the pain of uncertainty and to avoid thinking, thus to prevent learning. In learning from experience, both participants and learners move between task and fantasy. In fact, frenzied activity around a task may become a defence in itself that

precludes the opportunity to think or reflect upon, and learn from, experience (Gabriel 2005).

Moreover, universities generate fantasies of their own. Freud named education as one of the impossible professions and this has been explained as follows;

> While seeming to be a place of learning where new knowledge could be generated and genuine questioning encouraged, [Freud] believed that the university was primarily a cover… for the master/slave discourse. The assumption in this discourse is that the master is all-powerful and makes demands of the slave who must carry them out. The master's pleasure is gained through the labour of the slave…
>
> …In the university, the master (authority) is in a particular position of power. The position is what Lacan (1992) terms 'the subject supposed-to-know'. The fantasy behind this position contains the assumptions that (1) knowledge is a commodity, (2) there is a hierarchy of those who have increasing amounts of it, (3) the highest authority has ultimate knowledge, and, (4) the existence of such an authority is possible now or in the future. Such a fantasy will not only lead to grandiosity and the possibility of abuse of power or its counterpart, rebelliousness and the rebuke of authority, but it also makes the avowed task of the university indeed impossible. (Long 2004: 116)

The binding of knowledge into units or blocks makes dependent subjects of students. Packaging and marketing and premium pricing of MBA programmes may make students and teachers on these programmes more, rather than less, susceptible to the grandiose fantasy that conceives of knowledge as a commodity for consumption. The alternative, knowing, calls on intuition and is less easily packaged or commodified. Learning involves establishing knowledge through experiences of knowing and vice versa.

Live Projects as Part of a Management Programme

The MBA programme at Manchester Business School originated over forty years ago with the ambitious intention of providing a radically different approach to management education. The intention was to sustain only loose divisions between subject areas with most project work, undertaken by students, crossing interdisciplinary boundaries. The design decision was to cluster learning experiences around multidisciplinary projects. Whilst the business school was unable to sustain such a loose structure, and academics grouped themselves under disciplinary banners, some elements of the approach remain. One such element is the inclusion of live projects in the MBA programme supported by tutors from a range of disciplinary backgrounds.

The programme incorporates subject-based lectures alongside group projects in organizational settings. Students are involved in a series of group projects. Each of these projects is sponsored by different organizations and requires the student groups to explore a particular area of interest or aspiration of the organization, within a prescribed time period. Each student group has access to a tutor from the business school but may draw on others as required. The term 'live' refers to the propensity of these areas of interest (projects) to be experienced as organic and changing, because they relate to current organizational situations, which are likely to evolve during the course of a project. Moreover, the sponsor and others in the organization have varying expectations of the project that alter over time. Groups of students work on a project and seek to understand and manage a range of competing expectations to produce a report and/or presentation that satisfies a range of interests, including their own. Uncertainty is inherent in these projects as outcomes are largely undefined and expectations vary between student, tutors, sponsors, and examiners.

Rather than a single 'one-off' event, students are involved in an iterative process of learning whereby they play an increasing part in negotiating their learning experiences as they progress through the course. They are supported initially with taught courses, which may be subject-specific. They move towards less taught courses and more live project group work, supported by in-house opportunities to review their learning. These in-house opportunities to review learning include both large group reviews and tutorial sessions where the focus of attention includes the opportunity to review project group processes as well as project content and development. The process of increasing autonomy for project teams is achieved by being given projects acquired by the business school, initially, and by their seeking out and bidding for specific projects later in the programme. The projects themselves come from a range of organizations, for example, IT, pharmaceutical, consulting, and public sector organizations. These one-off projects occasionally lead to future project work. One example of the regenerating effect of these types of projects took place at UNESCO (UK region). UNESCO operated across the world to find ways of transferring knowledge aimed at economic development from developed countries. Regional centres faced enormous challenges in translating local knowledge for global transfer. Three MBA project groups worked on this problem with different regions in 2003 for a 'business and environment' project. By 2004, the project was extended to a global challenge involving twenty groups of MBA students.

The 'live' nature of projects means that one project may lead directly to future projects and business developments. The development of the Business School Incubator in 2002 was a direct outcome of an internally generated 'live' project. A group of MBA students opted to find their own project and conduct it as a summer elective. They took responsibility for finding a sponsor (the head of school) whom they convinced of the benefits that would accrue from such an incubator. They

also negotiated terms of reference for the project with their sponsor, conducted an investigation through direct interviews at existing incubators nationally and internationally, and reported their findings, which included evidence for the financial viability as well as the academic rationale for the incubator. As a direct result, an externally funded incubator was established, with the added objective of providing learning experiences within future MBA programmes. Moreover, members of the original project team act as operational executives. Financial support comes from several international financial and professional sponsors. New businesses are being created and supported, particularly through (yet more) 'live' project teams. Several incubator electives are now offered within the MBA, giving a focus for those interested in entrepreneurial careers, and new businesses supported by the incubator have been developed (Rickards, Hyde, and Papamichail 2005).

As the MBA programme progresses projects become less bounded and offer greater scope for individual and project team negotiation as seen in the incubator example above. Later in the programme students form their own groups, whereas these groups are given in the early projects. In later projects students are involved in a competitive process bidding for projects and negotiating the terms and scope of the project brief. Opportunities for reflexivity are high in the MBA programme as students take part in events aimed at allowing personal and reflective learning from the early stages. Experiential features of the programme are introduced from the beginning of the programme and students are encouraged to acknowledge high levels of knowledge uncertainty as live project work ensures frequent opportunities for unintended and personal learning. Uncertainty arises from the fact that projects are not designed with one answer in mind. Rather, they present project groups with problems to explore and to which they may suggest potential approaches. This approach generates high levels of creativity and anxiety (Rickards, Hyde, and Papamichail 2005).

These live projects reveal recurring themes, which challenge those involved. These include encountering issues around personal and team development, leadership, reflexivity, and the management of ambiguity. The content uniqueness of projects as 'living cases' has provided a context for these themes to be surfaced, explored, and addressed. This is not to suggest that recurrent tensions are removed, rather they resurface with familiar and timely regularity for re-inspection and serve to emphasize the emotional effort required to sustain a dynamic approach to student learning. Indeed, many, including those involved with this programme, would argue that this sort of approach cannot be sustained over many iterations of the programme without consideration, reflection, and learning from each experience for the facilitators themselves. It has been recognized that experiential learning of facilitators themselves is an important facet of experiential learning programmes. Except for a small number of examples such as those included at the start of the chapter, this appears to be an unrecognized feature in MBA programmes. Where tutors act as subject-supposed-to-know, they may be isolated within their own

disciplinary boundaries and their own access to experiential learning may reduce. Opportunities for learning arise from each iteration of the project and offer familiarity that sometimes precludes learning from experience.

Experiential Learning Through Live Projects

Each iteration of a live project brings with it new challenges for students and tutors alike. These new circumstances can generate a range of familiar themes including tensions within the project group, tensions between students and tutors, and confusion about the nature of a 'live' project. Students are encouraged to explore these tensions whilst recognizing the overall uncertainty of their project task. These tensions arise from conflicts with 'oneself, with the "other", with authority, with ideas, and with nature itself' (Lazar 2004: 139). These conflicts give rise to anxiety, defences, and basic assumptions.

Project Group Processes

The ability of tutors and participants to experience uncertainty, mystery, and doubt and contain their anxiety, their 'negative capability', is an important aspect of the live project. Participants look to tutors for solutions, for clues as to what they should do, or for the answers they suspect are being withheld from them. The lack of a clear answer, similar to one that may be attained from a case study approach, leaves the students with some level of uncertainty around what is expected of them. Additionally, they may be uncertain about what help they can expect from their tutors and their host business. The resultant anxieties occasionally spill over into group meetings with the tutors. Recently there have been increasing numbers of staff ambivalent or hostile to group projects. The staff group as a whole have grown increasingly fragmented along subject specialisms, which mitigate against the generalist role of project tutor. Moreover, experiential learning means different things to different people. Student anxieties have not always been contained or surfaced. Instead some members of faculty have absorbed the anxiety and colluded with the group in the search for the 'right' answer. This has sometimes led to frustrations with the approach itself and to a push for more 'concrete' student assignments. There is rarely a call to move away from the 'live' element of projects, i.e. working with businesses on current problems; rather, the call is for tighter definitions, specifications, or more written documentation about what is expected from whom. Notwithstanding these tensions, students who have completed the MBA programme often record the live projects as one of the most memorable and influential aspects of the programme (Rickards, Hyde, and Papamichail 2005).

Each project group seeks to find a way to work to complete their task, notwithstanding the likelihood of engaging in counterproductive behaviours relating to basic assumptions driven by the anxiety of the uncertainty of the task. To further complicate matters each project team is highly international, with students originating from more than thirty-four countries in a cohort of around eighty students. These differences within the team can become the focus of attention and a source of destructive rather than creative activity. At this point, group members may seek the help of a tutor in confirming the view that the group is hampered by the language difficulties or characteristics of particular members. The interdependence of facilitator and learner is crucial here as such pleas can feed into the anxieties of the tutor who may start to doubt the ability of the group to succeed and seek to intervene. This in turn can confirm anxieties in the group that they may not be able to succeed. Similar attempts may be made to gain special consideration for extraordinary individual efforts or for punishment of a lazy individual. On the whole, tutors seek to explore with the group the nature of the problem they face without seeking to intervene on their behalf. The intention would be to enable individuals to think about their experiences in order that they may return to the task of the group. Constructive dynamics of international teams have been described as including involvement of all team members, developing bridges to support issues of language, cross-cultural curiosity, and developing a diversity of ideas. On the other hand destructive processes are characterized by a dependence on dominant groups or cultures, avoidance of anxiety, under- or overplaying language difficulty, task rather than learning focus, use and misuse of communications technology (Heimer and Vince 1998). These dynamics are played out with each iteration of a live project.

Heimer and Vince went on to argue that sustainable learning is only possible by working through such tensions. They argue that it is those very tensions and difficulties that are essential to effective experiential learning as the material that inspires learning and change. Learning becomes sustainable where students are able to question and challenge evolving norms and see and reflect on group processes as they emerge. Project groups learn to sustain uncertainty created through the interaction of different cultures and the task itself. This sustainable learning is the goal, but not always the outcome, of a live project.

The Task Itself: Consultancy or Experiential Learning

Live projects are easily mistaken for consultancy projects. Business schools have existed symbiotically with management consultancy firms, with a proportion of MBA participants undertaking the course as a direct route into consulting. Consultant business models pass in an interactive fashion from business schools to consulting firms and vice versa. Indeed, arguments have been made for the benefits of approaching business projects in order to develop consulting skills

(Clifford and Hillar Farran 2004). There are, however, tensions between projects regarded primarily as consultant-type experiences and those more concerned with broader aspects of personal development, particularly where students are encouraged not to accept uncritically managerialist approaches (Burgoyne and Reynolds 1997). The consultant–client relationship is often transactional and is generally exercised around pre-established and negotiated parameters. This is distinct from live projects wherein the relationship is between project team and project sponsor rather than a client. Here learning is openly accepted as a central part of the process: the sponsor learns through fresh insights into their interests; the project teams experience a range of knowledge, skills, and behavioural elements both directly and indirectly. The language used in marketing brochures for students and sponsors, as well as administrative arrangements for project acquisition and support, influence perceptions of projects as experiential or consultancy in nature.

Absorption in a consultancy project is one possible avenue for tutors and students alike. The distinction between consultancy and live projects is far from clear-cut and some projects are closer to traditional consulting arrangements: indeed, some staff are themselves more disposed to encourage the development of consulting skills. Experiences are mediated through relationships between the sponsor, the team, and the tutors. Arrangements are not made solely around a financial contract, but include the additional recognition of a learning contract. Sponsors contribute financially in recognition of obligations and costs incurred by participants whilst achieving the mutually agreed objectives of the project. Furthermore, the live project is influenced by the preferences of the faculty team, the language they use, and the manner in which a specific project develops over time.

Conflict between consultancy approaches and experiential learning reflects the tensions inherent within live projects and the wider business school and the manner in which diverse views jostle for a negotiated acceptance. Attempts to integrate live projects as part of a wider programme of management education offer one example of experiential learning in a university context.

Experiential Learning as an Integral Feature of Management Education Programmes

Whilst MBA programmes have proliferated globally, three types of provision can be identified (Rickards, Hyde, and Papamichail 2005). These distinctions do not define MBA programmes as discrete entities, they may be better understood as points in a continuum that range from highly controlled taught programmes with

low levels of uncertainty for students and teachers, through to loosely bounded programmes with high levels of uncertainty and opportunities for experiential learning for participants and facilitators alike. As such, these distinctions can be useful in thinking about learning opportunities provided to participants on management education programmes. Table 17.1 shows some differentiating features of MBA programmes.

The 'lecture-centred' MBA involves students in specialist courses which are taught and assessed by traditional means. Lectures provide a coherent knowledge base and levels of uncertainty are bounded. Scope for creativity lies in the presentational approach of the teacher, and opportunities for student reflection and personal learning have less emphasis. In contrast, 'project-added' MBA programmes build on established courses by providing projects that allow for some personal and experiential learning. These programmes increase the possibility for uncertainty, unintended outcomes, and creativity in the course of completing a project task. The final category could be called experiential programmes. These programmes take participants through a series of projects, whereby the level of external control and specification of projects can be reduced over time. Subject area boundaries are loosely defined in relation to project work and facilitators and participants are faced with uncertainty and novelty in each project experience and the anxieties these

Table 17.1 Comparative features of MBA programmes

Dimension	Lecture-centred MBAs	Project-added MBAs	Experiential MBAs
Delivery style	Controlled and bounded delivery of established knowledge categories (marketing, finance, operations management, etc.)	Controlled and bounded projects designed to supplement established course lecture categories, while permitting some personal and experiential learning	Level of external control and boundedness of projects moderated and increased over the course of the MBA. Subject area boundaries loosely defined in relation to project work
Mode of assessment	Well-established assessment procedures permitting external quality control and examination	Each project may present challenges and novelty to students and tutors. Assessement of project outputs possible with well-codified pedagogic interventions	Facilitators have to approach the novelties within each project as presenting challenges and opportunities to students and facilitators

(*cont.*)

Table 17.1 (continued)

Dimension	Lecture-centred MBAs	Project-added MBAs	Experiential MBAs
Reflexivity	Personal and reflective learning has less emphasis	Personal and reflective learning possible under controlled conditions	Personal and reflective learning possible, with greater scope for personal experiences, challenges, and setbacks
Experiential features	Psychologically safe learning zone within expectations of students and faculty	Experiential learning boundaries can be managed to permit some uncertainties, but avoid over-threatening challenges (Moderate scope for developmental 'stretching')	Challenges and setbacks require facilitated negotiation, so that they lead to qualitatively different experiential learning. The learning model permits reflective critique of group processes and anxieties
Degree of knowledge uncertainty	Lectures provide a coherent and convincing knowledge base	Projects provide realistic experiences equipping MBAs for industrial work as a unitary culture (shared goals etc.), and less frequently as a negotiable pluralism	Projects reveal the 'messiness' of pluralistic and fragmented group cultures, which sometimes are susceptible to negotiable outcomes
Organization of learning opportunities	Personal and unintended learning opportunities few	Personal and unintended learning opportunities possible	Personal and unintended learning opportunities frequent
Scope for creativity	Presentational approach of teacher	Presentational approach of teams; some scope for exceptional insights in content	As for other project-based approaches, plus additional opportunities for resilient and creative responses to unanticipated challenges
Knowledge management	Knowledge management structures mostly codified	Knowledge management structures partly codified (with scope for some integration of learning)	Knowledge management structures integral to the method ensuring recurrent developmental features

Source: Adapted from Rickards, Hyde, and Papamichail 2005.

experiences generate. There are increased opportunities for personal and reflective learning and for understanding and working with group processes. Such projects reveal the messiness of group work and allow for creative responses to unanticipated challenges.

Whilst the MBA programme at Manchester may have once claimed to be an experiential MBA (see Table 17.1), this was probably never fully realized. The programme structure and design have the features of a project added programme with live projects, at times, more closely resembling consultancy projects. These projects do however incorporate features of experiential learning in their provision of an experience which involves planned and unpredicted features, and students are encouraged to expect accidental opportunities to learn. The extent to which students are able to observe and reflect on their experiences varies between groups and between group members and tutors. There are a range of familiar behaviours exhibited by students and tutors during live projects, which can include classic group processes of fight-flight, dependency, or pairing. In reality, boundaries between subject area groups in the Business School are more clearly delineated than hitherto, resulting in perhaps a more conservative-looking department at some distance from its radical roots.

Whilst there are many examples of experiential events for management students, incorporation of such events into a programme of management education also requires tutors to learn from experience. Susan Long suggests that universities authorize the defence of 'isolation' (2004: 131) where learning from experience that is available to students is less available to tutors as staff are 'supposed-to-know'. Theoretical differences act as containers for anxieties and isolate the problem of competition between staff. The task of the university—to bind knowing into knowledge and commodify learning—means that knowledge is packaged into small parcels isolated from other units/courses/sessions and few courses integrate knowing across subjects. Whilst the tutors lack access to their own experience, students lose the ability to relate to the wider institution, its authority, and its boundaries. This leads to the development of specialist graduates. It is perhaps the generalists' ability to work across disciplinary boundaries that management graduates are lacking. It could also be that the aspiration towards an idealized future where graduates are capable and organizational life is simple, unproblematic, and easily managed is also a fantasy.

In order to enable experiential learning as a feature of the institutional life of the university, Long suggests three factors for consideration;

1. The creation of times and spaces for reflection where members may seriously look inward to their own inner experience, in connection to task and role. Some of these spaces should allow for the public sharing of reflections.
2. The search for ways to understand how current structures and practices make some experiences legitimate and not others. This can be done in everyday

practice through testing out taken for granted ideas, values, attitudes, and behaviours. It requires the courage of everyone to face the taken-for-granted views that come with power, position, and hierarchy, to question one's own assumptions about the ones-supposed-to-know, or the part of oneself supposed-to-know.

3. Understanding that this can only be achieved if it is legitimated within the institution not simply in rhetoric, but in practice. Without such authorization, learning from experience becomes isolated and unavailable to others—and often to the subject whose experience it is. (Long 2004: 134–5)

These suggestions apply to all staff and students, including administrators and others, and illustrate the enormity of the task, should one seek to incorporate experiential learning as a central feature of management education programmes.

Conclusions

This account of the use of live projects within a wider management education programme has shown that these projects offer opportunities for experiential learning that remain memorable to students over long time periods. Students are able to experience a range of project group processes (taking account of task and fantasy) that allow for the development of negative capability, including living with the experience of not knowing. They are able to work with 'not knowing', 'knowing', and 'establishing knowledge' and to move between these states. The tutors are as much a part of these processes and movements between knowledge states as the student group. Live projects run the risk of being transformed into consultancy projects as students and tutors seek to reduce uncertainties inherent in the projects.

One further critical issue is that the type of learning system described represents a moving target, ever striving to address possibilities for self-initiated change and development. There are necessary challenges in sustaining a dynamic approach to management education. Such approaches to learning generate tensions between faculty and staff and can conflate sponsor–client relationships. Furthermore, they require the continuous emotional engagement of participants to live with uncertainties and anxieties arising from the negotiated nature of live projects. Such tensions concern personal and team development, leadership, reflexivity, and the management of ambiguity. Live projects allow for the possibility of surfacing, exploring, and resolving conflicts. Rather than being removed, these conflicts recur, in novel forms, upon the advent of each new live project, re-emphasizing the emotional engagement required to sustain the approach.

Live projects cannot be separated from the programmes within which they occur, nor from wider university structures. The susceptibility of universities to the defence of isolation, built on assumptions of commodified knowledge consumption,

acts against the possibility of experiential learning except as isolated pockets of student experience. Tutors find themselves in the position of those 'supposed-to-know', which limits their opportunities for learning from experience still further. Integrating experiential learning into management education programmes presents a challenging task that would require system-wide adaptation to achieve and sustain. By creating opportunities for experiential learning, management education programmes may be able to offer the student the opportunity to move between not knowing, knowing, and established knowledge and to learn from their experiences. Without the opportunity for experiential learning of some sort, management education programmes will continue to produce students unprepared for the realities of organizational life.

References

Bion, W. R. (1968). *Experience in Groups*. London: Tavistock (repr. London: Routledge, 1989).

Burgoyne, J., and Reynolds, M. (1997). *Management Learning: Integrating Perspectives in Theory and Practice*. London: Sage.

Clifford, P., and Hillar Farran, J. (2004). *Wharton's Global Consulting Practicum*. New Orleans: Academy of Management Conference Procedings.

Gabriel, Y. (2005). 'MBA and the Education of Leaders: The New Playing Fields of Eton', *Leadership*, 1/2: 147–61.

Gould, L. J., Stapley, L. F., and Stein, M. (2004). *Experiential Learning in Organizations: Applications of the Tavistock Group Relations Approach*. London: H. Karnac Books Ltd.

Heimer, C., and Vince, R. (1998). 'Sustainable Learning and Change in International Teams: From Imperceptible Behaviour to Rigorous Practice', *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, 19/2: 83–8.

Hyde, P., and Thomas, A. B. (2002). 'Organisational Defences Revisited: Systems and Contexts', *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 17/5: 408–21.

Klein, M., Heimann, P., Isaacs, S., and Riviere, J. (1970). *Developments in Psychoanalysis*. London: Hogarth Press.

Kolb, D. A. (1985). *Experiential Learning: Experiences as the Source of Learning and Development*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Lacan, J. (1992). *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*. London: Routledge.

Lazar, R. (2004). 'Experiencing, Understanding, and Dealing with Intergroup and Institutional Conflict', in L. J. Gould, L. F. Stapley, and M. Stein (eds.), *Experiential Learning in Organizations: Applications of the Tavistock Group Relations Approach*. London: H. Karnac Books Ltd.

Long, S. (2004). 'Building an Institution for Experiential Learning', in L. J. Gould, L. F. Stapley, and M. Stein (eds.), *Experiential Learning in Organizations: Applications of the Tavistock Group Relations Approach.* London: H. Karnac Books Ltd.

Menzies, I. E. P. (1970). *The Functioning of Social Systems as a Defence against Anxiety.* London: Tavistock Institute.

Mintzberg, H. (2004). *Managers Not MBAs: A Hard Look at the Soft Practice of Managing and Management Practice*. San Fransisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Rickards, T., Hyde, P., and Papamichail, N. (2005). 'The Manchester Method: A Critical Review of a Learning Experiment', in C. Wankel and R. DeFillipi (eds.), *Educating Managers through Real World Projects*. Greenwich, Conn.: Information Age Publishers.

Stein, M. (2004). 'Theories of Experiential Learning and the Unconscious', in L. J. Gould, L. F. Stapley, and M. Stein (2004). *Experiential Learning in Organizations: Applications of the Tavistock Group Relations Approach*. London: H. Karnac Books Ltd.

Thomas, A. B. (1982). 'Inside Story: Managing Boundaries', *Organization Studies*, 3/2: 183–8.

Wankel, C., and DeFillipi, R. (2005). *Educating Managers through Real World Projects.* Greenwich, Conn.: Information Age Publishing.

Whitley, R., (1984). 'The Fragmented State of Management Studies: Reasons and Consequences', *Journal of Management Studies*, 21/3: 331–48.

PART V

DOCTORAL STUDENTS' EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING

This page intentionally left blank

CHAPTER 18

EXPERIENCING SCHOLARLY WRITING THROUGH A COLLABORATIVE COURSE PROJECT

ANDREA D. ELLINGER
WITH
RAYNIKA TRENT, YU-LIN WANG,
GRANT WOFFORD, YVONNE HOWARD,
INSIK CHO, MARA FREEMAN,
EUNJEE KIM, SOOYOUNG KIM,
PAT McGLAUGHLIN, SEOK YOUNG OH,
WAYNE SUTTON, BRAD WOOTEN

All life experiences hold the potential for learning. Some experiences result in learning, and some do not.

(Merriam and Caffarella 1999: 287)

Introduction

This chapter will describe a collaborative writing project that was designed to encourage doctoral students enrolled in a doctoral seminar at a midwestern university in the United States to become more immersed in the scholarly literatures on organizational learning and the learning organization concept. The chapter begins by situating experience and learning and briefly introducing experiential learning theory. Then, an overview of the purpose of the collaborative writing project in the broader context of experiential learning will be provided along with the processes followed by seminar participants to review and synthesize empirical work on the learning organization concept. Finally, doctoral seminar participants' reflections about key learnings as a result of participating in this experiential writing project will be discussed.

Several scholars have acknowledged the important role that experience plays in learning (Dewey 1938; Jarvis 1987; Knowles 1980; Kolb 1984; Merriam and Caffarella 1999). For example, Dewey (1938) asserted that 'all genuine education comes about through experience' (p. 25), but acknowledged that not all experiences educate and that some experiences may actually mis-educate.

For learning to occur through experience, Dewey (1938) articulated that the experience must exhibit the principles of continuity and interaction. The principle of continuity, or the experiential continuum, suggests that 'every experience both takes up something from those which have gone before and modifies in some way the quality of those which come after' (p. 35). In terms of the principle of interaction, 'an experience is always what it is because of the transaction taking place between an individual and what, at the time, constitutes his environment' (p. 43). For Dewey, these principles are interconnected and are the 'longitudinal and lateral aspects of experience' (p. 44). Dewey asserts that as learners encounter situations, what one has 'learned in the way of knowledge and skill in one situation becomes an instrument of understanding and dealing effectively with the situations that follow' (p. 44).

Drawing upon Dewey and others, Kolb (1984) conceptualized a theory of learning from experience, experiential learning theory (ELT), which suggests that learning is 'the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience' (Kolb 1984: 41). Kolb's experiential learning theory 'portrays two dialectically related modes of grasping experience—Concrete Experience (CE) and Abstract Conceptualization (AC)—and two dialectically related modes of transforming experience—Reflective Observation (RO) and Active Experimentation (AE)' (Kolb and Kolb 2005). According to Kolb, concrete experiences are the basis for observations and reflections which are then assimilated and distilled into abstract concepts. Implications can be drawn from these abstract concepts and action can be taken to test them which serves to create new experiences (in Kolb and Kolb

2005). Experiential learning is portrayed as a 'spiral where the learner "touches all the bases"—experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting—in a recursive process that is responsive to the learning situation and what is being learned' (p. 194). As Kayes (2002) has acknowledged, 'What distinguishes ELT is not its concern for any single aspect of learning, but rather its concern for the interaction between multiple aspects' (p. 139).

Design of the Course and Collaborative Writing Project in the Context of Experiential Learning Theory

Efforts to improve higher education have become increasingly focused on experiential learning as a core stream of research to improve learning processes (Kolb and Kolb 2005: 207–10). At the doctoral level within higher education institutions, this type of experiential approach is important. Although doctoral students have developed a foundational base of experience and knowledge throughout their undergraduate and graduate education upon which to build, further developing their core competencies as researchers and writers is fundamental to their successful completion of the dissertation and ultimately the awarding of their doctoral degree as well as their transition into academic career paths. As Boote and Beile (2005) have acknowledged,

> We have all heard the joke before—as we move through graduate school, we learn more and more about less and less until we know everything about nothing. It is expected that someone earning a doctorate has a thorough and sophisticated understanding of an area of research and scholarship. Unfortunately, many doctoral dissertations in education belie the joke, their authors failing to master the literature that is supposed to be the foundation of their research. (p. 3)

While it is often assumed that doctoral candidates have well-developed writing skills, Boote and Beile have acknowledged that many doctoral students 'have not explicitly studied writing and rhetoric since their freshmen composition classes' (p. 12). Furthermore, it is also assumed that a dissertation literature review is indicative of the doctoral student's ability to identify, critically read, understand, and synthesize the scholarly literature. Yet, most doctoral students are novice researchers and Boote and Beile suggest that they are often insufficiently prepared. As they note, 'the dirty secret known by those who sit on dissertation committees is that most literature reviews are poorly conceptualized and written' (p. 4). They

acknowledge that reviewing literature should be a central focus within doctoral programmes and integrated throughout the curriculum.

Since researching, synthesizing, and writing about the scholarly literature are critical core competencies required for doctoral study, it was thought that drawing upon these conceptions of experiential learning and Kolb and Kolb's (2005: 207–10) principles to enhance experiential learning:

- respect for learners and their experience
- beginning learning with the learner's experience of the subject matter
- creating and holding a hospitable space for learning
- making space for conversational learning
- making space for development of expertise
- making spaces for acting and reflecting
- making spaces for feeling and thinking
- making space for inside-out learning
- making space for learners to take charge of their own learning

would enable the course facilitator to help doctoral students to further develop these competencies. Therefore, the course facilitator at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign attempted to design a doctoral seminar so that learners could engage in the experiential learning spiral in which the learner 'touches all the bases'—experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting' (Kolb and Kolb 2005: 194). The primary purpose of the course was to introduce learners to the multidisciplinary literature on the concepts of organizational learning and the learning organization through reading and in-depth discussion of these concepts so that learners would be able to meet the following objectives at the completion of the course:

- Describe different conceptualizations of the concepts of organizational learning and the learning organization;
- Discuss core philosophical and theoretical principles related to these concepts;
- Articulate the importance of these concepts and their application to the field of HRD;
- Examine and critique contemporary research literature on these topics;
- Gain knowledge and expertise in selected areas as a result of course projects and activities;
- Integrate knowledge and expertise through in-depth discussion and class facilitation;
- Experience group dynamics through collaborative learning projects and in-class activities; and
- Further develop research, writing, and critical thinking skills.

All twelve learners enrolled in the course were doctoral students. The composition of the course was diverse, with nearly 50 per cent of the course participants being from countries outside the United States. Approximately one-third of the course

participants were first-semester doctoral students, another third were within their first year or two in their programme of study, and the final third were nearing the final stages of their degree programmes. During the sixteen-week progression of the course, the facilitator's intent was to expose learners to seminal readings on the concepts of organizational learning and the learning organization so that learners could build upon any of their pre-existing knowledge of these concepts, understand the historical evolution of these concepts, and how scholars have built upon each other's work to further advance these literature bases through conceptual writing and empirical research. It was also intended that learners would search for current literature on these concepts to develop further both individual and collective knowledge. It was also expected that learners would each assume responsibility for facilitating class discussions on assigned readings. Lastly, the course facilitator had proposed that the collective output of the course be a conference paper submission that would focus on the concept of the learning organization and current issues and research in this area. Through this collaborative writing project, it was intended that learners would experience reading, reflecting upon the readings, engaging in discussions and facilitation activities to deepen individual and collective knowledge, conducting focused reviews of the literature, and synthesizing and writing up mini-literature reviews conducted within smaller enquiry groups that would be integrated to form a collective conference paper submission.

Rationale for Focusing on the Learning Organization Concept for the Collaborative Writing Project

The course facilitator chose to focus the collaborative writing project on the concept of the learning organization because it has generated considerable attention in recent years given the importance of learning as a sustainable competitive advantage in the highly turbulent global marketplace (Boud and Garrick 1999; Colteryahn and Davis 2004; Garvin 2000; James 2003; Marquardt and Berger 2003; Marsick and Watkins 1999; Ruona, Lynham, and Chermack 2003; Senge 1990a, 1990b; Watkins and Marsick 1993, 1996). Despite the growing interest in learning organizations much of the existing literature base has been criticized for being overly prescriptive and descriptive as opposed to being empirically grounded. Several scholars have suggested that the literature base should be further explicated (Altman and Iles 1998; Iles 1994; Jacobs 1995; Johnson 1998; Kaiser and Holton 1998; Leitch et al. 1996; Slater and Narver 1995; Sun and Scott 2003; Tsang 1997; Ulrich, Von Glinow, and Jick 1993).

In particular, several areas have been critiqued as requiring more attention. Issues around management and leadership in building and sustaining learning organizations have been an area in need of additional research as it has been suggested that leaders lack guidance and an understanding of specific behaviours that impact learning (Prewitt 2003; Vera and Crossan 2004). Issues around power, gender, and emotions have also not been adequately addressed. Contrasting the philosophies of Senge, Coopey (1995) has indicated 'that the absence from the learning organization model of specific features to facilitate changes in the framework and institutions of governance, and in the political processes constrained by them, detracts considerably from the model's prescriptive value' (p. 197). Easterby-Smith, Snell, and Gherardi (1998) have also lamented the lack of literature identifying the relationships of power and politics to organizational learning and learning organizations. Furthermore, Long and Newton (1997) have expressed concern that while 'the ideas of the learning organization promote some excellent ideals, they never quite address those emotional processes whereby one moves from say, the destructive competitiveness inherent in fractured experiences of the world, to the more holistic co-operative experiences inherent in a broader sense of mutuality—a model perhaps of organizational maturation' (p. 288). While emotions 'are now being recognized as an inevitable feature of organizational life' (Gabriel and Griffiths 2002: 215), the domain of emotion in the study of organizational learning is underpresented (Turnbull 2004) and limited empirical research exists within the context of learning organizations.

Lastly, issues around assessment and measurement and how the learning organization concept may be linked to performance improvement have been an area demanding more scholarly attention (Moilanen 2001). Furthermore, while proponents of the learning organization contend that becoming a learning organization should result in improved performance, the linkage of the learning organization concept with organizational performance outcomes has been an area of enquiry demanding scholarly attention (Jacobs 1995; Kuchinke 1995; Smith and Tosey 1999).

Therefore, it was determined that the purpose of this collaborative writing project would be to conduct a focused review of the state of current empirical literature on the learning organization concept related to these thematic areas as well as to develop some directions for future research. While not exhaustive or comprehensive, it was assumed that the collective paper emerging from this collaborative writing process would provide some insights into these issues as well as present some implications for practice and future research. It was anticipated that this collective output would become a conference proposal submission for the Sixth International Conference on HRD Research and Practice across Europe. This venue was determined to be the most appropriate for the content of this submission and the submission timeframe corresponded to the completion of the course and project timetable.

Method for Conducting the Collective Literature Review and Writing the Paper

The collaborative process began with the course facilitator's preliminary identification of several broad themes: learning organization and leadership/management; learning organization and innovation; learning organization and culture/performance/assessment; learning organization and employee perceptions; learning organization and knowledge management/technology; learning organization and gender/power issues; learning organization and emotions; other topics. Course participants formed smaller enquiry groups and selected areas of interest so they could begin to conduct literature searches on their respective broad theme relative to the shortcomings in the literature. ABI-Inform and EBSCO were the primary databases that were searched using some of the following search terms: learning organization, employees, organizational behaviour, job satisfaction, commitment, workers, emotion, power, politics, political, assessment, gender, measurement, performance improvement, leadership, management, and a combination of these terms with the learning organization term.

Following a cursory review of the conceptual and empirical literature, several of these broad categories were collapsed and merged. Through this process, it was determined that the resulting collective review of literature would incorporate empirical research identified around the issues of leadership/management, power, gender, emotions, measurement/assessment, and performance improvement. These issues were determined to represent the acknowledged voids in the learning organization literature.

Doctoral students individually explored their thematic areas and then worked within their enquiry teams to collectively discuss and synthesize the empirical research they had gathered. They were encouraged to bring their laptop computers to the seminar so that the final two weeks of the semester could be used to integrate and assemble the work of the enquiry teams into a cohesive final product. During the final two weeks of the course, the facilitator also provided laptop computers and began to integrate the enquiry teams' files into one file that would serve as the initial draft of the collective paper. The facilitator and doctoral students reviewed the guidelines for the EHRD proposal submission process and discussed the general format of a conference paper submission and the type of content that each section within the paper should contain. A general outline of the content of the EHRD proposal submission was developed and sections were then cut and pasted into the respective sections. The facilitator used projection capabilities and highlighting features to display the initial and subsequently revised drafts to the students on a

large projection screen. Once a reasonable near final draft was developed, a team of four students served as editors and the facilitator worked closely with them to finalize the paper to meet the conference submission deadline. The course concluded with the facilitator indicating that she would keep students apprised of the outcome of the submission.

Following receipt of the favourable outcome about the conference submission two months later, the facilitator contacted all of the students, who met to discuss the reviewers' feedback. The enquiry teams independently worked on enhancing their sections and pursuing recommended readings by reviewers to enhance the final draft of the paper. The final paper, 'Some Current Perspectives on the Learning Organization: A Review of the Literature', was submitted and the paper was presented jointly by the facilitator and one of the doctoral students who was able to travel to the conference on behalf of all of the seminar participants. This paper appears in the Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference on HRD Research and Practice across Europe, Leeds.

Learners' Reflections on the Collaborative Writing Project Experience

Following the completion of the course and presentation of the paper at the Sixth International Conference on HRD Research and Practice across Europe in May 2005, the course facilitator contacted all twelve learners and asked the learners to reflect on four questions:

1. As you reflect on your experiences, how did this writing project shape, challenge, and transform your individual understanding of organizational learning/learning organization? Do you and how do you come to understand organizational learning/learning organization concepts/literature differently?
2. As you reflect on your experiences, how did this writing project shape, challenge, and transform your group/collective understanding of organizational learning/learning organization? Did your group and how did your group come to understand organizational learning/learning organization concepts/literature differently?
3. As you reflect on your own experiential learning experiences, what if anything did you feel you learned from this project that has contributed to your scholarly writing?
4. Have you and how have you been transformed as an emerging and developing scholar in the doctoral programme?

The written reflections provided by all twelve learners were then examined by the course facilitator. While the facilitator had hoped that some of the learners indicating an interest in continuing work on this project would participate in the content analysis of the written responses, the four learners most committed to furthering this project had not yet taken qualitative data analysis courses. Therefore, the course facilitator asked these four learners to serve as critical reviewers of the content analysis as a form of member checking for this process. The following sections provide insights into the learners' reflections about their experiences in participating in this collaborative writing project.

