

MANAGEMENT IS ETHICS:
Critical Management Studies and Professionals in the MBA Program

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Abstract: Over the past four years the author has taught an elective course in the Professional MBA Program (PMBA) at Saint Louis University that moves concern for the impact of organizations on their many different stakeholders to the center of attention in teaching practical management and organization theory. The approach draws on writings from a field called "Critical Management Studies" as well as mainline business publications to question accepted models of management and to direct the focus of study to the impact of management decisions on the many different groups that are reliant on organizations. Moving students out of their comfort zones as practicing managers and into the shoes of those not as interested in running organizations can help the students to become more effective managers through the learning of a more critical and comprehensive view of management decision-making. PMBA students, almost all practicing managers, often start the course in a skeptical frame of mind but most come to see the utility of questioning traditional models and of viewing businesses and business issues from differing perspectives (e.g., management, employee, owner, consumer, neighbor, environmentalist, etc.). They also develop a better understanding of management models while learning about the models' underlying assumptions and limitations. This paper focuses on teaching critical management studies to business professionals. To that end the author has designed a course to achieve a central focus on the role and importance of values-oriented decision-making to effective management.

Introduction: Ethics Education in the Business School

Enron, Lehman Brothers, Bernie Madoff, Jeff Skilling—names that are on the tips of the tongues of businesspeople, legislators, regulators, journalists, and many others in society and that remind us that those who manage our business organizations could do a lot better at keeping the public trust. While the business schools and universities that educate managers cannot be held totally accountable for the financial crisis and the crisis of trust that has naturally flowed from it, no one teaching in a business school over the past several years can fail to be aware of societal pressure to do a better job in values education for future generations of top managers. In Jesuit Business Programs, the ethical development of managers is a core goal. Yet an informal survey of Jesuit graduate business programs conducted in April 2010 indicated that, of those responding, only one required ethics be covered beyond the typical

required core course (that school, however, really appears to have developed coverage of ethics throughout the curriculum).¹

Ethics or values education, particularly if it is enacted primarily through a limited number of courses in law, ethics, and social responsibility, is no longer a unique identifier or mission component—and has not been for some time. The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International (AACSB) has for years included in its standards an expectation that the curriculum cover individual ethical behavior and community responsibilities.² Interestingly, and particularly relevant to this topic, the standard also encourages the engagement of multiple—including non-business—stakeholders in managing curricula and notes that “Public policy makers may supply ideas about skills needed in graduates to meet anticipated social demands.”³ Further, in 2004 an AACSB task force produced a white paper with recommendations for ethics education in business schools. It argues that “All of us involved in business education need to think more deeply and creatively about...ethical awareness, ethical reasoning skills, and core ethical principles [and] we must socialize students in the obligations and rewards of stewardship, *including the concerns of multiple stakeholders and the responsible use of power*” [emphasis added]. The report also suggests that assumptions that students are being adequately prepared in ethics are highly questionable.⁴ It goes on to state that “executives become moral persons by expanding their awareness to include multiple stakeholder interests” and that

¹ Google posted survey to JEBNET MBA programs; nine respondents.

² AACSB, *Eligibility Procedures and Accreditation Standards for Business Accreditation*, Tampa, FL, January 2010, Standard 15, p. 71.

³ AACSB, *Eligibility Procedures*, p. 70.

⁴ AACSB Ethics Task Force, *Ethics Education in Business Schools*, 2004, p. 9.

“Students are encouraged to consider multiple stakeholders and to assess and evaluate *using different lenses and perspectives*” [emphasis added].⁵

According to Rakesh Khurana of Harvard University, concerns about the role of business management and organizations in society were central to the very founding of university business education and the decision to link this education to liberal arts universities (along with other new professions at the time, such as medicine and law) was made purposefully to align this new academic field of management with “broader social aspirations and the public’s interest.”⁶ He claims that the academics and managers who founded the first business schools saw a need for creating a managerial class that would “run America’s large corporations in a way that served the broader interests of society rather than the narrowly defined ones of capital or labor.”⁷ At the time, educating managers was importantly viewed as “a matter of socializing individuals into a particular conception of themselves, of the peer groups to which they belong, and even of the meaning of their ‘higher’ education itself, thus helping to develop informed, reflective, integrated individuals fully able to engage with ultimate questions about the meaning and purpose of their lives and work.”⁸ However, while the mission of university business education originally may have centered on the professionalization of business management, Khurana claims that schools diverged from this focus after World War II. With regard to the way values and ethics are typically addressed in business schools today, Khurana is pessimistic. He laments that intelligent MBA students may not get much out of the required ethics course or even ethics across the curriculum because the subject cannot be reduced to equations (considered valuable in the “hard” subjects) and so can be easily

⁵ AACSB, *Ethics Education*, p. 11-12.

