An exploration of Barnett's analysis of the 'ecological' university (2011) and the potential contribution of arts-based pedagogy and knowledge

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Abstract

This paper complements a workshop at the Art of Management 2016 conference which was designed to encourage the participants to explore their own felt experience as academics and practitioners engaged in arts-based practices in university and other organisational contexts. It explores historical, cultural, strategic and pedagogical themes related to the nature of knowledge within and beyond the universities and business schools, with particular reference to Barnett's (2011) analysis of different forms of *Being a University*. I conclude by positioning the current arts-in-management debate (eg Darsø, 2004; Adler, 2006, 2010, 2015; Bartunek and Carboni, 2006; Kaiser and Kaplan, 2006; Tung, 2006; Gallos, 2008; Barry, 2008; Taylor and Ladkin, 2009; Colby *et al.,* 2011; Schiuma, 2011; Sutherland, 2013) within the context of Barnett's analysis, finding that the arts-in-management movement aligns closely to Barnett's definition of the feasible utopia of an 'ecological' university which engages with the world and aims to make a difference through the nature and depth of its research and teaching, and by accommodating the insights of staff with multiple academic identities.

Introduction

This paper was informed by a pedagogical research project related to a module entitled 'Creativity and the Creative Industries', part of an interdisciplinary Masters in Innovation, Creativity and Leadership. To summarise, my emerging conclusions from that study include that experiential, workshop-based encounters with the arts led by expert practitioners and arts-based assignments can offer management students these conditions and outcomes:

1) Presenting, embodied, imaginal experiences (Heron, 1992; Claxton, 2015)
2) A context within which the students encounter their own learning processes through reflection and personal/interpersonal narrative (Clarke, 2008; Darsø, 2004; James and Brookfield, 2014)
3) Invitations to identify, express and 'make' metaphors of personal and professional identity which both provide aesthetic distancing and act as transitional objects (Edwards, 2010; Winnicott, 1974; Pässilä and Vince, 2012)

4) Initiatives which demand a reflexive approach from educators and facilitators, whether within HE and in other organisational contexts (Brookfield, 2010; Fleming, 2012; Foucault, 1980)
5) Potentially powerful learning tools which can better equip students to address complex, 'VUCA' challenges, and which call for an extension of the curriculum of the traditional MBA (Adler, 2010, 2015; Bennett and Lemoine, 2014; Sutherland, 2013).

In this paper, I aimed to contribute to the growing arts-in-management literature by reviewing the place of arts-informed innovations within the broader higher education (HE) context and well as the current and potential business school. I conclude by briefly reviewing the implications of this discussion for the integration of arts-based pedagogy and research in management education.

Theoretical framing

To frame this discussion, I first review Barnett's (2011) analysis of the past and potential future 'being' and 'becoming' of the university as a cultural and anarchic entity and of the knowledge generated within universities. He identified four types of universities which, through both teaching and research, expressed different values and views of knowledge; and discussed aspects of all of them as 'feasible utopias', with both positive and negative aspects:

- The largely historical 'ivory tower' or 'metaphysical' university (which produced 'knowledge-for-itself'/'knowledge-in-itself')
- The 'professionalised', 'corporate' or 'bureaucratic' university (producing 'knowledge-for-itself'/'knowledge-in-the-world')
- The 'entrepreneurial' university (seeking to generate 'knowledge-in-the-world'/'knowledge-for-the-world')
- The 'developmental', 'therapeutic' or 'ecological' university (aiming to produce 'knowledge-in-the-world'/'knowledge-for-the-world') (Barnett, 2011, p.31).