Reflections on Individual Understanding

The learners' responses to the first question revealed an overarching theme related to the participation in the course and collaborative writing project as one that *broadened my scope of understanding*. Within this overarching theme, there was some variation as to how this occurred. Learners referred to the notions of being able to *distinguish between these concepts, deepen their knowledge about these concepts by understanding the vastness of the literature, its historical evolution and influential scholars, the dynamics that shape these concepts, and future research directions.*

The majority of course participants may have initially considered themselves to be organizational learning and learning organization neophytes. For example, learner 5 indicated, 'at the beginning of the class, I did not recognize the differences between organizational learning and the learning organization . . . however, throughout the semester, I came to realize the huge dissimilarity between [the] two terms.' Similarly, learner 3 mentioned, 'I just knew that organizational learning and the learning organization [were] the same thing . . . after reading tons of literature related to definitions, theories, and empirical research, I could . . . classify them in different points of view by scholars.' For learner 12, she indicated, 'honestly, the differences in concepts of organizational learning/learning organization was not clear to me until I read a few articles which changed my views of organizational learning/learning organization'.

In slight contrast to many of the other learners in the course, two learners had indicated that they had some knowledge of organizational learning and the learning organization concepts prior to enrolling in this course but gained new insights as a result. As learner 8 acknowledged,

I have a research project that focus[es] on one of organizational learning's constructs, information acquisition. . . . Based on my previous literature reviews on organizational learning, this writing assignment made me extend and review more organizational learning/learning organization concepts in depth. . . . I understand organizational learning and the learning organization in a time series [and] from various perspectives. . . . the historical literature review truly led me [to] understand the development [of these concepts]. . . . hence, I merge these diverse concepts to transform my own understanding [of them].

Learner 10 stated,

Before the [writing] project began, my understanding of organizational learning was as learning as a process at an organizational level and that of the learning organization was as just and one type of organization that emphasize[s] learning, respectively. As the project went on, I got to understand that learning organization is a type of organization as an open system that the rapidly changing world demands to [ensure] its survival in competitive markets. The transition occurred from differentiating mere definition[s] to identifying several factors to facilitate or prevent organizations to become learning organizations: Learning organization is one type of organization that [is] good at organizational learning whose leaders play a major role in 'change'; power and politics come into play either in a positive or negative way; knowledge management is essential since knowledge and innovation are major players.

For learner 4, 'the writing project was a vehicle that guided me through the literature review process by providing an insight to organizational learning/learning organization and the distinction between the two. It challenged me to engage in how the various authors viewed [these concepts] and how their interpretations influenced and added to the body of knowledge.' As learner 2 acknowledged, 'This collaborative activity provided a foundation of where the learning organization concept had come from and where we are in the quest for understanding the learning organization, further, it facilitates future discussion identifying trends and illuminating missing or incomplete areas of our knowledge and understanding.'

Two learners specifically referred to their own research interests as being stimulated though their work on this project. As learner 1 noted, 'through my participation in this seminar and the organizational learning/learning organization literature, I began seeing that what I was interested in was how organizations were participating in the education and learning development of employees for them to contribute to the long term success of the organization.' Similarly, learner 3 suggested, 'As the [project] goes on, I began to find my own interest.' And for two other learners, how they approach their reading and work has been changed. For learner 6, 'as a result of participating in the assignment I now approach understanding [these concepts] differently than prior to my participation. I now seek to classify literature that I read regarding [these concepts] into broad categories, similar, but not limited to those developed during the collective class assignment. This mental classification allows me to organize my thinking by ensuring that I review literature with the appropriate "lens" if you will, as I conduct research.' For learner 11, 'the experience made me want to share some [of] the concepts that we

explored during our project with colleagues in an effort to make a more positive impact on current situations in our "learning organization" '.

Overall, the individual reflections suggest that the writing project did enhance their individual understanding of these concepts. One learner commented that 'working together on this paper almost epitomize[d] what the learning organization/organizational learning [are]' (learner 9).

Reflections on Group/Collective Understanding

Learners' responses to question 2 regarding their reflections about how the writing project shaped, challenged, and transformed group/collective understanding of organizational learning/learning organization concepts revealed an overarching theme associated with *stimulating conversations and exchange to refine, reshape, challenge, and sacrifice perspectives to develop niche knowledge and expertise*.

Learners' responses consistently described a similar approach among the smaller collaborative enquiry groups. Group members typically each conducted independent searches of the literature related to their respective thematic area and then met with their group members to share and potentially transform their insights with each other as well as work toward the development of a synthesized section of the literature review on their particular thematic area. Learner 2 captures the essence of the process that most groups used:

> Within my particular sub-group were five students. Each of us commenced a search of the literature sources seeking material along the general line of our chosen topic of interest in organizational learning/learning organization. During our collaboration the diverse ideas and findings of this group became more refined and were narrowed down through individual reflection and feedback to express what we believed to be the salient issues expressed in the literature. This process elaborated some areas, such as the prevalence of power and gender issues recorded in the literature, but also reshaped our perceptions of other areas where we expected to find a substantial literature base but instead found little material. Through this process our perceptions [of these concepts] were modified and provided a sense that the literature base of organizational learning/learning organization was dynamic in nature and changing as it grows and faces new challenges and opportunities.

Sometimes during this process, though, 'we could not always explain our perspectives and relationship of topics to each other, some perspectives were sacrificed', according to learner 1. Furthermore, learner 1 felt that 'group members who had a stronger or more direct study that linked to the learning organization literature were able to contribute more and members who felt their research was repetitive or reinforcing of the other direct study contributed less . . .'. Learner 4 pointed

out the challenges to the group because 'members had their own interpretation of [these concepts] and how they perceived power, gender, and emotions within an organization. . . . afterwards [obtaining our literature] [we] collaborated within the group to reach consensus of what power, gender and emotions represented in the [learning organization]. This interaction of reaching consensus transformed the group's understanding of [these concepts].'

Learner 6 said, 'I was free to focus my energy toward my particular niche and be as thorough as possible in its development . . . in addition, the particular subgroup in which I was a member had some very stimulating conversations which deepened our collective understanding and individual understanding. . . . I was the expert for my particular niche and took on the responsibility of teaching my section to other members [of my subgroup], linking with other's sections [in the subgroup], and editing as necessary to make sure there was a decent "fit" between our sections.' Similarly, learner 9 acknowledged, 'I think the best part was getting together and collaborating to put our thoughts and ideas together.' But, as learner 8 noted, 'my group members and I can exchange and articulate our ideas based on the same literatures on [leadership], on the other hand, I only read one to two articles on power and gender issues on the learning organization . . . and therefore, I cannot say I am the expert on gender and power on learning organization literature.' Learner 10 suggested that '[in her small subgroup initial topics overlapped] and we got to figure out how to organize our portion of the paper and to put [it] into one big paper'.

Overall, learners appeared to acknowledge learning about their thematic area from each other through their group processes, perhaps with some variation of group dynamics between groups. However, the focus on a specific thematic area enabled learners to become more immersed in the empirical research in that thematic area perhaps at the expense of total immersion in literature covering all areas. It was anticipated that learners would learn about all thematic areas once the final paper was produced.

Reflections on Writing/Research

In response to question 3 which sought to better understand how participation in the writing project contributed to scholarly writing, an overarching theme emerged: *benefits derived from working in these small groups* for which there were several manifestations.

For the majority of the learners, the *benefits derived from working in these small groups* on this project enabled them to gain a *personal perspective and niche engagement*, *learn from each other through the sharing of multiple viewpoints*, *more critically look at their own research and writing skills*, and *become intellectually stimulated*

to conduct research. In terms of personal perspective and niche engagement, the majority of learners found the experience to be a positive one that immersed them in their small group. Learner 6 described developing a 'renewed understanding and respect for the collaborative process in researching [these concepts] and how it allows the individual collaborators to focus their energies in specific areas, become the "expert", and teach the other members of the group about his/her specific area'. In terms of learning from each other, learner 5 acknowledged, 'other students interpreted the same literature about organizational learning and the learning organization somewhat differently in comparison with me. That was also a valuable lesson from being involved in this writing project.' Similarly, learner 11 said, 'the experience reinforced my understanding of the need to be flexible and open to ideas that may differ from my own'.

A few learners did acknowledge some contrasting perspectives that illustrated the frustrations of not knowing it all. For learner 1, 'the significance of personal perspective and engagement most influenced my experience . . . as the project became more collaborative it included more perspectives and in some ways was less personal . . . as the project grew I felt less connected not having participated in either discussion and writing of the other sections.' Similarly, learner 7 did comment on the frustration associated with the inability to 'review all of the information that the other groups assessed and presented in their portion of the paper that was a source, albeit insane and impractical, of frustration'. Further, she acknowledged, 'pragmatic consideration does impart a genuine appreciation for how experiential group processes can provide such a multiplicity of knowledge in an efficient and productive manner'.

In terms of writing and research skills, learner 4 indicated, 'my experience with this project led to a closer examination of my research and writing skills and techniques while conducting keyword searches and reading articles pertaining to power, gender, and emotions within organizational learning/learning organization [literature]'. Similarly, learner 2 suggested, 'the group effort and group dynamics helped me to look more critically at my own writing and thought process and through feedback enabled me to improve my writing and amend my frame of reference for increased understanding of the organizational learning/learning organization literature'. Learner 9 also commented on the value of feedback when he said, 'in any type of scholarly writing, I feel it is important to have someone else reread and look at your work to get a second, third, etc. opinion'. For learner 8, 'learning how to synthesize related or different concepts, as a well-reasoned academic writing is what I learned most from the process'. And learner 10 acknowledged, 'this collaborative work was an opportunity to learn how to synthesize each member's ideas into one paper and to learn to write a paper together. Each of us could write a paper according to APA format.'

Lastly, several learners alluded to their intellectual desire to further research these topics. For example, learner 3 acknowledged, 'so this project impacts my study

about learning organization [concept] in Korean [context]'. Learner 5 suggested that 'the writing project . . . stimulate[d] my intellectual desire to research about organizational learning'. Lastly, one learner specifically acknowledged learning more about the need for more leadership/management research in the context of learning organizations (learner 12) as a result of her immersion in the smaller collaborative group exploring this thematic area.

In slight contrast to the overarching theme, two learners made additional observations that reflected on the challenges of group learning as a dynamic: 'As our learning was on the group level, I could see where the application of learning may fail in organizations because the members may not fully engage throughout the learning activities and therefore be less able to apply their learning to the organization's goals' (learner 1). Learner 1 seemed to consider that 'developing an understanding of the literature and desire to be understood and perceived as knowledgeable' may have impacted some learners' contributions to the group process. Learner 7 described the challenge of time to engage in the collaborative project as one that may have 'prevented the typical "growing pains" or developmental stages that are involved in any effective group process. . . . It is thought that the time constraints did influence the lack of distractions re: power struggles, expressionistic differences, etc, as well as the fact that the dismal amount of empirical data on this sub-group's assigned categories left little to tussle about!'

Reflections as an Emerging Scholar

In their reflections about becoming an emerging scholar, two broad themes emerged across learners' responses: *Exposure and immersion in the scholarly exchange on these concepts* and *developing a broad base of knowledge of research, writing, and publication processes*.

Exposure, immersion, and participation in the scholarly exchange on these concepts reflected learners' perspectives about having read a volume of diverse literature on these concepts and having had an opportunity to interact with their peers to think more deeply and reflectively about them. Learner 5 noted that 'the collaborative writing project gave me an opportunity to experience various types of literature'. Learner 4 indicated that 'the experience of participating in a group writing project helped to generate scholarly exchange on information that is important in the research field'. Similarly, learner 1 acknowledged, 'I am now a scholar that looks at the relationship of [these concepts] with other concepts/constructs,' and learner 12 suggested that, 'I would say my viewpoint of [the] learning organization has been expanded through this class.' Learner 2 also shared,

I believe the saturation of the literature coupled with the interaction with my peers during the weekly class meetings led me to some deep reflective thinking regarding [these concepts]. This activity raised illuminating and intriguing questions that I hope to pursue through further study and research which I believe apart from this interaction I would not have [been] likely to have encountered.

In terms of *developing a broad base of knowledge of research, writing, and publication processes for doctoral study*, learner 7 acknowledged, 'it was a part of my initiation into the doctoral programme. The immersion in this process awarded the indispensable tools of research, literature reviews, writing in an intimate, scholarly setting and notably aided in the reduction of what formidably could have been a paralyzing culture shock.' For learner 3, he discovered 'how strict the conference paper was in form and process', and learner 8 felt that 'this writing process taught me to synthesize literatures and transform it into a logical and well-reasoned paper . . . [which are] critical to doctoral programme training'. Learner 6 acknowledged that he had a 'much better understanding and respect for what an exhaustive literature review could look like'. For learner 10, the project 'was another opportunity to write up an academic paper and to know some emerging topics about learning organizations. I am still in the process of [becoming] a scholar. I am sure that this collaborative group project showed me how to search topics and synthesize articles and ultimately expose myself to a possible and potential topic I will be interested in for the future.' Tangentially related to this, learner 11 suggested that she didn't know if she had been transformed, but she had 'been inspired to make some adjustments in my life/work so that I can redefine my doctoral plan, develop a completion timeline, and focus more of my energies in that direction'. And learner 9 felt that he had 'gained independence and I am able to look for things that interest me . . . while working with my advisor I am able to shape my thoughts and interests into research and then create the process of writing papers'. Three learners acknowledged their interests in conducting future research on these concepts.

Overall, while learners may not fully know if they have been transformed, it appears that they have derived value from this project and developed skills that will enable them to engage more fully in their doctoral studies.

Concluding Thoughts

At the doctoral level, Boote and Beile (2005) have acknowledged that 'acquiring the skills and knowledge required to be education scholars, able to analyze and synthesize the research in a field of specialization, should be the focal, integrative activity of predissertation doctoral education' (p. 3). However, they assert that the centrality of the literature review has largely been ignored by faculty which has

weakened the quality of education research. Quality dissertations and research 'must be cumulative; it must build on and learn from prior research' (Boote and Beile 2005: 3). Similarly, experiential learning theory posits that learning should be cumulative and built upon prior experiences according to the principles of continuity and interaction.

The reflections provided by the doctoral students tend to suggest that the collaborative writing project was a positive experience that engaged the multiple facets of the experiential learning cycle. As can be seen from the reflections, initial immersion in the scholarly literature on the learning organization during the progression of the course helped to build a foundation upon which concepts could be clarified and internalized. For some learners, pre-existing knowledge of the learning organization concept and organizational learning was ill informed, whereas for others, the concepts were a part of the learners' experiential continuum. Through reading, facilitation activities, and in-depth discussion, learners could challenge their own understandings to form more abstract conceptualizations of the concepts. The learners also had to take action to locate relevant literature, to synthesize it, as well as discuss it in depth with their peers within their enquiry teams. Lastly, they had to engage in the writing process at a team level and then experience the process of transforming this team-level contribution into a collective product representative of all of the seminar participants and course facilitator.

By engaging doctoral students in this type of seminar where they were able to experience the dynamics of experiential learning, it is hoped that a more holistic and integrated approach to learning occurred that afforded them opportunities to develop themselves as emergent researchers and scholars. It is further hoped that their engagement enhanced the development of their research and writing skills. As Kayes (2002) asserts, 'Methods that increase vocabularies, introduce proximity of knowledge sharing, aid in making connections between personal and social knowledge, and organization experience in meaningful ways' (p. 147) lead to learning in academic and managerial contexts.

References

Altman, Y., and Iles, P. (1998). 'Learning, Leadership, Teams: Corporate Learning and Organizational Change', *Journal of Management Development*, 17/1: 44–55.

Boote, D. N., and Beile, P. (2005). 'Scholars before Researchers: On the Centrality of the Dissertation Literature Review in Research Preparation', *Educational Researcher*, 34/2: 3–15.

Boud, D., and Garrick, J. (1999). 'Understandings of Workplace Learning', in D. Boud and J. Garrick (eds.), *Understanding Learning at Work*. London: Routledge.

Colteryahn, K., and Davis, P. (2004). '8 Trends You Need to Know Now', *T and D*, 58/1: 28–36.

Coopey, J. (1995). 'The Learning Organization, Power, Politics and Ideology', *Management Learning*, 26: 193–213.

Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and Education.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

Easterby-Smith, M., Snell, R., and Gherardi, S. (1998). 'Organizational Learning: Diverging Communities of Practice?', *Management Learning*, 29/3: 259.

Gabriel, Y., and Griffiths, D. S. (2002). 'Emotion, Learning and Organizing', *Learning Organization*, 9/5: 214.

Garvin, D. (2000). *Learning in Action.* Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Iles, P. (1994). 'Developing a Learning Environment: Challenges for Theory, Research and Practice', *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 18/3: 3–9.

Jacobs, R. L. (1995). 'Impressions about the Learning Organization: Looking to See What is behind the Curtain', *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 6/2: 119–22.

James, C. R. (2003). 'Designing Learning Organizations', *Organizational Dynamics,* 32/1: 46–61.

Jarvis, P. (1987). *Adult Learning in the Social Context.* London: Croom Helm.

Johnson, J. R. (1998). 'Embracing Change: A Leadership Model for the Learning Organization', *International Journal of Training and Development*, 2/2: 141–50.

Kaiser, S. M., and Holton, E. F. (1998). 'The Learning Organization as a Performance Improvement Strategy', in R. Torraco (ed.), *Proceedings of the Academy of Human Resource Development Conference.* Oak Brook, Ill: Academy of Human Resource Development.

Kayes, D. C. (2002). 'Experiential Learning and its Critics: Preserving the Role of Experience in Management Learning and Education', *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 1/2: 137–49.

Knowles, M. S. (1980). *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Andragogy*, 2nd edn. New York: Cambridge Books.

Kolb, A. Y., and Kolb, D. A. (2005). 'Learning Styles and Learning Spaces: Enhancing Experiential Learning in Higher Education', *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 4/2: 193–212.

Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Kuchinke, K. P. (1995). 'Managing Learning for Performance', *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 6/3: 307–16.

Leitch, C., Harrison, R., Burgoyne, J., and Blantern, C. (1996). 'Learning Organizations: The Measurement of Company Performance', *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 20/1: 31–44.

Long, S., and Newton, J. (1997). 'Educating the Gut: Socio-emotional Aspects of the Learning Organization', *Journal of Management Development*, 16/4: 284–98.

Marquardt, M., and Berger, N. O. (2003). 'The Future: Globalization and New Roles for HRD', *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 5/3: 283–95.

Marsick, V. J., and Watkins, K. E. (1999). *Facilitating Learning Organizations: Making Learning Count.* Aldershot: Gower.

Merriam, S. B., and Caffarella, R. S. (1999). *Learning in Adulthood: A Comprehensive Guide*, 2nd edn. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Moilanen, R. (2001). 'Diagnostic Tools for Learning Organizations', *Learning Organization*, 8/1: 6–20.

Prewitt, V. (2003). 'Leadership Development for Learning Organizations', *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, 24/2: 58–61.

Ruona, W. E. A., Lynham, S. A., and Chermack, T. J. (2003). 'Insights on Emerging Trends and the Future of Human Resource Development', *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 5/3: 272–82.

Senge, P. (1990*a*). *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization.* New York: Doubleday.

—— (1990*b*). 'The Leader's New Work: Building Learning Organizations', *Sloan Management Review*, 32/1: 7–23.

Slater, S. F., and Narver, J. C. (1995). 'Market Orientation and the Learning Organization', *Journal of Marketing*, 59: 63–74.

Smith, P. A. C., and Tosey, P. (1999). 'Assessing the Learning Organization: Part I—Theoretical Foundations', *Learning Organization*, 6/2: 70–5.

Sun, P. Y. T., and Scott, J. L. (2003). 'Exploring the Divide: Organizational Learning and the Learning Organization', *Learning Organization*, 10/4: 202–15.

Tsang, E. W. K. (1997). 'Organizational Learning and the Learning Organization: A Dichotomy between Descriptive and Prescriptive Research', *Human Relations*, 50/1: 73–89.

Turnbull, S. (2004). 'Emotion in Organizational Learning: Implications for HRD', in T. M. Egan and M. L. Morris (eds.), *Proceedings of the Academy of Human Resource Development Conference*. Austin, Tex.

Ulrich, D., Von Glinow, M. A., and Jick., T. (1993). 'High-Impact Learning: Building and Diffusing Learning Capability', *Organizational Dynamics*, 22/2: 52–66.

Vera, D., and Crossan, M. (2004). 'Strategic Leadership and Organizational Learning', *Academy of Management Review*, 29/2: 222–41.

Watkins, K. E., and Marsick, V. J. (1993). *Sculpting the Learning Organization: Lessons in the Art and Science of Systemic Change.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

—— —— (1996). *In Action: Creating the Learning Organization.* Alexandris, Va.: American Society for Training and Development.

CHAPTER 19

EXPERIENCING A COLLECTIVE[1] MODEL OF DOCTORAL RESEARCH SUPERVISION

SANDRA JONES
(AND DOCTORAL STUDENTS)

Introduction

The increasing number of candidates enrolled in doctorates (especially in the growing area of professional doctorates), in combination with industry demand for more relevant research into professional practice, is leading to growing recognition that university doctorates are 'occupying a more central role, both institutionally and nationally' (Neumann 2003: 4). This is resulting in wide-ranging discourse about the most effective form and structure of doctoral programmes to support candidates and lead to maximum output (completions). In the early 1990s in the USA Bowen and Rudenstine (1992) undertook research into completion rates, in the UK Becher, Henkel, and Kogan (1994) explored the educational experience, while

Clark (1993) and Burgess (1997) explored issues associated with postgraduate education and lifelong learning. In addition several authors have undertaken research to compare doctoral education in different countries (Clark 1993; Holdaway, Deblois, and Winchester 1995).

One of the important issues raised is the most appropriate supervisory relationship, especially in regard to the newly emerging professional doctorates. The professional doctorate differs from the more traditional Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in attracting part-time candidates with several years in the workforce in addition to their past academic success, rather than the full-time (recently graduated) candidates with a strong academic performance attracted to the Ph.D. The professional doctorate also differs from the Ph.D. in the expected contribution of advancement of professional practice rather than the advancement of knowledge within an academic discipline (Bourner, Bowden, and Laing 2001). Gibbons et al. (1994) describe this as the difference between Mode 1 (new) and Mode 2 (applied and integrated) knowledge. Lee, Green, and Brennan (2000) describe the professional doctorate as situated at the nexus of the profession, the workplace, and the university. While Green, Maxwell, and Shanahan (2001) state that the professional doctoral qualification represents

> a significant challenge to the traditional orientation of universities, especially with regard to existing policies and practices of research and research training . . . it involves a fundamental reconsideration of matters such as knowledge, practice, supervision and methodology, as well as issues such as diversity and flexibility. (p. 2)

This is particularly the case in the management area where professional Doctorates of Business Administration (DBA) are attracting increasing numbers of candidates in the UK and Australia (Bourner, Bowden, and Laing 2001), with candidates seeing this as the next step beyond the Master of Business Administration (MBA).

Experiential learning has long been acknowledged as appropriate for management education. This has led to an increase in practice-based/action-based research, evidence-based, reflective practice, situated learning, and experiential learning. Practitioner-based research is often described as the 'pull' of research that differs from the traditional Ph.D. research 'push' approach through which academic researchers disseminate their results to practitioners (Bourner, Bowden, and Laing 2001). In response to business and industry criticism of the quality and skills of graduates from traditionally academic focused doctorates (Clarke 1996), this 'pull' approach is influencing both professional doctoral and Ph.D. research, especially in the 'soft' disciplines such as management.

Recognizing that this shift holds many challenges for organizations, universities, and candidates, the issue of interest for this chapter is: what should an appropriate student–supervision relationship for practice-based research include? In so doing it is acknowledged that any new experiential model of supervision for management

doctorates should take account of the perceived limitations as well as advantages of experiential learning, particularly the need to focus beyond the individual to the collective (social), to link theory and practice, to expand reflection to the present, and to establish a process that reduces defensive responses (Vince 1998; Reynolds and Vince 2004).

This chapter proposes the addition of an experiential research Community of Practice (CoP) to provide peer-supported knowledge sharing and discovery for candidates whose doctoral research is in a similar domain. The chapter presents reflections of the supervisor (the author) and several doctoral candidates (DBA and Ph.D.) in an experiential research CoP established in 2003. The conclusion from this example is that a research CoP can provide a valuable experiential learning opportunity for doctoral candidates, especially those undertaking research into professional practice, particularly in addition to 'outsider' peer reflection on 'insider' first-person action reflections.

Student–Supervisory Relationship

Research has found that effective supervision is crucial to the successful completion of a Ph.D. (Hockey 1994). In so saying, several models of supervisory relationships, associated with different philosophies of doctoral education, have evolved. Under the more traditional research-based Ph.D., supervision tends to adhere closely to a master–apprentice tradition as identified by Frankland (1999), or a mentoring process as discussed by Hockey (1994). Neumann (2003: 38) found that students generally look for supervisors with similar research interests who are 'enthusiastic about their area of research, are experienced researchers, show an interest in students and respect them as people'. Supervisors in this traditional relationship are expected to have the expert academic knowledge to lead and support a candidate in their research. Examples of such supervisory modes include individual student–supervisor relationship (the major form of supervision in the 'soft fields'); small to medium-sized teams or groups under one or two supervisors with possibly a post-doctoral fellow (generally in laboratory-based hard pure disciplines); very large research groups of centres (soft pure fields); and finally, a supervisory panel (hard disciplines) (Neumann 2003). In all these models the emphasis is upon the individual relationship between the student (or groups of students) and the supervisor (sometimes supported by a post-doctoral student), with the supervisor providing the student with intellectual stimulation and excitement, academic rigour, and an appropriate framework within which to develop ideas without being too prescriptive.

New models of research supervision are needed for more practice-based professional doctorates and more mature-aged, work-experienced Ph.D. candidates.

These models need to be more cognizant of the candidates' greater practitioner knowledge, skills, and experience. Morley (2002) summarized the different supervisory relationship as:

> in a PhD . . . the emphasis is on academic knowledge and experience, supervisors are usually well ahead of their students in the vital knowledge areas at the commencement of the study . . . DBA candidates can have much more relevant, practical knowledge than their senior (academic) supervisor. This means that the candidates' maturity, practical judgment and knowledge need to be respected in the supervisory relationship. (p. 8)

One way to respond to this challenge is to adopt a more experiential learning approach to the supervisory–candidate relationship.

Experiential Learning and Doctoral Supervision

Experiential learning covers a variety of techniques that seek to assist a continual process of learning through four circular 'stages' that include observation and reflection upon concrete experience leading to the development and testing of abstract concepts and generalizations through active experimentation (Kolb 1984).

Underpinning the 'Learning Cycle' that evolved into a theory of experiential learning are Kolb's theoretical principles that learning should be a holistic and continuous process grounded in experience rather than an outcome during which the learner resolves conflicts between dialectically opposed modes of adaptation to the world through transactions between people and between people and the environment. This Learning Cycle thus accommodates both deductive and inductive approaches enabling learning to occur as abstract concepts are tested in practice as well as reflection upon concrete experience.

There are many examples of experiential learning in management education with the most popularly discussed including: action-based learning, situated learning, experiential professional practice activities based on case studies and role-plays, reflective practice, and practice-based research (Schön 1983; Lave and Wenger 1991). Applied to doctoral supervision, examples of experiential learning as part of the supervisory relationship are more common in the emerging professional doctorate arena, although there is some discussion in relation to Ph.D. supervision (see for example McMorland et al. 2003 and their research into first- and second-person action research/peer partnership enquiry).

Action-based and practice-based research places the candidate-as-practitioner as the source of knowledge, with opportunities provided for practitioners to develop a research methodology that includes reflection upon both their practice and the practice of others from a deeper knowledge perspective (Schön 1983, 1987). It is

the contention of this chapter that principles of experiential learning design can be of assistance in redesigning the doctoral supervisory–candidate model from the traditional master–apprentice, paternalistic approach (Sharp and Howard 1996).

In developing such a model, cognizance of the limitations of the experiential approach in a general education context is needed. Vince (1998), for example, criticized the learning cycle as being, first, limited by the individual experience that often does not recognize complexity and the unequal power relationships of social reality. This results in only certain 'voices' being heard and unequal power relations being hidden. Second, he identified the limitation of the focus of reflection on past events rather than on current experiences. Third, he pointed out that reflection can be limited by participant defensiveness about what may be exposed during the educative process. The solution he offered to address these limitations was more open dialogue to provide 'simultaneous access both to individual experience and to the translation of that experience through the social context' (Vince 1998: 313).

More recently Reynolds and Vince (2004) suggest that applying critical perspectives to management theory and practice, combined with an action-based learning approach, may address many of the limitations of the experiential learning approach. This is achieved by placing emphasis on the value of questioning and challenging existing power relations, enabling questioning of individual practice, while at the same time focusing on social and cultural processes rather than individual practice:

> situating management learning in the workplace . . . complemented by formal education within management and business schools. . . . [enables academics to] . . . work with managers in critically examining the challenges and problems with which they must work, drawing on our (academics) ideas and experiences in conjunction with theirs.
>
> (Reynolds and Vince 2004: 445)

This chapter presents a model of an experiential collective peer-supported doctoral supervision process through the establishment of a Community of Practice (CoP).

CoPs and Doctoral Supervision

The term Communities of Practice was first coined in 1991 when Lave and Wenger (1991) refocused learning on the 'journeyman' or 'master–servant' apprenticeship models through their concept of 'practice-based learning in Situated Learning environment'. The resultant focus on 'communities of practitioners . . . [in which] . . . mastery of knowledge and skills requires newcomers to move toward full participation in the sociocultural practices of the community' (Lave and Wenger 1991: 29) led to a model of CoPs through which older members introduce newer

members to their knowledge and skills through a process of *legitimate peripheral participation* (LPP) as the newer members move from the edge of the community to the centre. Building on this theory, Brown and Duguid (1991: 40) suggest that learning is a 'natural connection between working and innovating . . . the central issue in learning is about becoming a practitioner, not learning about practice.'

This has led to a surge in business interest in how organizations can use CoPs as a source of networking to encourage knowledge sharing. Literature on the theory and potential of CoPs by Snyder (1997), Wenger (1998), Lesser, Fontaine, and Slusher (2000), and Lesser and Prusak (2000), has been supplemented more recently by case studies of the practice of CoPs by Brown and Duguid (2000) and Hildreth and Kimble (2004). As Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002: 6) state 'it is not that CoPs themselves are new, but the need for organizations to become more intentional and systematic about "managing" knowledge'. In this sense CoPs have been defined as:

> groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis.
> (Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder 2002: 4)

CoPs are explained as fluid, not structurally rigid, voluntary groups of people who care about an issue (domain), share their practice, and often tacit knowledge, such that individual knowledge becomes social knowledge, and/or new knowledge is created. Organizations are encouraged to allow CoP to evolve and end organically, rather than have a particular 'task' or timescale (Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder 2002: 27 and 42).

CoPs are not a new concept in academia. Scholars naturally establish research collegiality around a common issue (*domain*), although such collegiality is often limited by competition for research grants and promotion (part of the 'publish or perish' performance criteria of academia). Thorne (2001) has also claimed that team or group research is a CoP. However, similarly to the recognized difference between teams and CoPs in organizations, the team research approach selects members rather than encouraging self-selection and has a specific task with clear boundaries that is held together by specific research goals and milestones. This is different from CoPs that aim to create, expand, and exchange knowledge around 'fuzzy' boundaries in which members are held together by passion, commitment, and identification with each other (Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder 2002).

A new model of research CoPs proposed in this chapter aims to bring candidates, supervisor, and other interested persons together to explore knowledge within a mutually defined domain that may be either directly or indirectly related to a candidate's specific research topic. This model assumes, first, that the role of the doctoral supervisor is to create the research environment, support candidates, and provide knowledge networking opportunities. Second, that continual peer review and feedback is useful for both research and improving practice through providing

the means to explore new approaches to responding to ambiguity in a knowledge era. The model uses the concept of legitimate peripheral participation in a new way whereby the 'expert' and the peripheral 'newcomer' change according to the particular discourse. In this sense the research CoP becomes an experiential learning environment as members develop new knowledge by sharing experiences and reflecting on their own and other experiences.

The CoP model of doctoral supervision addresses many of the challenges identified above of practice-based doctoral research. First, by providing the opportunity for open discourse, analysis, and reflection on each individual candidate's experiences and research, it broadens the individual practitioner reflection to a more collective social reflection as other members of the CoP contribute an 'outsider' perspective on the 'insider' reflection. Second, it changes the power relationship between supervisor and candidate as the discourse recognizes the legitimacy of many 'voices' and the supervisor focuses more on providing an appropriate framework for the research rather than on providing expert knowledge. Third, members are enabled to reflect on their current experience within the CoP and then use reflection upon their experience as a contribution to their particular research topic. Finally, it links theory and practice as practitioners and academics share their knowledge. In their description of the eight months' lived experience of supervisors and supervisees in a community of practice (or what they termed 'relational learning community'), McMorland et al. (2003) state, 'it is only seeing supervision and research collaboration as a relationship as well as a project, that intellectual intimacy, reflexive practice and creative inquiry can be fostered and enhanced' (p. 6).

In order to 'test' this collective model of doctoral supervision the next section presents the 'lived' experience of the author and several doctoral candidates (Ph.D. and DBA) in a CoP established as a voluntary addition to the traditional one-on-one supervisory model. In so doing a first-person action research reflective research method is used to present the experience, with anecdotal comments of various members of the CoP used to demonstrate, in a narrative tradition, the contribution of membership of the CoP to the doctoral supervisory process.

Experiencing a Collective Model of Doctoral Supervision

Background

The Business Portfolio of the University of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) offers both a Ph.D. and a DBA. The Ph.D. generally attracts less work-experienced, more academically focused candidates, many of whom are

international students. The DBA attracts practitioners with an appropriate postgraduate award and significant work experience. The DBA programme differs from the Ph.D. in the aim of contributing to professional practice rather than knowledge, and its structure, with a coursework component (33 per cent) that provides advanced specialist knowledge as well as academic analysis and writing skills. It also differs in the candidates it attracts—mature, high-achieving professionals, rather than the younger, more academically focused Ph.D. candidates. Finally, there is a difference in the ambitions of the candidates, with Ph.D. candidates focused more on an academic career, while DBA candidates wish to contribute to professional practice (Morley 1999).

The supervisory process offered by the university also differs. Ph.D. candidates are provided with a principal supervisor with whom they meet on a weekly basis, have twice-yearly formal reviews in which they present a summary of their progress to their supervisor and the research director, and a further public progress presentation to their peers. DBA candidates have a senior supervisor (academic) and a second supervisor (industry expert), plus a Supervised Professional Practice Review Session that provides opportunities for candidates to report on, and discuss, professional work relating to their thesis to colleagues and supervisors (RMIT 2003).

Experiential Learning: a CoP Model of and Doctoral Supervision

Establishment of the CoP

In 2003 the author (here after referred to as I) was the principal supervisor of four DBA and two Ph.D. research candidates in management (a third Ph.D. candidate was added in 2004). As a senior academic I was experienced in one-on-one research supervision of candidates in my area of research expertise, namely the challenges facing organizations in the ever-emergent knowledge era. Of the two Ph.D. candidates, one was an experienced practitioner. The DBA candidates were all practitioners with many years' experience operating in senior management positions from a cross-section of industry sectors (public service, manufacturing, academia, service), and disciplines (engineering, physics, design, human resource management). All candidates were at different stages of their research (one of the Ph.D. candidates was well advanced in his thesis write-up, the second Ph.D. candidate was involved in the first (quantitative) phase of her multi-method research. Two of the DBA candidates were new candidates undertaking the initial (coursework) part of their candidature, while the other two candidates had completed their coursework segments and were embarking upon their practice-led research. The research methodologies also varied from a more traditional external researcher using case study methodologies through questionnaires and interviews, to 'lived

experience' through action-research methodologies such as participant observation, first-person reflection narrative of 'lived experience', and interpretativism (using an abductive epistemology).

Having supervised the two Ph.D. candidates for a year, and the four DBA candidates for six months through traditional one-on-one supervisory meetings, I had identified that although all were undertaking research in diverse topics, a domain common to all was management of change in a knowledge era. I was keen to establish an opportunity for candidates to meet and share their thoughts, ideas, and experiences in a more collective and collaborative environment. Given that my own research included identifying the potential for CoPs to assist the sharing of knowledge (particularly tacit knowledge), I invited each of the candidates to join with me in establishing a research CoP as an experiential learning opportunity. I identified the potential of a research CoP to contribute to their own research by providing a forum to network research (theory and practice) and to create, exchange, and expand knowledge around the theme of the contribution of CoPs to organizations' knowledge strategy. To initially assist identification of whether the candidates might find value in a CoP I suggested that all candidates read Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) on how to cultivate CoPs.

All DBA candidates and one of the Ph.D. candidates (henceforth called members) attended the first meeting. All candidates acknowledged that my suggested domain for the CoP of 'the contribution of CoPs to an organization's knowledge strategy' did, directly or indirectly, relate to their particular practice-based research. One candidate stated that the CoP could provide 'a space in which all participants can share their thoughts, ideas, experiences and findings'. In so doing it was thought that the CoP would add a different dimension to their DBA supervised professional practice review sessions that involved more formal presentations on a more eclectic range of issues in the issues. The Ph.D. candidate was less certain about the connection between her research focus (a more macro view of knowledge transfer between organizations in research alliances) and consequently attended the CoP meetings irregularly.

It was agreed that meetings would commence at monthly intervals at a mutually convenient time. One of the DBA students with skills and experience in establishing virtual discussion facilities suggested using the university Distributed Learning System (DLS) to provide the opportunity for a more continuous discourse. It was also agreed that the discourse in the CoP would emerge organically, with no set agenda and no formal notes, although I agreed to circulate any notes I took, especially interesting or 'breakthrough' ideas, to assist the opportunity for double-loop learning through reflection and feedback between meetings (Argyris 1990). A number of issues related to the domain emerged during discussion in the first meeting and these have continued to underpin discourse throughout the life of the CoP:

- relationship between CoPs and social capital
- organizational commitment to CoPs (resource commitment or verbal rhetoric)
- apparent dichotomy between knowledge sharing and organizational commitment to the individual
- relationship between trust and knowledge sharing
- potential role of CoPs in assisting the development of lateral thinking
- cultural influences on knowledge sharing
- role and measurement of resources people bring to organizations
- potential knowledge sharing/partnership between universities and organizations
- link between knowledge and organizational sustainability (triple bottom line)
- difference between CoPs and other employee participative practices.