⁶ Rakesh Khurana, *From Higher Aims, to Hired Hands: The Social Transformation of American Business Schools and the Unfulfilled Promise of Management as a Profession*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007, p. 10-11.

⁷ Khurana, *From Higher Aims*, p.4.

⁸ Khurana, *From Higher Aims*, p. 366.

blown off. “It’s not like there’s a formula that you absolutely have to learn.”⁹ Similar concerns about the difficulty of preparing students in ways that will encourage the internalization of a professional, values-based approach to management have been expressed by others.¹⁰

Critical Management Studies: Constructivist vs. Positivist Approaches to Organization Theory

In line with Khurana, Starkey and Tempest worry that the business school community may have lost the ability to think critically about what they do, adding that “Critical reflection is a key characteristic of a good decision science and should form the foundation of the business school of the future.”¹¹ Natale and Sora note that business schools have adopted a pseudo-scientific model to attain respectability. This conveys a sense of assurance or certainty that business management can be learned and applied like a scientific formula—a “physics envy” approach to humans in organizations that removes any sense of judgment, discernment, or value-based decision making.¹² These authors also argue that we need to reconfigure the curriculum in a way that enables students to address the underlying reasons for their decision making so that “profit making” is seen as neither a necessary nor a sufficient basis for an action in the global environment. Jeremy Rifkin, a senior lecturer in the Wharton School’s executive education program, also suggests that it may be time “to ask the question of whether simply becoming economically productive ought to be the primary mission of American education.”¹³

⁹ Khurana, *From Higher Aims*, p.365.

¹⁰ See for example Samuel M. Natale and Sebastian A. Sora, “Exceeding Our Grasp: Curricular Change and the Challenge to the Assumptive World, *Journal of Business Ethics*, Spring 2009, p. 79

¹¹ Ken Starkey and Sue Tempest, “The Winter of Our Discontent: The Design Challenge for Business Schools,” *academy of Management Learning & Education Journal*, 2009 (V8, N4), p. 575.

¹² Natale and Sora, “Exceeding Our Grasp”, p. 80.

¹³ Jeremy Rifkin, “Empathetic Education: The Transformation of Learning in an Interconnected World,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 4, 2010, p. A30-A31.

The AACSB white paper on ethics education suggests several possible approaches to inculcating better discernment in managerial thinking. One approach, referred to as the “consequentialist” approach, requires students to analyze a decision in terms of the harms and benefits to multiple stakeholders in order to arrive at a choice that produces the greatest good for the greatest number: “Students are encouraged to consider multiple stakeholders and to assess and evaluate using ***different lenses and enlarged perspectives***” [emphasis added].¹⁴

Consistent with this call, Critical Management Studies (CMS) emphasizes looking at management and organization theory from the perspectives of a wide variety of groups impacted by business managers and the educators who instruct them. This multi-stakeholder emphasis derives naturally from the origins of CMS, which initially developed outside the United States, largely in European and Australian business schools,¹⁵ out of the efforts of academics from several, predominantly non-business, disciplines (e.g., sociology, psychology, history, philosophy, and other social sciences).¹⁶ Given its non-business and non-US foundations, it is not hard to understand why CMS raises serious questions about the “science” and perspectives underlying traditional, mostly US, theories and why writings in this field encourage the reader to view management from the perspectives (referred to as “lenses”) of non-managers (as well as of those doing the managing) and of the many other groups, outside of business, that are impacted by organizations.¹⁷ CMS takes aim at both the positivist view, a “scientific” approach taken by most

¹⁴ AACSB, *Ethics Education*, p. 12.

¹⁵ Given this background it is not hard to understand why the Critical Management Studies Division of the Academy of Management boasts the largest international membership of any division.

¹⁶ I might note here that the author’s background includes an undergraduate degree in history and geography and a proclivity to study non-business organizations (including pro-bono consulting with a Roman Catholic Archdiocese and a major military command). Given my significant non-business interests and experience, it should not be surprising that CMS would be more intriguing to me than other, perhaps more business oriented, management academics.