Barnett argued that the modern university has evolved to be primarily a scientific institution, both in the nature of its research and teaching and in its mindsets and values. Its possibilities of the university appear to have become limited and constricted through the managerial and entrepreneurial demands on universities in their increasingly competitive global environment, characterised also by overwhelming complexity and the ever-increasingly volume of scholarly production. However, applying Heidegger's theorisations in *Being and Time* (1962), Barnett challenged this view to argue for the 'infinite' possibilities available to the contemporary university: their 'boundaries' were becoming more and more 'open to negotiation' (2011, p.13), demanding fundamental redefinitions at this 'existential moment for universities' (2011, p.14). Citing Maxwell (2008, pp.16–17), he called for a shift towards 'wisdom-inquiry' from 'knowledge-inquiry' (2011, p.66) which embraces and 'holds within itself' (Barnett, 2011, p.66) expressions of both dissensus and consensus within the university (Readings, 1996).

As part of his discussion, Barnett also explored how the concept of space might provide fruitful insights. Extending Lefebvre's focus on different types of space within universities, including 'pictural, musical or plastic spaces' (1991, p.91), Barnett saw these as fruitful aspects of universities' self-evaluation of their 'being' and potential for 'becoming':

1. 'Intellectual and discursive space'

2. ‘Epistemological space’
3. ‘Pedagogical and curricular space’
4. ‘Ontological space’ (Barnett, 2011, pp.76–7)

Though all of these are potentially relevant to the introduction of arts-based practices in management education, I found his definition of pedagogical and curricular space to be especially pertinent, including to question ‘just what spaces are to be granted to students such that they may strive authentically to become their own persons?’, and ‘what space do course teams have in which to initiate new kinds of course, free from ideological or discursive and even power-laden constraint (not dictated by frozen ideas of “skills” or “outcomes”)?’ (Barnett, 2011, p.77). He also questioned the implications of the increasingly ‘fluid ontological space’ in which the teaching team was likely to include practitioners, curriculum designers or managers who might not define themselves as ‘academics’, or could take on ‘several academic identities’, a situation which may offer ‘both peril *and* liberation’ (Barnett, 2011, p.77). This view of a ‘liquid university’ might seem to approach post-modern definitions of a ‘value-free’ university, open to the world (eg Smith and Webster, 1997), but Barnett cautioned that this would be ‘naïve’: ‘sheer liquid-ness is insufficient to warrant the title of “university”’ (Barnett, 2011, p.119). Instead, each university must define its own ethical stance while encouraging its students towards ‘a place of “authoritative uncertainty”’ (2011, p.124) where they could manage their uncertainties through reflective and artistic practices: ‘The student moves into a new place through a kind of *epistemological therapy*, achieved not least through the powers of their own critical self-reflection (encouraged through their programme of studies)’ (2011, p.125). As a feasible utopia, the university would then encourage its students to develop their own maturity through effective curriculum design and teaching; and so contribute to wider ‘*social therapy*’ through which local and even global, networked societies can develop ‘better informed’ narratives (2011, p.128) by ‘pedagogising’ the internet (2011, p.128). In Barnett’s conception, the ‘ecological’ university, with echoes of the metaphysical university, can embrace the ‘iconoclastic’ potential to influence society more broadly (2011, p.149), pursuing wisdom and ‘energised’ by both a ‘leap of faith’ and a commitment to the value of the knowledge it generates (2011, p.148), encompassing but extending scientific knowledge and sustained by an imaginative vision:

> ‘Valid forms of knowing themselves stretch out, and are potentially infinite. The poet, the ballet dancer, the midwife, the Eskimo and the mystic: all are recognised as having valid forms of knowledge.’ (Barnett, 2011, p.150)
>
> ‘The ecological university is none other than the fullest expression of the idea of the university. It is the fullest realisation of the university’s *being-possible* (to return to the Heideggarian expression…).’ (Barnett, 2011, p.151)

In my Conclusion below, I return to this review of Barnett’s theorising of the university to discuss its potential relevance to the arts in management research and teaching.

Higher education: the institutional context

This section reviews current debates related to both the history and current conditions of higher education, before considering the business school in the following section. This discussion is focused mainly on British and US experience, with some comparisons to historical and contemporary university practice in other parts of the world.