The CoP in Practice

The CoP met monthly between August and December 2003, varying more in 2004, sometimes on a fortnightly basis, sometimes on a bi-monthly basis, depending on the work demands of the members. All DBA candidates and the supervisor attended regularly, the Ph.D. candidates attended less regularly, with a new Ph.D. candidate who commenced in March 2004 also becoming a regular attendee. One of the DBA members summarized attendance at meetings as follows:

> the ongoing participation in these sessions, for those who have senior full-time roles testifies to their perceived value to all. It is rare to not have a quorum for fresh discussions and directions.

Membership grew in 2004 with a new Ph.D. candidate, an academic colleague undertaking a Ph.D. within the domain of knowledge management at another university, an honours student from the design area undertaking research into 'virtual' CoPs in local communities, and an external expert from a not-for-profit organization. The latter person was invited after members expressed a desire to ensure that the discourse extended from a 'business' perspective into more 'social' aspects. The external expert continued to attend meetings periodically because it provided an open, less pressured environment to discuss issues with senior representatives of the business community.

CoP meetings were held for an hour, once a month on a Friday morning starting at 8.30. This time limit was the only structural feature of CoP meetings and was maintained to make sure that members were able to fit the opportunity for open discourse into their heavy work schedules. Discussion was also unstructured and varied from continuation of a discourse begun at the previous meeting, to discussion on an article that a member might have circulated between meetings, or to ideas or reflection that a member may have had under consideration. Discourse was open, with everyone engaging in, and contributing to, the discourse.

Assessment of the CoP

In assessing the value of the CoPs I have used a combination of the advantages and limitations of experiential learning discussed earlier in this chapter including:

- value added to the individual doctoral researcher
- extension of doctoral research from an individual to a social experience
- combination of management theory and professional practice
- more equal supervisory–candidate relationship
- reflection in the 'here and now'
- opportunities for frank, open (non defensive) discourse and reflection.

In so doing, in keeping with the views of the CoP members emphasis has been placed on a qualitative rather than quantitative form of evaluation. Qualitative comments from members were collected in a variety of ways: collectively during one CoP meeting in which discussion focused on what may be the identified 'artefacts' emerging from CoP meetings, individually when a decision was taken to submit the CoP experience to the university as an example of an innovation. This evaluation revealed the following.

Value Added to the Individual Doctoral Researcher

The CoP was credited with assisting the individual doctoral candidates to develop their research skills, gain a broader understanding of their topic through the sharing of discussion on the various literature reviews undertaken, and develop a more holistic view of their research area. In their individual comments CoP members stated the following:

Deanne:

- I have fast-tracked my development as a researcher through the collaborative collegiate culture that is generated through CoP engagement
- The CoP facilitated
  - my ability to articulate and discuss my research amongst a diverse community of researchers
  - the maturing of my research process; greater clarity of focus and research method
  - a deeper level of self-reflection and personal understanding of research intent
  - an exchange of research paradigms, encouraging open debate and discussion

Owen: for me, our COP is a valued research paradigm that:

- broadens my academic and social networks and learning.
- adds to my research design and approach by my living the CoP experience.
- gives increased 'value adding' to my DBA time allocation and efforts.

Jackie: the value in the CoP environment is in the:

- free and proactive sharing of information amongst the participants who are participating voluntarily.
- removal of pressure of formal outcomes, and competitive influences.

- students participating in the CoPs are already highly skilled business people, but meeting for purely intellectual reasons is not a common opportunity.
- help in developing skills and rigour in theory development and defence.

Extension of Doctoral Research from an Individual to a Social Experience

During the collective feedback a number of statements about the CoP as a source of social learning experience were made including:

> the CoP creates a sense of belonging . . . reduces the loneliness of the part-time post-graduate student: it builds a sense of community and not just a group of colleagues coming together for lectures which are driven by somebody else's agenda . . . it creates a tie that binds, bringing together candidates from various backgrounds, professions and experiences.

This led to recognition of similarities underpinning their different research topics that:

> despite the divergence in backgrounds, knowledge, industry and thesis title, members recognised that discussion within the CoP led to an extraordinary commonality and convergence of topics that originally only Sandra had seen.

Owen summarized the CoP experience as:

> providing a base for members to codify new models of social interaction, generate substantial bonding/linking social capital . . . manifested in the trust displayed and knowledge shared.

Jackie stated:

> the group functions as a collection of intellectual equals who come to learn and to pass on knowledge wherever the opportunity arises in the free-flowing discussion . . . what the CoP does is provide the environment to capture the social energy of the collective.

From my perspective the CoP supplied the opportunity for candidates to provide peer support for each other. This was both intellectual (through sharing literature they came across as well as the exploration of different ideas) and social and emotional (through sharing the 'journey' through the academic process). The experience confirmed my initial belief that candidates could assist and support each other better by sharing their journey in this collective manner than through me as an intermediary.

Combination of Management Theory and Professional Practice

Members contributed both their professional practice and academic insights from their literature reviews. Jackie described the opportunity for true intellectual engagement provided by the CoP as providing 'a chance to work-out my brain that I don't get in my current work/life situation'. She went on to liken the environment created in the CoP to a university 'where academics can stop an expert in the

corridor and discuss new research findings . . . a luxury not normally available in the world of the practitioner . . . it was quite a creative process'. She summarized the experience as:

> there are frequent 'epiphanies' experienced by participants as the group exploration of theories from the wide variety of disciplines use experiments in language and narrative as sense-making methods, both supporting and challenging their fellow researchers. There is much cross-fertilisation of ideas, and sharing of readings and practice examples which would not happen in the competitive environment of course-based discussion groups.

Owen described the CoP as providing 'time and ambience for reflective thinking'. Indeed, the open interchange within the CoP reduced the concern often expressed about practitioner research that it may lack a critical external 'voice'.

Deanne commented:

> the CoP broadened my original frame of reference to include a range of literature and views from other CoP participants that may not have been identified had I worked entirely on my own. It challenged my interpretations of literature, allowing deeper analysis and discussion from community members. It exposed [me] to new ideas, new ways of interpreting and greater appreciation for the input of others, and it provided greater openness to diverse views and inputs and the value to my own research endeavour.

Jackie commented:

> Whilst the meetings are 'themed' the discussions are allowed to take any path which emerges and this unstructured approach leads often to innovative linking of concepts, introduction of new areas of interest, and breakthroughs in terms of removing boundaries and other scope limiters.

More Equal Supervisory–Candidate Relationship

Candidate members stated that the CoP did provide a more equal, mutually beneficial supervisory–candidate relationship. During the collective feedback session one comment was that the CoP provided 'a new way of engaging in teaching and research supervision' that assisted the development of 'common understanding'. The CoP was described as being built on a foundation of 'here is an opportunity to collaborate' rather than 'you will collaborate'. Another comment was that the CoP created a more equal environment by 'allowing candidates the freedom to make the connections and search for common threads as a gathering of equals, rather than being supervisor driven where candidates work to someone else's theme'.

Apart from a more equal supervisory relationship, Owen stated that the benefits of a more equal interchange within the CoP 'demonstrated the value of a non-hierarchal structure and minimalist (but essential) functional roles that distinguish CoPs from other social structures'. Deanne commented that she developed 'a greater

understanding of the supervisor role as research agent within the CoPs context—opening up new levels of interaction and guidance'.

As the supervisor, I noted the expanded opportunities for the candidates to share information and knowledge rather than rely solely on the supervisor. The major challenge for me was to restrain myself from assuming responsibility for CoP meetings, the direction of the discourse, and circulating notes from the meetings. Candidate members assisted me in making this transition by sharing responsibility for reminders of meeting dates. Furthermore, whenever I suggested the cessation of meetings in busy work periods, candidate members resisted this, and other solutions, such as meeting at alternating times to suit work commitments, were instituted.

Reflection in the 'Here and Now'

Members stated that the discourse that occurred within the CoP assisted them to identify and reflect on their own tacit knowledge and the assumptions made by individuals. This was described as 'starting with one tiny thread and then expanding'. The CoP was described as providing members with the opportunity to influence their professional practice as part of a double-loop learning process by transferring knowledge developed during CoP meetings to their individual workplaces. Jackie stated that the CoP 'provided the opportunity for insider practice-based researchers to broaden their perspective and ensure that their reflection upon practice assists them in considering change required in a knowledge era'.

Opportunities for Frank, Open (Non-Defensive) Discourse and Reflection

Members remarked that the CoP, being voluntary and free of the structural rigidities and requirements of formal academic interchange, meant that the subject material remained interesting and members were honest and willing to offer their views. Jackie stated, 'it is in fact a luxury that we don't often get'.

The CoP was credited with providing members with emotional support, intellectual stimulation, and an opportunity to discuss emerging ideas in a 'safe' environment, through support given to each other. Trust being established between CoP members was identified as an important requirement to encourage the sharing of confidential information and to encourage members to contribute their views. One member stated, 'the supportive atmosphere created encouraged members to openly share their thoughts'. This was a surprising comment for me, as I had not considered the potential 'threat' of individuals 'revealing' their vulnerabilities in the more open environment of a CoP than in the one-on-one supervisory relationship. This could also have been influenced by the fairly senior role that most of the members had as practitioners. Indeed one member stated that the CoP provided a 'forum where contentious thinking can progress to free discussion without retribution or diminishment'.

The outcome was that members believed that their research had been improved, their knowledge expanded, and their own personality developed through their participation in the CoP. Jackie stated that the CoP provides the opportunity to 'challenge and be challenged, to try on the theories and beliefs of others and see how they felt—this cannot be achieved in a group smaller than three or four'.

In summary, as an experiential approach to doctoral supervision, the CoP served to provide opportunities for practitioners to share their individual practice-based knowledge in a collective research environment. Although the attendance of the Ph.D. candidates was limited, this can be seen as a result of the stage of their research when the CoP was established as well as their broader focus and less practical experience. This conclusion is borne out by the fact that the newer Ph.D. candidate became a regular and enthusiastic attendee at meetings.

It is, however, also important to record that, despite the positive evaluation of the CoP by candidate/members and myself as supervisor, as an innovative form of research supervision, the university was restricted in its ability to recognize its true value by a focus on government-established measures of supervisory excellence. The major current measure is 'number of research completions within time'. As any causal link between the CoP and 'timely' research completions could not be evidenced, the university was unable to recognize the CoP as a major experiential research supervision innovation. This has implications for the level of future university support that may be provided for innovations associated with experiential research supervisory arrangement such as a CoP.

Conclusion

The model of an experiential, collective (social) approach to doctoral research supervision through a CoP has been shown to demonstrate the advantage of enabling a number of doctoral candidates to share their practice-based knowledge, their reflection as 'outside' observers, and their academic research, to the mutual advantage of all members. In so doing the CoP provides the opportunity to expand each individual's research beyond the individual to the collective through which knowledge is extended from the individual to the social. This provides an expanded opportunity to link management practice and theory in a less hierarchical research environment in which the supervisor becomes a member of the CoP rather than a separate 'expert'. In so doing the supervisor still has the opportunity to contribute their 'expertise' as required, be that about the domain under discussion, or how the domain can be translated to reflect a theoretical approach, with the result being that the supervisory relationship becomes more mutually rewarding. It also adds a more contemporary aspect to the reflective process.

The advantage of a CoP over other research groups or teams is that attendance is voluntary, with members building relationships, learning together, and developing a sense of belonging, trust, and mutual commitment. As a model of research supervision, the CoP also provides the opportunity for ongoing membership at the conclusion of the doctoral candidature, an advantage for candidates who desire to continue the opportunity for open discourse, and universities that desire an ongoing relationship with their alumni.

However, the CoP model of 'collective' supervision is not without its challenges and limitations. First, the supervisor has to be prepared to become more a facilitator of knowledge sharing rather than the 'expert', and although there is some sharing of the administration of CoP meetings, this falls more to the supervisor than the doctoral candidate members. Second, the university needs to support and recognize the additional time contribution of the supervisor in establishing and supporting the CoP. Academic workload and 'performance appraisal' negotiations need to consider the supervisory process rather than just outcomes (number of successful completions) if this new supervisory process is to be adopted. Third, candidates can become so involved in the breadth of the discourse that they find it difficult to confine their research within the boundaries of their research topic. This can especially become a problem when there is pressure (from the university or the candidate sponsor) to finish the doctorate within a set period of time. Fourth, the research CoP can go through periods during which the combination of work, family, and thesis demands leads to a decrease in ability to attend meetings. Both the supervisor and candidate members need to accept that this is a natural characteristic of CoPs, and be comfortable with the need to reassess the value of any particular CoP at any time.

Notes

Written by Sandra Jones on behalf of doctoral candidates/CoP members: Deanne Koelmeyer; Owen Lockwood; Jackie McCann; Ahmad Mousa; Frank Tait.

1. Note: collective in this sense refers to a collective process rather than a co-creation of a dissertation.

References

Argyris, C. (1990). *Overcoming Organizational Differences: Facilitating Organizational Learning*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Becher, T., Henkel, M., and Kogan, M. (1994). *Graduate Education in Britain*. London: Jessica Kingsley.

Bourner, T., Bowden, R., and Laing, S. (2001). 'The Adoption of Professional Doctorates in English Universities: Why Here? Why Now?', in B. Green, T. Maxwell, and P. Shanahan

(eds.), *Doctoral Education and Professional Practice: The Next Generation*. Armidale: Kardoorair.

Bowen, W., and Rudenstine, N. (1992). *In Pursuit of the PhD*. Princeton: Princeton University.

Brown, J., and Duguid, D. (1991). 'Organizational Learning and Communities of Practice: Towards a Unified View of Working, Learning and Innovating', *Organizational Science*, 2/1: 40–57.

——— (2000). 'Organizational Learning and Communities of Practice: Towards a Unified View of Working, Learning and Innovation', in E. Lesser, M. Fontaine, and J. Slusher (eds.), *Knowledge and Communities*. Boston: Butterworth-Heinemann.

Burgess, R. (1997). *Beyond the First Degree: Graduate Education, Lifelong Learning and Careers*. Buckingham: SRHE and Open University.

Clark, B. (1993). 'The Research Foundations of Postgraduate Education', *Higher Education Quarterly*, 47/4: 301–15.

Clarke, H. (1996). 'Dumbing-Down in Australian Universities', *Quadrant*, Sept.: 55–9.

Frankland, M. (1999). 'The Master/Apprentice Model for the Supervision of Postgraduate Research and a New Policy for Research Education', *Australian Universities' Review*, 42/1: 8–11.

Gibbons, M., Limoges, C., Nowotny, H., Schwartzman, S., Scott, P., and Trow, M. (1994). *The New Production of Knowledge: The Dynamics of Science and Research in Contemporary Societies*. London: Sage.

Green, B., Maxwell, T., and Shanahan, P. (2001). *Doctoral Education and Professional Practice: The Next Generation*. Armidale: Kardoorair.

Hildreth, P., and Kimble, C. (eds.) (2004). *Knowledge Networks: Innovation through Communities of Practice*. Hershey, Pa.: Idea Group.

Hockey, J. (1994). 'New Territory: Problems of Adjusting to the First Year of a Social Science PhD', *Studies in Higher Education*, 19/2: 177–90.

Holdaway, E., Deblois, C., and Winchester, I. (1995). *Organization and Administration of Graduate Programs*. Edmonton: Department of Educational Policy Studies, University of Alberta.

Kolb, D. (1984). *Experiential Learning*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Lave, J., and Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated Learning Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lee, A., Green, B., and Brennan, M. (2000). 'Organizational Knowledge, Professional Practice and the Professional Doctorate at Work', in J. Garrick and C. Rhodes (eds.), *Research and Knowledge at Work: Perspectives, Case-Studies and Innovative Strategies*. New York: Routledge.

Lesser, E., Fontaine, M., and Slusher, J. (eds.) (2000). *Knowledge and Communities*. Boston: Butterworth-Heinemann.

——— and Prusak, L. (2000). 'Communities of Practice: Social Capital and Organizational Knowledge', in E. Lesser, M. Fontaine, and J. Slusher (eds.), *Knowledge and Communities*. Boston: Butterworth-Heinemann.

McMorland, J., Carroll, B., Copas, S., and Pringle, J. (2003). 'Enhancing the Practice of Phd Supervisory Relationships through First-and-Second-Person Action Research/Peer Relationship Inquiry', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, FQS. http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs/.

Morley, C. (1999). 'A Professional Doctorate in Business: The New Height of Management Education', in S. Neelamegham, D. Midgley, and C. Sen (eds.), *Enterprise Management*. New Delhi: Tata McGraw-Hill Publishing Company.

Morley, C. (2002). 'Different Doctors: A Comparison of PhD and Professional Doctorate Supervision, *Proceedings Annual Conference ANZAM*. Beechworth, Australia.

Neumann, R. (2003). *The Doctoral Education Experience*. Canberra: Department of Education, Science and Technology, Australian Government Publishing Service.

Reynolds, M., and Vince, R. (2004). 'Critical Management Education and Action-Based Learning: Synergies and Contradictions', *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 3/4: 442–56.

RMIT (2003). *DBA Brochure*. Melbourne.

Schön, D. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

—— (1987). *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sharp, J., and Howard, K. (1996). *The Management of the Student Research Projects*, 2nd edn. Aldershot: Gower.

Snyder, W. (1997). 'Communities of Practice: Combining Organizational Learning and Strategy Insights to Create a Bridge to the 21st Century'. Presented at the 1997 Academy of Management Conference.

Thorne, L. (2001). 'Doctoral-Level Learning: Customisation for Communities of Practice', in B. Green, T. Maxwell, and P. Shanahan (eds.), *Doctoral Education and Professional Practice: The Next Generation*. Armidale: Kardoorair.

Vince, R. (1998). 'Behind and Beyond Kolb's Learning Cycle', *Journal of Management Education*, June, 22/3: 304–19.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

—— McDermott, R., and Snyder, W. (2002). *Cultivating Communities of Practice*. Combridge, Mass.: Harvard Business School Press.

Action Research

Candidate Statements (D. Koelymer, O. Lockwood, J. McCann, and A. Mousa). RMIT Research Supervision Award Application, 2004.

CoP Notes from meetings: 6 August 2003; 22 August 2003; 10 October 2003; 14 November 2003; 28 November 2003; 18 June 2004; 24 September 2004.

Jones, S., Koelmeyer, D., Lockwood, O., McCann, J., and Mousa, A. (2004). 'A Community Approach to Research Supervision'. RMIT Research Colloquium. Internal mimeo.

CHAPTER 20

DRAWINGS AS A LINK TO EMOTIONAL DATA

A SLIPPERY TERRITORY

TUSSE SIDENIUS JENSEN
JANE ROHDE VOIGT
ENRICO MARIA PIRAS
BENTE RUGAARD THORSEN

Introduction

At the time of writing this chapter, we are Ph.D. students with an interest in learning about research from emotional and aesthetic perspectives. The specific context of this writing was a Ph.D. short course on 'Emotions and Aesthetics in Organizational Learning Research' arranged by the Doctoral School of Organizational Learning (DOCSOL) at the Danish University of Education, for European researchers and doctoral students. The task we were involved in was to take part in a drawing event and afterwards to work together to make a written contribution to knowledge in this field. Our interest in emotions and aesthetics was evoked because the course introduced methods to study complex social arenas in organizations that were new (to us) and that immediately seemed more promising than conventional methods.

One thing that we discovered on this course was that emotions and personal experiences are easily revealed by the use of drawings and that drawings can be used as a research method for capturing emotional and aesthetic aspects of experience. We have included four case stories from our experience of the course in order to reflect on the researchers' experiences as research participants as well as developing our knowledge about this method.

The drawing method is seen as a good way of gaining knowledge and generating interpretations from research participants. However, we also describe how certain skills are required in using this method in order to handle both the 'sensitive' information (information relating to senses and emotions) and the process itself. We do not specify the nature of the required skills, since we are still learning about these ourselves, but we do recommend some ideas for further research on this topic. Generally, it seems to us that the researcher's role changes when she or he is working with the drawing method, because the emotional data that emerges from the method easily becomes a slippery territory (meaning difficult to keep one's footing) if not handled with care.

We are aware that the classic research paradigms prescribed by positivist methodologies have been challenged by an increasing number of scholars. We are also aware that there is not necessarily agreement about the assumptions that underpin this approach to research. For example, there are different perspectives and positions within an 'aesthetic approach' to research in organizational and management theory. While some advocate a vision of the aesthetic as translatable in rational terms (Gagliardi 1996), others consider rational/clear-cut knowledge as intrinsically opposed to aesthetic/ambiguous knowledge (Strati 1992, 1999). We are learning that one of the most intriguing ways to rethink the path of research has been to put 'artful' expressions into it, generally as a complementary part of a qualitative approach. Barry (1996) considers artefacts intrinsically ambiguous and facilitative of a process of interpretation, where researcher(s) and interviewee(s) cooperate, and always leave room for open and contradictory explanations. Such reflections have opened a field of experimentation where artefacts like drawings, sculptures, pictures, and dramatization have gained a legitimate position as valid tools for analysis. We are part of an emerging understanding that non-rational forms of self expression can elicit the non-verbal, tacit, emotional knowledge that is often ignored or discarded by conventional techniques. A key question for researchers like us therefore is how to use artful expressions as a research device?

The Experiential Drawing Event

We took part in a research experiment during this short course that involved making drawings as a way of engaging with the emotional experience of being a researcher and of doing research. The experiment involved working with lived

experiences and with reflections, as participants and as researchers, respectively. The four phases of the research method we experienced were the same as the approach outlined in a paper by Vince and Broussine (1996), which used drawings as a research method for investigating the emotions and politics mobilized by attempts to make change happen within organizations. The learning event was facilitated by our guest tutor Russ Vince and the process we undertook included one individual drawing session, a group process with individual and group reflections, a group discussion of emerging categories, and finally a plenary discussion of the method. At the plenary discussion we were invited to consider using the data collected during the learning event as the basis for writing a chapter for this book. This chapter focuses on our experience of this workshop, its content, and our reflections on the research method. We used drawings to generate data about the experience of being a doctoral student/researcher; including being both a research participant and a collector of data within complex qualitative processes.

In his introduction to the event, Russ Vince explained that drawings give rise to emotional data, and that they represent a method to sustain the connection between personal and political data. The drawing approach is a participative research process, which gives access to and has an influence on organizational members' emotional responses (see Vince forthcoming). This kind of research asks the researcher to pay attention to the interactive and developmental nature of research processes. As researchers and as participants in the process of learning about using drawings in research, this was what we were introduced to as well as inspired by.

To use drawings as a method within (for example) management education, the drawings have to be explicitly placed within a range of contextually specific dialogues (intra-interpersonal and intra-intergroup) and must be regarded as an expression of context (Vince and Broussine 1996). One way to strengthen these processes of disparate and consensual dialogues is to differentiate between them as either antagonistically destructive or constructive. This distinction generates knowledge of how to intensify group processes, and can be an agent for developing an atmosphere of openness, active listening, and retaining mutual goals; an atmosphere that is important when emotional and personal information is included because of the risks of humiliation, vulnerability, and other feelings of exposure (Darsø 2001, 2004). Darsø's research is particularly relevant to add to this experiential session, because her studies build on risky innovative processes and experiences of disclosure within teams in Danish organizations.

A Description of the Drawing Event

It was made clear from the beginning that all the steps of the event would give rise to research data collected as drawings and audio records. Something more than a lesson was at stake. An overview of the stages was provided in advance,

but the experiences we had could never have been included in a workshop introduction. This workshop came to mean a lot for us—both as participants and researchers.

We were asked to draw a picture of our experience of being a Ph.D. student on large sheets of paper with markers in different colours. The only requirement was to include ourselves in the picture. Some protested and claimed to lack drawing abilities, but we were assured that the ability to draw was not required. After drawing in a tense and complete silence for twenty minutes—a phase we still easily recall—we were situated in two random groups with four and five members, respectively. The individual stage gave way to a group process; the awareness of the stages made the process systemic. An awareness, which was reinforced by the facilitators as they walked around observing our work progressing and took photos of the event and the drawings. Within the groups, each of us explained in detail what the image meant to us, and we shared our thoughts, feelings, and interpretations of each image, asking 'Is this a melody that is catching up on you?' or 'What was is like to do that? How did you feel?'

The processes of (a) telling others about one's drawing and (b) listening to others commenting on it made the non-verbal explicit and allowed a verbal form of communication. It was a process of continuous immersion, and detachment was only allowed by the physical presence of the drawings. The participants explained their drawing, its embedded meaning and emotions, by continuously pointing to or addressing specific parts ('in this part I represent . . . this figure stands for . . . '). Those who commented acted in much the same way. Thus, each individual drawing continuously provided a way of discussing the common topic and the drawings' potential for inspiring and for playing with the different interpretations which emerged in the group. The most significant moments of this phase happened when insight would suddenly hit the person who had made the drawing; showing that she or he had not realized fully what she or he had drawn. One participant realized during this phase that she had depicted herself naked!

We were encouraged to include emotional data in the process, which was easy enough because the subjects were highly relevant to us. Energy was intense, communication was unrestrained and intimate, and we shared little pieces about our lives with each other. When each member of the group had presented their image and received comments and reflections, the group's task changed; we now had to agree on some common categories or differences emerging from the discussions of the drawings. In this phase, there was more energy and conversation. The individual comments and reflections merged into the collective work of finding common categories from the session. Some categories emerged quickly from the material, for example the loneliness of being a Ph.D. student, others emerged from working with the subject, and this last part of the session closed down the event properly so that everyone had at least an opportunity for closure after the emotions that the experiment had raised.

Drawings and Stories

The research material from this drawing session comprises images, audio recordings of the group discussions, and written descriptions of the experiences from the session. The descriptions vary somewhat in terms of focus and style because they are produced individually by each participant.

Case No. 1

I look at the white paper and think that this is a hard one to do. I find it difficult to structure my thoughts. My thoughts come sporadically. Especially my thoughts of what is difficult are hard to pin down. Then the picture is there and I begin to draw. I draw myself sitting in front of the computer. I sense frustration—frustration that I cannot capture the soft and not-verbal knowledge. The soft waving and melodious aspects of knowledge, which come into action, when describing playful learning and movements, are not easily categorized. Just to describe them verbally is difficult.

Case No. 20.1 Drawing

My hair is all wild; it is like energy that radiates from me—so much so that I look electric and rather weird.

I had thought it would be difficult to draw these experiences with problematic and chaotic writing processes, but it turned out fairly recognizable and, to me, captures the experience rather well. I presented my picture to the others and told them about it and I sense that once I have shared my story with the others, I am somehow closer to them.

The comments I get from the other participants are somehow difficult to take in—I kind of defend myself, until I am asked by the facilitator to try and listen to the comments instead of rejecting them. By listening I come to a better understanding of what they see in my picture, and the important thing is that I can suddenly look into areas that I haven't noticed or wanted to look into before. By contemplating, taking inspiration from it and perhaps implementing these insights into my own interpretation of my experiences, I can learn something from others, see different takes upon my experiences, and do a reinterpretation of my experiences.

Case No. 2

Normally I don't like to draw, but I felt that I was forced to do so as part of this course. Having been a Ph.D. student for two years now, I have come to realize that being forced into something new is a part of the Ph.D. learning process! The atmosphere in the course was supportive, and I felt fine. I immediately picked up an image of a tree in my mind. The image of a tree just came to me and I began to draw a picture. My drawing is quite simple and naive. What I found interesting was not the drawing itself, but the process of explaining the story about my Ph.D. that came after the drawing part, the group reflection, and the storytelling in relation to all the different drawings.

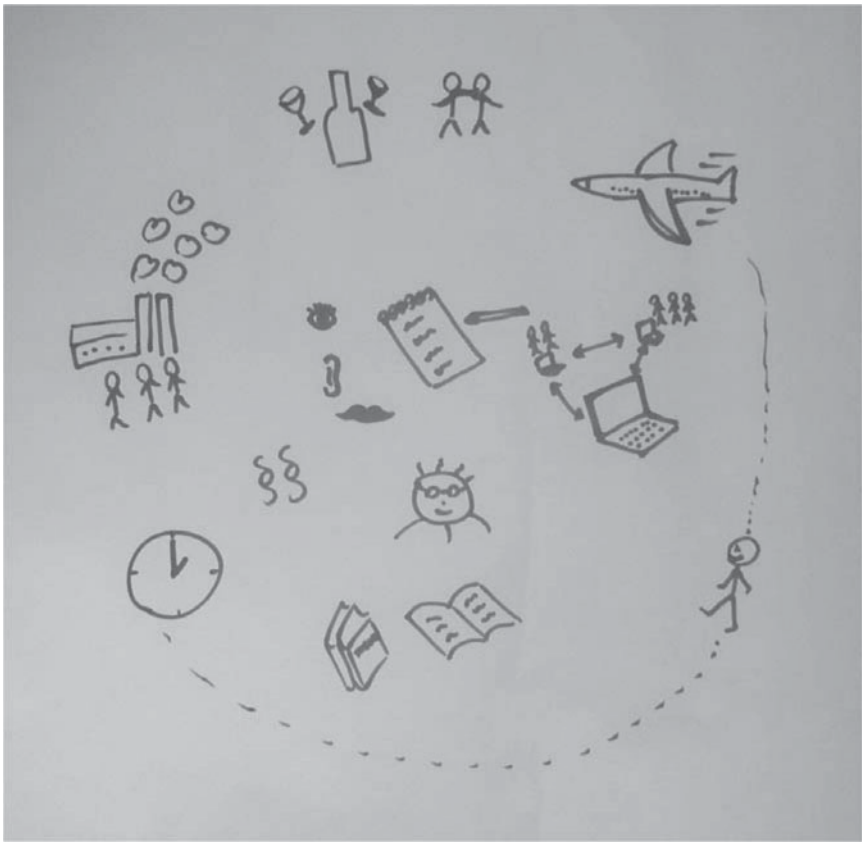
The group process was interesting because it was an intensive process. Emotions were on the agenda and the stories were intense. The group was inquisitive and reflective in relation to the drawings, and details gradually entered the discussions that followed. At the group level, we learned from each other's experiences, realizing the differences, for example culture, stages, the hard work, and similarities within the Ph.D. processes, for example being curious, knowing, being vulnerable, having to write academic articles. Aside from the group process, I found the individual reflective level following the event to be a very valuable part of the learning process. My self-reflection was mainly concerned with what I felt was missing in my own drawing in relation to my Ph.D. process, and I have reflected a lot on that. I think that to some extent this process made me more conscious about being a Ph.D. student.

Case No. 20.2 Drawing

Case No. 3

As a new Ph.D. student I feel I am entering a world with many aspects and many challenges, but also with new friendships and a lot of fun along the way. I am entering the new world with a smile on my face because I am full of positive expectations. In this new world, I have drawn the writing process in the middle and my senses like seeing, hearing, and talking just next to that. I find it a little strange that my body only is about to enter the world, when my senses are already inside. Yet I think the answer is that I already began this Ph.D. project in my mind when I graduated in 2003.

In my drawing, a man wearing glasses symbolizes my supervisor. I see him as a solid anchor for this ride I am about to begin. I also think there are a lot of rules and regulations one must be aware of, and that is why the paragraphs are in there. There



Case No. 20.3 Drawing

are three computers and they symbolize the importance of networking with others. Another social aspect is the wineglasses and the friendly persons, because I think this process is impossible without help from friends. The aeroplane symbolizes the amount of travelling to conferences and seminars in other countries, the factory symbolizes contact with the industry I am investigating, and the books represent the tremendous amount of literature I have to read. Finally, there is Time; a big, overwhelming, and dangerous part of the project. Dangerous, because you at first feel like you have all the time in the world to do your project, but suddenly you are in a hurry and have a hard time catching up. The group process made me see and say things to the group that I was not aware of about my own view of being a Ph.D. student.

Case No. 4

'It's not about drawing skill.' It's been repeated quite a few times before we all started to draw. Still it was embarrassing. I felt somehow forced to do something I didn't

Case No. 20.4 Drawing

like and was not skilled at. This feeling of inadequacy was reinforced by supervisors walking around the tables, looking at my work, and taking pictures. I felt observed. A few lines on the paper: I didn't like it and I started drawing on the other side.

I drew myself walking away from home, towards a place made of bicycles, book-butterflies, pentagrams, and pictures. These things are all related to my research, they surround me, but I felt like I haven't yet grasped them. In a while it became easier to draw and I kept adding details. 'We are supposed to explain it to others,' I kept repeating to myself, so I thought about drawing as a prelude to something I am keener at: speaking. When I presented my drawing to the group I knew exactly what every line meant. I explained the steadiness of my parents' house as counterpoint to the instability of my new situation. Pentagrams, pictures, and flying books were a clear symbol (to me) of the aesthetic perspective on organizations. It was something completely new for me, I explained. I was proud of my butterfly-book: a symbol that stands for beauty (of the topic), difficulty (to understand and use new concept), and the challenges of being a Ph.D. student. Then a supervisor passed by. He heard my explanation, looked at the drawing, and said: 'It looks like they are shitting on you.' I believe it's now I understand what the facilitator meant when he said you put things in the drawing you are not aware of. I'm fascinated. But, I don't know if I like it.

Reflections on the Drawing Event

The task we had been assigned was simply to draw our experience as Ph.D. students with ourselves in the picture. The underlying assumption that justifies this is that artful activities, such as drawing, elicit the non-verbal and elusive dimensions of knowledge. They are a means to express something synoptically, rather than linearly; it facilitates the complex, chaotic, and unspeakable rather than the consequential, rational, and clear-cut. During the process, emotions inextricably emerged from our drawings, associated to our lived experiences, unintentionally and unconsciously. Just look at the artefacts in the pictures: what have trees, wineglasses, pentagrams, aeroplanes, and private houses to do with Ph.D. students? How come we all put these artefacts in the drawings? Are they part of our professional life or just something that belongs to our private life? We concluded that it was probably our emotions that connected these different aspects of our life.

The Experience of being a Participant in Research

One of our reflections addresses the distinction between our professional and private lives, a distinction that seems to lose some of its relevance when personal experiences and emotions are associated with it. Even if we were asked merely to depict ourselves as organizational actors, none of us restricted her or his representation to a classic organizational space, and we believe that this drawing method and experiential research session contributed to revealing things that we, as research participants, were only partly conscious of. This may also explain the difficulty we had as individuals in accepting and taking in comments from others, as well as realizing just how much others could construct, construe, misconstrue, and reflect on from a simple drawing. In the plenary session many agreed it had been a challenging experience, 'emotionally involving but not necessary pleasant', as one said.

Unlike conventional research methods we were quite able to understand that this method required an unusual trust in the others: 'It's a part of me I give to others, and others give something back to me.' This 'give and take' required openness and it included having to allow others to comment on our stories. Once we had put something in the drawing, even if we were unaware of it at the time, it became a matter of discussion and it was not easy to accept that a fellow Ph.D. student was allowed an opinion about our lives. This led us to reflect on the climate generated by the use of this technique, and on the high emotional investment that is expected of the research participants when cooperating in such research. We concluded that to be the analysed subjects for once was a highly valuable experience in order to understand what we are 'really' asking people to do within qualitative methods. By experiencing an intensive processes of data collection ourselves on a relevant topic,

the lived emotion can be recalled and emphatically relived in order to understand the difficulties of respondents and research participants within our own research projects.

Another thing to keep in mind is how to protect oneself in sessions like this. Some of us believed that more explicit precautions were needed and emphasized the risks of this approach in the study of organizations. The plenary discussion touched on the risks by implicitly asking people to share their feelings from this session, to put the feelings down on paper, and to give others possibilities to discuss and reflect upon them. On the other hand, it was discussed whether it was possible to ask someone to repress their emotions in a research process, or make a sharp distinction between home and work or past, present, and future. Organizational theory has traditionally applied similar distinctions, often as dichotomies, which leads to a certain interpretation of organizational phenomena. In the drawing sessions, we found that it is impossible to separate emotions from professional life. It is interesting that this intense and, for some, scary process seemed to be able to break down well-established boundaries between organizational and personal life, but it also pinpoints that the researcher must possess certain competencies in facilitating group processes.

The experiment demonstrated the development of a research process from an individual to a group level. The drawing phase was a rather solitary one. As a result of this phase, there was a continuous change of focus from a material artefact, the drawing, to a verbal one; the discussions and the development of initial categories emerging from these discussions. The aim of this phase was, in fact, to come up with some shared preliminary conclusions on the commonalities that had emerged in the process so far. Because we were immersed in the process, this stage did not make immediate sense to all of us; thus, as part of research data it is important for the participants to understand the aim of this part of the event.

Emotions as a Slippery Territory

The two groups of Ph.D. students brought the following initial categorizations to the plenary session: ambivalence, loneliness, challenges (group A); peer networking, navigation in multiplicity, practice vs. academia, time, supervisor, theory, and approaching the field (group B). Loneliness and ambivalence were the only emotions that were mentioned. Other categories could easily be associated with emotions, for example 'challenges' could encompass fear or pride. It is difficult to determine which emotions we have identified just from looking at the categories. We were not asked to use emotions as categories and so the point here is not to judge the value of the categories, but it can easily be interpreted as the willingness of the participants to leave the slippery territory of emotions and step back to the comfortable realm of the rational.

We think that this research approach can be helpful for the development of knowledge about organizational group processes. In drawing sessions all the material is gathered and analysed in terms of the specific context and the theoretical implications. This implies that, at the event, emotions were regarded as an organizational dimension of a specific phenomenon rather than as characteristic of the event. At the same time, the choice of rational categories instead of emotions indicates the difficulties in handling emotions when we analyse an event like this. Thus, this method reveals our difficulties in expressing and being in emotional processes, but it also makes a difference to be a part of this slippery territory; the participants recall the event regardless of the individual evaluation of this experience.