¹⁷ Other CT writers today come from perspectives that include feminism, ecological philosophies, queer theory, and radical democratic theory, continuing to add to the perspectives from which organizations and traditional

traditional management theories, and at the management-focused perspective that these models generally assume. As a field of study CMS does, therefore, directly target the concerns, expressed by the AACSB white paper and by the critics of management education referenced earlier, regarding the scientific, single-perspective focus of much of management education today.

One important CMS scholar, Chris Grey of the Warwick Business School, notes that much of management and organization theory treats organizations solely from the point of view of how to manage businesses better. He says that “when organizations are simply thought about in terms of ‘getting the job done’, it cuts out so much that matters – who says what the job is, who says how it should be done and how are people affected by getting it done this rather than that way?”¹⁸ “Positivists,” who see managing organizations as more of a science, believe that there is an objective organizational reality that exists independent of organization theory. The organizational world can, therefore, be “known” and understood objectively, as can the physical world. Grey, however, places himself instead in the “interpretivist” or “constructivist” camp of those who, disagreeing with the positivists, do not believe that organizational reality has an objective existence but, rather, is constructed or enacted by people in organizations and by those who study and try to define and interpret them (i.e., management scholars and organizational theorists).¹⁹ An immediate consequence of this perspective is that any interpretation of management becomes by nature subjective and, therefore, is to be questioned. Before we act on any particular interpretation of the organizational world we should want to know what perceptions, and, therefore, perceptual biases underlie the interpretation: Who are the authors of the model you are considering and what is their background?

management theory can be viewed and also potentially adding to the interest—if not controversy—of classroom discussion.

¹⁸ Chris Grey, *A Very Short, Fairly Interesting and Reasonably Cheap Book About Studying Organizations*, London: Sage Publications, 2009 (2nd ed.), p.3.

¹⁹ Grey, p. 6.

For whom are/were they researching and writing? Who is left out of the analysis? What political and societal influences were at work in the nation and the academy at the time of the theory's development? The fact that business schools were initially founded by industrialists and that they depend on the businesses and other organizations that they study and teach about needs to be considered in interpreting any model of how to manage that is developed by academics in those schools.²⁰ Ultimately Grey also leads us to question traditional organization studies on the basis of their assumed, underlying goal of improving organizational efficiency. The key question he says—which flows naturally from both an interpretivist view of organization theory and from the need to look at the organization through the lenses of different perspectives—is “*efficiency for whom?*”²¹ Taking this view of the analysis of management problems—and specifically incorporating the skeptical, “multi-lense” approach of CMS to business issues and cases in class discussions and exercises—naturally moves students toward including stakeholder and values issues as a central part of business analysis and decision-making/implementation.

Critical Management Studies in a Course in Organizational Theory and Design

As a management professor I pretty much stumbled across CMS without knowing it (and over a period of about three years) when looking for materials to use in a (at the time) new course in our Professional MBA (PMBA) program. When asked to develop a course in organizational theory and design for our January 2007 Intersession, I was pleased to learn that Gareth Morgan had updated his *Images of*

²⁰ An interesting CMS presentation on the foundations of Organization Theory as an area of study, which outlines roles for the Ford Foundation, McCarthyism, Cold-War Politics, post WWII operations research, and other factors, is presented in Mark Tadajewski, “The Politics of the Behavioral Revolution in Organizational Studies,” *Organization*, (16:5) 733-754.

²¹ Grey, p. 155.

*Organization*²² book, which studies organizations and their impacts from several different perspectives using the concepts of metaphor and paradox. I had used his original edition of the book several years earlier as a supplement to a more traditional text for a graduate course (that at the time included Ph.D. students, which allowed for a somewhat more theoretical bent). Now, faced with a need to keep students, who were in class three to four nights a week after full days at the office, engaged in a typically dry subject (at least from the perspective of non-management majors), I was relieved to find that Morgan's interesting treatment of organizational studies was once again available.

Over the first three intersession offerings of this course (January 2007, 2008, and 2009) I used Morgan, supplemented with articles primarily from practitioner-oriented publications (*Forbes*, *Business Week*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Harvard Business Review*, etc.) along with case problems that could be used to demonstrate the practical application of Morgan's model as he describes it in his Chapter 11.²³ The treatment of the subject was very different from anything the students had been exposed to in their other management courses or in training/management development sessions for their jobs.