When analysing the research data from the drawing session we found that the process we went through confirms that handling emotions is complicated and fraught with uneasiness (expressed for example in complaints about lack of drawing abilities and when receiving others' comments). In the plenary session, the unease reached a climax; the discussions can be characterized as rather emotional: an oppressive silence interrupted by bursts of collective noisy laughter, which felt as though it was a collective ritual to mitigate the tension. When we discussed the emotions that were expressed and hidden in the drawings, we noted that they were associated with events, situations, and conditions not generally considered to be part of 'being a Ph.D. student', which we found highly significant. We realized that this process gave us an opportunity to come to grips with the emotional aspects of being a Ph.D. student, aspects that are not generally included in the formal academic education, but are known to have an immense influence on learning processes. Thus, we realized that the drawing was a welcome event that gave us possibilities to share and discuss our common experiences of being a Ph.D. student.

Reflections on How Drawings can Elucidate Experiences

In this section we move from a focus on the learning event to a short discussion of some theoretical references, which help in a description of knowledge about aesthetically informed learning processes.

Conceptualizing Experiential Learning Related to the Group Process

We are aware of the importance of the group processes and the collective reflections which support our experiences of an event. It is important to include reflections on individual and collective learning processes when one is facilitating research using

drawings as a method. Some of the discussions, when we reflected on and evaluated the event in the group, concerned the benefits of sharing one's drawing with the others. According to our personal descriptions of the event, a lot of learning, considerations, and consolidation took place in the group processes; they were very important to the overall process of the research. At this stage, earlier experiences were taken into account, others' interpretations were taken into consideration, and a lively debate took place about common and disparate experiences. According to Boud (1994), such events can transform perceptions, and old patterns of learning can be challenged through critical reflection. Thus, the process of (for example) rethinking one's experiences through a drawing in a group can make a difference because taken for granted assumptions can be discovered in disparate and consensual dialogues (Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith 2004). The images are individuals' interpretation of experiences based upon the original signs of emotional and bodily states, and this interpretation can be changed by reducing the representation of bodily signs and by enhancing the rational aspect. Thus a different interpretation can emerge by rethinking or re-elaborating the interpretation (Damasio 1994). Through our listening to comments and reflecting upon them, these explicit dialogues facilitated our awareness of assumptions that we were not conscious of either as individuals or as part of research and other communities. It is, however, important that as members of the group we are willing to disclose our assumptions, thoughts, and feelings in an open and enquiring way (Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith 2004). These thoughts link to and support the structure of the experience/event, but they also strengthen the importance of a solid and elaborate environment for reflection on the experience/event. A lot of emotional data emerged from both the individual and the group processes, and we can see that emotional data must be expected when we use the drawing method.

Conceptualizing Emotions

Emotions are an inescapable feature in organizational life. Far from being emotional deserts, organizations are now reconfigured as arenas for the deployment, management, and resourcing of human emotions. As a consequence, Gabriel and Griffiths (2002) stress that organizational life and learning has to be aligned at three levels: the individual, group, and organizational level. A differentiation of emotions can facilitate an understanding of each level and across levels, and particularly important organizational changes seem to bring emotions into the social arena (Gabriel and Griffiths 2002). Organizational change concerns negotiation of power relations and how employers/employees deal with emotions that arise from change. The dynamic character of emotions and emotional experiences explains the difficulty of defining emotions theoretically (Poder 2004). The different theories through which emotions in organizations have been understood include

psychoanalytic perspectives, social constructionist views (Gabriel and Griffiths 2002), and the embodied mind approach (Damasio 1994). It is not our aim within this chapter to go into the nature, advantages, and disadvantages of different approaches to understanding emotion in organizations. However, we can see that different ways of thinking about emotions will be found within organizational life and will influence how emotions are handled within an organization and how emotional phenomenon are 'constructed' when analysed, theorized, and presented as part of research into organizational life and experience. Even though the drawing event at our Ph.D. short course did not focus on the organizational context Ph.D. students are part of, we realize that this is an important issue for Ph.D. students to reflect upon.

Emotions are Connected to Political Processes in Organizations

When facilitating organizational change, people need to be engaged in the change process, and in this respect it is important to be aware of the power relations that are associated with the 'need' or desire for change. Any research method that is designed to reveal emotions and/or underlying assumptions is also likely to reveal at least some of the political context within which emotions are experienced. People within organizations are subjected to a significant amount of emotional processes beyond their conscious control. Since one emotion arises as a response to another, the interrelatedness of participants (whether in enquiry or organization) depends on this exchange, as well as on the extent to which others' emotions are internalized within and help to construct one's own feelings and emotional responses.

It seems to us to be important to notice when people act differently from what was expected. During our event, it was difficult within the group when others either disclosed too much or too little information. If people disclosed too much, a sense of over-involvement or embarrassment would result; when people disclosed too little, a sense of not meeting shared expectations or disappointment would spread. It is therefore important to work with expectations in events like this as well as with explicit agreements concerning confidentiality after the event. The researcher's ability to contain and react competently to all personal emotional data that comes out in the process must be unquestionable. Our general experience of the event was that drawing an image of one's experiences within a certain topic was a lot easier than expected. Much of our individual knowledge, including our memory of experiences, is recalled as visual and auditory images because of its basic topographical representation. This means that all thinking, even words and arbitrary signs, starts as a vague image before it becomes a thought (Damasio 1994). Thus, the human brain is familiar with images, though this does not explain how the vague image is transformed into the finished expression in the picture, or

how memories are evoked as a multidimensional experience in contrast to speech. This corresponds to our experience of the event; the drawing kept us focused on what we included and did not. We are assuming that this would be different in a 'spoken' method like an interview, which would involve progression through a set of questions.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have discussed drawing as an experimental research method from a researcher's point of view as well as the point of view of a research participant. We found it was a highly valuable experience to work with processes that include emotional and other personal experiences and it is important as a researcher to be able to understand the different dimensions of the collected data as well as the difficulties we create for respondents in addition to the difficulties they bring along for themselves. The assumption underlying the drawing session concept, that non-rational forms of self-expression can elicit the non-verbal, tacit, emotional knowledge that is ignored by conventional research methods, has indeed been confirmed in our drawing experience. We believe that artful expressions are an important approach to research because of the capacity of this method to yield knowledge that the informants are not even aware of themselves. At the same time, it is very important to note that such methods demand certain skills in handling sensitive and personal information from research participants as well as group processes.

The drawing method represents a powerful tool to reveal emotions and personal experiences, but this slippery territory must be handled with respect; this concerns learning processes as well as research in organizations due to the politics and power relations that are an integral part of social and organizational experience. We think that with such a method, risk becomes a key word. Risk can be associated with fear and discomfort, but can also be related to the pleasure and excitement of the discovery of the emotions as a powerful tool and not simply as a dimension to be explored in isolation from the others. 'A beautiful risk', as one of the participants said.

References

Barry, D. (1996). 'Artful Inquiry: A Symbolic Constructivist Approach to Social Science Research', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 2/4: 411–38.

Boud, D. (1994). 'Conceptualizing Learning from Experience: Developing a Model for Facilitation', *Proceedings of the 35th Adult Education Research Conference*. Knoxville, Tenn.

Cunliffe, A. L., and Easterby-Smith, M. (2004). 'From Reflection to Practical and Organized Reflection', in M. Reynolds and R. Vince (eds.), *Organizing Reflection.* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Damasio, A. R. (1994). *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason and the Human Brain*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Darsø, L. (2001). *Learning Lab: Vidensskabelse i nye forskningskonfigurationer*. Undervisningsministeriet, http://www.uvm.dk/cgi.

—— (2004). *Innovation in the Making*. Copenhagen: Samfundslitteratur, Narayana Press.

Gabriel,Y., and Griffiths, D. S. (2002). 'Emotion, Learning and Organizing', *Learning Organization*, 9/5: 214–21.

Gagliardi, P. (1996). 'Exploring the Aesthetic Side of Organizational Life', in S. R. Clegg, C. Hardy, and W. R. North, *Handbook of Organization Studies*. London: Sage.

Poder, P. (2004). 'Feelings of Power and the Power of Feeling: Handling Emotion in Organizational Change'. Ph.D. thesis, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Copenhagen.

Strati, A. (1992). 'Aesthetic Understanding of Organizational Life', *Academy of Management Review*, 17: 568–81.

—— (1999). *Organization and Aesthetics*. London: Sage.

Vince, R. (forthcoming). 'Drawings and Images in Management Research', in R. Thorpe and R. Holt (eds.), *The Dictionary of Qualitative Management Research.* London: Sage.

—— and Broussine, M. (1996). 'Paradox, Defence and Attachment: Accessing and Working with Emotions and Relations Underlying Organizational Change', *Organization Studies*, 17/1: 1–21.

PART VI

CRITICALLY FOCUSED EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

This page intentionally left blank

CHAPTER 21

POWER AND EXPERIENCE

EMANCIPATION THROUGH GUIDED LEADERSHIP NARRATIVES

ANNA B. KAYES

Introduction

One goal of management education is to help students organize experience in meaningful ways. Scholars have suggested that organizational storytelling (Klein 1998), the use of experiential-based simulations (Kayes et al. 2004; Kayes, Kayes, and Kolb 2005), reflective exercises, myth analysis (Gabriel 2000), and the use of metaphor (Morgan 1997; Kayes and Kayes 2003) all provide noteworthy methods that promote the use of experiential learning in the context of management education. But although these methods may encourage learning, they may not allow students to explore the complexities of organizational power that have an impact on learning. Also, they may not focus on how students can articulate and actively reconfigure their individual experiences of power. In this chapter I argue that when students of management engage in conversation, their experiences of power actually

become transformed and, through a social process of conversation, take on new meaning.

This approach to experiential learning follows a process called *guided leadership narratives*, which draws on Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory and conversational learning (Baker, Jensen, and Kolb 2002). Guided leadership narratives help participants increase awareness of power in organizations, understand limitations in individual experience, and gain the benefits of learning in a social setting. Students expand this awareness through conversational learning, drawing on multiple student viewpoints and articulating new insights and shared perspectives of power in organizations. My role in this process is that of facilitator, structuring the narrative assignment, providing guidelines for deconstruction, and creating space for conversation.

In this chapter I begin by describing conversational learning in relationship to experiential learning theory. I then show how conversational learning can be used as the basis for developing a guided leadership narrative. I explain how these narratives help participants to identify experiences of power dynamics in organizations related to roles, influencing behaviours, prejudice, and stereotypes, as well as through personal and positional power. Ultimately, students have expressed how writing these narratives and then engaging in the conversational process provide insights into themselves as leaders. The guided leadership narrative process provides meaningful learning in that students reconfigure their individual experiences into new meaning through conversation. Thus, students can see how individual experience is made meaningful through a social process.

Experiential Learning Theory

Experiential learning theory (ELT) provides a holistic description of the learning process and is often represented in four stages. I rely mainly on Kolb's (1984) description of experiential learning: a four-phase process of (1) *concrete experience*, where an initial experience provides the basis for (2) *reflective observation*, where retrospective review of the experience leads to (3) *abstract conceptualization*, which puts the experience into an integrated framework, which in turn leads to (4) *active experimentation*, which tests the framework, thereby continuing the cycle with yet another concrete experience. More recently, Kolb and his colleagues (Baker, Jensen, and Kolb 2002) have taken a more conscious look at the social dimension of experiential learning in the form of conversational learning.

Conversational Learning

If we take as a starting point the idea that education mainly occurs as a social and interactive process, rather than a solitary process, conversational learning becomes especially relevant in understanding the role of experiential learning in management education. It is within conversation that people begin to understand and make sense of experience. Baker, Jensen, and Kolb (2002) described conversation as 'a process whereby learners construct meaning and transform experiences into knowledge through conversation' (p. 51). Years of observation and participation in experiential learning exercises, such as field exercises, internships, and role-plays, led Kolb and his colleagues to conclude that when learners combine these various experiences with deliberate conversations about the experiences, student learning becomes shared.

Conversational learning consists of five dialectic poles. These dialectic poles allow for learning because contradictions and opposites are explored simultaneously in conversation. The first of the five poles is *apprehension*, or 'concrete knowing', and *comprehension*, or 'abstract knowing'. Apprehension is feeling oriented and involves tacit knowledge, manifested by feelings and openness to new experiences. The other end of this dialectic pole, comprehension, is reason oriented and involves the interpretative process, manifested by analysing or theorizing. The second of the dialectic poles consists of *intension* and *extension*. Intension is the act of reflection and is manifested when people show contemplative behaviours such as listening and observing. Extension is action that can be deliberate or experimental, manifested by trying things out or the desire to accomplish goals. The third dialectic pole consists of *individuality* and *relationality*. Individuality emphasizes the individual, and relationality emphasizes the connection with others. The fourth dialectic pole consists of *status* and *solidarity*, where status emphasizes one's position in the group and solidarity emphasizes equality. The fifth dialectic pole includes a *discursive orientation* and a *recursive orientation*. Discursive orientation is guided by linear time, such as agendas and direction; and recursive orientation is guided by cyclical time and individual interests.

Learning occurs because of the contradictions and opposites that emerge during the conversation. Conversational learning is especially relevant for students to explore power in organizations, because the dialectics of conversational learning form a process that is inherently emotional and cognitive, social rather than solitary, and complex and not simple. Conversational learning serves to surface various dynamics of power. For example, students' experiences of prejudice, stereotyping, and powerlessness, often difficult topics and not simply abstract and theoretical concepts, can be explored in a safe place through the structure of guided narratives and group conversation. Conversation allows students to share these experiences and construct new knowledge and perspectives on these topics. Power dynamics in organizations are social dynamics and as such should be made sense of in a

social setting. Conversational learning emancipates a participant from the personal knowledge of power, gained from personal experiences, into social knowledge of power, gained from class concepts and experiences of others shared through conversation. Power dynamics, discussed in the next section in more detail, consist of multiple topics and multiple variables and have been described by researchers in multiple terms. The method to provide management students with an understanding of the complexity of power dynamics in organizations should be a complex and holistic method. Simple memorization techniques or solo study would not serve the purpose of creating new and meaningful knowledge. It is through these *conversational spaces*, or places where different meaning is explored, reconciled, and adopted, that learning occurs.

The exercise described in this chapter addresses the criticism that experiential learning fails to adequately consider power inherent in social systems and that ELT disregards the context of power relations such as gender, social context, and cultural dominance and how these factors influence the learning process (see for example Reynolds 1998; Vince 1998). Specifically, the exercise reveals how the use of guided leadership narratives and conversational learning permits students to understand the power dynamics in their organizations and to make new meaning out of experience embedded in conversation with other students who are inherently different—different socio-economic status, race, gender, ethnicity, and positions in community and work organizations. It is these categorial differences that impact the facilitation of the dialectics and contradictions in the conversational learning process.

Power Dynamics

Power and influence are not synonymous terms. Rather, both terms represent important ways of viewing human interactions in organizations. Power describes a type of resource that one would use to change the behaviour of another. Influence describes the actual process of change attempt. The terms *power* and *influence* are broad and include many variables. At the intersection lies the term *power dynamics*, which I use to describe the interaction of power (as a resource) with an attempt to change someone's behaviour (influence). Leadership research over the past twenty years has shifted from a focus solely on power, such as power bases (French and Raven 1959) in the abstract, to a wider focus that includes power and influence behaviours (Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson 1980; Yukl 2002). This shift in focus stemmed from the misalignment of actual behaviours that people exhibit with traditional power classification schemata. Power bases, or power resources, can rest on personal or positional capital, such as expertise, or the ability to use organizational

sanctions and rewards. Influence behaviours, in contrast, could include more than 346 (Falbo 1977) different behaviours. In order to understand the full range of power and influence behaviours, and the impact these behaviours have on an organization, some causes and consequences are also worth mentioning.

Causes and Consequences of Power Dynamics

Power dynamics in organizations have been understood in different ways. For example, as structural and decision based (see, for example, Yukl, Kim, and Falbe 1996); stemming from powerlessness (for example Bies and Tripp 1998); and as part of organizational culture and the (hierarchical) organization of the firm, including levels of hierarchy (for example Mintzberg 1983). Decision-based factors include decision errors such as stereotyping and prior experience of influence attempts. Researchers have also examined consequences for the individual and the organization after influence attempts; these consequences include such variables as resistance to the influence attempt, accomplishment of individual goals at the expense of organizational goals, or loss of trust (for example, Zand 1997). Other consequences, described in more favourable terms, include salary increases, promotions, and visibility.

Power dynamics are an integral part of behaviour in organizations, and I would argue that a better understanding of these power dynamics is an important part of management education and learning about leadership. Power dynamics increasingly are used as a prescriptive means to increase leadership effectiveness. Research and practice continue to advocate the use of power dynamics as a means to become more effective and creative in leadership (Porter, Angle, and Allen 2003). Power dynamic effectiveness has been linked with successful performance evaluations (for example Kipnis and Schmidt 1998), the accomplishment of goals (for example Yukl, Guinan, and Sottolano 1995), the success of 'selling an idea', and even salary increases (for example Ferris et al. 1994).

The Guided Leadership Narrative

The leadership narrative is a guided exercise that can be used in different types of management education courses. In these written narratives, students are prompted to write, over a semester, a series of reflections on their leadership and followership experiences in their organizations, paying particular attention to themes of power dynamics. They might identify various bases of power, comment on what factors lead to influence effectiveness, and review how they have used influence to change other people's behaviour. Invariably, other connections to power dynamics are

made, such as the decision process prior to influence usage. This decision process may include such decision-making errors as prejudice and stereotyping. Other connections are also made, like the consequences to the individual and to the organization after the influence attempts, such as resistance to the influence attempt, loss of trust, or powerlessness. They discuss these written leadership narratives over the duration of the semester in small groups guided by the instructor and revise their initial drafts after they have engaged in conversational learning. Some of the questions that students are asked to write about have included the following:

1. How would you describe your ability to influence others in your organization? From what bases of power do you interact with others?
2. Describe your organization's culture and the types of influence behaviour that are seen as acceptable and unacceptable. What is your leadership role in the organization?
3. Describe a situation where you addressed conflict with a subordinate or a manager. What did you do to change their behaviour? How did others respond? Did you use power appropriately in this situation?

These questions correspond to content that the students are learning. For instance, as they learn about theories of how leaders manage conflict in organizations, they also write about their personal experiences with conflict and how they might use power and influence to resolve conflict. As they learn about leadership strategy and structure, they write about their experiences exerting influence and managing up and managing down the organization's hierarchy. These initial narratives serve as a starting point for conversation. Once the first draft of the leadership narrative is written, students bring it to class and discuss it in small groups.

Changing the Narrative

One of the most important considerations is that the initial narrative is a starting point for the conversation in groups and that the narrative will be revised. Students are instructed to pay attention to the themes of power dynamics that emerge in writing and to note how these themes change over the semester. These themes are highlighted as being fluid, and students are encouraged to rewrite their narratives as they enter into the process of conversation in the small groups. Each week, the students focus on a different theme to converse about in order to continue the process of conversational learning. Because the process of conversational learning often seems abstract, I have adopted a series of concrete guidelines developed by Boje and Dennehy (1993) to facilitate conversational learning in the classroom. These guidelines provide an important framework for conversation. Without them, student teams would agree with each other's experiences and make little progress towards embracing differences and contradictions. As an instructor, I needed a detailed method for facilitating contradictions in team conversations—telling the

students to have a conversation and to look for contradictions and multiple opinions was not concrete enough to stimulate conversation. Once these guidelines were adopted to stimulate this exploration of contradictions, however, conversation progressed.

The individual written narratives serve as the starting point for a team of students to utilize one or more of the themes listed below. These themes are subjected to a series of practical steps adapted from Boje and Dennehy (1993):

1. Duality search: The student team makes a list of any one-sided terms. An example is a narrative where only one gender is emphasized.
2. Reinterpreting the hierarchy: The team dissects the hierarchical relationships present in a narrative and reinterprets the hierarchy. An example is where a manager dominates the actions of a subordinate; this would be reinterpreted where a manager affects the actions of a boss.
3. Rebel voices: The team identifies the missing voices or opinions from a student's writing. What perspectives are not expressed in the writing? An example is where a student would rewrite an entry from the perspective of his or her manager.
4. Other side of the story: The student team finds the other sides of the story, as stories always have multiple sides. The student is prompted to reverse the story so that what is emphasized initially becomes marginal, what is vertical becomes horizontal, and so on.
5. Denying the plot: Students unearth the type of plot they have written and change it to another type of plot. An example is where students identify a narrative as a 'tragedy' and change it to a 'comedy'.
6. Finding the exception: Student stories have rules and scripts in which they can identify the exceptions and change them. An example is where a student has made a seemingly logical conclusion about an outcome, and the team reconsiders a seemingly absurd outcome as an alternative.
7. Tracing what is between the lines: Students are prompted to fill in the blanks and add more script to the backstage or the in-between. An example is where a student adds history or context to the story she has written.
8. Resituate: The final step is where the student has completely reconfigured the initial narrative that he or she wrote. The final story is completely different from the initial story and is the product of multiple perspectives. This final story is based on steps 1 to 7. This is where the individual articulates a new meaning based on shared experiences.

Student Narratives

This section uses examples of student writing to illustrate how the guided leadership narratives work. Students bring many differences into the classroom, including

position and organization experience, gender, socio-economic background, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation. These differences impact on individual and collective experiences and are expressed in the conversational process. The first step is for an individual student to write a conversational starter, or a leadership narrative, based on a specific question such as 'How would you describe your ability to influence others in your organization? What bases of power do you interact with others from?' Next, the student brings the narrative to class, and the student team picks one or more guidelines for deconstruction from the eight steps listed above. These guidelines will help the students enter into the process of conversation and experience the five dialectical processes: (1) apprehension and comprehension, (2) intension versus extension, (3) individuality and relationality, (4) status and solidarity, and (5) discursive and recursive orientations. In the final step, the student rewrites the initial leadership narrative based on new meaning.

In the following example, a student wrote of how she highlighted her accomplishments and became 'visible' in her large organization. Note how she changed her initial journal entry after conversation with her team. Her team decided to follow Boje and Dennehy's (1993) step 6, 'finding the exception', to prompt their conversation.

Leadership Journal entry one:

Making a move to XXXX, a large conservative company with an extremely rigid hierarchical structure and culture, I have found the need to use 'friendliness' in order to better influence my manager and those around me. I am humble and do not point out my accomplishments to anyone above my manager in the hierarchy. I believe that I have to be overly friendly because as a large company, XXXX, doesn't look favorably on those that break out of the organizational structure it has created. (MBA student)

As the instructor, I guided this student and others in her group through the process of conversational learning, listening for overemphasis on one or more process dialectic and then encouraging the students to shift to emphasize the opposite dialectic. In the example above, the students in this group initially tended to overemphasize the *extension* or 'action' phase to start the rewriting process of the narrative. Rather, I encouraged them to spend adequate time creating a *conversational space* or place where differences are encouraged and individuals are receptive.

The narrative from this first student embedded gender assumptions in the role of an employee, specifically a female employee, in the hierarchy, and the importance of being liked through the use of 'friendliness' as opposed to other ways of relating, such as through negotiations or assertiveness. In order to encourage the student team to spend more time experiencing the dialectic process of *intension* and *extension*, I encouraged them to look at all sides of the themes before acting (intension). I had them discuss the role of gender and socialized assumptions in relation to managing, given gender and organizational hierarchy.

I also asked them to explore why they labelled behaviours as 'male' and 'female'. Only after they observed these differences were they to discuss these reflections and assign a framework that synthesized their various points of view (*extension*).

This student was encouraged by her classmates to highlight her accomplishments at work and to explore alternatives to her initial logic. One of her group members suggested that she should be more visible in her organization. Another student suggested that perhaps the organizational hierarchy was not as rigid as she assumed.

The next week, the student team selected another conversation starter, Boje and Dennehy's (1993) 'absurd outcome', for an alternative.

Leadership Journal entry two:

Making a move to XXXX, a large conservative company with an extremely rigid hierarchical structure and culture, I have found the need to use 'friendliness' in order to better influence my manager and those around me. I have made an active effort to form networks that involve key personnel outside my immediate department and include directors and managers outside of my immediate hierarchy. I point out my accomplishments at every opportunity I have. I believe that I do not have to be overly friendly but do have to make sure people see my accomplishment. As a large company, XXXX wants to be innovative and looks favorably on those that break out of the organizational structure it has created. (MBA student)

The student expressed in this entry that perhaps the constraints that she felt on sharing her accomplishments were more related to her fears and that she was limiting her visibility in her organization by not standing out from her peers. When she considered what she initially thought was 'absurd', or the team's perspective—different from her own experience—she allowed herself to become open to the possibility that it was not the hierarchical structure or culture of the organization that was holding her back from exerting influence, but rather it was her own self-imposed barriers. The students in her team had decided that, in their experience, pointing out accomplishments was a more 'male' behaviour than a 'female' behaviour. She considered this perspective on influence to be incongruous with how she traditionally viewed her role in her organization, acknowledging that she constrained herself from promoting her accomplishments at work. In their exploration of why they labelled influence behaviours as 'male' and 'female', the students even reconfigured the simplistic view of influence behaviours classified as an absolute category (for example, either male or female) to behaviours as a relative category (for example, effective or ineffective given the particular context).

Conversational Outcomes

After each class in which a leadership narrative entry is discussed and changed, the students share the insights or meaning that they have generated

from this activity. The learning that this student team experienced included understanding

- The conversational learning processes and how to encourage contradiction and opposites in understanding power
- The importance of conversation with different others to expand personal experiences of power relations
- The inherently restrictive assumptions that bind individuals to rote patterns of influence behaviour
- The benefits of deconstructing narratives and considering multiple perspectives and outcomes

The next example is from a manager who changed her written narrative in response to step 7, 'tracing what is between the lines':

Leadership Journal entry one:

Today I addressed the project leader's poor performance as it related to a specific deliverable he provided to me. As the first conversation I've ever had with a superior regarding their lack of understanding of the task and unacceptable results, I would say I did a fine job. I think I could have approached the subject more delicately, but that would not be a true reflection of my personality to do so . . . The project leader became defensive and physically agitated. He raised his voice and in response, I did the same. He doled out several subjective criticisms of my work product. (MBA student)

The learning group wanted to discuss the experience and to express the emotions connected with the experience (apprehension), without theorizing about what transpired (comprehension). They continued to discuss this experience without assembling a meaningful framework to make sense of their multiple perspectives. As an instructor, in order to help them organize their experiences, I asked them to draw a figure that would illustrate an effective performance feedback loop and that considered gender, trust (or distrust), and hierarchy. I selected these particular constructs for them to include in their model because these were the constructs with which they kept emotionally engaging. Once they drew their figure, their conversation continued to evolve and included elements of the other conversational dialectics. For instance, the team imposed time limits on their conversation (discursive), and two members wanted to continue the conversation after class on e-mail (recursive).

After this conversation with her student team, this manager admitted that she had addressed the project leader's poor performance in front of the rest of the project team and did so after she gained approval from a director higher in the organization's hierarchy. She also expressed her fear that the project leader would not take criticism from her because she was a female and less influential, whereas he was a male and had more power resources at his disposal. She rewrote her entry to reflect this additional context and, interestingly, reconfigured her analysis of the situation.

Leadership Journal entry two:

Today I addressed the project leader's poor performance as it related to a specific deliverable he provided to me. My supervisor's supervisor, the division director, proposed the idea of confronting the project leader's dismal performance. As the first conversation I've ever had with a superior regarding their lack of understanding of the task and unacceptable results, I would say I did not do such a fine job. I was afraid that if I did not confront the project leader publicly, in front of the rest of the team, the division director would think I was weak and not suitable for my job … The project leader became defensive and physically agitated. He raised his voice and in response, I did the same. He doled out several subjective criticisms of my work product. He didn't criticize me because I was a woman but because he was embarrassed in front of everyone. Upon further reflection, I understand how my actions could have been misconstrued. I pledge to continually observe and learn from the people around me. (MBA student)

Conversational Outcomes

The learning insights that students expressed after this experience included the following:

- There is an interaction between fear and influence behaviours in organizations (for example, fear of being seen as a 'weak female' led this student to give performance feedback in a publicly humiliating context).
- It is easy to see only one's own experience with power dynamics until these experiences are discussed in a group. Group members are all so different, and their experiences of power and influence differ vastly.
- There is much learning value in deconstructing and rewriting personal narratives and experiencing the change from initial perspective to perspective after team conversation.

Conclusions

Guided leadership narratives illustrate the process of experiential learning in conversation. This tool offers management educators a practical mechanism for helping management students to learn about power dynamics in organizations. Additionally, this pedagogical event responds to two criticisms of experiential learning: that it disregards power relations and focuses too narrowly on reflection at the expense of experience. Individual leadership narratives contain themes of power and influence that are transformed from individual knowledge into social knowledge through the process of conversational learning. That is, dominant themes of power in organizations are explored through this process of learning.

This process of learning does not privilege reflection over the 'here and now' of experience, but rather privileges the shared meaning making through conversation over the initial set of assumptions that the individual held prior to experiencing this pedagogical event. Learning about power dynamics as a collective event promises to unearth and reconfigure meaning as the students share in the process of meaning making.

Written leadership narratives combined with conversational learning together highlight the sometimes dialectically opposing views that managers hold of themselves and their role in organizations. This method seeks to emancipate managers from the limits of their initial interpretations of experience. Writing a guided leadership narrative, deconstructing the narrative through conversation, and rewriting the narrative allows managers to unearth their assumptions, to modify their perceptions, to make new shared meanings, and to understand the fluid nature of experience. This approach to learning emphasizes new knowledge and individual development. It acknowledges and explores contradictions that are inevitably part of working in social and political settings. As students move from their individual knowledge of power relations into more complex and social knowledge, this process of change leads to their individual growth and development.

References

Baker, A., Jensen, P., and Kolb, D. A. (2002). *Conversational Learning: An Experiential Approach to Knowledge Creation.* Westport, Conn.: Quorum Books.

Bies, R. J., and Tripp, T. M. (1998). 'Two Faces of the Powerless: Coping with Tyranny in Organizations', in R. M. Kramer and M. A. Neale (eds.), *Power and Influence in Organizations*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage.

Boje, D. M., and Dennehy, R. F. (1993). *Managing in the Postmodern World*: *America's Revolution against Exploitation*. Dubuque, Ia.: Kendall-Hunt,

Falbo, T. (1977). 'Multidimensional Scaling of Power Strategies', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 35: 537–47.

Ferris, G. R., Judge, T. A., Rowland, K. M., and Fitzgibbons, D. E. (1994). 'Subordinate Influence and the Performance Evaluation Process: Test of a Model', *Organizational Behaviour and Human Decision Process*, 58: 101–35.

French, J. R., and Raven, B. (1959). 'The Bases of Social Power', in D. Cartwright (ed.), *Studies in Social Power*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Gabriel, Y. (2000). *Storytelling in Organizations: Facts, Fictions, and Fantasies*. London: Oxford University Press.

Kayes, A., Kayes, D. C., and Kolb, D. A. (2005), 'Developing Teams Using the Kolb Team Learning Experience', *Simulation and Gaming*, 36/3: 330–54.

—— —— Kolb, A. Y., and Kolb, D. A. (2004). *The Kolb Team Learning Experience: Improving Team Effectiveness through Structured Learning Experiences*. Boston: Hay Resources Direct.

Kayes, D. C., and Kayes, A. B. (2003). 'Through the Looking Glass: Management Education Gone Awry', *Journal of Management Education*, 27/6: 1–17.

Kipnis, D., and Schmidt, S. M. (1988). 'Upward Influence Styles: Relationship with Performance Evaluation', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 33: 528–43.

—— —— and Wilkinson, I. (1980). 'Intraorganizational Influence Strategies: Explorations in Getting one's Way', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 65/4: 440–52.

Klein, G. (1998). *Sources of Power: How People Make Decisions*. Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press.

Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Mintzberg, H. (1983). *Power in and around Organizations*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Morgan, G. (1997). *Images of Organization*. Newbury Park, Conn.: Sage.

Porter, L. W., Angle, H. L., and Allen, R. W. (2003). *Organizational Influence Processes*. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, Inc.

Reynolds, M. (1998). 'Reflection and Critical Reflection in Management Learning', *Management Learning*, 29/2: 183–200.

Vince, R. (1998). 'Behind and beyond Kolb's Learning Cycle', *Journal of Management Education*, 22/3: 304–19.

Yukl, G. (2002). *Leadership in Organizations*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

—— Guinan, P. J., and Sottolano, D. (1995). 'Influence Strategies Used for Different Objectives with Subordinates, Peers, and Superiors', *Group and Organization Management*, 20: 272–96.

—— Kim, H., and Falbe, C. M. (1996). 'Antecedents of Influence Outcomes', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 81: 309–17.

Zand, D. E. (1997). *The Leadership Triad: Knowledge, Trust and Power*. New York: Oxford University Press.

CHAPTER 22

WORK ORIENTATIONS AND MANAGERIAL PRACTICES

AN EXPERIENTIAL AND THEORETICAL LEARNING EVENT

TONY WATSON

Setting the Context

The set of events which are to be reported and reflected upon here were those experienced by undergraduate students taking a final-year module on work organization and management. The students attended a lecture and a seminar each week for twelve weeks. The seminars for two of the fifteen student groups were run by me and I gave the twelve lectures, these all being closely tied to the module textbook which I had developed and tested in modules with a variety of different types of student. In the department in which the module was located, the phrase 'the book of the module and module of the book' was used for this approach to

simultaneously developing teaching modules and supporting textbooks—an approach which several other staff members also followed. What all of this suggests is that this top-level module was a highly integrated one. This was indeed the case. It was quite deliberate and seemed to be very much appreciated by the students, who responded to it with almost completely full attendance at both lectures and seminars (and produced very high-quality seminar performances and examination scripts in the view of the team of tutors who worked on the module as well as in the opinion of the external examiner).

Later, I shall focus on just one of the seminars that I took part in and this single event has been chosen for two reasons. First, it was the seminar at which I took notes as part of my preparation for writing a second edition of the textbook (Watson 2006). Second, the topic being covered by the module has a particular significance in terms of the whole spirit of the module. It deals with 'work orientations'—the meanings which work has for people as an element of their 'whole lives'—as well as the implicit contract which is at the heart of the exchange between organizations and their employees. So how does this relate to what I've called the 'spirit' of the module? Perhaps the best way to answer this is to refer to the informal 'contract' that was offered to the students at the beginning of the module. This was a contract which was very much influenced by the awareness shared by myself and the students that their lives generally and the meanings to them of work (both academic work and career work) were at a significant point of change. They were now in the final year of study and, I said to them in the first lecture,

> This time next year, you will be coming to terms with the realities of life in organizations. You will deal with attempts by others to manage you and many of you will be reflecting on just how, later on, you might go about managing work situations yourselves.

And the offer made to them was expressed something like this:

> If you all attend the whole module, read everything that is recommended to you and put real energy into the very participative seminars that we will be having, I promise that you will really see the cliché that good theory and good practice are closely related becoming a reality. I promise that you will be much better placed to cope with the highly political, ambiguous and emotionally challenging world of organizing and managing.

I added to this that the module would be challenging in that there will be 'some tough theoretical work to do'. 'Nevertheless', I went on, 'I hope that you will recognize, perhaps at the end of the module or perhaps when you are out there in the organizational jungle, that this was the most practical course you ever did.'

It was also explained in this introductory lecture that all the case study material with which they were going to be presented had come out of first-hand research done by their lecturer/text writer—much of this having been done in a participant observer way within managements. I explained that from the very beginning of my own industrial career I had been an ethnographic researcher at the same time as a practitioner and that, as a very young manager early on, and as a seconded senior

manager in the 1990s (when I worked in GEC Plessey to 'update my management experience' and to prepare a book which became *In Search of Management*, Watson 2001), I was constantly 'using and testing organizational and management theories'. I wanted, I said, to pass on as much as I could of the benefits of all this to course members, as long as they put as much effort and commitment into the programme as I and my tutorial team wanted to do.

I would not claim that this initial 'presentation of the lecturer self' to students is fundamentally different from what many colleagues do. But this particular version of the standard 'trust me, I am a professor' speech needs to be explained here to contextualize all the subsequent events. To create a relationship with the students—however limited that would have to be for the majority of the 300 or so of them—I was telling them a lot about my own 'work orientation' and I was trying to establish a broad contract with them. I suggested to them that if they thought that I was attempting to 'be a manager' in my first talk to them, they were absolutely right. I was putting into practice my beliefs about theory and practice. And I told them that, 'later on, when we study the notion of "implicit contracts" you will get a good idea of some of the theory that is behind my practice today'.

Having set the context in this way, I shall now proceed to outline the theory behind the basic approach to experiential learning that I was applying in this work before returning to the specific theoretical notions of work orientation and implicit contract that were part of the course content. I shall then sketch out the case material that was used in the seminar that dealt with these ideas before going on to look at how the students related their personal experiences to the experiences of the figures in the two cases that they were required to reflect upon.

A Negotiated Narrative Approach to Experiential Learning

The negotiated narrative approach to teaching and learning was first articulated in the process of reflecting upon my approach to postgraduate, post-experience group work (Watson 2001). In that work I was using ethnographic and participant observation material with managers and asking them, in effect, to throw their own managerial experience into a 'mix' of academic research materials, theories and concepts, and personal managerial experiences. The reflective manager notion (Schön 1983) and the philosophical pragmatist assumptions (Watson 1997) behind the model and the theoretical recognition of the power of 'narrative learning' (Tsoukas 1998) are discussed in the above (Watson 2001) reference. The model has also been applied to innovations in entrepreneurship learning (Fletcher and Watson 2007).

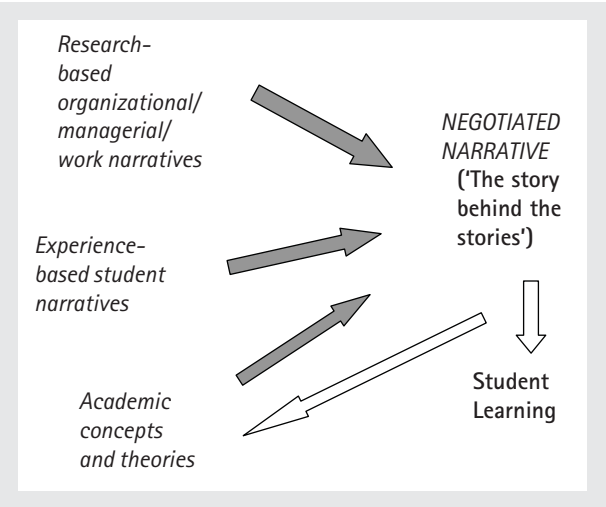


Fig. 22.1 A negotiated narrative approach to teaching and learning

The challenge of applying this approach to undergraduate students of business and management is inevitably much greater than that of applying it to experienced managers of the type attending the 'executive MBA' programme in which it was originally developed. However, a belief that has always informed my undergraduate teaching is that there is a lot more *managerially and organizationally relevant* experience among management undergraduates than at first sight we would expect to be the case. All have had experience of organizations, even if this only as the pupils of schools and the customers of retailing organizations. But few will have experience of observing managers at close hand, let alone trying to do a managerial job. This does not mean that we should not try to find areas of undergraduate experience where some 'negotiation of narratives' can occur based on potential links between material in the research literature and experiences in students' lives along the lines seen in Figure 22.1. Light should be thrown on just what is and what is not possible when we look at what occurred in the seminar event we will focus upon later.

The diagram shown here as Figure 22.1 was presented to students with the following explanation:

The diagram illustrates how we are going to use the ethnographic narratives or 'tales of the field' in the learning and teaching processes of the module. In preparation for seminars you will be asked to pre-read one or two of the book's cases and to bring along your reflections on the case together with accounts of your own experiences or observations in that aspect of working or organizational life. You might, for example, have read the case material on mischief at work. You and your colleagues would thus bring along an appreciation of this material together with accounts of events and activities which you have encountered yourselves—at school if not in a workplace. A valuable comparing of the research based and the personal would then occur, this comparison leading to the shaping of generalizations

that might be derived from all this 'empirical' evidence. In effect a 'story behind the stories' (more formally, a 'negotiated narrative') is being worked upon by the seminar participants.

It is not the stories alone that are put into this mix, however. There are also the theoretical and research ideas which are presented in the textbook, further reading, and lectures. The 'negotiated narrative' experience, at its best, then becomes one in which students and tutor become involved in a process of 'research'-based theorizing about the particular topic under examination. This should result in significant student learning on your part. And it should also be possible (as the diagram suggests) for there to be learning on the part of the tutors. We all hope so! Tutors are thus enabled to feed back into their own learning, and indeed scholarly writing, insights and ideas emerging from the learning/teaching experience. We are going beyond the idea of the tutor acting as a 'learning resource' for the students. We see you, the students, becoming a learning resource and, indeed, a source of research ideas for the tutor!

Having now established the model upon which the learning events were based we can turn to a sample of the theory element of the module. This is an example of the 'academic concepts and theories' input to the mix represented in Figure 22.1.

Learning 'Content': Work Orientations and Implicit Contracts

In presenting the work orientations concept (originating with Goldthorpe et al. 1968) and the concept of implicit contract (originating with Levinson et al., 1966) to the students, it was argued that to understand any individual's or group's work behaviour it is necessary to examine

(a) how they are predisposed to act in certain ways in the light of the meaning of work to them at that time and, within this,
(b) their perception of the deal they are making with the employer.

Both of these things, it was explained in the text and the lecture, have to be looked at in the context of employees' lives before they enter an organization. This is especially the case with a person's work meaning or *orientation to work*. This was formally defined as *the meaning individuals attach to their work which predisposes them both to think and act in particular ways with regard to that work.* And it was pointed out that one can distinguish between an *initial orientation* at the point of entry to work and the *dynamic orientation* that follows later. Work orientations are always liable to change as circumstances and interests change within the continuing employment relationship. And various changes in people's broader lives (including job changes themselves) will mean that orientations shift, sometimes in a minor and sometimes in a major way. But each time that a new job is entered a broad 'deal' is made with the employer, large parts of which may never be formally stated, let alone written down. This deal is conceptualized as *the tacit agreement between*

an employing organization and the employed individual about what the employee will 'put in' to the job and the rewards and benefits for which this will be exchanged. This focal element of the work orientation is similarly likely to change over time as both organizational and personal circumstances change.

This summary of a complex series of ideas emerging from decades of industrial sociology and organization theory (see Watson 2008) barely scratches the surface of the account given to students in the lecture and the text. In the lecture, especially, numerous examples were given of 'real life' cases of changes in people's work meanings and in the associated exchanges which they made in different ways at different times with employing organizations. An illustration which was given particular emphasis, in order to make links with students' own lives, was that of the lecturer himself and the approach he took to student vacation jobs (basically a work orientation which prioritized monetary reward whilst having a secondary concern with having experiences that might be helpful in a future career as an industrial sociologist). That early orientation was contrasted with the very different one that applied after graduation and marriage. The aim of this, fairly obviously, was to encourage students to think about the way in which their own work meanings were liable to be different in a year's time, when they were to enter full-time careers, from what might have been the case previously. They were being prompted to reflect on the very different sorts of implicit contract they might to make with graduate employers from the ones they had been making with employers of students over the past few years. And this theme was central to the first of the two case studies that they would be reading in preparation for the seminar on orientations and tacit employment contracts. This was the story of Ravi Barr.

Enter Ravi

The first of the two case studies—these representing the research-based narratives in Figure 22.1—is that of Ravi, a young man who moves from school, through student work experiences, into a graduate and then a managerial career—his work orientation changing all the time. The material takes the form of an interview with Ravi who explains that in his first experience of employment, 'I worked enthusiastically in the family business [after school]. I simply fitted into the business, like my older brothers, and did whatever my father asked me, whether it was delivering orders or sorting out the invoices. I didn't think of myself as cheap family labour. I was their dutiful Indian boy.' Later, however, when he was at university, 'I started to see myself then as cheap family labour. I began to resent this and I got more and more awkward with my father and brothers—doing the minimum amount of work

and refusing to take any kind of initiative at all. This all ended up in a big row and for the next few vacations I got work near the university.'

The employment Ravi undertook whilst at university (part-time in term, full-time in vacations) was sometimes labouring work, sometimes bar work, and, once, 'something horrible in a chicken factory'. He said that the work was 'a means to an end'. That 'end' was 'having a good time . . . the money I made enabled me to carry on partying in term time too. I was sort of shaking off all those years of being the quiet conscientious boy. And I was also refusing the plan my parents had for me, as the first one in our family to go to university and, hence, the one who would eventually run the business. I knew that this was something my older brothers really resented.' At the time of the interview, however, Ravi talks of how he has changed his orientation since then: 'I am very career oriented now. I am making sure that I am learning about every aspect of this business so that I can eventually be a chief executive of a large retailing outfit. My parents have now accepted that I do not want to work in the family business . . . and they are proud of what I am achieving. I think my marriage has been an important factor in my approach to career. Her family wanted to arrange a marriage for her and she had to fight them to marry me. So we have both had to make our way, and establish who we are "making careers away from the Asian community".'

Enter Sacha

The second case deals with a group of workers in the corporate affairs department of an organization and looks at the way Sacha, the manager of the group, comes to terms with the varying work orientations of the individuals who make up her department. And this 'coming to terms' means active intervention in certain cases. She is seen to influence or 'manipulate' the workers' perceptions of their implicit contract with the company (something that was to be a key theoretical point later in the module when the notion of 'managerial manipulation of perceived implicit contracts' was to be put forward as an alternative frame of reference for managers to the standard 'motivation' one). Sacha talks about all of her seven staff. And this is what she says about three of them:

Biffy and Sniffy are amazing cases of people who have changed. When I came here I was told they were simply miserable types. It was also said that they both had 'chips on their shoulders' because they had lost their jobs when the second of the town's papers closed down. They felt they were demeaning themselves by working in public relations. Both were well on the way to becoming alcoholics and they ruined their marriages, largely because of the drink. However, about a year ago there was this amazing change. In part, it was down to my giving them the most almighty shouting at—'Shape up or ship out' is what

I basically said. But it was also to do with some kind of conversion experience they had, as our managing director put it. They had both joined Alcoholics Anonymous and, at the same time, they discovered the delights of line dancing. Somehow the smartening up that went on with getting off the booze and their meeting women at the dancing sessions translated into their work. It was amazing. Almost over night they changed from lazy and uninspired individuals who were in danger of letting the company down to smart and reliable characters who I can happily allow to speak for the company.

Smithy, on the other hand, is somebody I increasingly can't trust. In her case, the change seems to have come about after moving in with a new partner, as opposed to losing a partner. She is my languages person and used to be brilliant at dealing with almost any issue where we needed to deal with Europe. It seems that her bloke has been getting resentful about her travelling abroad for us and this has led to her taking it out on all of us in the office. She's managed not to go abroad for six months now and the other day she rushed out of the office screaming, 'Oh, sod the French'. One of my best people has become a complete liability for reasons which, it seems, have nothing to do with the company.

We have now seen excerpts of the material that the students carefully read, alongside the relevant academic reading and their lecture notes. I recognize, though, that some readers will find this claimed high participation level hard to believe. The explanation for it lies, in part anyway, in what a student once called a 'cunning managerial device' within the module design—a device designed to ensure full seminar and preparation! Thirty per cent of the assessment was for *leading and chairing* one of the seminars. And the main criterion for this assessment was that of gaining a high quality of participation by the group. The implication of this was that each individual was strongly discouraged from 'opting out' in any sense whatsoever. If you 'let down' the fellow students who were leading their allocated seminar, those students would get a bad mark. And the likely consequence of this was that these people would retaliate by failing to turn up to do the reading for the people who had failed to appear or contribute to their session!

Scenes from the Seminar Event

It is in the seminar event that we see the 'experience-based student narratives' of Figure 22.1 coming into play. The seminar at which I took notes was led by Emma and Nihal. They did the job in an impressive way and, as was the case with most of the subsequent seminars, I only contributed, like the students themselves, when invited to by the chairpersons. This was in spite of the fact that everyone knew I would be filling in a pro-forma and, after the event, awarding a mark to the event leaders. They all, I think, assumed that my note taking was part of the assessment process.

Emma and Nihal had prepared their own thoughts on the academic material. They gave a ten-minute summary of the key theoretical ideas with which the

seminar was concerned but they insisted to the group that they would reveal nothing of their own analyses of the two cases until 'everyone else in the room' has made a contribution. This was said in a friendly and unthreatening manner and was well received by the seminar group—who were functioning very well together, having at this stage experienced three previous seminar events. This was the first week of the module, however, in which the seminars were student led (the module design required the tutors to lead the first three seminars). The group were rather grateful to Emma and Nihal for volunteering to be the first ones to take over from the tutor 'in the chair', so to speak. To my surprise, the first student to speak was one of the three Asian students in the group. He had been very shy in the earlier events and I had struggled to get him to speak in front of the group. He told us about working as a boy in the family business and feeling, just like Ravi, that this was a simple matter of duty and 'how things are meant to be'. Again, like Ravi, his 'orientation towards my family and the work in the business changed when I came to Uni'. To everyone's amusement (they clearly knew him as a quiet and shy colleague) he said that he was 'not the partying type' and therefore did not look for student employment in order to 'pay for going out on the town'. His orientation was nevertheless, he said, 'money oriented'. But he wanted the money for savings and he said that, after several arguments with his parents, they had agreed to pay him whatever he would have got paid by other employers if he still worked in the family business in his vacations. He said he 'liked the orientations theory' and he felt sure that it would influence him when it came to 'sorting out a proper job when I leave here'.

The next student to speak, Tom, started with, 'I just want to pick up on something that Sandeep has just said'. This was the phrase 'partying type' and, to laughter from the group, he reminded the group that he really was a 'partying type' and went on to argue that 'this is really much more of who I am than just an orientation—as was probably the case with Ravi who, I reckon, was just going through a phase. So, yes: an orientation for Ravi, but something different for me.' Mandy tackled him hard on this, suggesting that when he faced the pressures of 'the real world' next year, he was bound to reorient himself. I wondered if she had a close personal relationship with Tom, especially given the tone of what she went on to say, 'And if you don't get a new orientation to work very soon, you will never get to the point of making an implicit contract with a company, because you won't have a degree.' Emma intervened, at this point, to say, 'we need to move on to other people', but the group appeared to want more on this matter. And Nihal suggested that this should be related to the theoretical point of whether there was 'something about people being types which clashed with the work orientation approach'. He reminded people that it had been argued in the lecture that it was more helpful, in work situations, to look at how people were orienting themselves at any given time rather than speculating on what 'sort of people' they were. Tom said that his father was a 'partying type' and that this had not stopped him being

a very successful businessman. 'And you are just like your father?' Sandeep asked him. 'Without doubt,' Tom responded, 'my mother often says I have inherited his personality.'

The discussion then proceeded with people arguing about the issue of 'basic personality' versus 'emergent orientation'. This was skilfully chaired by Emma and Nihal, who made sure they brought most people into the debate. They became visibly uncomfortable, however, on several occasions when they had to cut short contributions 'because we have only got an hour'. But one of the skilful things they did was to ensure that the characters in Sacha's story were brought into the discussion. Because few of them felt they had ever got sufficiently close to anyone in a work situation to know them as well as it appeared Sacha knew 'her people', they tended to drift into arguing about such things as whether or not 'deep down Smithy always was someone you couldn't really trust' and that 'this had simply taken some time to come out' or whether or not, as one student put it, 'Sacha was mistaken to call Biffy and Sniffy miserable types: they were simply sick alcoholics who got cured'. The majority, however, thought that the Sacha story showed how valuable the orientations and implicit contract ideas were for managers trying to understand people in their departments. Emma and Nihal (who, incidentally, never got time to tell how his personal story compared with Ravi's) tried hard to get people to report experiences relating to managerial attempts to influence work orientations through manipulating people's perceived implicit contracts with their employer.

Only one student had anything to say on managerial interventions. And he had a lot to say. Perhaps not surprisingly, this was because, in his early twenties before coming to university, he had worked as a manager in a retail clothing business. Paul told how he had been 'totally up against it when I took over this bunch of uncooperative, stroppy bastards'. He continued, 'If I hadn't worked to turn these people around I could not have stayed in the job.' 'So how did you do it?', he was asked. He responded by talking in detail about how he'd tried to show them ways in which they could build into the work 'some good laughs'. Emma struggled to make sure this was related back to the theories under consideration and she put it to the group that what Paul was doing was 'inserting into the unwritten agreement between the shop and these workers the reward of fun at work and, I take it Paul, a better level of companionship with you and the rest of the team'. I presumed that they agreed with this because the group simply gave Emma a round of applause for her observation. And she and Nihal then moved to 'draw things together to see if we have a "story behind the story" as a result of our debates' (this being the 'negotiated narrative' element of Figure 22.1). The discussion, unfortunately, was severely curtailed by the clock. As the sound of other students gathering at the door of the seminar room built up, Nihal wrote up on the flip chart under the heading 'Our theory':

- people change their orientations to work as things in their lives and their jobs change;

- managers can make an input into implicit contracts to change behaviours;
- some types of people are easier to change than others.

The group then applauded Emma and Nihal. As the group started to file out of the room I approached the two 'leaders'. They looked worried and Nihal simply pointed at the flip chart and said, 'Sorry about that, Tony. I know you wouldn't want to sign up to this "types of people stuff". ' I assured them that this was no problem because I had set up the event to be one where, between us as a group, we were to 'negotiate a narrative' and this was what we negotiated. I then assured the two of them that I would be awarding them a first-class mark for the outstanding way in which they had managed the group and gained a high level of participation in an event in which theory, research, and people's real life experiences were brought into play with each other. They both looked very pleased—and deservedly so.

In Conclusion

It is hoped that this fairly full account of a set of learning and teaching activities demonstrates the potential that exists for incorporating experiential learning relating to 'whole life' issues as opposed to 'work placement' experiences with undergraduate students. More importantly, though, it shows that quite a sophisticated level of achievement in relating 'theory and practice' is possible with such students if a suitable vehicle is created—one which carefully integrates, and makes mutually supportive, lectures, seminars, reading, and, very relevantly, assessment. In addition to this, there is the matter of the nature of the relationship established between teachers and students. This cannot be of the more personal type once possible when numbers were smaller. So what we saw here was an informal contract or *effort bargain* made between lecturer and student in which, in return for hard work and commitment, a promise was made of learning which would not be only relevant to students' own past and current experiences but which would help them manage their future experiences. This would relate not just to their initial experiences of entering the employment 'jungle' but to their later experiences when they might be confronting the challenges of *doing management* themselves.

References

Fletcher, D. E., and Watson, T. J. (2007). 'Entrepreneurship, Management Learning and Negotiated Narratives', *Management Learning*, 38/1: 9–26.

Goldthorpe, J. H., Lockwood, D., Bechhofer, F., and Platt, J. (1968). *The Affluent Worker: Attitudes and Behaviour*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Levinson, H., Price, C., Munden, K., and Solley, C. (1966). *Men, Management and Mental Health*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Schön, D. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner*. New York: Basic Books.

Tsoukas, H. (1998). 'Forms of Knowledge and Forms of Life in Organised Contexts,' in R. Chia (ed.), *In the Realm of Organization: Essays for Robert Cooper*. London: Routledge.

Watson, T. J. (1997). 'Theorising Managerial Work: A Pragmatic Pluralist Approach to Interdisciplinary Research', *British Journal of Management*, 8: 3–8.

—— (2001). *In Search of Management*, rev. edn. London: Thomson Learning (1st pub. 1994).

—— (2006). *Organising and Managing Work*, 2nd edn. Harlow: FT Prentice-Hall.

—— (2008 forthcoming). *Sociology, Work and Industry*, 5th edn. London: Routledge.

CHAPTER 23

MAXIMUM DISORDER

WORKING EXPERIENTIALLY WITH HRM AND BUSINESS STUDIES UNDERGRADUATES

JANE THOMPSON
TRACY LAMPING

Introduction and Context

In this chapter we discuss an experiential seminar activity entitled 'Maximum Disorder'.[1] We demonstrate how we encourage our students to gain an understanding of the complexity of 'management', thus affording them the opportunity to gain insight and skills, as they negotiate the social, emotional, and political aspects of managing/managerial work. Debate with regard to critical pedagogy in management education is now well developed. Transferring this into practice at the level of curricula, or what we term 'critical pedagogy in action', is less so. In this chapter we

illustrate how we have extrapolated from this debate and developed ideas/activities to establish a firmer foundation for the *practice* of a critical pedagogy.

To contextualize our practice, first we identity our pedagogic approach. We begin by introducing ourselves as senior lecturers at the University of Lincoln. We have worked in the Faculty of Business and Law for many years, designing and delivering a range of business studies courses. During this time our working environment has been turbulent (not unlike that of many of our colleagues in other universities), with increasing pressures from our own university to recruit students, in the midst of a large-scale voluntary severance programme.

Making meaningful subject areas such as HRM/Organizational Behaviour/Management to undergraduates (our seminars include a mix of business studies and HRM students) who have little work experience is challenging. While many students now, of course, undertake part-time work, or have been employed in at least one McJob, most of our full-time undergraduates have little experience of business environments and tend to hold a view of 'management' that is imbued with what Anthony (1986) describes as 'official theory'. Such a view is further reinforced by many traditional business studies/HRM/OB texts which have tended to present a prescriptive approach to the nature of managing (Grey and French 1996). In recent years, however, there has been a concern to get students to engage with 'real theory' which begins with the premiss that 'management' is a social and political activity; and 'power', in its various guises, requires recognition and deconstruction, thus equipping students for their future roles.

Texts such as Gareth Morgan's *Images of Organization* (1986), Tony Watson's *In Search of Management* (1994), Paul Thompson and David McHugh's *Work Organizations* (1990), Fiona Wilson's *Organizational Behaviour: A Critical Introduction* (2004), Norman Jackson and Pippa Carter's *Organizational Behaviour* (2004), and Chris Grey's *A Very Short, Fairly Interesting and Reasonably Cheap Book about Studying Organizations* (2005) do indeed acknowledge 'real theory' as described by Anthony. On the HRM front the work of Karen Legge (1995), Barbara Townley (1994), Richard Hyman (1975), and Tony Redman and Adrian Wilkinson (2001) is particularly helpful in that these authors adopt a more critical stance with regard to the employment relationship. 'Real theory' is reflected in their writings, encapsulating in their texts an acknowledgement of power relationships and the politicking that takes place in organizational life.

Many commentators, of course, have stated that 'teaching management' is problematic (see, for example, Grey and Mitev 1995) even at postgraduate level when there is often some experience of the business world on which to draw. It is our view, however, that with the adoption of an experiential critical pedagogy, based on 'real theory', students can be encouraged to consider aspects of managerial work which involve a critical understanding of power relations at the level of ownership, symbolic manifestion/personal interest, and the (in)equalities endemic of capitalist cultures. Such critical pedagogy can promote insight, skills, and a sense of

'morality' for (future) organizational roles, thus enabling a questioning of dominant managerial ideologies. We see this as extending Schön's model of the reflective practitioner (1987) to that of *reflexive* practitioner (see Thompson and McGivern 1996).

It is important to acknowledge that we have found the debates in *Management Learning* useful in stimulating our ideas. In particular we recognize some of the dilemmas raised by Michael Reynolds (1998), Christopher Grey and Robert French (1996), and Graeme Currie and David Knights (2003) in attempts to develop a critical pedagogy. Such theoretical debates do not, however, easily translate to the *practice* of a critical pedagogy, and by this we mean curricular development in terms of what actually takes place in the seminar room. This omission of debate about actual critical content is noted by Dehler, Welsh, and Lewis who, remarking on such absence, comment, 'Curricular content . . . but debate about what?' (2001: 500). However, it is important to point out that in recent years more attention has been given to critical curricular development, or as we term it 'critical pedagogy in action', and indeed chapters within this text are concerned with this very issue.

So how do we help our students to understand the complexity of 'managing' and to become what we have referred to as reflexive practitioners? In year 1 of our Business Studies/HRM courses all undergraduates undertake the modules Perspectives in Management and Management and Context in which we encourage them to think of themselves as possessing 'management skills' from the outset. We suggest 'management' is often reified, presented to us in a mystical manner, as deeds carried out by remote and unapproachable individuals in the name of 'the organization'. Mike Pedler's work provides an accessible framework through which students may identify their strengths and their development needs (Pedler, Burgoyne, and Boydell 1994). This approach also offers the possibility to students that they are *already* managers and may practise their skills in order to become adept at understanding organizations through 'reading situations' (Morgan 1986). Notions of management development as well as human resource management are introduced in this context. This approach acknowledges that there is no particular point at which one 'becomes' a manager but rather it is an ongoing process (Watson 2001). The Perspectives in Management and Management in Context modules are built upon at level 3/4 (when many of our students have undertaken a placement year) with the introduction of a double semester module entitled Management Action in Practice (MAP); an activity from this unit is used to exemplify our approach in this chapter. Before we discuss this, and in order to provide further contextualization, we briefly add a little more information on our approach.

Given our interest in the development of an experiential critical pedagogy, over the years we have designed and developed activities which have enabled us to establish curricula-content which encourages students to experience in a 'here

and now' situation the social, political and emotional behaviour that occurs in groups/organizations (McGivern and Thompson 2000). We have also tried to engender a critical reflexivity by encouraging students to consider debate that questions dominant ideologies around the way work is organized, the (in)equality of employment relationships, and the way in which particular interests are served and sustained. We would argue, therefore, that we engage with 'critical' aspects. Hence we emphasize that such an approach has the potential to develop what we have described as *reflexive* practitioners. The main purpose of this chapter therefore is to provide an example of an experiential event whereby we argue students are afforded the opportunity to recognize the complexity of managing, in the 'here and now' situation of the seminar, thus experiencing the power dynamics of group working, while also reflecting on wider critical reading.

The Management Action in Practice Module (MAP)

The final-year MAP module consists of a structured lecture programme and alternate weekly two-hourly seminars/workshops where we use experiential activities. It is in this context, faced with 'management issues' such as struggles for power/leadership, collusion/exclusion, trust/mistrust, that students can learn to develop skills and qualities to negotiate the socio-political and emotional aspects of organizational life. Confronted by such dilemmas in these seminars, and through dialogic practice, new insights can occur. At this point it is worth mentioning that our own dialogue with our managers has been ongoing, particularly in the way we wish to organize our work. Our managers at Lincoln have been very supportive of the development of a critical pedagogy. Not only have they edited *Thinking about Management* (Golding and Currie 2000) which encapsulates much of our learning philosophy, but they have also been instrumental in curricular development and negotiating with the staff who organize timetabling. This has enabled us to be allocated a two-hour slot and, up until recently, a dual-tutor system for these experiential seminars has prevailed. We have found that one hour is insufficient as an activity and discussion cannot be sufficiently developed within such a timeframe. Having a co-worker has been invaluable as we have been able to engage in an explicit dialogic method in front of, and with, our students, thus reflecting on our dilemmas and uncertainties with regard to our own learning and the questioning of our own assumptions. It can, of course, be very challenging to move out of the 'traditional' tutor role (as generally perceived by students), but we consider it important to do this, not only so our students can actually take responsibility for what occurs, thus practising their managerial/organizational skills, but also it provides us with an

opportunity to expose our own dilemmas, thus problematizing 'knowledge' and modelling 'a lack of closure' through dialogic practice (Cunliffe 2002).

In order to illustrate some of the above, we now describe the activity 'Maximum Disorder'.

The Activity ... Maximum Disorder

Tuesday, 10.45 a.m., Room 304 (on this particular occasion this activity took place in week 8 of semester 1).

We arrive early to set out the room in preparation for the activity. We expect seventeen students in this final-level seminar group so begin by placing a small table in the centre of the room, surrounded by four chairs. This is then surrounded by an outer circle of thirteen chairs (see Figure 23.1). On the table we place a

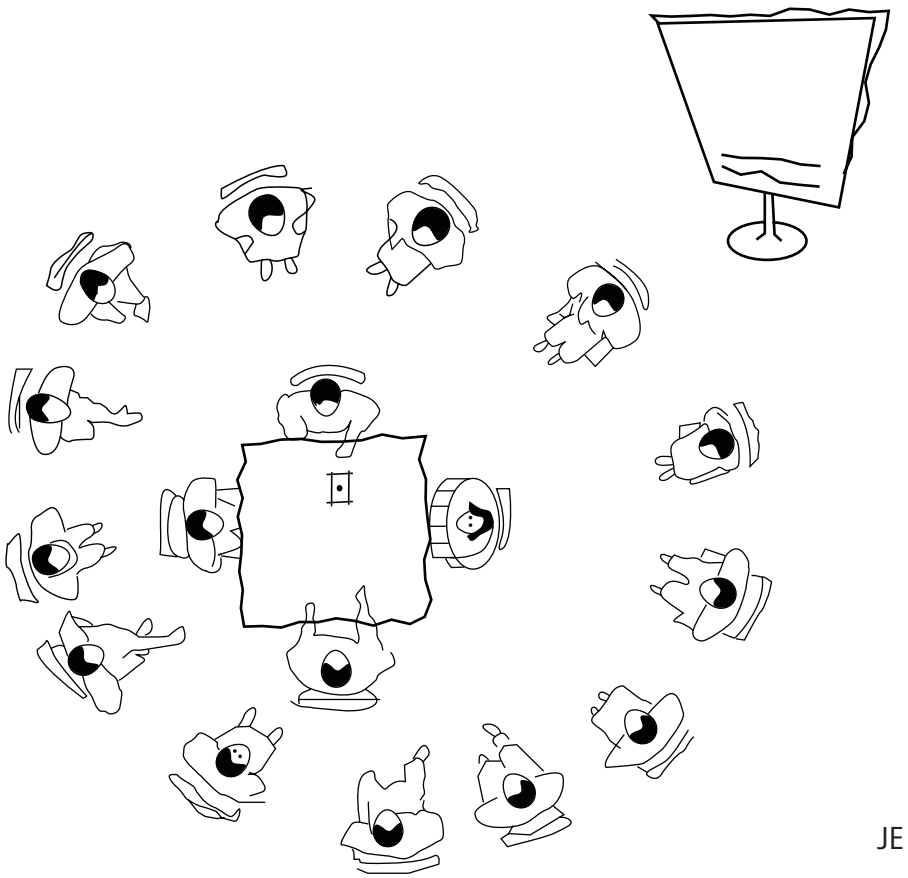


Fig. 23.1 Maximum disorder

pack of playing cards. On the whiteboard we write 'Plan to sort the cards into maximum disorder. Only those sitting in the inner circle may speak. You have 40 minutes.'

We are ready and just before 11.00 a.m. we open the door to see how many students are waiting to enter. We count fifteen on this occasion so we swiftly remove two chairs from the outer circle. The students are invited in.

Today (as we have witnessed on previous occasions) the outer seats are taken first, and those last in take the chairs around the small table on which the cards have been placed. And as usual, one can observe a marked reluctance in the steps of the last four who take their seats in the inner circle, which can be interpreted as having a 'higher profile' and thus requiring a more active role.

Silence ensues . . . (this is not unusual and can last for quite a few minutes and we can experience a sense of unease as eyes are focused on us, awaiting further instructions—the instructions are actually written on the whiteboard but we do not draw attention to these, waiting instead for students to observe, and take the initiative). Meanwhile we take seats at the back of the room, and occupy ourselves with our own reading. In our learning environment we want students to take responsibility from the outset—a central prerequisite of managerial work—so we do not intervene at this point.

The silence continues today. Several members of the group look at the floor, avoiding eye contact, while others gaze towards the window. Sue,[2] Sally, Kevin, and Bill have the inner seats. Suddenly, Sue in a rather anxious voice says, 'What are we supposed to do now?' This question does not seem to be directed at anyone in particular. The silence continues but is interrupted by John who is sitting in the outer circle. He taps her on the shoulder, and points a finger in the direction of the whiteboard. 'Oh, right', says Sue, looking at the board. 'What is maximum disorder,' asks Sally, directing her attention to Sue. Ten minutes pass while the four round the table attempt to address the questions they raise such as: 'What is maximum disorder?' 'It is impossible as it is a contradiction' . . . 'what is order?' . . . 'what is disorder'? The cards are removed from the pack by Bill and picked up by Kevin who shuffles them. There is talk as to the best way to achieve the task (as they have interpreted it) with voices becoming raised as they put forward their points. The conversation in the inner circle becomes quite muddled, seemingly no one is listening to another until Kevin confidently asserts, 'lets just throw them up in the air . . . that is maximum disorder'. There is laughter. 'That can't be right', says Bill who has another go at passing cards to the three others in what he describes as a 'random pattern'. 'How can a pattern be random?' asks Sue and there is some good-humoured banter at this point; Kevin suggests a game of three-card brag, while Bill argues for strip poker.

Meanwhile, half an hour into the activity, those in the outer circle are looking bored and there are obvious signs of frustration, represented by a leaning low in seats, with heads bowed. 'We have got nowhere and look at the time', says Sue,

commanding attention from the other three in what some might perceive as a quest for leadership. Sue turns round and looks at members of the outer circle and says, 'What do you think?' Kevin reminds her, 'they cannot speak'. (In debrief it is useful, for example, to pose questions such as 'Who makes the rules in here and "out there" in organizations, and why do we follow them?') At this point John from the outer circle gets up and his body language indicates that he wishes to swap places with Sally. Once in the circle John articulates his version of maximum disorder. This is very similar to Bill's idea and is soon rejected by Kevin. Meanwhile the sighs in the outer circle continue, and one or two exchange jottings on their notepads. Julia writes a note, folds it, and passes it into the inner circle. It is read by Sue but no comment is made.

By now it is 11.40. More notes are passed into the inner circle and Bill reads out the suggestions: 'Burn the cards,' and in very large writing 'Lets go to the pub.' A third jotting states, 'You've had your forty minutes, you're fired!' and another, 'Give a card to everyone in the room at random and see what happens.' Kevin picks up Julia's earlier note, reads it and says to the group, 'Ah, I get it, we don't have to actually sort the cards, we just have to PLAN [his emphasis] to sort them but we don't actually have to do it.' There is no acknowledgement of the group member who provided this suggestion. (Such an omission can be picked up in a debrief drawing attention as to why there was a lack of acknowledgement of what could be recognized as an important point of progression—to what extent do trust, liking structure, collusion, etc. impact on whose voice is heard and whose is ignored). Sue states, 'so, that is what we have actually been doing for the last 40 minutes,' trying to catch the eye of one of the tutors. 'What "planning?" ' says Kevin, 'I don't call that *planning*' (his emphasis); a discussion ensues as to what constitutes a plan and so debate in the inner circle takes off once again.

More swap places so their voices can be heard; Demetrius suggests throwing the cards out of the window; Malcolm advocates cutting them up but others reject this idea, looking with amusement at the tutors who continue to appear preoccupied with their reading. Our role throughout the activity has been one of non-direction/non-interference thus enabling the group to take full responsibility for what occurs, encouraging them to be active in their learning; but we are listening, and at appropriate points (later), in what can be described as a 'debrief', we question various patterns of behaviour, as we observed, thus prompting the group to engage in further reflection/discussion.

By noon the circle has become one, all participants are now in one large circle, the instructions on the board are no longer acknowledged, and conversation is in full flow. However, at 12.15 on this occasion, the group appear to be in dependency mode, displaying the need for some form of leadership (Bion 1959), with students looking to the tutors to help them resolve their predicament. As stated above, we have made no explicit intervention for well over an hour. At this point

Demetrius says the task is complete, and all eyes focus on the tutors. 'What have you done?' is the tutor response. Sally says somewhat impatiently, 'we have completed the task by planning to sort the cards into maximum disorder . . . well, we didn't actually "plan" exactly but we did talk.' This prompts further discussion within the group on how events/actions are interpreted differently . . . when is a 'plan' a 'plan' . . . and the problematic nature of language. The difficulty of establishing 'meaning' is recognized by some, and reference is made to an earlier lecture on postmodernism, and the reading Demetrius and Sam had done from Jackson and Carter in preparation for today's activity. There appears to be a genuine attempt to deal with the difficulties they are encountering in terms of agreement/consensus and their discourse structures the next ten minutes with most participants making useful contributions, particularly with reference to the reading from the module core text, Jackson and Carter.

We ask, 'what has actually occurred in the last hour or so' and 'what implications might this have for managerial work, particularly if interpretation/meaning is so problematic with regard to instructions and achieving a task', as they have suggested. One student stated this would not happen in 'the real world' as instructions would be clear and 'therefore there wouldn't have been a problem'. At this point another describes an experience he had on his work placement and how no one understood 'what the boss was on about so we just did it how we thought'.

We then ask the group if they think there should be an 'answer' or 'solution' to the activity, thus prompting further discussion. This is not addressed at this point and instead there is talk of 'being set up' (by us), and, 'had the tutor been more clear and given more feedback at various points, there would not have been a problem'. 'What problem . . . who has a problem?' asks Kevin, at which point the tension is relieved by laughter.

'What is happening now?' we ask. Students look confused and then Angela states 'at least we are talking to each other . . . in many seminars we do not even do that, so that is a bonus'. (Given that we remind them, throughout this module, of the importance of 'talk' in managerial work, see Stewart 1982; Boden and Zimmerman 1991; and Boden 1994, this can be a useful prompt in debrief). We pose another question: 'how can we (you) progress when we (you) cannot agree as to what constitutes maximum disorder?' Someone mutters, 'THIS [their emphasis] is maximum disorder!' A reference is then made to the previous week's lecture which focused on intersubjectivity when Kevin states, 'but we are agreeing to agree, rather than agree whatever maximum disorder means so we can move on'. There follows a brief discussion about 'meaning' being negotiated through discourse to achieve some sort of closure. The role of power, leaders, and language is further discussed. This group have certainly done their reading and have been able to relate ideas to the activity. We might add that this is not always the case!

The Ongoing Debrief and Debate

Indeed there is so much that can be drawn from the material that this group has generated in this one activity, and over the weeks, after such experiential activities, references are made to behaviours, dilemmas, and tensions that they highlight as being significant. In particular, points for discussion that are often raised during, or towards the end of, an experiential activity such as Maximum Disorder might include: the behaviour/feelings of those in the inner/outer circle; the making of 'good' contact when asking questions, the importance of developed listening skills and body language; rule making and the legitimization of such; gendering; lack of clarity and the ambiguity of language/meaning; the role of friendship, trust; inclusion, exclusion, and mistrust; the role of tutors; and reaction to silence. There are, of course, many other issues that can surface and may require skilful facilitation by both tutors and students (see further examples in McGivern and Thompson 2004). We do, however, encourage students to raise issues themselves—rather than for us to prompt particular issues—thus enabling them to take responsibility and ownership for the discussion, thereby practising for their future organizational roles. This particular session was lively: there has been lots of 'talk', laughter, jokes, and innuendo. Most have engaged with the activity (we are sensitive to the feelings of those who appear not to engage, and again, careful facilitation is required by both students and tutors), and participants have identified and reflected on behaviour patterns/postures/roles as well as relating their reading.

We referred earlier to the group being 'set up' (their words) by us and indeed, we did, of course, stage an activity that had the potential to create conflict and a range of emotions. We find this particular activity very appropriate as it departs from traditional role-plays which can be highly structured and solution based. Apart from the initial layout of materials and space, Maximum Disorder requires very little intervention from us and therefore students are put in a position whereby they have to reflect on the power dynamics in the 'here and now' and 'manage' for themselves. Being 'set up', as this group so describe, is necessary in order to expose the power relations within the seminar room, not only within the group but also within the tutor–student relationships. We have considered elsewhere the debate as to whether power can be decentred in the classroom (McGivern and Thompson 2004: 150), but maintain that by exposing power dynamics within the tutor–student relationship we are at least able to encourage students to gain a greater awareness of 'political' behaviour, thus enabling them to practise the skills they need in order to 'read' organizational situations.