Whether or not one considers Morgan to fit under CMS, his review of organizations across his eight metaphors—what CMS scholars might call lenses, forces the reader to think about organizations from perspectives that go well beyond profit and efficiency and, under several of his metaphors, to consider specifically non-management views (particularly in chapters with titles such as “Organizations as Psychic Prisons” and “Organizations as Instruments of Domination”). Students regularly became less comfortable with the book as we moved into the later chapters with metaphors further and further

²² Gareth Morgan, *Images of Organization*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2006.

²³ Morgan, p. 345-362.

removed from the more traditional mechanistic and organistic models of classic theory (which is where the book starts) but, in combination with the more practical or applied supplemental reading and cases, seemed to appreciate the value of looking at organizations from even very different and sometimes uncomfortable lenses. I also found, after my first offering of the class, that spending about two class periods at the beginning of the term discussing the concepts of theory in general and of metaphors in particular and of their value to making better informed choices—and in doing exercises that helped students see how metaphors could be used to interpret organizational “realities”²⁴—was important to student acceptance of the concept as of practical value and, therefore, to the ultimate success of the class. Morgan’s treatment very naturally draws the student into perspectives beyond that of management and his emphasis on “paradox”—the struggles of opposites with an understanding that “both sides may embrace equally desirable states”²⁵—also helps move analysis away from the often easy answers of more traditional models. He also emphasizes that we all have developed our own metaphors—or ways of interpreting the world—which are, importantly, both a way of seeing and a way of not seeing, very clearly a constructivist perspective. Primary goals of the course, as it evolved over those three terms, came to emphasize that students “understand the traditional assumptions that underlie and help us construct our personal perceptions of organizations” and that they “understand the many roles organizations play in society in general and relative to individuals who must exist both inside and outside various organizations” (see Appendix A). The overall focus of the course was, therefore, on improving managerial decisions about organization design in large part through attention to one’s own underlying assumptions about organizations and to other perspectives, in addition to those typically taken by the traditional management models with which the student is most familiar.

²⁴ Morgan has used metaphors for business consulting and instructor materials provide useful guidance on how this can be replicated in the classroom.

²⁵ Morgan, p. 281-3.

Then Came the Internet...

As the January 2010 intersession approached we decided to try offering this course in “blended format”—most of the material still covered in the classroom but now with a significant portion (35-40%) through on-line methods. Coincidentally, the copyright on Morgan’s book, 2006, was becoming too old to, in my opinion, allow its use for another term. Looking for a new text to replace Morgan that would have the potential to become a catalyst for discussion in a partially on-line format, I came across the most recent edition of Chris Grey’s book—and, “formally,” was introduced to CMS.

The initial appeal of Grey’s book to me was, as Grey himself states, in the use of “...the less conventional approach to organization theory [that] tells us something different. It tells us about the complexity of organizations, a complexity that makes them infinitely interesting...Most courses on organization try to suppress those complexities – that is why they are boring.”²⁶ This was a sentiment with which I readily identified.

With Morgan’s book I had already become comfortable with looking at organizations through different metaphors or lenses—one key aspect of CMS—and with conveying the concept to professional students. Grey’s book discusses the concept of lenses in a number of places but it really focuses much more on another key aspect of CMS, re-interpreting traditional, positivist theories from a critical, primarily constructivist, perspective. In other words, a significant effort is made to consider the context in which earlier models were developed with attention to political, social, cultural, and other influences on the authors and institutions within which they studied and wrote. As I previewed the book I found this

²⁶ Grey, p. 166-7.

approach got my attention and drew me along. I had no doubt that it would offer the students a view of management and theory that might spur discussion, both on-line and in class. But I was also concerned that the author's narrative might very well put off the business professionals that largely populate our PMBA classes. As I anticipated, and would later confirm in discussions with students in the class, Grey's consistent questioning of management models came to be viewed, by many the students/managers taking the course, as negativity about management as a profession. As I moved further into my review of Grey's book I also began to explore CMS in other sources, which did not offer much reassurance in this regard.

For example, an article by Fournier and Grey discusses debates by CMS authors over such issues as Post-Structuralist vs. Neo-Marxist positions and spends much time in a discussion as to whether CMS does, *or even should have*, practical application.²⁷ The article also notes that "CMS, or just the term critical, is increasingly being invoked as a kind of new approach to management studies and is being utilized with little regard for the complexities or intentions of its theoretical underpinnings."²⁸ In a commentary in the *Academy of Management Journal* Dov Eden, a former editor of the journal, suggests that the CMS "agenda is as much, if not more, politically driven than scientifically motivated"²⁹ and suggests an absence of theoretically driven, methodologically sound, critical management research.³⁰ At the same time, he acknowledges the need for the Academy to place some of its focus on the inequities arising from organizations and implies that CMS could have an important role to play in this regard.³¹

²⁷ Valerie Fournier and Chris Grey, "At the critical moment: Conditions and prospects for critical management studies," *Human Relations*, 53: 1, (January 2000), p. 7-32.

²⁸ Fournier and Grey, p. 25.

²⁹ Dov Eden, "Critical Management Studies and the 'Academy of Management Journal': Challenge and Counterchallenge," *Academy of Management Journal*, 46: 4, p. 391.

³⁰ Eden, p. 393.

³¹ Eden, p. 392.

While such debates and concerns did not give me much comfort about the practicality of CMS as a context for teaching an MBA class (a phrase that would probably get me into significant trouble with some CMS purists), I remained intrigued by the critical approach, decided to adopt Grey's book, and try my best to convey the value of questioning one's assumptions and perspectives to becoming more effective as a manager.

Grey's book can probably be divided into three major sections in terms of professional students' reactions to the material. In the introductory and concluding chapters Grey lays out his definitions and discusses why he thinks management and organization theory are important and interesting. I noted earlier that I spent up to two periods setting the context for theory and metaphor when teaching with Morgan's book. When using Grey's book I moved coverage of his chapter on the "Myth of Management Education" (Chapter 6) to the early class sessions and used other non-business readings to, in conjunction with in-class discussions, provide the same kind of early context for the approach, in order to prepare the students to think differently about studying organizations (please see Appendix B and Appendix C for the course schedules from January 2009 and January 2010 respectively). Unfortunately, many students honed in on Grey's negative view of current management education in this chapter so, in the future, I will probably keep this chapter toward the end.

Chapters one and two, on Bureaucracy and Scientific Management and on Human Relations Theory respectively, raise concerns about the development and use of these models to produce efficient organizations that enable more powerful interests (owners and managers) to take advantage of less

powerful players (workers and, in some cases, the public). The students seemed ok with the perspective to this point and had almost certainly heard criticisms of classical theories in previous management courses that are not far different from Grey's. But they began to struggle a bit more when they got into the chapters on organizational culture, change management, and "fast capitalism/the end of management."

In the unit on culture Grey suggests that organizational cultures, rather than being truly shared values that are enlisted for a common cause, are most often the manipulated result of efforts of a few managers in the hierarchy which are still really only designed to improve efficiency and output—i.e., the same "power elite" goals as those of the classical models. Worse, culture is, essentially, compared to brainwashing in the interest of company goals!³² Grey also questions the concept of empowerment, arguing that "empowerment in organizations has the curious feature that it is only allowed if it is exercised in ways beneficial to the organization."³³ I think the students were less comfortable with these critical perspectives on culture and empowerment primarily because now the text was going after things that they had recently been taught as current, enlightened approaches to managing people and building real consensus. Concepts such as democratic decision-making styles, achieving consensus, effective communication, and all that goes with them, are the humanistic approaches to people and organizations of consultants and management development experiences. If these can be condemned with relative ease and with the same kinds of charges as can the older theories, then what is left of management? *What are the practical lessons for managers?*

³² Grey, p. 83.

³³ Grey, p. 76.