One of the key features of working with our students is an explicit focus on their learning. Managing one's learning is central to the task of organizing and we believe that an understanding of one's own learning process and that of others is an essential prerequisite for future organizational roles. Reflecting on learning therefore is

an integral part of our programme. Using a dialogic methodology (McGivern and Thompson 1995) we encourage our students to share their thoughts about their own learning. Such an approach is compatible with the reflective journal practices we establish in order to help them make explicit links between their own experience and conceptual material, thus leading to reflexive practitioners capable of significant learning through linking explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge. We suggest our critical pedagogy in action adds a further dimension to experiential approaches and, as Ann Cunliffe suggests, creating opportunities for reflexive dialogue 'in which we question and surface taken for granted aspects of our everyday experience' (2002: 46) is an essential prerequisite for a critical pedagogy. Through raising the problematic rooted in the assumptions underpinning managerial practice, we aim to reveal the socially constructed nature of the discipline, liberating students to deconstruct and reconstruct.

In this chapter we have explained how we work with our final-level HRM/Business Studies undergraduates with a view to encouraging them to become reflexive practitioners. We have described an experiential activity entitled Maximum Disorder and attempt to show how extrapolations can be made from this that have the potential to promote insight and skills. We are, of course, mindful of the debates as to whether critical content can actually initiate a process which extends beyond the 'traditional' (wherein the tutor retains control over the passive student via their 'expertise') and authoritative discourse reigns (as noted in Currie and Knights 2003: 32). However, by linking curricular (activities) such as described to a process where *we* and students problematize and develop 'knowledge' and understanding through dialogue and debate, a critical pedagogy in action can be engendered. As we have noted, the wider hierarchical/meritocratic cultures in which our discourse takes place are not ignored, but raised as issues for debate.

Notes

We are grateful to John Elliott for reproducing Figure 23.1.

Michael Reynolds and Russ Vince dedicated *Organizing Reflection* (2004, Ashgate) to Janet McGivern. Janet was our colleague and very dear friend and we have been inspired and encouraged by her experiential practice. Without her we could not have written this chapter, and it is to her that this is dedicated.

1. We have been using this activity for many years but the precise source cannot be located. The 'Instructions for Tutors' are these:
   - Create an inner circle with 4–5 chairs and place a table in the middle.
   - Create a larger outer circle with the required number of chairs (depending on number of participants).
   - Place a pack of playing cards on the table in the inner circle.

- Write on the board, 'Plan to sort the cards into maximum disorder. Only those in the inner circle may speak. You have 40 minutes.'
- Check the number of seats correspond with those waiting to enter and then invite participants into the room.

2. As we have asserted, our students are indeed aware of our research into our practice, and several have read (and, on occasion contributed to) our papers, but we consider it appropriate in this case to protect identity, hence names have been changed.

References

Anthony, P. (1986). *The Foundation of Management.* London: Tavistock.

Bion, W. R. (1959). *Experiences in Groups*. New York: Basic Books.

Boden, D. (1994). *The Business of Talk*. Cambridge: Polity.

—— and Zimmerman, D. H. (1991). *Talk and Social Structure*: *Studies in Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis*. Oxford: Polity in Association with Blackwell.

Cunliffe, A. L. (2002). 'Reflexive Dialogue Practice in Management Learning', *Management Learning*, 33/1: 35–61.

Currie, G., and Knights, D. (2003). 'Reflecting on a Critical Pedagogy in MBA Education', *Management Learning*, 34/1: 27–49.

Dehler, G. E., Welsh, A. M., and Lewis, M. W. (2001). 'Critical Pedagogy in the "New Paradigm": Raising Complicated Understanding in Management Learning', *Management Learning*, 32/4: 493–511.

Golding, D., and Currie, D. (eds.) (2000). *Thinking about Management*. London: Routledge.

Grey, C. (2005). *A Very Short, Fairly Interesting and Reasonably Cheap Book about Studying Organizatins*. London: Sage.

—— and French, R. (1996). 'Rethinking Management Education', in R. French and C. Grey (eds.), *Rethinking Management Education*. London: Sage.

—— and Mitev, N. (1995). 'Management Education: A Polemic', *Management Learning*, 26/1: 73–90.

Hyman, R. (1975). *Industrial Relations: A Marxist Introduction*. London: Macmillan.

Jackson, N., and Carter, P. (2000). *Rethinking Organizational Behaviour*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Legge, K. (1995). *Human Resource Management: Rhetorics and Realities.* London: Macmillan.

McGivern, J., and Thompson, J. (1995). 'Dialoguing for Development', in G. Gibbs (ed.), *Improving Student Learning.* Oxford: OCSD.

—— —— (2000). 'Teaching Management through Reflective Practice', in D. Golding and D. Currie (eds.), *Thinking about Management*: *A Reflective Practice Approach*. London: Routledge.

—— —— (2004). 'Dialoguing for Development: Lessons for Reflection', in M. Reynolds and R. Vince (eds.), *Organizing Reflection*. London: Ashgate.

Morgan, G. (1986). *Images of Organization*. London: Sage.

Pedler, M., Burgoyne, J., and Boydell, T. H. (1994). *A Managers Guide to Self Development*. London: McGraw Hill.

Redman, T., and Wilkinson, A. (2001). *Contemporary Human Resource Management*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Reynolds, M. (1998). 'Reflection and Critical Reflection in Management Learning', *Management Learning*, 29/2: 183–200.
Schön, D. (1987). *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
Stewart, R. (1982). *Choices for the Manager: A Guide to Managerial Work and Behaviour*. Maidenhead: McGraw Hill.
Thompson, J., and McGivern, J. (1996). 'Parody, Process and Practice: Perspectives for Management Education?', *Management Learning*, 27/1: 21–35.
Thompson, P., and McHugh, D. (1990). *Work Organizations*. London: Macmillan.
Townley, B. (1994). *Reframing Human Resource Management*. London: Sage.
Watson, T. (1994). *In Search of Management.* London: Routledge.
—— (2001). 'The Emergent Manager and Processes of Management Pre-learning', *Management Learning*, 32/2: 221–35.
Wilson, F. (2004). *Organizational Behaviour: A Critical Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

CHAPTER 24

WORKING WITH EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE IN PRACTICE

KIRAN TREHAN
CLARE RIGG

Introduction

This chapter reflects on experiences of running a management development programme where the pedagogical process is as significant as the content for participants' learning. The programme works through an approach to experiential learning that incorporates insights from Critical Management Learning, integrating action learning and critical reflection with a central focus on the notions of power, empowerment, and openness that have been pivotal to the aspirations of experiential learning. This chapter does two main things. First, it elucidates the elements and processes that make the programme experiential. But secondly, it identifies some of the problematics that are frequently glossed over in the idealistic treatment of much experiential learning literature. Threaded throughout are evaluations of

management students' and tutors' experiences which illuminate the impact of experiential learning on the development process.

The chapter is structured in three sections. The first contextualizes the programme and outlines the course design and content, describing core principles of the pedagogical process and how experiential learning is expedited on the programme. The second section elucidates the 'Critically Experiential' approach underlying the UCE Programme, explaining how ideas from Critical Management Learning are integral, particularly through Critical Reflection and Participative Assessment. The final section explores how adopting a critical perspective to management learning both highlights the potential of developing managers through this approach to experiential learning and at the same time explains what is problematic about it. The chapter concludes with a reflection on some of the implications and challenges of working with experiential learning in practice.

Mastering Management

Thirty years ago a marketing lecturer was told by his new head of department, recently arrived from working in industry, 'We're going to change the way we teach here. I'm relying on you to start. Go into that class tonight, give them some marketing materials and tell them to take them away, use them and learn.' The marketing lecturer entered the class, terrified, spoke as instructed to the forty-five managers on a part-time postgraduate Diploma in Management, and walked out of the room with his heart pounding. In the classroom there was a momentary stunned silence, followed by uproar, with angry cries of 'They can't do that; what are we supposed to do? What do they think we're paying them for?' In the uncertainty created by the tutors' apparent abstention, students' anxieties ran high. However, as Vince (1996) argues, anxiety is the precursor to potential learning, and in Lewin's terms it can be the unfreezing necessary to provoke change (Lewin 1947). A year later, when the course was up for national revalidation, it was students' support which convinced the validators to agree it.

From these beginnings, the University of Central England's (UCE) approach to management and organization development has evolved. A post-experience, part-time Diploma in Management Studies was designed in 1974, integrating experiential and psychodynamic principles, and has run for almost thirty years. Since the mid 1990s, two master's stages have been developed to follow the diploma, one of which is an M.Sc. in Organization Development and Management Learning, and the other an MBA which attracts thirty to fifty students a year.

From its inception the programme was designed for those who wish to become effective leaders, managers, practitioners, and consultants. As highlighted above,

participants' learning about management and organizational development is as much from the experiential process as from the course content. 'Experiential learning' has had diverse meanings, and a varied history of applications. However, for this programme there are a number of features that are fundamental. These are action learning, praxis, process, and proactivity. The next section will deal with each of these in turn.

Core features of the Experiential Pedagogy

Action Learning

The programme takes an experiential learning approach where, supported by a small number of lectures, students spend two-thirds of their time working collectively in action learning sets (ALS) of six to nine people facilitated by a tutor (see Revans 1982; McGill and Beaty 1995 for more on action learning). The ALS fulfils a number of functions. It undertakes group tasks, which are predominantly real organizational problems, and participants are encouraged, through facilitation, to reflect on how they work together and to work through process issues in some depth. Participants are also encouraged to exchange their experiences of working within the ALS, and of carrying out their individual course assignments. They are also involved in the assessment of their own and each other's work. In this sense students' dialogue and social support can be fundamental to the course.

The course team does not use pre-written case studies and makes very little use of examinations (10 per cent in the diploma and none in the master's). Learning is through assignments that are almost entirely based on student-selected live organizational issues and based on their interpretation of tutor-written summaries. These are not organizational puzzles or problems with ready technical solutions, but are 'situations' in the sense that Schön (1983) describes, characterized by uniqueness, uncertainty, instability, complexity, and value conflict. Learning about management and developing the capacity to manage comes from the experience of working with these 'situations'. A prime example is an overseas residential event held towards the end of Stage 1. The students' task is to undertake a comparative study of the market environment of a product or service in the overseas destination in contrast to their home context. UCE organizes the destination, accommodation, and travel arrangements, but tasks the participants to identify client organizations and arrange visits. Through this activity they not only learn about international market research in practice rather than simply through lectures, but also learn about change

experientially, about working outside their comfort zones, and about difference and cross-cultural comparisons. They also learn from their involvement in participative assessment.

Praxis: Learning about Theory to Practice

Application of theory to practice and an iteration of practice to theory are advocated throughout the programme. From the first brief papers (1,000 words: staff assessed) and presentations (twenty minutes: peer assessed) that participants prepare, to the 20,000-word dissertation at master's level, they are tasked to relate concepts and models to live situations, and to make use of Lewin's adage that 'there is nothing so practical as a good theory' (Lewin 1951). The approach is informed by three key assumptions about learning. First, for participants to become aware of their theories-in-use (Argyris and Schön 1974); secondly, to think critically, so becoming, as Carr and Kemmis write, emancipated 'from the often unseen constraints of assumption, habit, precedent, coercion and ideology' (1986: 192). Thirdly, informed by Bateson's (1973) and Belenky et al.'s (1986) theories of levels of learning, tutors encourage participants to value their own experience and insights and to develop their own models; in other words, to create theory from practice.

In the programme there are also consultancy assignments, where each group has to identify a client, negotiate a brief, and manage the process of implementation. Participants are guided to consider differing models of consultation and, in particular, to explore diverse approaches for organization development (see, for example, Schein 1987; Rice 1999). At the master's stage they become involved with implementation, not simply delivering a report in 'expert mode'. As such they have the opportunity to develop practical capabilities for organizational intervention and through 'reflection-in-action' are guided to learn critically as much from the process of carrying out consultancy as from the substantive content. Implementation is extended by the Master's Action Research dissertation, during which students are encouraged both to engage practically in organization interventions as well as to explore the epistemological basis of action research, conducting a work-based project that employs action research principles with cycles of action and reflection (Eden and Huxham 2001; Rigg, Trehan, and Ram 2002).

Process

Process skills are fundamental to managing and to organization development. Throughout the DMS/M.Sc. equal emphasis is placed on process as on task content. In undertaking course tasks and investigating organizational situations,

participants are supported by tutors in reflecting on how they work together as a group. This principle is also reflected in the course assessment in that many of the assignments require participants not only to demonstrate learning about content (for example, about organization behaviour or performance management models), but also to reflect on process issues they experienced in the course of undertaking the tasks, such as how they made decisions, what happened in their group, the strategic exchanges that occurred in the course of carrying out their research, and how they felt throughout the activities, as well as issues associated with the assessment process. The action learning set is itself therefore a source of learning about organization dynamics, in what Reynolds and Trehan (2001) have termed 'classroom as real world'. The student cohort each year is often a source of gender, cultural, class, religious, age, and occupational diversity, and each learning set consists of participants from a variety of roles and backgrounds, where issues mirror some of the patterns in organizations and society. Students are encouraged to reflect upon, act on, and learn from their feelings and experiences of these dynamics.

Student evaluations of the group experience provide insight into their learning, with such comments as: 'it raised awareness of the complexities that exist within organisations'; 'most events in organisations are influenced by the way individuals interact in groups'. As one woman wrote:

> I would argue that my experience of being a member of these action learning sets has led me to experiencing a process of real personal 'change', which would not have occurred if as students we had been allowed to stay with the problem-oriented rationality of 'sharing' experience, rather than being made to 'work through' our experience within the group.
>
> (UCE 2005).

Proactivity

The fourth core feature of the course is that participants become proactive interdependent learners, able to handle uncertainty and complexity, confident in their own judgement, whilst seeing others as a resource. Participants receive an induction into this approach in the first month of the programme when they attend a five-day residential workshop. Based on a Tavistock model (Miller 1990), its purpose is

> to help students explore their experiences in organisations and to create, in the week, a small temporary organisation which can be studied itself. By bringing together students' past experience, developing and studying the shared experience of the week and some conceptual and theoretical findings from the social sciences, they will learn about aspects of organisational behaviour, interpersonal relations, group processes and management perspectives.
>
> (UCE 2001b: 31)

The week is actually quite structured, but because it does not conform to participants' expectations of themselves as passive learners and tutors as the expert givers of knowledge, many experience the initial uncertainty as chaos. It is their comments after the event that illustrate the importance of the week, exemplified by one woman who said, 'It was like a great jolt. It made me sit up and think what I want to do with my life. I'm drifting along in a job I don't enjoy and nobody else is going to sort it out.'

Throughout the programme many features aim to reinforce proactivity. The question of who owns the learning, diagnosis of issues or problems, and the solutions to these is central to the students' learning. Tutors take two basic, mutually supportive roles: those of Task Consultant—offering information, models, or reading related to the task, and Process Consultant—making the participants aware of group processes. Tutors take care in responding to participants' questions not to position them as dependent and passive. The courses are structured around individual and group tasks framed in terms of learning outcomes. However, there is room for interpretation, which provides considerable leeway for participants to influence the content of the curriculum. But this is also a situation of uncertainty, through which students have to direct their own paths, individually and collectively. One participant described this as:

> The total refusal, well not so much refusal, more slippery than that, an avoidance of allowing the students to inscribe the tutors as knowledge bearers or themselves as empty vessels to be filled with knowledge.

Another said,

> The loose style of the [programme] acts more rigidly upon the student . . . because I had to pace out and set my own boundaries upon my learning. (UCE 2001a)

Summary

So far we have explained four core elements of the UCE's Management Development Programme, action learning, praxis, process, and proactivity, which comprise an experiential pedagogy in which the learning *process* is considered as being as significant as the *content* in developing participants' learning about managing.

In the next section we explain how ideas from Critical Management Learning are integral to our approach to experiential learning, particularly through the use of Critical Reflection and Participative Assessment. We explore how a Critical perspective enhances our understanding of how course participants make connections between their learning and work experience as a basis for understanding and changing interpersonal and management practice.

A Critical Approach in Practice

Critical management learning has emerged as a field that goes beyond ideas of traditional management education. Burgoyne and Reynolds (1997) see as central an emphasis on understanding the whole person as mediated through experience, thus paying attention to more connectedness to daily personal and professional life. Also, by avoiding the passivity associated with more conventional management education methods, critical approaches offer more opportunity for development than seemed possible in focusing exclusively on the acquisitions of knowledge and skills.

A key principle of the UCE Programme is what Reynolds (1997) describes as 'process radical' pedagogy. Through action learning sets, process facilitation, action research, and the idea of a learning community, not only do participants learn about organizational dynamics, they also learn about themselves in relation to others. Reflexivity is seen as integral to learning and self-development in several fields: adult learning (Jarvis 1995), work-based reflective practice (Argyris and Schön 1974), qualitative research (Blaxter, Hughes, and Tight 2001), and critical reflection (Trehan and Rigg 2005: Reynolds and Vince 2004). The most content-radical elements occur in the master's year, through a critical reflection paper and an action research dissertation. In the former, students are asked to reflect critically on their development as a manager, and are introduced to critical ideas, drawing on feminism, Foucault's ideas on power, and concepts of critical education based on Habermas and Giroux. This form of critical education is seen as embodying Kemmis's principles (1985) of critical reflection. As such it differs from the more instrumental, individualized, and introspection-based approaches to reflection promoted by some experiential learning methodologies. An action research methodology is deployed for the dissertation and students are encouraged to explore the epistemological basis of action research. Action research has a long history of use for radical community action and this leads many students to engage with the critical theory on which it is based.[1]

Self-Development through Critical Reflective Practice

Reflection and reflective practice have been gaining validity in recent years within higher education generally including the fields of management and organization development. Reflection is argued to improve the depth and relevance of individual learning (Moon 2000), to support emergence of self-insight and growth (Miller 2005), to develop the transferable ideal of the reflective practitioner, and to offer potential for organizational learning and change (Vince 2002a; Nicolini et al. 2004). However, the theory and practice of reflection has been subject to

critique for being instrumental, individualized (Vince 2002a), for simply meaning introspection (Hoyrup 2004), or for serving narrowly defined purposes of individual growth. Lather, for example, criticized the fashion for exalting empowerment as 'individual self-assertion, upward mobility and the psychological experience of feeling powerful' (1991: 3).

Critical reflection, itself broadly interpreted, aims to go beyond these critiques. Mezirow (1991) defines critical reflection as reflection on assumptions and presuppositions. Brookfield (1988) highlights four elements as central to critical reflection: assumption analysis; contextual awareness; imaginative speculation; and reflective scepticism. Others advocate more explicit engagement from participants in a process of drawing from critical perspectives to make connections between their learning and work experiences, to understand and change personal, interpersonal, and organizational practices.

We differentiate critical reflection from critical thinking or engaging in critique in the following way. Critical thinking as critique is

> the application of all the traditional scholarly criteria of rigour, challenge to taken-for-granted assumptions, debate, logical consistency and the setting of claims to valid generalisation and theories against the best evidence that can be mustered about what occurs in the world. (Watson 2000: 387)

Whilst there is no assumption of neutrality or pretence of objectivity here, it is the process of critical thinking that is emphasized, and implicitly there is a belief that the thinkers/researchers should attempt to be impartial as to the outcomes of their activity.

This contrasts with the use of the term 'critical reflection' by critical management writers, where it has a specific meaning, namely to achieve a society with social justice and free from oppression (howsoever defined). Critical reflection here is intertwined with the use of and generation of Critical Theory. For example, Guba and Lincoln suggest the aim of critical enquiry is 'the "critique and transformation" of the social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic and gender structures that constrain and exploit humankind' (1994: 113). Likewise, Carr and Kemmis exhibit a concern for the outcome of critical reflection, 'to articulate a view of theory that has the central task of emancipating people from the "positivist domination of thought" ' (1986: 130).

On the UCE programme participants write reflective papers, both individually on their learning, and collectively about their learning from the group process within their ALS. On the master's stage they write a critical self-reflection paper, an autobiographical reflection on their development. In this participants are encouraged to identify their core assumptions, to understand some of their patterns, and the contextual influences on them. Depending on their particular focus, individuals may be introduced to critical concepts derived from such perspectives as feminism, post-colonial literature, Marxism, social constructionism, or critical pedagogy.

It has proved important to have individual knowledge of each student in order to judge what might be appropriate for them, and to help them make sense of their particular experiences. For example, some of the black students on the course attributed what they described as a sense of enlightenment to the literature to which they were introduced from anti-racist pedagogy (Mirza 1997).

This form of critical self-development is qualitatively different from the concept of reflection in experiential learning theory. While reflection focuses on the immediate, presenting details of a task or problem, critical reflection involves an analysis of power and control and an examination of the taken-for-granteds within which the issues are situated. The potential for critical reflection derives from the tensions, contradictions, emotions, and power dynamics that inevitably exist in managers' lives. Critical reflection as a pedagogical approach emerges on the programme because these dynamics are treated centrally as a site of learning about managing. McLaughlin and Thorpe (1993) argue:

> At the level of their own expertise, managers undertaking critical reflection can come to know themselves and their organization much better. In particular, they can become aware of the primacy of politics, both macro and micro, and the influence of power on decision making and non-decision making, not to mention the 'mobilization of bias'. (p. 23)

Vince (1996) argues that the influential action learning and learning cycle models of Revans (1982) and Kolb (1984) both fall short of providing a way of integrating the emotional and political into experiential approaches to management education. Vince claims that these models lead, in some cases, to reflection on experience being constructed or interpreted as managers 'thinking about their experience', emphasizing the rational nature of the reflective process, and argues that if part of learning from experience is about working with the emotional and power dynamics generated in learning processes, then the reflective process also needs to involve the *rational*, the *emotional*, and the *political*.

Thus, on the UCE programme critical reflection is part of both formal and informal learning processes, and fits with Watson and Harris's (1999) concept of the individual as emergent, and of there being 'a clear continuity between the management of one's personal life and the formal managerial work done in the organisation' (1999: 237).

This integration of critical reflection with action learning is a significant aspect of the UCE programme as the following extract from a student's reflective paper highlights:

> The action learning sets represented a move towards a critical approach to management, where the frustrations, power differentials, emotions, indifferences and conflicts which occur within groups can be focused upon and treated as topics for the exploration of management issues that are sensitive in our everyday experience. By focusing on our experiences as students in the action learning set context, a forum was provided for critical reflection on that experience, as a means of countering our conventional knowledge about the world.

Assessment

On this programme we define *participative* assessment as a process in which students and tutors share, to some degree, the responsibility for making evaluations and judgements about students' written work, gaining insight into how such judgements are made, and finding appropriate ways to communicate them. The criteria for assessment may be given, or there may be an opportunity for students to influence them. At most this can mean students on the course being involved with peer assessment, which takes the form of evaluation and commentary on written work and in reaching agreement with student colleagues as to its grading (Reynolds and Trehan 2000).

Peer assessment is intended to evaluate each student's understanding of their chosen topic area and how it relates to the practice of management. They are expected to record the comments and grades that result from group discussions. In this sense, students' dialogue and social support is fundamental to the assessment process. A member of staff is present to facilitate decision making, but not to pass judgement on the assignment.

This process provides a backdrop for students to engage reflexively with power relations in the classroom. The emphasis on students learning from each other in small groups, and the opportunity for their evaluation of each other's work to influence the assessment outcome, would seem to provide the foundations for 'diffusing authority along horizontal lines' (Giroux 1988: 39). Assessment on the programme is not simply another aspect of education method, as Reynolds and Trehan highlight: 'its function in providing the basis for granting or withholding qualifications makes it a primary location for power relations' (2000: 2). Individuals on the programme have different status and influence within the learning sets, informed by who they are in the wider society in relation to age, gender, religion, class, and ethnicity. Those differences will surface through assessment, as the following extract from a student illuminates:

> . . . on the course, peer assessment invariably includes feedback from a wide range of intellect and knowledge within which the person assessed probably falls in at some point with the range . . . this implies that some assessment is made by individuals of a lower intellect/knowledge . . . how valid does that make this assessment?
>
> One consequence of this approach is that in my group people would make allowances for some of the women's experience and abilities, or rather, lack of it.

The above accounts demonstrate how the social processes taking place within participative assessment provide opportunities for students to learn experientially, developing their understanding of relationships and social dynamics as they unfold in the classroom. Operating such assessment methods is a challenging, complex process but is fundamental to the principles of a critically experiential pedagogy in practice.

Critically Experiential: Rich *and* Complex

In this final section we draw insights from Critical Management Learning to illuminate how experiential learning can simultaneously be both a rich source of learning and problematically complex. We reconsider the theme of action learning through the discourse of learning communities, and draw on psychodynamic insights to highlight both the value and the challenge of feelings and emotions for experiential management development. The section also provides an exploration of experiential processes within classroom interaction that illuminate the complexity of managing and working with experiential learning.

Action Learning and Learning Communities

Generally considered fundamental to action learning approaches, the concept of the learning community has recently been examined from more critical perspectives. Fox (2001), for example, claims that learning community-based pedagogy aims to maximize student and/or pupil participation in the framing of the topic of learning and the skill of critique. He points out that without participation, and its consequence, the problematization and customization of content, the individual teacher and student confront bureaucratically standardized intellectual curricula and are alienated from the process of learning, just as the worker is alienated from the means of production.

Fox further claims that the learning community seeks to reverse the alienating effect of traditional authoritarian education, and quotes hooks (1994: 8) who tells us:

> To begin, the professor must genuinely value everyone's presence. There must be an ongoing recognition that everyone influences the classroom dynamic, that everyone contributes. These contributions are resources. Used constructively they enhance the capacity of any class to create an open learning community.

The learning community concept involves increased levels of participation: each individual is recognized, their presence is valued, and their contributions produce resources which enhance the collective good. Further, the learning community concept involves 'some deconstruction of the traditional notion that only the professor is responsible for classroom dynamics' (hooks 1994). The professor cannot escape a higher level of responsibility for these dynamics, but ultimately 'excitement is generated by collective effort' (ibid.). The learning community approach requires sharing responsibility for choosing learning methods, the curricular content, and, ideally, in assessment. While these participative practices take time, they allow participants to customize their own pursuit of learning, helping

to prevent the estrangement of the person from the knowledge they produce and own.

Furthermore, a challenge of working with a diverse community on an experiential learning programme is that issues emerge which might not be obvious for more homogeneous student groups or with less participative methods. Our observations reinforce criticisms from feminist and post-colonial pedagogy, that action learning is not a utopian, non-hierarchical environment and that the concept of learning 'community' has often been presented naively (for example Ellsworth 1992). Action learning groups tend to mirror the sociodynamics of wider society, so the influence of race, class, or gender on the habitus students enact at university often serves to recreate oppressive environments that silence and disempower some people (hooks 1994; McGill and Beaty 1995).

Core values of experiential learning, such as equality, openness, and honesty, are challenged by the imbalances of power, status, and social/cultural capital which exist within groups that are diverse in ethnicity, gender, religion, and class. For example, we have observed that for some participants on the programmes their experiences of action learning sets can at times be disempowering, so deep are the interconnected consequences of racism and sexism (Rigg and Trehan 1998). Issues of power and powerlessness, silence and openness challenge tutors, but cannot be avoided. They are also an important opportunity for learning. As students have said (UCE 2001a): 'exploring questions of power, as an action researcher and change agent, has provoked new insights into organisational politics more broadly.'

Engaging with Feelings: A Psychodynamic Insight

Learning from experience is also central to psychodynamic and systemic traditions with their focus on development, insight, and understanding. But what separates psychodynamic from other approaches is the idea of learning from unconscious phenomena. Psychodynamic perspectives illuminate approaches which differentiate between behaviours and activities geared towards rational task performance and those geared to emotional needs and anxieties. The application of this approach on the programme emphasizes the importance of understanding human relationships through the idea of connectedness and relatedness. In doing so the emphasis is placed on 'learning from the conscious and unconscious levels of connection that exist between and shape selves and others, people and systems' (French and Vince 1999: 7). In addition, growing awareness of the influence of emotions in shaping pedagogical agendas has provided interesting impetus for the issue of emotional learning on the programme.

It is very common as tutors to be on the receiving end of course participants' anger, as well as to observe, within the ALS, a range of emotional behaviour such

as withdrawal, silence, aggression, or scapegoating. A psychodynamic perspective helps make sense of such behaviour and informs students' understanding of social processes and our facilitation of them. Tutors have to develop resilience in the face of participants' emotions, the insights to interpret them, and the skills to facilitate groups and individuals. Such learning is transferable to organizational development (Fineman 1999) and as Vince (2002b) has argued:

> The importance of psychodynamic theory to the study of organizational learning is that it provides one way of thinking about the inseparability of emotion and politics, and acknowledges that this relationship is at the heart of what it means both to learn and to organise. (p. 73)

If we are to accept that engaging with emotions and associated feelings of fear and anxiety is an important element in the learning process, then questions of feelings, power, and authority need to be embedded in the curriculum. Risks are many and varied in learning groups, the expressions of powerful feelings such as anger, the risk of speaking or not speaking, the risk of leading, fear, and anxiety all have important implications for our programme, and students are actively encouraged to work with these issues as they surface. As Vince (1996) argues, any consideration of learning needs to take account of the emotions experienced by learners in the learning context. A Critically experiential course is likely, as a result of the level of social engagement it entails, to touch participants' emotions. Changes to learner—teacher power relations may have similar consequences, as Vince writes: 'Approaches to learning that break free of dependency on the teacher, and place emphasis on the responsibilities of the learner, always create anxiety' (1996: 121).

From our experience, active engagement in experiential learning can be painful and, contrary to its intention, can be disempowering. We should not expect it to be comfortable. Indeed, as has been observed more generally, learning cannot take place without anxiety or critical learning without personal struggle (hooks 1994). As the following extract from a student highlights;

> I can recall incidents when my own uncertainty, that feeling of being on the edge of change, created the conditions for risk and it was in these situations that I think I learned most.

Vince (1996) states that it is the anxiety created from fear that gives rise to the uncertainty which can lead to learning and change, as is illustrated by the above extract. He also observes that learning environments are a powerful and contained arena for viewing negotiations on autonomy and dependence. Within the programme therefore, it is important that all the stakeholders acknowledge the inequalities of power which can be generated and which in any case can develop between students. Learning groups are permeated with relations of power, which contribute to the construction of individual and group identity.

Conclusion: Experiential Learning for the Tutors?

In this chapter we set out to explain the particular approach to experiential learning that characterizes the UCE Masters for Managers programme and that we have characterized as Critically Experiential. We have highlighted four key features of action learning, praxis, process, and proactivity that combine with insights from Critical Management Learning and psychodynamics to develop participants' management practice. A Critical perspective also enhances our understanding of both the potential and the pitfalls of experiential learning. It explains the opportunities for course participants to make connections between their action learning experiences and management practice. However, Critical insights also illuminate the complexity of managing and working with experiential learning.

We have identified some of the ways in which core facets of experiential learning, such as empowerment, openness, and trust, can simultaneously be challenged, whilst continuing to offer a wealth of unparalleled opportunity for learning to manage and practising organization development. So what does this demand of tutors? This is the question we turn to in this concluding section. We also need to explore the responsibilities of course tutors when initiating a process of experiential learning, when the consequences of such an approach are potentially disturbing and 'unmanageable'. We do not aim to offer a prescription, but some of the issues that we conclude are important include: the fundamental importance of facilitating the action learning set; tutors' reflexivity; and students' informed choice.

Learning is a social as well as an individual process (Jarvis 1987). Brookfield (1994) talks of the value to students of a supportive peer community, and we found the action learning sets had high importance as a site of learning, a place for dialogue, and a source of emotional support. Establishment and facilitation of the sets is therefore of great consequence, and demands skilled facilitators with good group work skills and insight into the social dynamics of diverse groups.

Our experience reminds us of the power that lecturers can have to influence students' lives, which clearly places a responsibility on us to question our own intentions, motives, and practices. Tutors have to be prepared for emotionality and conflict, and be aware of their own needs and impetuses. It is also incumbent upon us to be aware of, and be reflective about, the 'expert practitioner' label, which students often fix upon us, to query the roots of our own assumptions, and to be reflexive about our own awareness and practice concerning race and gender issues. The learning we gained from past action learning sets, for example, might not be adequate for the next year. As we have seen in Birmingham over the life of the programme, power dynamics between 'Us' and the 'Other' change: once women

were few in number (less than 10 per cent), now they represent over 40 per cent. Where once white faces prevailed, black and minority managers now make up more than a third. However, in the very recent past, the 'other' has become students from refugee backgrounds, whilst the majority 'Us' is British, whether black, minority ethnic, or white. Notions of who has status, who has cultural capital, and how participants might ally across the learning community shift.

Our understanding as tutors has to keep up. Diversity in a staff group is therefore essential, to straddle the literature that can be offered, to be present as heterogeneous individuals that different students can approach, and also to challenge and stretch each other. We need to be constantly developing ourselves, in a sense mirroring the risk taking we ask course participants to engage in. Just as we ask of our students, we also need to engage in reflexive practice.

Note

1. For distinctions between action learning and action research—both of which are applied in the programme—see Pedler 1983 and Eden and Huxham 2001.

References

Argyris, C., and Schön, D. (1974). *Theories in Practice.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Bateson, G. (1973). *Steps towards an Ecology of the Mind*. London: Paladin.

Belbin, M. R. (1981), *Management Teams: Why They Succeed or Fail* London: Heinemann.

Belenky, F. M., Clinchy, B. M., Golderger, N. R., and Tarube, J. M. (1986). *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice and Mind.* New York: Basic Books.

Blaxter, L., Hughes, C., and Tight, M. (2001). *How to Research.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Brookfield, S. (1988). 'Developing Critically Reflective Practitioners: A Rationale for Training Educators of Adults', in S. Brookfield (ed.), *Training Educators of Adults: The Theory and Practice of Graduate Adult Education.* New York: Routledge.

—— (1994). 'Tales from the Darker Side: A Phenomenology of Adult Critical Reflection', *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 13/3: 203–16.

Burgoyne, J., and Reynolds, M. (eds.) (1997). *Management Learning: Integrating Perspectives in Theory and Practice.* London: Sage.

Carr, W., and Kemmis, S. (1986). *Becoming Critical: Knowing through Action Research.* Geelong: Deakin University.

Eden, C., and Huxham, C. (2001). 'Action Research for the Study of Organizations', in S. Clegg, C. Hardy, and W. Nord (eds.), *Studying Organization*. Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage.

Ellsworth, E. (1992). 'Why Doesn't This Feel Empowering? Working through the Repressive Myths of Critical Pedagogy', in C. Luke and J. Gore (eds.), *Feminisms and Critical Pedagogy.* New York: Routledge.

Fineman, S. (1999). 'Emotion and Organizing', in R. Stewart, S. Clegg, and C. Hardy (eds.), *Studying Organization.* London: Sage.

Fox, S. (2001). 'Studying Networked Learning: Same Implications from Socially Situated Learning Theory and Actor-Network Theory', in C. Steeples and C. Jones (eds.), Networked Learning: Perspectives and Issues. London: Springer.

French, R., and Vince, R. (1999). *Group Relations: Management and Organisation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Giroux, H. (1988). *Teachers as Intellectuals.* New York: Bergin & Garvey.

Guba, E., and Lincoln, Y. (1994). 'Competing Paradigms', in N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research.* Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage.

Hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom.* New York: Routledge.

Hoyrup, S. (2004). 'Reflection as a Core Process in Organisational Learning', *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 16/8: 442–54.

Jarvis, P. (1987). *Adult Learning in the Social Context.* London: Croom Helm.

—— (1995). *Adult and Continuing Education: Theory and Practice.* London: Routledge.

Kemmis, S. (1985). 'Action Research and the Politics of Reflection', in D. Boud, R. Keogh, and D. Walker (eds.), *Reflection: Turning Experience into Learning.* London: Kogan Page.

Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential Learning.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Lather, P. (1991). *Getting Smart: Feminist Research and Pedagogy with/in the Postmodern*. New York: Routledge.

Lewin, K. (1947). 'Frontiers in Group Dynamics: Channel of Group Life: Social Planning and Action Research', *Human Relations*, 1: 143–53.

—— (1951). *Field Theory in Social Sciences*. New York: Harper & Row.

McGill, I., and Beaty, L. (1995). *Action Learning.* London: Kogan Page.

McLaughlin, H., and Thorpe, R. (1993). 'Action Learning: A Paradigm in Emergence: The Problems Facing a Challenge to Traditional Management Education and Development', *British Journal of Management*, 4/1: 19–27.

Mezirow, J. (1991). *Fostering Critical Reflection in Adulthood: A Guide to Transformative and Emancipatory Learning.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Miller, S. (1990). 'Experiential Learning in Groups: The Development of the Leicester Model', in E. L. Trist and H. Murray (eds.), *The Social Engagement of the Social Science: A Tavistock Anthropology*. London: Free Association Books.

—— (2005). 'What it's Like Being the "Holder of the Space": A Narrative on Working with Reflective Practice in Groups', *Reflective Practice*, 6/3: 367–77.

Mirza, H. (1997). *Black British Feminism: A Reader*. London: Routledge.

Moon, J. (2000). *Reflection in Learning and Professional Development: Theory and Practice.* London: Routledge.

Nicolini, D., Sher, M., Childerstone, S., and Gorli, M. (2004). 'In Search of the "Structure that Reflects": Promoting Organizational Reflection Practices in a UK Health Authority', in M. Reynolds and R. Vince (eds.) (2004), *Organizing Reflection.* Abingdon: Ashgate.

Pedler, M. (1983). *Action Learning in Practice.* Aldershot: Gower.

Revans, R. W. (ed.) (1982). *The Origins and Growth of Action Learning.* Bromley: Chartwell-Bratt.

Reynolds, M. (1997). 'Towards a Critical Pedagogy', in J. Burgoyne and M. Reynolds (eds.), *Management Learning: Integrating Perspectives in Theory and Practice.* London: Sage.

Reynolds, M. and Trehan, K. (2000). 'Assessment: A Critical Perspective', *Studies in Higher Education,* 25/3: 267–78.

—— —— (2001). 'Classroom as Real World: Propositions for a Pedagogy of Difference', *Gender and Education*, 13/4: 357–72.