In the chapter on change Grey questions common notions that environmental change is rapid, increasing, and the most important factor in managing organizations (questions he repeats with respect to society in general). In the chapter on “fast capitalism” he takes his questions about notions of change a step further, raising doubts about the restructuring of Western economies toward “the immediate satisfaction of consumer desires,” the proliferation of confusing choices, and the movement of society in general and organizations in particular away from stable career structures.³⁴ He also notes the proliferation of debt and growth in financial businesses along with the depreciation of “management” as a profession³⁵ (please note Grey’s book with these concerns was written prior to the start of the recent banking crisis). Working through these three chapters is tricky and the instructor has to be careful not to appear to be a Luddite amongst students who live on the internet and anticipate many career changes in their lifetimes. By this point in the course some students are also wondering as to whether or not Grey even likes business and why he would choose to work in a business school. At one point Grey, appearing to recognize the likely discomfort of the reader with all of his skepticism, inserts a section sub-titled “Why are you always carping?” in which he states that:

If you have followed the argument so far but are unpersuaded by it, then you may well be thinking something along these lines: will nothing ever satisfy you? Older approaches to organizations have been condemned as dehumanizing and degrading. Human relations-type approaches are manipulative. Culture management is brainwashing. Now we have non-hierarchical, personally focused and trust-based organizations and you are still whining. Your sort make me sick.³⁶

However, the fact of the recent financial crisis, given Grey’s “predictions”, also lends some real creditability to many of Grey’s concerns in the midst of what might otherwise appear to simply be a negative, anti-management tirade. And by this time in the book and class many good and important questions have also clearly been raised about ethics, most specifically with respect to the impact of

³⁴ Grey, p. 119, 120, 122.

³⁵ Grey, p. 118, 122-27.

³⁶ Grey, p. 89-90.

management actions on various stakeholders, particularly workers and consumers, and society in general (e.g., the development of a need/expectation for immediate satisfaction of material desires). Drawing upon Morgan's metaphors at this point helps the students to put a more positive spin on what they derive from Grey by couching Grey's concerns in the context of the impacts of management decisions on different stakeholders and of the real value of considering these perspectives for contributing to more informed and, therefore, hopefully more effective decision-making and implementation. As in the course when based on Morgan's text, I continued my approach of pairing readings from the text (now Grey) with readings taken heavily from business outlets (and with some excerpts from Morgan's text too). In doing this I particularly sought articles such as "Smashing the Clock"³⁷ from *Business Week* and "Move Over CEO"³⁸ from the *Wall Street Journal* that focused on the changing nature of business and management and on what we faddishly refer to as "out-of-the-box thinking." While CMS scholars, and certainly Grey among them, focus on moving beyond the efficiency paradigm of traditional management and on viewing decisions from the perspectives of different stakeholders, these other readings, by contrast, focus on innovative approaches to environmental change and uncertainty that consider other stakeholders and changing environments, but from a more traditional perspective that does not entirely abandon the efficiency paradigm. Re-evaluating business cases using, in part, a critical perspective, and particularly by using different lenses to identify the often unconscious biases and concerns/fears that managers and members of other groups possess that can impede the implementation of a management decision, helps students to find the practical value in approaching management from the critical perspective.³⁹ While many students commented somewhat

³⁷ Michelle Conlin, "Smashing the Clock," *BusinessWeek online*, http://www.businessweek.com/print/magazine/content/06_50/b4013001.htm?chan=gl, December 4, 2006.

³⁸ Philip Tulumieri and Moshe Banai, "Move Over, CEO: The Time is Right for the Chief Financial Officer to be a Co-Leader", *WSJ.com*, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204830304574133442382113808.html>, August 18, 2009.

³⁹ One interesting case which I will use in the future is that of the transition of the Pančevo Brewery in Serbia from Socialist to market production as discussed in Graham Hollinshead and Mairi Maclean, "Transition and

negatively on the book itself⁴⁰, most also noted that they learned new perspectives that encouraged them to think differently about management—and a few even said they appreciated the “thought provoking” questioning of traditional models by Grey, noting that it encouraged really good discussion.

Conclusion

As Jesuit Business Schools we seek to distinguish ourselves by preparing students to be leaders and managers of conscience (at Saint Louis University one of the ways we project this is by saying that we prepare “Women and Men for Others”). Jesuit schools apparently all require at least one core course in ethics and/or social responsibility in their MBA programs but, if my very informal survey provides anything close to an accurate indication, we do not really do very much more than this. Ethics throughout the curriculum, where it even exists in anything but name only, is generally a poorly defined concept and, if Khurana is to be believed, can easily be “blown off” by sharp MBA students who are focused on “practical, applied” (read “quantitative”) skills.⁴¹ It is, therefore, critical that we get values issues in front of our students in ways that have a lasting impact and exhibit inherent value to specific functional fields if we are to be true to our missions and place values education at the center of what we do.