—— and Vince, R. (eds.) (2004). *Organizing Reflection.* Abingdon: Ashgate.

Rice, A. K. (1999). *Learning for Leadership: Interpersonal and Intergroup Relations.* London: Tavistock.

Rigg, C., and Trehan, K. (1998). 'Not Critical Enough? Black Women Raise Challenges for Critical Management Learning', *Gender and Education*, 2/3: 265–80.

—— —— and Ram, M. (2002). 'Using Action Research to Explore the Development Needs of Second Generation Asian Small Businesses', in J. McGoldrick, J. Stewart, and S. Watson (eds.), *Researching HRD.* London: Routledge.

Schein, E. (1987). *Process Consultation: Lessons for Managers and Consultants*, vol.ii. Wokingham: Addison Wesley.

Schön, D. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action.* New York: Basic Books.

Trehan, K., and Rigg, C. (2005). 'Beware of the Unbottled Genie: Unspoken Aspects of Critical Self Reflection', in C. Elliott and S. Turnbull (eds.), *Critical Thinking in Human Resource Development*. London: Routledge.

UCE (2001a). *Postgraduate Management Development Programme Student Evaluation Questionnaire.* Birmingham: UCE.

—— (2001b). *Postgraduate Management Development Programme Student Handbook (Certificate in Management)*. Birmingham: UCE.

—— (2005). *Masters for Managers Brochure.* Birmingham: UCE.

Vince, R. (1996). 'Experiential Management Education as the Practice of Change', in R. French and C. Grey (eds.), *Rethinking Management Education.* London: Sage.

—— (2002a). 'Organizing Reflection', *Management Learning*, 33/1: 63–78.

—— (2002b). 'The Impact of Emotion on Organizational Learning', *Human Resource Development*, 15/1: 73–86.

Watson, T. (2000). 'Beyond Managism: Negotiated Narratives and Critical Management Education in Practice', *British Journal of Management*, 12/4: 385–96.

—— and Harris, P. (1999). *The Emergent Manager.* London: Sage.

CONCLUSION

INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS TO EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING REVISITED

D. CHRISTOPHER KAYES

Rearranging the Chairs: An Opportunity to Revisit Experiential Learning in Practice

After I had been teaching in my first full-time faculty position for only a week, the Dean's office called and asked me to stop by. The Dean's assistant simply asked that I kindly place the chairs in the classroom back into rows after my classes were complete. This, she assured me, was only being considerate of the other faculty members who used the room. The request of the assistant wasn't earth shattering. I simply said 'okay' and left the encounter at that.

Confusion set in as I returned to my office. I may have engaged in what Chris Argyris calls defensive routines, or my counter-institutional orientation in general may have led to my confusion. I kept asking myself: Why was it inconsiderate for me not to put the chairs back into rows after my class, when other professors failed to

put the chairs back into a circle after finance, accounting, or marketing? Why were rows the standard and circles or clusters or pairs or complete disarray considered deviant? In retrospect, this was my first encounter with the institutional barriers to experiential learning-based education. I don't think I can describe my experience any better than the student described in Kiran Trehan and Clare Rigg's chapter when she said of her experience, 'It was like a great jolt!'

The confusion I felt that first year of teaching continues to this day, although I have come to accept the situation, just as any teacher must do to keep from becoming weary from cynicism. The figure of 'maximum disorder' depicted by Jane Thompson and Tracy Lamping in this volume reminded me of this early career experience and put me on the path not only of reflecting upon my own experiences as a teacher, lecturer, and student of experiential learning, but of revisiting, more generally, the institutional barriers to using experiential learning in the contemporary classroom.

This chapter explores, from a different angle, a challenge put forth by Anne Herbert and Sari Stenfors in their chapter about experiential methods. The challenge they put forth, as I understand it, can be stated more generally as this: how do educators reconcile the use of experiential learning methods, which are clearly consistent with stated goals and strategies of most universities, with institutional practices that may not support, or in some cases run directly counter to, the use of experiential methods?

My answer to this question centres on the notion that, despite the growing acceptance of experiential approaches to education around the world, adopting experiential exercises remains a difficult, almost counter-institutional task. Despite the long, successful, and continued use of experiential events as a means to educate managers in and out of the classroom, institutional barriers to successful experiential learning still abound.

I begin by briefly explaining experiential learning in the context of institutional norms that emphasize the assessment of learning outcomes. I then rely on this framework to explore how experiential learning events described in this book challenge these norms. The purpose of this chapter is not to provide a comprehensive analysis of the barriers to adopting experiential learning methods in the classroom but to increase awareness of the potential barriers that might emerge as the reader seeks to apply the methods found throughout this book. I then use this volume as the basis to draw some broader conclusions about the state of experiential learning practice.

Experiential Learning in Context

To better understand the nature of experiential learning, it can be viewed in relation to other forms of learning. In Figure 25.1, I present a framework

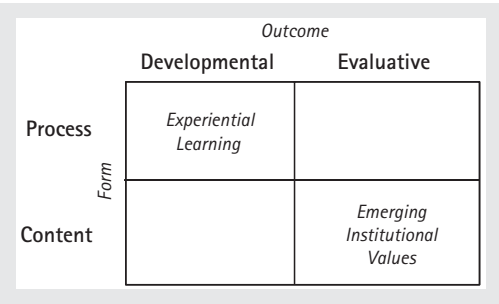


Fig. 25.1 Experiential learning in the context of management education

that considers learning in the context of formal education based on two dimensions.

The first dimension considers that learning outcomes generally relate to the development of individual participants or the evaluation of individual participants. Developmental outcomes focus more on creating individuals, building skills or abilities, or increasing knowledge in the form of critical thinking or similar knowledge management approaches. Developmental outcomes focus on individual growth, change, and reflexivity. In the context of learning theory, development involves a variety of potential changes, including growing (Kegan 1994), learning (Kolb 1984), failing and recovering (Weick, Sutcliffe, and Obstfeld 1999), creating new knowledge, questioning existing problems (Marquardt 1999), and viewing situations as dilemmas (Mezirow 1991). In contrast, evaluation outcomes focus more on how individual participants can better serve a greater end, through their improved performance or more effectual contributions to an organization's goals. Evaluation emphasizes topics such as measuring specific quantifiable outcomes, achieving goals, improving existing processes, solving existing problems, rewarding successes, and getting it right the first time.

The form of the educational experience can be considered either process driven or content driven. Processes consist of the course 'how', or the procedures, exercises, and/or method for teaching. Content, as I use the term here, refers to course and professional content, rather than the content of experience. Content focuses on the specific knowledge, language, or skills that students might gain from participation in the course.

This framework helps to distinguish between experiential learning and other, more pervasive forms of management education. Based on the matrix, I hypothesize that experiential learning is process oriented and developmental, while more prevalent forms of pedagogy, such as lectures and case studies, are content oriented and evaluative. At the end of the chapter, I will use the chapters in this book to test the hypothesis.

The framework, of course, contains a number of Parsonian functionalist assumptions that may be limiting to a full understanding of the phenomenon of

experiential learning. The use of Parsonian logic here suggests an underlying belief that educational institutions perform the powerful function of social control and behavioural control.

To be sure, the framework's overly simplistic nature fails to serve as a theory of education. Yet, the framework has proven practical since it provides a basis to compare experiential learning and more institutionally centred practices. The chapters presented in this volume provide an important source of data for both the practice and conceptualization of experiential learning. Before moving more deliberately into the substance of these fascinating chapters, I want to briefly explore a few of the more potent institutional norms and values working against the further development of experiential learning.

Institutional Norms and Values as a Barrier to Experiential Learning

Despite the vigour and enthusiasm for experiential learning presented in this book, in my experience teachers find it increasingly difficult to implement and justify the use of experiential learning events in management education. Evidence suggests that management education is moving from the process-driven/developmental quadrant to the content-driven/evaluative quadrant of the framework with alarming speed. While a number of reasons for this move exist, two trends in particular push institutional norms towards the content-driven/evaluative approach: outcome-based education and continued uncertainty about the professional identity of management educators.

Outcome-Based Education

One important factor limiting the application of experiential learning is the drive towards more outcome-based or evidence-based education. This drive can be seen in the recent revised accreditation standards issued by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. Each school seeking accreditation must develop a short list of learning goals by which to 'demonstrate assurance of learning' and measure its success. The goals need to denote an outcome of individual students (as opposed, for example, to teams or cohorts) and must have a clear measurement. In and of themselves, such goals are not inherently anti-experiential learning, but the implementation often results in narrowly defined outcomes that are antithetical to experiential learning.

The problem with these goals is that they focus on the outcomes at the expense of process and focus on the individual and not the group. Since the problems with

these kinds of goals have been addressed elsewhere (Kayes 2006), I will not go into further details. The barrier that these goals present to experiential learning might best be expressed as a question. How can the possibility of insight, engagement, or serendipity—just a few of the goals of experiential learning expressed in these chapters—be measured by such a narrowly defined outcome?

Jeff Gold, Robin Holt, and Richard Thorpe expose some of the folly of this kind of abstract goal setting. They show, although maybe unintentionally, what can happen when goal setting is treated as a lawlike predictive system rather than a context specific activity. They point to the social significance of goal setting and the implications of normative standards and traditions in determining what constitutes an 'appropriate goal'. If I am reading them correctly, oftentimes what constitutes a goal is actually an object of activity, not necessarily the intended outcome itself. We should seek to learn more from their use of activity theory to deconstruct the goal-setting process as it relates to the effective (or ineffective) use of goals in the context of learning. This might lead us to consider more fully the implications that goals are essentially 'informed by different people, and norms, and produce differing outcomes (in terms of expectations and results), in the context of management education'.

Professional Identity

Not only are the demands of outcome-based education pulling management education towards an unflattering narrowness, but the search by management education practitioners, i.e. professors, for a professional identity seems to pull us towards the content-driven/evaluative quadrant of our framework as well. Bennis and O'Toole (2005) have discussed at length the identity crisis faced by educators in schools of management, particularly in the United States, in relation to their more academic-minded counterparts in the arts and sciences, not to mention economics and finance. In order to become more academically credible, these educators have sought their validation through basic research.

The professionalization of management education had its benefits, as it assured a more secure or at least a recognized place for management scholars in the academy more generally. But this professionalization came at a cost. This drive for basic research may make us more academic in the eyes of our colleagues in arts and sciences, but it alienates us from the practice of management. Management scholars became increasingly dissociated from the world of practising managers. More interested in writing for and gaining accolades from other academic professionals, professors of management began to teach and think in academic jargon rather than management practice. This professionalization has had important consequences for experiential learning since professional disciplines, by nature, are more concerned with content than process, more interested in codification than application. The

content of experience is particularly suspect because it is difficult to measure, codify, and evaluate.

Both the trend towards outcome-based education and the felt need to build a professional identity have moved schools of business in the direction of increased focus on accreditation standards and procedures, what Julian and Ofori-Dankwa (2006) term *accreditocracy.* Accreditocracy carries four systems. (1) *Formalized assessment processes* shift control of classroom activities from cultural control in the hands of specific disciplines to bureaucratic control in the hands of administrators. (2) *Documentation for external accountability* increases accounting procedures. (3) *Hard data-driven outcomes* require 'objective' learning outcomes that are easily measurable. (4) *A focus on continuous improvement* encourages safe, step-by-step changes rather than dynamic progressive change. I think Julian and Ofori-Dankwa's characteristics of accreditocracy provide a nice summary of the forces working against the use of experiential learning in management education, as well as the forces pulling institutions in the direction of evaluation/content.

Themes from this Book

Using the previous chapters as the basis to test my beliefs that institutional norms pose a threat to experiential learning, I want to explore this theme of threat more deeply within the chapters of this book. Russ Vince and Michael Reynolds provide me with an exceptional opportunity to explore this idea. The rich selection of chapters in this book offers an opportunity to partake in a more nuanced comparison between process-driven/developmental experiential learning and emerging trends towards content-driven/evaluative practices. In addition, the book allows me to take stock of experiential learning and to make some general comments about the current state of, as well as future directions for, experiential learning theory and practice.

Outcomes and Forms of Management Education

Generally speaking, the experiential approaches described here appear to focus on process. The authors call for learning activities that generate the opportunity to reflect upon and take stock of experience. These experiential learning activities are designed to produce a wide variety of experiences in the form of engagement, serendipity, reflection, and surprise. The call for process seems to outweigh the need for outcome-based measures, although there is some call for better measures as well.

A little more might be said about content/process as well. The process of experiential learning seems to play a more important role in experiential learning than content-related issues. The evidence for this statement is that the content of the course seems to be secondary to the process by which it is taught. One might expect process to trump content in a book about experiential learning. I do think, however, that the lack of focus on specific course content represents a broader theme in experiential learning. On the one hand, the chapters here may point to an increasing reliance on experiential learning techniques (for example, the generation of events). On the other hand, at the same time there may be an increasing movement of experiential events into diverse content.

Many of the authors invite us to integrate experience with content. This book speaks to the diversity of fields in which experiential learning is beginning to have an impact. To gain a better understanding of the relationship between content and process, we can turn to Tony Watson's chapter. Watson shows the role of academic content as an important part of his experiential exercise of the negotiated narrative. He considers research-based narratives alongside experience-based narratives and not as something that exists independently. Watson talks of content as 'something you bring along with your reflections', again emphasizing that content does not stand alone from one's experience of it. This, of course, takes us back to Kolb's (1984) formulation of experience and content (for example, abstraction) as a dialectic relationship.

The chapters generate the opportunity to reflect upon experiences using a variety of techniques. Some of the new and exciting techniques include narratives, role-plays, drama, photography, deliberate reflection, and focused observation, just to name a few. The techniques generally cluster around taking stock of one's self and one's environment, especially in the context of others. To many, these techniques are not new. What is new and exciting, however, is to see these techniques being applied to pedagogy and to see them relative to experiential learning. The chapters provide many helpful hints on how to facilitate experiential learning events. Andrea Ellinger may provide the best advice in counselling teachers like me to get out of the way and let students learn.

In many cases, the techniques emerge from critical pedagogy and critical management studies. In the past (Kayes 2004), I have argued that critical management studies and experiential learning approaches have always had much to learn from each other. This volume marks an important step forward in seeing how the combination of critical and experiential-based pedagogy can lead to even richer experiences in the classroom.

Nowhere has the tension between experience and content been more prevalent than in the prolific work of Chris Argyris. Argyris's contribution to this book is that we need to take learning in organizations to a different level for it to make a difference. Dr Argyris's (1991) well-known *Harvard Business Review* article 'Teaching Smart People How to Learn' is the first reading I assign to each of my MBA

classes. It doesn't take students long to realize that this chapter is talking about them, and that sets the tone for learning. Perhaps by reading Argyris's article, students make sense of why they are sitting in a circle of chairs rather than a row of chairs for the first time.

Argyris's arguments are important to our understanding of institutional barriers because they help us think a different way about the barriers to learning. With all my ranting about the institutional barriers, Argyris reminds me that many of the barriers to learning lie not in the order of my chairs, but in the order of my thinking. I am more likely to learn by releasing my mind than releasing myself from the organization.

The notion of being released by experiential learning may bring to mind prisons and other total institutions. Burkard Sievers finds a striking similarity between prisons and universities, a comparison that can be traced back at least as far as Foucault. Sievers points to the triteness of a 'chair' metaphor in light of the other, much stronger visual images of institutional structure. He proves that 'institutions of higher learning' are ultimately 'institutions' first and educational second. Through photography, Sievers's students provide us with an image of educational institutions through their very physical structure. We can learn from these photographs that those who enlist experiential learning activities must overcome substantial challenges simply because of bricks and mortar.

Barriers to Experiential Learning

Most, if not all, of the events described in this book shed some light on the problem of institutional pressures working counter to experiential learning.

The metaphor of institutions of higher education creeps into Paula Hyde's chapter just as it did in Sievers's chapter. Hyde returns to Freud to explain how educational institutions enlist relationships of domination. In particular, we see the master–slave relationship manifested in the teacher–student interaction. Whether the theme describes simply a metaphor or a re-enactment of the master–slave relationship itself, Hyde does not make clear. Either way, she surfaces a vivid and disturbing view of the barriers inherent in the relationship between student and teacher. Here, professionals enslave students by dangling knowledge. Not surprisingly, Hyde highlights Gabriel's idea that most of higher education in this form is about creating followers rather than about creating leaders.

Luckily, we are provided with at least two explicit examples of how to overcome the limitations posed by the bricks and mortar of our institutions. Peter Reason offers us an opportunity to move outdoors and away from institutional building blocks through wilderness experiences.

If some authors point out the physical and cultural limitations our institutions pose to realizing the potential of experiential learning, then others show

us how to manage or even use these barriers to our advantage. Moving from prisons to the police, Ruth Colquhoun, Nelarine Cornelius, Meretta Elliott, Amar Mistry, and Stephen Smith explain the complexity of the constraints. They show how institutions can serve an important purpose. Institutions help us know what experiences are appropriate. Once we learn this 'institutional code' then we can endorse and display certain emotions that are institutionally appropriate. The chapter provides an example of how to explain and even codify the range of expressed emotions that emerge in a detention cell and the concurrent responses available to the facilitator to manage the particular expressed emotions that emerge.

John Coopey outlines some additional barriers to the effectiveness of experiential events. Coopey explores the rising interest in theatre techniques as a way to help managers manage and champion change. One of the most important limitations to realizing the benefits of experiential learning events is time. If what Coopey observes about dramatic techniques can be generalized, we are all conducting our experiences on borrowed time. Given that only a limited amount of time is devoted to experiential techniques, usually a day or less, it is surprising that these experiences can have much of an impact at all.

Some of the institutional constraints to experiential learning have become taken for granted. Reason, for example, recognizes that this use of wilderness experiences may be useful in 'a business programme in a prestigious business school'. This is a helpful counsel because I am not sure how many business schools include an introduction to Gaia theory as a regular part of their programme. But many business programmes would benefit from a goal that sought 'to open the possibility of a different way of addressing' one's experience in organizations. Imagine the possibility of using this as the sentence root for serial institutional goals. Imagine the possibility of a different way of seeing your career. Imagine the possibility of different ways of seeing your workplace, your coworkers, your financial statements, your education. It would be difficult to imagine how to evaluate such goals in the current outcome-based environment. It would also be difficult to imagine how accreditation standards would evaluate such a goal.

Antonio Strati's chapter brings up an important question about the nature of evaluation in light of experiential exercises. How do you respectfully evaluate someone's performance when you are asking them to 'invest something of themselves' in their coursework? The movement from abstraction to concrete experience is not a simple one, and measuring someone's 'infantile ability to engage in play' may not be an easy thing to get at, especially if it is up for evaluation. As Strati rightly notes, in institutions of higher learning, some teaching techniques like the riddle prove just too bizarre. The riddle, with its 'serious irony, playfulness, and non-sense', is likely to work only in the hands of the most skilled facilitator.

Defining Experience

In this section, I want to pick up a theme that underlies the chapter by Elaine Swan. One of the many issues her chapter surfaces is the problem of defining what we in fact mean by 'experience'. The project to define experience brings up issues related to the institutionalization of experiential learning itself. Interestingly, experiential learning, once a counter-cultural approach to management education, has now become a kind of institution itself. This institutionalization of experiential learning creates problems for defining experiential learning in consistent terms.

Yet, the institutionalization of this anti-institution has characteristics that keep it fresh and open in light of new approaches to learning. Experiential learning tends not to be defined by a clear-cut set of rules and shared assumptions. Rather, experiential learning tends to be defined by diversity rather than homogeneity, complexity rather than simplicity, and disagreement rather than consensus (see Kayes 2004). From the looks of the events described in this text, these tendencies have allowed experiential learning theory to thrive in practice as it incorporates newer understandings of the learning processes described as critical management learning (Reynolds and Vince 2004b), narrative, humanism, and psychoanalysis (Kayes 2002), just to name a few. From reading the texts in this volume, it appears that experiential learning has even experienced its own postmodern moment. One might conclude, after reading this volume, that those who practise experiential learning have adopted, for their own purposes, the postmodern belief that to name (or define) experience is to undermine its very definition.

The lack of a common (experience) referent is indeed anxiety provoking in the same way that circles of chairs provoke more anxiety than rows of chairs. Concerns that experiential learning has yet to develop a consensus definition of experience may have actually aided in the development of our understanding of what experience is and how people learn from it. This lack of a defining character of experience seems to have encouraged an interesting and wide-ranging set of individuals to partake in exploring how learning can emerge from something we call 'experience'.

Silvia Gherardi and Barbara Poggio provide a line of argument—rather, a line of illustration—that experiential learning theory, like leadership, is not an absolute. Rather, experience is best thought of as a contextualized event. The goal of identifying a common definition or set of words to describe experience may itself be problematic. The attempt to name experience simply seeks to further institutionalize it, making it more content driven/evaluative than process driven/developmental. Yet, I want to identify a few themes, no doubt to relieve my own anxiety, that might help at least put experiential learning within the current discussion of management learning.

Characteristics of Experiential Learning that Help Define It

One theme that emerged from my reading of these chapters is a strong connection between experience and narrative. A number of the chapters use narrative as a means to understand experience. These narratives take different forms, including negotiated (for example, Tony Watson), facilitated (for example, Anna Kayes), and gendered (for example, Silvia Gherardi and Barbara Poggio), to help configure experience. These chapters in particular help to highlight the narrative quality of experience. Although they might not agree on exactly what a narrative is, they offer a few insights in how to think about experience. Experience is encapsulated or at least expressed in words that take on a particular sequence.

Experiential learning seems to share something in common with critical theories. Both approaches to management pedagogy work on the fringes of mainstream thinking. In some ways, experiential learning and critical theory may have opposite problems. Jane Thompson and Tracy Lamping argue that, despite the extensive work done in critical pedagogy, few practices have emerged. Experiential learning may suffer the opposite problem. Despite substantial theoretical foundations that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, few theoretical innovations have occurred since that time. In the meantime, as evidenced by the chapters in this volume, the practice of experiential learning has flourished. In fact, the efforts of Reynolds and Vince in compiling this volume highlight how experiential learning has flourished, despite the gathering storm of institutional controls over the form and outcome of management education. My reading is that, unlike other recent works produced by Reynolds and Vince, practice has taken centre stage to theory.

Taking these chapters as data, we can learn that experiential learning is moving more toward social and group dynamics. Group dynamics have always had an implicit role in experiential learning. After all, Kolb's (1984) initial formation was based, in large part, on action learning theory that emerged from t-group observation. More recently, the group or social dynamics characteristic of experience has become more explicit. For example, Baker, Jansen, and Kolb (2002) talked about experiential learning as a kind of conversation, and Kayes, Kayes, and Kolb (2005) provided a systematic way to think about how individual experiential learning works towards team learning. The trends toward the social dynamics of experiential learning emerged in Reynolds and Vince (2004a) and can be seen in a number of the chapters of this book, especially in Sandra Jones's use of communities of practice.

Ultimately, the social dynamics of practice help us to understand, in a more complex way, that experiences are constructed, not simply constructs, and Keijo Räsänen and Kirsi Korpiaho help us make this distinction. The distinction is not trivial. Constructs put experience into play while constructing plays with experience. Tusse Sidenius Jensen, Jane Rohde Voigt, Enrico Maria Piras, and Bente

Rugaard Thorsen remind us that such experiences occur in many symbolic forms, including drawings and art, not simply language.

As I have come to expect from their work, Ann Welsh, Gordon Dehler, and Dale Murray provide an interesting and thoughtful chapter on experiential learning that serves as a summary of what I have learned from this book. We might learn from their students who are trying to engineer better experiences or commercial products. What is brewing underneath the commercial application of the products these students are designing is an underlying structure to the experiential event of learning. If I may put their chapter into my own words, then I would suggest that an experiential learning event emerges from the following laundry list of considerations:

- *Emotionally intense.* Emotions work with cognition to create a concentrated experience.
- *Decentred.* The purpose of the exercise is determined by the participant (student) as much as the facilitator (teacher).
- *Multidisciplinary.* Traditional academic boundaries matter less than the usefulness of the knowledge.
- *Non-hierarchical.* Traditional power dynamics are named, imagined, and dealt with in explicit ways.
- *Action oriented.* The outcome of events is designed to be useful, even if usefulness is defined by the participants themselves.
- *Team based.* The interaction among participants and facilitator creates something that would not exist without such interaction.
- *Technologically enhanced.* Experiential events do not shy away from and even embrace new technology.

The students that Welsh, Dehler, and Dale describe focus on developing 'experiences' for customers: custom brewing experiences, custom in-flight experiences, etc. It is this very notion of 'experience', as intangible as it may be, that serves as the organizing principle for experiential learning practice and theory.

Although Welsh, Dehler, and Dale, like authors of other chapters, refrain from explicitly defining experience, hidden within the chapter is a kind of direction for understanding what is meant by experience. Experiential learning generates many emotional and cognitive events brought together and juxtaposed through language and arranged through conversation. Joseph Champoux builds on Welsh, Dehler, and Dale's definition of experience to describe experiential learning as a 'wide range of learning and teaching practices' that help learners focus on process, rather than strictly the outcomes of learning.

While surely this definition is not designed to encompass all definitions of experience, it provides me a starting point to limit anxiety about not having a definition,

avoid the pitfall of the postmodern agenda that defiantly defies definition, and at the same time begin serious discussion of what experiential events actually are.

In short, I share the optimism described by Martin Hornyak, Steve Green, and Kurt Heppard about the promise of experiential learning to generate positive learning experiences. I am, however, less assured than they are that experiential learning will be used appropriately in the push for greater measurement and 'accountability' in management education. Not unlike the organization reengineering craze, the growing accountability craze in education is more likely to assure measurement *per se*, than it is likely to assure learning itself. Luckily, these authors provide an example of how organizations can avoid the measurement pitfalls and focus on learning more directly.

Final Thoughts: Evaluating the Hypothesis about Experiential Learning

I have limited my reading of experiential learning to the chapters in this book. This method, of course, proves somewhat problematic. In addition to the biases inherent in the selection process utilized by editors Reynolds and Vince in this book, their reputations probably preceded them, and thus, they probably experienced some self-selection by authors interested in their particular viewpoint. The conclusions I draw here about the state of experiential learning must be made with some scepticism, since I am working with a representative sample of experiential learning efforts across the globe. I would suggest that, based on my knowledge of the editors' interests, there are probably more examples of functionalist, quantitative, and outcome-driven experiential exercises in the marketplace than are represented in this book. Nonetheless, the chapters selected by the editors of this book do provide some promising and interesting applications of experience into pedagogy.

My reading of the chapters implies that management education today is more about replication, socialization, imprinting, and conformity. Innovation and learning in management education may be secondary objectives. This book reaffirms my belief that the emergent institutional values and norms of management education reward pedagogy that is content driven and evaluative. Thus, the unscientific hypothesis that I proposed in the beginning of this chapter is supported. Experiential learning-based pedagogy tends to buck the forces of institutional priorities to provide an alternative to the growing reach of institutionalization.

Within this book we can see the mechanisms of experiential pedagogy at work in a variety of philosophical viewpoints, from functionalism to critical theory, from humanism to pragmatism. Experiential learning seems to have come into its own as an eclectic approach that accepts and integrates a variety of viewpoints, methods, and desired outcomes.

Despite my inclination to view my role as an educator to help individuals become more self-aware, I have become more accepting of the notion that most situations of learning in business schools are not going to be as insight producing as t-groups or even small study groups. Business schools today are targeted mainly toward professional development, not personal growth. I became more aware of my own assumptions about the value of personal development in management education by reading Jean E. Neumann's chapter on the work at the Tavistock Institute in London. There is no small irony here. The irony comes in two forms. First, I became more self-aware after reading about Tavistock, known, at least historically, for its work in making individuals more aware of personal blind spots. The deeper irony is that the Tavistock programme advocates as much for professional development as it does for personal development.

Despite the many barriers from within and without, I sense a general optimism about the breadth, depth, and diversity of experiential learning, which is being used in a variety of settings to teach a wide range of content. Experiential learning encompasses many different types of pedagogical strategies, including critical pedagogy, narrative-inspired self-reflections, simulations, and electronic technology. I continue to be optimistic about the future of experiential learning, Reading this volume, and reflecting on the experiences of Elizabeth Creese, I am more aware than ever that learning is a struggle, both between individual and institution, as well as within oneself.

Rearranging the Chairs: An Update

I appreciate the opportunity to revisit the troubling experience I encountered years ago when I was teaching in my first full-time position. I recall the situation of moving chairs into circles and then back into rows as challenging, more mentally than physically.

I was reminded of this situation once again as I walked into a new classroom, especially designed to include the latest teaching technology. Indeed, the classroom contained computers and internet hook-up, project-screen TVs, and other video recording devices. The wireless network permeated the room.

As I walked up the aisles of the multitiered classroom to move the chairs of the new lecture hall into a more experiential friendly arrangement, I noticed something both odd and expected. Here, in the brand new, technology-enhanced classroom, the chairs were bolted to the floor. No matter what configuration I wanted, I was trapped by institutional barriers from moving things out of order. And so I continued along with my exercises that semester, without so much as moving a chair. Working around institutional barriers may be the only way to survive.

References

Argyris, C. (1991). 'Teaching Smart People How to Learn', *Harvard Business Review*, 69/3: 99–109.

Baker, A. C., Jansen, P. J., and Kolb, D. A. (2002). *Conversational Learning: An Experiential Approach to Knowledge Creation*. Westport, Conn.: Quorum Books.

Bennis, W. G., and O'Toole, J. (2005). 'How Business Schools Lost their Way', *Harvard Business Review*, 83/5: 96–104.

Julian, S. D., and Ofori-Dankwa, J. C. (2006). 'Is Accreditation Good for the Strategic Decision Making of Traditional Business Schools', *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 5/2: 225–33.

Kayes, A. B. , Kayes, D. C., and Kolb, D. A. (2005). 'Experiential Learning in Teams', *Simulation and Gaming*, 36/3: 330–54.

Kayes, D. C. (2002). 'Experiential Learning and its Critics: Preserving the Role of Experience in Management Learning and Education', *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 1/2: 137–49.

—— (2004). 'The Limits and Consequences of Experience-Absent Reflection: Implications for Learning and Organizing', in M. Reynolds and R. Vince (eds.), *Organizing Reflection*. London: Ashgate.

—— (2006). *Destructive Goal Pursuit: The Mount Everest Disaster*. London: Palgrave-Macmillan.

Kegan, R. (1994). *In over our Heads*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Marquardt, M. J. (1999). *Action Learning in Action*. Palo Alto, Calif.: Davies-Black.

Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Reynolds, M., and Vince, R. (eds.) (2004a). *Organizing Reflection*. London: Ashgate.

—— —— (2004b). 'Critical Management Education and Action-Based Learning: Synergies and Contradictions', *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 3/4: 442–58.

Weick, K. E., Sutcliffe, K. M., and Obstfeld, D. (1999). 'Organizing for High Reliability: Processes of Collective Mindfulness', *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 21: 81–123.

This page intentionally left blank

Author Index

Abma, T A 161
Abram, David 196
Ahmed, S 204, 209, 214–15, 217
Allen, E D 226, 227, 228
Allen, R W 367
Altman, Y 313
Alvesson, M 36, 112, 158, 159
Anderson, L 141
Angle, H L 367
Anthias, F 206, 208
Anthony, P 389
Argyris, C 32, 33, 260, 275, 335, 403, 406, 423
Arkin, A 176, 178
Arnzen, M 251
Arora, Ranjit 203, 205, 206
Astin, A 149
Atherton, J S 92

Baier, A 172
Bailey, A 214
Bain, A 253
Baker, A 364, 365
Bakhurst, D 40
Bandura, A 125
Bannister, D 109
Barr, R 138, 140
Barry, D 73, 346
Barthes, R 248
Bartlett, F C 125
Bartlett, H F 294
Bateson, Gregory 190, 403
Beard, C 139
Beaty, L 226, 402, 411
Beccali, B 159
Becher, T 327
Bedny, G 39
Beech, N 162
Beile, P 311, 323–4
Belenky, F M 403
Bell, V 206–7
Benne, K D 260, 261
Bennis, W 36, 421
Ben-Tovim, G 208
Berger, N O 313
Berhman, J 138
Berlant, L 213, 214, 217
Berry, Thomas 198
Beumer, U 249
Bhavnani, Reena 203, 205
Billing, Y 159
Bion, W R 242, 252, 278, 288, 294, 394
Blaxter, L 406
Blixen, Karen 157, 161
Bloom, B S 124
Boal, A 112, 173–4, 181
Boden, D 395
Boje, D 165, 368, 369, 370, 371
Bollas, C 251
Bonnett, A 205, 206, 208
Boote, D N 311, 323–4
Born, D 150
Boud, D 125, 156, 313, 357
Bourdieu, Pierre 171
Bourner, T 328
Bouwen, R 173
Bowden, R 328
Bowen, W 327
Bowker, G C 101
Bowles, G 157
Bowles, M L 251
Boydell, T H 390
Bradbury, H 65, 66, 188
Brady, E M 158
Brah, A 125, 203, 204, 214
Brennan, M 328
Brock, B 243
Brockbank, A 162
Brookfield, S 204, 407, 413
Broussine, M 347
Brown, C 208
Brown, J 64, 92, 125, 199, 332
Brown, M Y 190
Brown, S 210
Bruner, J S 42, 65, 125, 163, 263, 272
Bruni, A 159

Bruno, E 148
Bryant, I 203
Buckless, F 141
Bugental, J F T 125
Burbules, N 212
Burgess, R 328
Burgoyne, J 292, 300, 390, 406
Burke, L A 89

Caffarella, R S 309, 310
Cagan, J 55
Calás, M B 160
Callander, B 142
Calvino, Italo 161, 162–3
Campbell, A 171
Canavan, F 175, 183
Caragata, W 139
Carr, W 403, 407
Carter, P 389
Casula, C 160
Caulkin, S 176, 177, 178
Cavalle, C 223
Cavarero, A 158
Cavell, S 39
Cecchini, Loris 80
Champoux, J E 130
Chance, P 125
Chapman, S 138
Chattopadhyay, G P 253
Chen, G 140
Chermack, T J 313
Chin, R 261
Chodorow, N 159
Christensen, C R 227
Ciccotello, C 144
Clark, B 328
Clarke, H 328
Clegg, S 165
Clifford, P 299–300
Cohen, A R 275
Cohen, P 207
Collins, J S 125
Colteryahn, K 313
Contu, A 101
Coopey, J 314
Cox, Taylor 203
Cox, Thomas 209
Coyle, D 177
Creese, E 275, 277, 278, 286
Cressey, P 156
Cron, W L 61
Crossan, M 314
Csikszentmihalyi, M 59
Cunliffe, A 88, 101, 107, 115, 119, 357, 392, 397
Currie, D 391
Currie, G 390, 397
Czerniawska, F 259

Dadzie, S 211
Damasio, A R 357, 358
Darsø, L 347
David, P 159
Davies, J 50
Davis, P 313
Deblois, C 328
DeFillipi, R 293
Dehler, G E 55, 60, 62, 66, 390
Denhardt, R D 251
Dennehy, R F 368, 369, 370, 371
Devall, B 190
Dewey, J 59, 61, 123, 310
DiMaggio, P J 225
Docherty, P 156
Dollard, J 125
Donahue, L 140
Draves, W 123
Duch, B J 226, 227, 228
Duguid, P 64, 92, 125, 332
Dweck, C S 61

Easterby-Smith, M 50, 314, 357
Eden, C 403
Edwards, R 93
Elias, N 250, 251
Elkjaer, B 156
Ellsworth, E 411
Engeström, Y 35, 39, 40, 41, 42, 44
Erickson, I M 213
Eriksson, P 91, 92
Essed, P 213

Falbe, C M 367
Falbo, T 367
Feldhendler, D 173
Fenwick, T 101, 107, 139, 203
Ferris, G R 367
Figlio, K 242
Fineman, S 107, 109, 412
Fink, L 141
Fletcher, D E 378
Foldy, E G 189
Fong, C T 36
Fontaine, M 332
Forray, J 101
Foucault, M 406
Fox, S 410

Frank, R 143
Frankland, M 329
Fransella, F 107
Freire, Paulo 7, 61
French, J R 366
French, R 4, 244, 275, 389, 390, 411
Freud, S 251, 295
Fulop, L 172, 175

Gabriel, Y 107, 165, 291, 293, 295, 314, 357, 358, 363
Gagliardi, P 59, 73, 76, 249, 346
Gaine, C 206, 207, 208
Gamelli, I 158
Gardner, H 262
Garfinkel, H 157
Garrick, J 66, 67, 313
Garud, R 225
Garvin, D 313
Geertz, C 63
Gherardi, S 79, 83, 90, 159, 160, 161, 314
Ghoshal, S 37
Gibb, J R 261
Gibbons, M 51, 328
Gibbs, G 282, 283, 284
Gilmore, T N 277, 278
Gilroy, P 205, 207, 209, 212
Girma, S 178
Giroux, H A 56, 406, 409
Goldberg, R 83
Golding, D 391
Goldthorpe, J H 380
Gombrich, E H 249
Gould, L 253, 293
Gray, C 170
Green, B 328
Green, S 144, 145
Green, S G 107
Greenfield, P M 125
Gregory, M 66
Grey, C 389, 390
Griffith, W 160
Griffiths, D S 314, 357, 358
Griffiths, M 66
Groh, S E 226, 227, 228
Gronn, P 46
Guba, E 407
Guderian, C 249
Guile, D 94
Guinan, P J 367
Gustavsen, B 188