In the field of management and organization theory, CMS has been used in an MBA class with some success in this regard. While students who are practicing professionals will be skeptical about the

organizational dissonance in Serbia,” *Human Relations*, 60: 10 (2007), p. 1551-1574. The research describes circumstances in which managers, who have adapted to Western styles, appear to be completely unaware of worker perspectives that are seriously reducing the value of organizational changes.

⁴⁰ In the Course/Instructor Evaluations.

⁴¹ Khurana, p. 365.

theoretical and generally negative tone that CMS often carries, and while some CMS purists may argue that using this work to train managers is misguided, it most certainly brings values, ethics, and social responsibility issues to the center of management decision-making and to the study of organizations and organization theory. If properly introduced and taught in combination with readings from practitioner sources, students will—even if a bit grudgingly—see the value of second guessing their own perspectives, thus helping them to become more “informed, reflective, integrated individuals fully able to engage with ultimate questions about the meaning and purpose of their lives and work.”⁴²

The instructor of a course based in CMS, however, needs to provide the balance with “practical” management. I know I will probably never feel that I’ve got it exactly where I want it. In my next offering of the course I will plan to put more in-class emphasis on the practitioner readings than I have in the past and use additional case studies, both as real examples and as exercises, to demonstrate the utility of this approach. I will use Grey’s book in the fifth offering of this course (in August 2010) as I believe it provides a very good, succinct overview of the critical perspective in the field of management and organization theory. If, however, I cannot achieve the desired balance while using a source such as this I will probably then move toward an all readings course in future offerings in order to remove the text as a target of negative feelings regarding the presentation CMS.⁴³ I am, nevertheless, convinced of the utility of the critical approach to bringing a values orientation into management courses—at least for non-core/elective classes—and expect it will be an important component of my courses in the future. In over 28 years of teaching in the field I have never had better classroom interaction than in this most recent offering using a consciously critical perspective.

⁴² Khurana, *From Higher Aims*, p. 366.

⁴³ Using a single text for such a large portion of course material, if it does draw negative attention, can color the entire offering of the course.

As I noted earlier, I am not an expert in CMS and only recently stumbled across it in searching for a more interesting treatment of my subject. Given this, I certainly cannot venture to offer advice on the use—or even existence of—critical theory in other business functions. In my readings in the subject I have, however, come across references to CT in Accounting and Information Management. Given my experience, I do believe there is value to exploring the use of critical theory as one vehicle to incorporate ethics and values issues into the core of the MBA curriculum. This may even provide a vehicle for truly incorporating “ethics across the curriculum.”

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APPENDIX A: MGTB-613 ORGANIZATION THEORY & DESIGN COURSE GOALS

The over arching goal of this course is to encourage students to consider modern organizations from multiple perspectives, combining critical theory with current applied/professional writings in an effort to better appreciate both the complexity of organizations and the complexities those organizations must face. While the result of such study will not be the development of simple or neat models for managing businesses and other organizations, it is hoped that it will lead to a more robust approach on your part to analyzing the situations that you will face in your professional life within organizations. The perspective of the course will primarily be to look at organizations as a whole (as opposed to focusing primarily on their component parts) although it is impossible to neatly divide the "macro" from the "micro"

By the end of the course students should:

- Understand the traditional assumptions that underlie and help us construct our personal perceptions of organizations ("constructions")
- Understand the many roles organizations play in society in general and relative to individuals who must exist both inside and outside various organizations
- Learn new approaches to thinking about organizations, their challenges and opportunities
- Be able to create new ways of approaching organizational analysis and appreciate their utility to organizational change and renewal

APPENDIX B: JANUARY 2009 COURSE SCHEDULE

MGTB-613: ORGANIZATION THEORY AND DESIGN

Course Schedule:

Date	Topic	Text Reading	Other Reading
Mon, Jan 5	Course Introduction		-Handouts
Tues, Jan 6	Using Metaphor	Chs 1 & 10	-MD: "Speaking About...Education" -HBR: "The Five Minds..."
Wed, Jan 7	Rational Models: Organizations as Machines ➤ Start Christina Gold Case in class		-BW: "Cog or Co-Worker?" -Ivey Case: Christina Gold
Thurs, Jan 8	Continue/Conclude Rational and start Organic Models ➤ Continue Gold Case	Ch 2	-CHE: "Digital Wisdom of Sennett" -COT 33: "Differentiation and Integration" -BW: "Southwest: 'No More Cattle Calls'"
Mon, Jan 12	Continue: Organic Models: Organizations as Organisms	Ch 3	-COT 27: "From Bureaucracies to Networks" -BW: "The Empire Strikes at Silos"
Tues, Jan 13	Organizations as Brains ➤ Discuss Christina Gold Case in class	Ch 4	-HBR: "Swarm Intelligence"
Wed, Jan 14	Organizations as Cultures	Ch 5	-WSJ: "Managers...Close Culture Gaps" -WSJ: "New CEOs May Spur

Date	Topic	Text Reading	Other Reading
			Resistance..."
Thurs, Jan 15	Organizations as Political Systems	Ch 6	-COT 90: "The Fortress Insurance Company" -CT: "Dealing With Bad Boss..." -WSJ: "How Office Tyrants..."
Mon, Jan 19	No Class – MLK Day		
Tues, Jan 20	Organizations as Psychic Prisons	Ch 7	-BW: "Smashing the Clock"
Wed, Jan 21	Organization as Flux & Transformation ➤ Start Christina Gold Case "Reprise" in class	Ch 8 Ch 11	-HBR: "The Quest for Resilience" -KW: "Why an Economic Crisis..." -BW: "A Guide for Multinationals" -Ivey Case: Christina Gold
Thurs, Jan 22	Conclude Flux & Transformation, Start Organizations as Instruments of Domination Shaping Organizational Life	Ch 9	-BW: "Hospitals X-Ray Patient Credit Scores" -BW: "Report Raises Alarm Over 'Superweeds'" -CT: "30 Nation Study Shows Income Inequality..."
Mon, Jan 26	Finish Organizations as Instruments of Domination ➤ Discuss Christina Gold "Reprise" Case in class		
Wed, Jan 28	Course Review		

APPENDIX C: JANUARY 2010 COURSE SCHEDULE

MGTB-613: ORGANIZATION THEORY AND DESIGN

Course Schedule: Un-shaded sessions will be in the classroom (“on-ground”). Shaded sessions will be on-line.

Date	Topic	Text Reading	Other Reading
Mon., Jan 4	Introduction to Course	Introduction	-IOO: Ch 1 <i>Introduction</i> (pp. 3-6) -BW: <i>Management as a Liberal /art</i> -CHE: <i>My Meeting With Mephistopheles</i>
Tue., Jan 5	Shortcomings of Management Education	Ch 6	-IOO: <i>Plato’s Cave</i> (pp. 207-8) -HBR: <i>The Five Minds of the Manager</i>
Thur., Jan 7 Mon., Jan 11	Bureaucracy & Scientific Management	Ch 1	-IOO: <i>Mechanization Takes Command</i> (pp. 11-18) -BW: <i>Cog or Co-worker?</i>
Tue., Jan 12 Wed., Jan 13	Human Relations	Ch 2	-IOO: <i>Nature Intervenes: Organisms</i> (pp. 33-8) -BW: <i>Smashing the Clock</i> -AOMP: <i>High-Involvement Work Practices: Are They Really Worth It?</i>
Thur., Jan 14	Organizational Culture	Ch 3	-WSJ: <i>Managers Find Ways to Get Generations to Close Culture Gaps</i> -WSJ: <i>New CEOs May Spur</i>

			<i>Resistance</i> - <i>FOR: How to Build Great Leaders</i> - <i>WSJ: Detroit Diplomacy</i>
Tues., Jan 19 Wed., Jan 20	Post Bureaucracy: Flexibility & Change	Ch 4	- <i>IOO: The Importance of Environment</i> (pp. 38-49) - <i>WSJ: Lencioni: The Last Competitive Advantage...</i> - <i>WSJ: Move Over, CEO</i>
Thurs., Jan 21 Mon., Jan 25	Fast Capitalism	Ch 5	- <i>BW: The Best Leadership is Good Management</i> - <i>WSJ: Too Big to Fail</i> - <i>CHE: What's an MBA Worth...Happiness?</i> - <i>WSJ: Not so Fast</i>
Tues., Jan 26	Conclusions & Review	Conclusion	- <i>WSJ: Bogus Theories, Bad for Business</i> - <i>WSJ: What Managers Really Do</i>
Thurs., Jan 28	Final Q & A FINAL EXAM		