Habermas, J 249, 253, 406
Hackman, J R 130
Hadfield, C 170, 176
Halifax, Joan 195
Hall, S 216, 217
Handy, C 177
Hansen, A J 227
Harding, S 157, 189, 190, 194, 196
Hardy, C 225
Harris, P 408
Haug, F 158
Haun, P 142
Haynie, M 140
Heeke, H 171
Hegelsen, S 159
Heimer, C 299
Held, V 157
Henkel, M 327
Henry, G 244
Henry, J 137
Heppard, K 140
Herbert, A 226
Heron, J 60, 188, 191
Heubach, F W 249
Hildreth, P 332
Hillar Farran, J 299–300
Hjorth, Daniel 80
Hochschild, A R 108, 109, 111, 118, 176
Hockey, J 329
Hodgson, G 112
Hoggett, P 254
Holdaway, E 328
Holland, J 204
Holman, D 37
Holton, E F 262, 313
hooks, b 410, 411, 412
Höpfl, H 177–8, 242
Hornyak, M 144
Horwitz, L 266
Howard, K 331
Hoy, J 125, 203, 204, 214
Høyrup, S 156, 407
Huberman, M 272
Hughes, C 406
Hurd, S 141
Huxham, C 403
Hyde, P 292, 294, 297, 298, 300
Hyman, R 389
Hytten, K 215

Ibarra, H 107
Iles, P 313
Ilyenkov, Evald 39
Infinito, J 214

Jack, G 209
Jackall, R 107
Jackson, A 112, 174
Jackson, I 213
Jackson, N 389
Jacobs, R L 313, 314
Jain, S 225
James, C R 313
Jantsch, E 64
Jarvis, P 125, 310, 406, 413
Jay, G 213, 215
Jensen, P 364, 365
Jick, T 313
Johnson, D 141
Johnson, J R 313
Johnson, R 141
Johnston, R 203
Jones, J E 262
Jones, S 213, 215
Jonson, Ben 177
Julian, S D 422
Jüngst, P 249

Kaiser, S M 313
Kalekin-Fishman, D 107
Kanter, R M 159
Kaptelinin, V 38
Katula, R 142
Katz, J 208
Kayes, A B 363, 427
Kayes, D C 3, 311, 324, 363, 421, 423, 426, 427
Kearsley, G 123
Keats, John 294
Kegan, R 272, 419
Kelly, G A 112
Kemmis, S 275, 403, 406, 407
Kershaw, B 172
Kets de Vries, M F R 159
Kettunen, P 223
Kim, H 367
Kimble, C 332
King, David 187
King, S 228
Kipnis, D 366, 367
Klein, G 363
Klein, M 286, 294
Klein, R Duelli 157
Klimoski, R 140
Knight, A 141
Knights, D 101, 390, 397
Knowles, Malcolm 2, 261, 262, 310
Kogan, M 327
Kolb, A Y 310, 311, 312
Kolb, David 2, 16, 125, 139, 141, 276, 278, 280, 282, 283, 284, 292–3, 310, 311, 312, 330, 363, 364, 365, 408, 419, 423, 427
Korpiaho, Kirsi 89, 90, 96, 223
Kossek, E 210
Krantz, J 277, 278
Krathwohl, D 141
Kuchinke, K P 314
Kumaraswamy, A 225

Laban, R 112
Lacan, J 295
Laing, S 328
Langer, S 59
Lasch-Quinn, E 208, 209, 213, 216
Laurillard, D 279
Lave, J 64, 90, 125, 330, 331
Lawrence, T B 225
Lawrence, W G 242, 250, 251, 253
Lawton, J 208
Lazar, R 298
Ledford, G R 282
Lee, A 328
Legge, K 389
Leitch, C 313
Leont'ev, A N 44
Leppälä, K 89, 94, 97, 99, 223
Lesser, E 332
Levin, R 138
Levine, J 140
Levinson, H 380
Lewin, Kurt 2, 401, 403
Lewis, M W 55, 66, 390
Licuanan, B 67
Lincoln, Y 407
Lobel, S 210
Loden, M 159
Lomax, P 65–6
Long, S 243, 253, 293, 294, 295, 303, 304, 314
Lorbiecki, A 209
Lovelock, James 187, 190
Lovio, R 91
Luckmann, C 138
Lütkehaus, L 249
Lynch, F 209
Lynham, S A 313

McDermott, R 101, 332, 335
Macdonald, I 206, 208
McGill, I 125, 162, 211, 226, 402, 411
McGivern, J 390, 391, 396, 397
McHugh, David 389
McLaughlin, H 408

McMorland, J 330, 333
McNiff, J 65–6
McPhee, P 138
McTaggart, R 275
Macy, Joanna 190
Maguire, S 225
Maier, C 143
Mailen, A 140
Maiteny, P 277
Mangham, I 174, 181
Manz, C C 159
Marquardt, M 226, 228, 313, 419
Marrow, A J 260
Marshall, Judi 188
Marsick, V J 313
Martin, J 145
Martin, P Y 73
Marx, K 38
Maughan, E 197
Maxwell, T 328
Meister, D 39
Meltzer, T 143
Menzies, I E P 294
Meriläinen, S 91
Merleau-Ponty, M 196
Merriam, S B 309, 310
Mersky, R 249
Meyerson, D E 199
Mezirow, J 407, 419
Michaelsen, L 141
Michelson, E 139
Miettinen, R 41, 44
Miles, M 272
Miller, E J 260
Miller, N 125
Miller, S 404, 406
Mills, A J 209
Milter, R 226
Mintzberg, H 36, 291, 292, 367
Mir, A 209
Mir, R 209
Mirchandani, K 112
Mirza, H 408
Mischel, W 125
Mitev, N 389
Moilanen, R 314
Molderings, H 248
Moon, J 406
Moore, J E 89
Morgan, G 363, 389, 390
Morley, C 330, 334
Mumford, M D 67
Murray, D 57, 63
Naess, A 190
Narver, J C 313
Neumann, J E 258, 261, 264
Neumann, R 327, 329
Newton, J F 243, 254, 314
Nicholson, Ian 199
Nicolini, D 90, 406
Nilson, L 138
Nissley, N 59
Nkomo, Stella 203
Norman, D A 125

Obstfeld, D 419
Ofori-Dankwa, J C 422
Oldham, G 130
Oliver, R 125
Orlikowski, W 64
Orr, David 188
Osborne, E 244
O'Toole, J 421
O'Toole, T 36
Overington, M 174, 181

Päiviö, H 89, 94, 97, 99, 223
Papamichail, N 292, 297, 298, 300
Parker Follet, M 165
Patterson, C H 125
Pederson, A 206
Pedler, M 225, 390
Penketh, Laura 203, 205, 206, 207, 208
Pennac, Daniel 161
Pfeffer, J 36, 262
Pfreundschuh, W 251
Piccardo, C 158, 160
Pickles, T 139
Poder, P 357
Poggio, B 158, 159, 161
Porter, L W 367
Powell, D 209
Powell, W W 225
Prasad, P 209
Prewitt, V 314
Proudman, B 138
Prusak, L 332
Putnam, R 260

Raab, N 57
Raelin, J A 226
Raelin, J D 226
Ram, M 403
Ramazanoglu, C 204
Räsänen, Keijo 89, 90, 91, 99, 100
Ratcliffe, M 173

Rattansi, A 204, 206, 216
Raven, B 366
Ravenscroft, S 141
Reason, P 60, 65, 66, 188, 191, 196, 197
Redman, T 389
Reinharz, S 157
Revans, R 226, 227, 402, 408
Reynolds, M 3, 55, 66, 87, 92, 156, 204, 205, 275, 287, 292, 300, 329, 331, 366, 390, 404, 406, 409, 426
Rhodes, C 66, 67
Rice, A K 261, 403
Rickards, T 292, 297, 298, 300
Rifkin, W D 172, 175
Rigg, C 403, 406, 411
Roberts, H 157
Roberts, J 94, 101
Rochberg-Halton, E 59
Rogers, C R 125
Rorty, R 37
Ross, G 42
Rothman, J 157
Rudenstine, N 327
Rudolph, J W 189
Rumelhart, D E 125
Ruona, W E A 313

Salzberger-Wittenberg, I 244
Savin-Baden, M 225
Sax, L 149
Scalfi, Anna 79
Scarman, L G 207
Schatzki, T 90
Schein, E 403
Schmidt, H G 226
Schmidt, S M 366, 367
Schofield, J 139
Scholten, Christel 199
Schön, Donald 2, 32, 156, 188, 275, 330, 378, 390, 402, 403, 406
Schultz, W C 261
Schutzman, M 182
Schwager, S 175, 183
Schwartz, H 246
Scott, J L 313
Scott, J W 203
Scully, M A 199
Searles, H F 249
Seed, John 190
Seglin, M 39
Selle, G 249
Sellers, J 145
Senge, P M 160, 313, 314
Sessions, G 190
Shanahan, P 328
Sharp, J 331
Shotter, J 37
Siegel, G 140
Sievers, B 159, 243, 251, 252, 253
Simmel, G 74
Sims, H P, Jr 159
Sims, S 107
Skinner, B F 125
Slater, S F 313
Sloman, A E 241
Slusher, J 332
Smircich, L 160
Smith, D M 260
Smith, P 108, 119
Smith, P A C 314
Snell, R 314
Snyder, W 101, 332, 335
Sorenson, J 140
Sottolano, D 367
Srivastava, Sarit 215
St George, J 175, 183
Stanislawski, C 112
Stanley, L 157
Stapley, L 293
Staw, B M 36
Stehr, N 58
Stein, M 244, 293, 294
Stein, R 141
Steyaer, Chris 80
Steyaert, C 173
Stinson, J 226
Strati, A 73, 76, 79, 81, 346
Sun, P Y T 313
Sutcliffe, K M 419
Sutton, R I 36
Sveningsson, S 112
Svinicki, M 140
Swan, E 205, 211, 214
Swanson, R A 262

Taber, T D 107
Tagg, J 138, 140
Taylor, P 209
Taylor, S S 189
Thomas, A B 293, 294
Thompson, A 215
Thompson, J 390, 391, 396, 397
Thompson, P 389
Thompson, S 178
Thorndike, E L 125
Thorne, L 332

Thorpe, R 37, 408
Threnhauser, E 142
Tight, M 406
Tiuraniemi, J 92
Tochon, F 93
Tompkins, D 140
Torbert, W R 188
Tosey, P 314
Tournier, Michel 161
Townley, B 389
Townsley, Ruth 196
Trehan, K 205, 403, 404, 406, 409, 411
Tsang, E W K 313
Tsoukas, H 378
Tufte, Edward 59, 60
Turnbull, S 177, 181, 314
Turner-Vesselago, B 196
Turquet, P 246
Tyson, T 275, 279

Ulrich, D 313
Usher, R 203

Van Aken, J T 51
Van Looy, B 173
Vann, K 101
Vera, D 314
Vicarelli, G 159
Vidler, A 251
Vik, G 141
Vince, R 3, 4, 61, 62, 87, 156, 204, 214, 275, 276, 278, 287, 299, 329, 331, 347, 366, 401, 406, 407, 408, 411, 412, 426
Viola, W 243, 250
Virkkunen, J 41
Vogel, C M 55
Von Glinow, M A 313
Vroom, V H 131
Vygotsky, L S 38, 43

Wackernagel, M 187
Walker, D 156
Walker, H 209
Walker, I 206
Wankel, C 293
Warren, J 215
Warren, S 247, 249
Watkins, K E 313
Watson, J B 125
Watson, T J 378, 381, 389, 390, 407, 408
Weaver, M 139
Weber, Max 70, 80–1
Weddington, H S 60, 61
Weick, K 64, 419
Weigand, R 138
Weil, S 125, 211
Weiler, H N 253
Welsh, M A 55, 57, 62, 63, 66, 390
Wenders, W 247, 248
Wenger, E 64, 90, 101, 125, 330, 331, 332, 335
Whitehead, J 65–6
Whitley, R 291
Wiegand, W 248
Wildemeersch, Danny 203
Wilkinson, A 389
Wilkinson, I 366
Willmott, H 3, 36, 101
Wilson, F 389
Wilson, J 139
Winchester, I 328
Winnicott, D W 249, 277
Wise, M 206
Wise, S 157
Wong, D 209
Wood, D 42, 227
Woodward, G C 212
Wray-Bliss, E 101
Wrench, J 209
Wright, P 178

Yanow, D 90
Yetton, P 131
Yukl, G 366, 367
Yuval-Davis, N 206, 208

Zand, D E 367
Zimmerman, D H 395
Zucker, L G 79

This page intentionally left blank

Subject Index

3M 33

ABB 33
abstract conceptualization 310
accreditocracy 422
action, theories of 24–5
  and counterproductive actions 21, 24, 25, 32–3
  and double-loop learning 24–5
  and espoused theories 22, 25
  fundamental assumptions about 22
  and Model I theory-in-use 25–7
    Joe-Bill case 27–30
  and Model II theory-in-use 30
    Joe-Bill case 30–2
  and single-loop learning 24
  and theories-in-use 22, 403
    diagnostic methodology 22–4
action learning 12, 222, 400
  characteristics of 225
  and choice of experiential methods 234–6
  and choice of problem 226
  and critical reflection 408
  instructor/learner responses to 228–9
    learning process 231–3
    orientation to learning objectives 229–31
    resources and support 233–4
  and learning communities 410–11
  and learning process 226–7
  and orientation to learning objectives 225–6
  origins of 225
  and resource/support requirements 224, 227–8
  and tutor's role 227
  and UCE Management Development Programme 402–3
action research 188
  and transdisciplinary action research course 65–6
  see also transdisciplinary action research course
active experimentation 310
activity theory 8, 39–40
  and activity system 40
  and knowledge 39
  and MBA education 35, 37–8, 50–1
    as activity system 41
    benefits of using in 35, 41–2
    student response to 46–50
    using in 42–6
  and normative spaces 39–40
  see also Cultural and Historical Activity Theory
actors, and use in police training 107, 109
adult learning theory 261
Advanced Organizational Consultation (AOC) programme 259
  candidates for 259
  contribution to consultant education 268–9
    consultancy experience and reflection 270
    curriculum and module design 269
    experiential activities 269–70
    institutional reflexivity 271–2
    reflection 269–70
    vicarious learning 270–1
  evaluation of 268
  and experiential learning 259, 260
    consultancy experience and reflection 264–5
    curriculum and module design 260–2
    experiential activities 262–3
    institutional reflexivity 267–8
    reflection 263–4
    vicarious learning 266–7
  and practical theory 260
  and reflection 260
  structure of 259
aesthetics 9
  and experiential learning 70
  and learning experience 59
  and organizational life 71–3, 82–3
  and performance 70, 83–4
    'Iron Cage Performance' 79–82
  and power in lecturing practices 73–5
  and riddle as teaching device 76–9

aesthetics (*cont.*)
and transdisciplinary action research course 54, 59–60
see also drawing event
anti-racism:
and difficulties in teaching 216–17
and diversity training 209–10
and Elliott's 'Blue-eyed brown-eyed' approach 210–11
concepts of racism 213
critiques of 214–16
empathy 212, 214–15
recreating racism 211–12
role of emotion 214
teaching style 213
therapeutic nature 214–15
and multiculturalism:
awareness training 205–6
critiques of 206–7
and municipal anti-racism 207
and race awareness training 207–9
and race equality training 205
anxiety, and learning 401, 412
anxiety containment 275, 277
and experiential learning 294
and teacher's role 276
apprehension, and conversational learning 365, 372
arts, and business involvement with 170–1
Arts and Business (A&B) 170
assessment 141
and participative assessment 409
Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) 141, 420
assurance of learning 141
and Small Satellite Program 145

Backdraft (film), and on-line learning exercise 132–3
behavioural learning theory, and learning theory 124–5
biased testing, and faulty learning 23
business schools, and criticisms of 36

change, and power relations 358
change programmes, and theatre workshops 176–8
Class as Learning Organization (CALO) 275, 279–80
Class as Virtual Learning Organization (CAVLO) 275, 276
and balancing on-line teaching role 287–8
and emotion and reason:
escalating split between 284–6
increasing split between 282–3
pre-existing separation of 279–82
separation of 280
climate change 187
cognitive theory, and learning theory 125
collaborative projects 15
collaborative writing project (doctoral students) 310, 323–4
and course design 311–13
and focus on learning organization concept 313–14
and learners' reflections on 316–17, 324
as emerging scholars 322–3
group/collective understanding 319–20
individual understanding 317–19
writing and research 320–2
and literature reviews 311–13
and methods of 315–16
and objectives 312–13
collective activity system, and activity theory 44–5
communities of practice:
and activity theory 47–9
and definition of 332
and practice-based theorizing 101
and transdisciplinarity 64
see also supervision of doctoral research
CompCo 180, 181, 183
comprehension, and conversational learning 365, 372
Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) 275
concrete experience 310
conflict orientations, and on-line learning exercise 128–9
constructivism, and learning theory 125
consultant education 13–14, 258
see also Advanced Organizational Consultation programme
content:
and educational experience 419
and experiential learning 422–3
and process 423
continuity, and experience 310
conversational learning 16
and dialectic poles 365
and experiential learning 365–6
and guided leadership narratives 364, 367–8, 373–4
conversational outcomes 371–3

revising the narrative 368
student narratives 369–71
themes of 369
and power 363–4
and power dynamics 365–7
causes and consequences of 367
cooperative learning 141
and ecology education 191
cycles of action/reflection 192–4
Council of All Beings 190
cover-up, and faulty learning 23
creativity:
and paradox of 294
and theatre workshops 178
critical experiential design, and difficulties with 275–8
critical management learning 400, 406
and UCE Management Development Programme 406
critical management studies 2, 423
critical pedagogy 423, 427
and curricular development 390
and practice of 388–90, 397
and transdisciplinary action research course 55
action orientation 58–9
decentred classroom 56
multidisciplinary approach 56–7
power relations 57–8, 62–3
critical reflection 400, 406
and action learning 408
definition of 407
as distinct from reflection 156, 408
and transdisciplinary action research course 66
and UCE Management Development Programme 406–8
see also reflection
critical theory 407, 427
critical thinking 407
Cultural and Historical Activity Theory (CHAT):
and background to 38–9
and collective activity system 44–5
and communities of practice 47–9
and MBA education 37–8, 50–1
advantages in 35
student response to 46–50
using in 42–6
and mediation 45–6
and production triangle 43–4
cultural change, and difficulties in making 33
Custody Sergeants, *see* performative learning, and the police service
custody suites, *see* performative learning, and the police service

decentred classroom, and critical pedagogy 56
decision-making, and on-line learning exercise 131–2
deep ecology 189–90
and deep commitment 194
and Deep Ecology Platform 189
and deep experience 194
and deep questioning 194
experience of 197–8
impact of 198–9
see also wilderness experience
defensive processes 294–5
defensive reasoning:
and Model I theory-in-use 26–7, 33
Joe-Bill case 29
and underground world in organizations 33
Department of Defense (DoD, USA) 142
Department of Homeland Security (DHS, USA) 142
developmental outcomes 419
discursive orientation, and conversational learning 365, 372
disempowerment, and experiential learning 412
distributed leadership, and activity theory 46
diversity training 209–10
doctoral students 15
increase in 327
and literature reviews 311–12, 323–4
and nature of professional doctorate 328
research on 327–8
see also collaborative writing project; drawing event; supervision of doctoral research
double binds 23–4
double-loop learning 8, 24–5
and Model I theory-in-use 27
and Model II theory-in-use 30–2
and problems requiring 21
drawing event 345–6
assessment of 359
and case studies 349–53
and emotions 346, 354, 355–6
conceptualizing 357–8
explanation of 346–7
and group processes 356–7
and levels of disclosure 358
and participative research 347
process of 347–8

drawing event (*cont.*)
reflections on 354
emotions 355–6
participant in research 354–5
risks 355
trust 354
and skills required 346
stages of 347, 348
and transformation of perceptions 357
and use in research 346

ecology 12
and deep ecology 189–90
deep commitment 194
Deep Ecology Platform 189
deep experience 194
deep questioning 194
experience of 197–8
impact of 198–9
education for 190
and Gaia theory 190
and responsibility and business practice course 188–9
cooperative learning 191
cycles of action/reflection 192–4
forms of knowing 191–2
and wilderness experience 188, 189–90, 195
exercises on 195–6
Elliott, Jane, and anti-racism teaching 202, 210–11
concepts of racism 213
critiques of 214–16
empathy 212, 214–15
recreating racism 211–12
role of emotion 214
teaching style 213
therapeutic nature 214–15
emotion regimes 108–9
emotional labour 109, 118–19
and performative learning 108
and police service 108
and role playing 176
emotional work 109
emotions:
and critical pedagogy 61
and drawing event 346, 354, 355–6
conceptualizing emotions 357–8
and experiential learning 294
and learning 61, 211, 216
and organizations 358
and psychodynamic perspective 411–12
and reason:
escalating split between 284–6
imbalance between 276, 277, 279
increasing split between 282–3
pre-existing separation of 279–82
and transformation 214
empathy:
and anti-racism 212, 214–15
and multicultural awareness training 206
encounter groups, and race awareness training 208
evaluation outcomes 419
evidence-based education, as barrier to experiential learning 420–1
experience:
and abstract conceptualization 310
and active experimentation 310
and concrete experience 310
construction of 204, 427–8
and continuity 310
critical scrutiny of 203–4
and defining 426, 428–9
and experiential learning theory 310–11
and interaction 310
and learning 310
learning from 292, 293
and narrative 427
nature of 3, 9, 12, 87–8, 202
and political relations 204
and reflective observation 310
experience-based action research course, *see* transdisciplinary action research course
experiential enquiry, and cycles of action/reflection 192–4
experiential knowing 191
experiential learning:
and action learning 402–3
and assurance of learning 141
barriers to 424–5
context of formal education 418–20
institutional barriers 417–18, 424–5, 430
institutional norms and values 420
outcome-based education 420–1
professional identity 421–2
challenges of 7
characteristics of 419, 427–9
and choice of learning methods 222
and content 422–3
and cooperative learning 191
core values of 411
and critical perspective 2–4
and criticism of approach 2
cyclical nature of 292–3

and defining experience 426
and definitions 138
developments in 2
and disempowerment 412
diversity of 139, 203, 426
and educational landscape 139–41
and experiential learning theory 310–11, 364
flexibility of 139
increased need for 141–2
institutionalization of 426
and learning paradigm 140
and learning theory 125–6
limitations of 3, 331
and management education 2, 292–5
models of 139
negotiated narrative approach to 378–80
paradoxical nature of 12
and political context 11
power of 137
and praxis 403
and proactivity 404–5
problems of changing to 221–2
and process 403–4, 422–3
and relation to other forms of learning 418–20
renewed interest in 1
and service learning 142
and social reality 204–5
state of 429–30
and techniques 423
themes of 6
and tutors 413–14
experiential reflexivity 7, 11
extension, and conversational learning 365, 370, 371

fantasy, and group work 294
feminism:
and feminist methodology 157
and memory work 158
and narrative knowledge 155
and reflection 157
and reflexive workshop on leadership 160–2
use of narrative methodology 162–5
and reflexivity 157
Forum Theatre 174, 181

Gaia theory 190
gender:
and guided leadership narratives 370–1
and leadership 159–60
reflexive workshop 161–5
goal setting, as barrier to experiential learning 421
group dynamics, and experiential learning 427
group learning 140–1
see also collaborative writing project
group relations 4, 275
and Class as Learning Organization 279–80
and emotion-reason balance 276
and reflexivity 275–6
guided leadership narratives 16, 364, 367–8, 373–4
and revising the narrative 368
and student narratives 369–71
conversational outcomes 371–3
and themes of 369

Helsinki School of Economics (HSE) 12, 88, 223
and external evaluations of 223
and teaching methods 223–5
choice of 234–6
see also Professional Development course (Helsinki School of Economics)
higher education, and learning paradigm 140
humanistic theory, and learning theory 125

identification, and vicarious learning 266
implicit contracts 380–1
and case studies 382–3
seminar 383–6
individuality, and conversational learning 365
innovation, and leadership 67
institutional reflexivity 14
and consultant education 267–8, 271–2
institutions, and experiential learning 12–13
as barriers to 417–18, 420, 424–5
instruction paradigm 140
intension, and conversational learning 365, 370
intentional learners 140
interaction:
and experience 310
and learning 123
'Iron Cage Performance' 79–82

Joe-Bill case, and theories of action:
Model I theory-in-use 27–30
Model II theory-in-use 30–2

knowing:
experiential knowing 191
practical knowing 192
presentational knowing 191–2
propositional knowing 192

knowledge:
and action research 66
and activity theory 39
and learning paradigm 140
knowledge management 36

leadership 293–4
and activity theory 46
changed views of 158
gendered nature of 159–60
and innovation 67
and power dynamics 366, 367
and power relations 159
gender 164–5
reflexive workshop on 160–2
use of narrative methodology 162–5
as a relational practice 159
as situated practice 155–6, 159
and women 159–60
see also guided leadership narratives
learning communities, and action learning 410–11
learning cycle 292–3, 330, 331
learning methods:
choice of experiential methods 234–6
comparison of action/problem-based learning 225, 235
learning process 226–7
orientation to learning objectives 225–6
resources and support 227–8, 233–4
tutor's role 227
framework for comparing 222
responses to action/problem-based learning 228–9
learning process 231–3
orientation to learning objectives 229–31
learning organization, and collaborative writing project 313–14
learners' reflections on 324
as emerging scholars 322–3
group/collective understanding 319–20
individual understanding 317–19
writing and research 320–2
methods of 315–16
learning outcomes 419
learning paradigm 140
learning theory 124, 126
behavioural learning theory 124–5
cognitive theory 125
constructivism 125
content 419
conversational learning 365–6
developmental outcomes 419
evaluation outcomes 419
experience 310
experiential learning 125–6
experiential learning theory 310–11, 364
humanistic theory 125
learning cycle 292–3, 330, 331
learning outcomes 419
negotiated narrative approach 378–80
process 419
social learning theory 125
lectures, and experiential learning 5
lecturing practices, and aesthetic experience of power 73–5
left-hand-right-hand case, and theories-in-use 22–4
live projects 14
and experiential learning 292
consultancy or experiential learning 299–300
project group processes 298–9
and management education 292, 303–4
as part of management programme 295–8
recurring themes in 297
tensions within 298–9

Management Development Programme (UCE), *see* University of Central England Management Development Programme
management education:
and accreditocracy 422
approaches to 1–2, 390
changes in 389
criticisms of 291
and experiential learning 2, 292–5, 303–4, 330
and organizing experience 363
outcomes and forms of 422–4
and professional identity 421–2
proposed changes to 291–2
state of 429
Management Education Research Initiative (MERI) 90
Management in Practice Module (MAP) 391–2
and maximum disorder activity 392–5
debriefing/debate 395–6
Manchester Business School:
and live projects 295–8
consultancy or experiential learning 299–300
project group processes 298–9
tensions within 298–9
and nature of MBA programme 303
Masters of Business Administration (MBA) programmes:

and activity theory 50–1
as activity system 41
benefits of 41–2
and comparative features 301–2
criticisms of 36
intellectual abstraction 36–7
practical naivety 37
teaching *doxa* 37
and Cultural and Historical Activity Theory 37–8
advantages of 35
background to 38–9
collective activity system 44–5
production triangle 43–4
student response to 46–50
using in 42–6
and facilitators' experiential learning 297–8
flawed nature of 293
and live projects 295–8
consultancy or experiential learning 299–300
project group processes 298–9
tensions within 298–9
means of delivery 14
types of 300–1
experiential programmes 301–3
lecture-centred 301
project-added 301
maximum disorder 388, 392–5
and debriefing/debate 395–6
mediation, and activity theory 43–4, 45–6
memory work 11
and feminist methodology 158
and meaning of 158
metaphor 363
Millennium Ecosystem Assessment 187
multiculturalism:
and critiques of 206–7
and multicultural awareness training 205–6
multidisciplinary working 8–9
and critical pedagogy 56–7
and learning process 63–5
and power relations 57–8, 62–3
myth analysis 363

narratives:
and experiential learning 166, 427
and feminism 155
and learning 65
and negotiated narrative approach to learning 378–80
and reappropriation of experience 158
and reflexive thought 157–8, 166
and reflexive workshop on leadership 160–2
use of narrative methodology 162–5
see also guided leadership narratives
NASA 33
negotiated narrative 16
networked learning 10
networks, and communities of practice 332
New Renaissance Group 175, 184

on-line learning 123–4, 278–9
and eExercises (experiential exercises) 124, 126, 127–8
'Alternative Social Processes for Decision-Making' 131–2
assessment of 133–4
diagnosing and redesigning jobs 130–1
forms of 127
individual exercises 128–31
'Organizational Culture Diagnosis' 132–3
virtual team exercises 131–3
'Your Conflict Orientations' 128–9
and experiential approach 126–7
and experiential course design 134
and learning theory 124, 126
behavioural learning theory 124–5
cognitive theory 125
constructivism 125
experiential learning 125–6
humanistic theory 125
social learning theory 125
and management education issues 133–4
learner analytical skills 124
learner involvement 124
learner self-awareness 124
practical applications 124
on-line teaching 275
and anxiety containment 276, 277
and balancing teaching role 287–8
and Class as Virtual Learning Organization 275, 276, 279
and Computer Mediated Communication 275
and emotion and reason:
escalating split between 284–6
imbalance between 276, 277, 279
increasing split between 282–3
pre-existing separation of 279–82
and reflection 276–7
and reflexivity 276, 280–1
organizational behaviour, and experiential learning 5
organizational culture, and on-line learning exercise 132–3

organizational dynamics, and whole group task 4–5
organizational learning, and psychodynamic theory 412
organizational life, and aesthetic approach to 71–3, 82–3
  experience of power 73–5
  'Iron Cage Performance' 79–82
  riddle as teaching device 76–9
outcome-based education, as barrier to experiential learning 420–1

participative assessment 409
patents 36
peer assessment 409
performance:
  and experiential learning 70, 83–4
  and 'Iron Cage Performance' 79–82
performative learning, and the police service 106–7
  Custody Sergeants:
    performance of 108
    role of 105–6, 108–9
    training 106
  custody suite simulations 106, 115–18
    design 110
    emotional labour 114, 118
    iterative review 111–12
    movement analysis 114–15, 118
    narrative content 113
    non-verbal content 113–14, 117
    participants 111
    project preparation 110
    staging of 110–11
    verbal content 114, 117–18
  emotional labour 108, 109, 118–19
  emotional work 109
  role playing 106
personal growth 211
photographs, *see* Social Photo-Matrix
police service, *see* performative learning, and the police service
power dynamics:
  and conversational learning 366–7
  and guided leadership narratives 367–8, 373–4
    conversational outcomes 371–3
    revising the narrative 368
    student narratives 369–71
    themes of 369
  and maximum disorder activity 396
power relations:
  aesthetic experience of 73–5
  and conversational learning 365–6
  and experiential learning 11, 366
  and leadership 159
    gender 164–5
  and management education 389
  and multidisciplinary learning 57–8, 62–3
  and organizational change 358
practical knowing 192
practice:
  nature of 91
  perspectives on 91–2, 101–2
  theories of 90
praxis:
  and action research 66
  and UCE Management Development Programme 403
prejudice 368
presentational knowing 191–2
proactivity, and UCE Management Development Programme 404–5
problem-based learning 12, 222
  characteristics of 225
  and choice of experiential methods 234–6
  and choice of problem 226
  instructor/learner responses to 228–9
    learning process 231–3
    orientation to learning objectives 229–31
    resources and support 233–4
  and learning process 226–7
  and orientation to learning objectives 225–6
  origins of 225
  and resource/support requirements 224, 227–8
  and tutor's role 227
problem-solving, and left-hand-right-hand case 22
process:
  and content 423
  and educational experience 419
  and experiential learning 422–3
  and UCE Management Development Programme 403–4
product development, and transdisciplinary action research course 54–5
production triangle, and activity theory 43–4
Professional Development course (Helsinki School of Economics) 88
  assessment of 100–2
  and communities of practice approach 101
  concept for 90
  and context of 88–9
    purpose of 88–9

experiences of 94–5
students 95–9
tutors 99–100
and nature of practice 91
and reflective practice 89
and student feedback 98–9
and study practices 90
basis for experiential learning 90, 93–4
moral perspective 97–8
perspectives on 91–2
strategic perspective 96–7
tactical perspective 95–6
and teaching methods 92–3
professional identity, as barrier to experiential learning 421–2
projective identification, and vicarious learning 266
propositional knowing 192
psychoanalysis, and experiential learning 13
psychodynamics 411–12

race awareness training 207–9
Reality Bites (film), and on-line learning exercise 130–1
recursive orientation, and conversational learning 365, 372
reflection:
concept of 156–7
and consultant education 263–4, 265, 269–70, 272
and EIAG model 272
and experiential learning 94, 139, 157, 408
and on-line teaching 276–7
purpose of 156
see also critical reflection; reflexivity
reflective observation 310
reflective practice:
concept of 156–7
and Professional Development course 89
reflexive learning, and workshop on leadership 162
reflexivity 156
concept of 157
and consultant education 267–8, 271–2
and critical self-reflection 275–6
difficulties in 277
and interactive introspection 157
and learning 406
and narrative 157–8, 166
and reflexive workshop on leadership 160–2
use of narrative methodology 162–5
as a relational practice 157
and transdisciplinary action research course 66
relationality, and conversational learning 365
responsibility and business practice (MSc course):
and cooperative learning 191
and cycles of action/reflection 192–4
and deep ecology 189–90
deep commitment 194
deep experience 194
deep questioning 194
experience of 197–8
and forms of knowing:
experiential 191
practical 192
presentational 191–2
propositional 192
and Gaia theory 190
impact of 198–9
MSc in 188–9
and wilderness experience 189–90, 195
exercises on 195–6
riddles, as teaching device 76–9, 425
risks, and learning 61, 412
Role Call Limited 176
role playing 10
and emotional labour 176
and Joe-Bill case 27–30
and performative learning 106
and theatre workshops 175–6
see also performative learning, and the police service
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, and doctoral students 333–4

safe learning laboratory 10
sense-making 22
and behavioural strategies 23
and left-hand-right-hand case 22–4
and multidisciplinary learning 64
service industry, and emotional labour 118–19
service learning, and experiential learning 142
simulation 10, 363
single-loop learning 24
Social Dreaming 243
social dynamics, and experiential learning 427
social learning theory, and learning theory 125
Social Photo-Matrix (SPM) 13
aim of 242
associations raised by 243–4
and management education 247

Social Photo-Matrix (SPM) (*cont.*)
as method of experiential learning 242
and new awareness of the social 250–1
as new way of seeing 252–4
and organizational psychodynamic 252
and organizational shadow 251
origins of 243
and photographs:
beauty 248–9
dreamlike quality of 247–8
human/non-human environment 249
reality 248
remembrance 248
and reflection sessions 244–7
and the uncanny 251
and working hypothesis 242
social reality:
and Cultural and Historical Activity Theory 38
and experiential learning 204–5
solidarity, and conversational learning 365
status, and conversational learning 365
stereotyping 368
storytelling 363
student team project 10
study practices, as basis for experiential learning 90, 93–4
assessment of 100–2
experiences of 94–5
students 95–9
tutors 99–100
moral perspective 97–8
perspectives on 91–2
strategic perspective 96–7
student feedback 98–9
tactical perspective 95–6
supervision of doctoral research:
and community of practice model 331–3
advantages of 341–2
assessment of 337
characteristics of 333
establishment of 334–6
issues emerging from 335–6
limitations of 342
opportunity for discourse and reflection 340–1
peer support 338
practical working of 336
social learning experience 338
supervisor-candidate relationship 339–40
theory/practice combination 338–9
value added to individual researcher 337–8
and experiential learning 330–1
limitations of 331
and student-supervisory relationship 328–9
need for new models 329–30
traditional models 329
sustainability, and challenge of 187

Tavistock Institute 13, 259, 430
see also Advanced Organizational Consultation programme
teaching, and experiential learning 14
team learning 140–1
Thatcher, Margaret 171
theatre:
and business involvement with 170–1, 183
and business use of 183
change programmes 176–8
creativity 178
role playing 175–6
as educational tool 171
and management education 169–70
and theatre workshops 11
assessment of effects of 181–4
building relationships 172–3
case studies 179–80
CompCo 180, 181, 183
conditions for successful use of 184
conventional workshops 173, 183
international executive master's programme 179, 181–2, 184
learning space 172–3
participants' roles 172
radical workshops 173–5, 182–3
trust 172
uses of 173
Theatre de Complicité 173, 174, 181, 182
Theatre of the Oppressed 174
tools, and activity theory 43–4, 46
training, and anti-racism 205
transdisciplinary action research course 54
and action research 65–6
as aesthetic experience 54, 59–60
and benefits of 66–7
and critical pedagogy 55
action orientation 58–9
decentred classroom 56
multidisciplinary approach 56–7
power relations 57–8
and critical reflection 66
and emotional intensity 54, 60–2
and knowledge creation 66
and learning objective 54–5

and learning process 63–5
and politically real 54, 62–3
tutors, and experiential learning 413–14

uncertainty, and anxiety containment 294
underground world in organizations 33–4
United States Air Force Academy 10, 143
and experiential learning 142, 149
educational outcomes 147–8
implementation of 143–4
improving 149
institutional commitment to 150
and Small Satellite Program (FalconSat projects) 144–6
educational outcomes 147–8
reasons for success of 146
universities:
and access to experience 293
and experiential learning 303–4
and master/slave discourse 295
University of Central England (UCE) Management Development Programme 413–14
and action learning 402–3
learning communities 410–11
and critical management learning 406
and critical reflection 406–8
origins of 401–2
and participative assessment 409
and praxis 403
and proactivity 404–5
and process 403–4
and process radical pedagogy 406
and psychodynamic perspective 411–12
and tutors 413–14

vicarious learning, and consultant education 266–7, 270–1
visual data collection 15

whole group task 4–5
wilderness experience 12, 189–90, 195–6
and deep ecology 189–90
deep commitment 194
Deep Ecology Platform 189
deep experience 194
deep questioning 194
experience of 197–8
exercises on 195–6
and Gaia theory 190
impact of 198–9
and management education 188
and responsibility and business practice course:
cooperative learning 191
cycles of action/reflection 192–4
forms of knowing 191–2
women, and leadership 159–60
work motivation, and on-line learning exercise 130–1
work orientations 377–8, 380–1
and case studies:
Ravi 381–2
Sacha 382–3
seminar 383–6
Worldwatch Institute 175, 184