The sustainability of academic institutions' social and educational role, especially cross-curricular, research-excellent western institutions which aspire to emulate Harvard, was increasingly questioned from the 1980s onwards, and especially after the 2008 recession, by policy-makers, funding bodies, and even senior academics themselves (eg Bok, 2006; Khurana, 2007; Christensen and Eyring, 2011). The institution as it had evolved from the early 19th century was increasingly challenged to more closely reflect the needs of employers as reflected in students' learning outcomes from both undergraduate and postgraduate study. As just one example, 'employers' were mentioned 28 times as key stakeholders alongside 'students' and 'taxpayers' in the May 2016 White Paper *Success as a Knowledge Economy* which set out the rationale to introduce a Teaching Excellence Framework audit to be linked to undergraduate recruitment without fee caps (Department for Business Innovation & Skills, 2016).

Such 'vocationalism' (Land, 2015) was a big step away from the historical traditions of the scholarly pursuit and sharing knowledge for its own, purportedly 'value-free' ends. Humboldt is credited as a founding father of the modern academy with his 1810 definition of the aims of the university in Berlin (now named after him) which provided a humanist education beyond the religious and classical education of older establishments. The beginning of the 20th century saw this model adopted more broadly in Europe and the US, though with a rigid emphasis on educating an elite limited by class and gender, being educated to serve the needs of government, empire and church, with a reluctant acceptance of the need to educate medics alongside 'gentlemen' who did not need to earn their living (Baron, 2005; Dyhouse, 1995; Endersby, 2008; Schwartz, 2011). From the 1960s onwards, the current strategic environment of higher education became established, with a populist expansion of provision first in the US then globally. By all measures, higher education is a global success story in its increasing reach, with enrolments in the year 2000 in some developing countries approaching 80 per cent (Schofer and Meyer, 2005, citing UNESCO, 2004).

The model of a research intensive university which delivers a recognised, consistent curriculum worldwide has proven to be highly resilient and consistent, reproduced through the development and promotion of individuals with similar skills who excelled in their achievements within the current system (Christensen and Eyring, 2011). Many shared conditions which transcend local variations can be seen in the strategic conditions within which universities currently operate, including:

- greatly expanded student demand and provision since the Second World War, with up to 20% of the eligible global population estimated to be able access to HE in the year 2000 (Schofer and Meyer, 2005), though still with limited opportunities in many developing economies
- increasing standardisation in the global curriculum with the increasing dominance of American HE practices including standardised tests as selection processes, modular programme designs, and the use of Grade Point Averages as granular tools to assess individual student outcomes (eg Department for Business Innovation & Skills, 2016, p.47)
- the rising cost of HE for students in most countries, with some associated student loan arrangements
- growing expectations of a direct relationship between HE study and employability, with governmental and intergovernmental policies emphasising on STEM and IT subjects over the human and social sciences: as an indication of the current emphasis on STEM subjects in UK government policy, business and management research funding declined by nearly 8.5%

between 2010–11 and 2013–14 to just below £64 million, while funding for mathematics increased by 24%, and both civil engineering and IT, systems science and computer software by about 15.5% (Association of Business Schools, 2016, p.9) – a policy shift which was also designed to encourage prospective students to reverse the continuing decline in IT student numbers (Universities UK, 2014, Table 4; Universities UK, 2015)

- the introduction of quality assurance disciplines linked to the definition of increasingly granular learning outcomes and student satisfaction measures as undergraduate and postgraduate level
- the adoption of business disciplines in managing HE institutions themselves across the sector (Altbach *et al*., 2009; Association of Business Schools, 2014 and 2016).

Many debates over the nature of the knowledge taught by these institutions, its relevance to society and its impact on the students who complete university courses were initiated outside of the academy, some of them reflecting 'return-on-investment' arguments which were arguably themselves products of the curricula of business schools since the 1970s (Khurana, 2007; Ferraro *et al.*, 2005). Policy makers increasingly called for state-funded academics to cross their ingrained disciplinary silos and work together with practitioners to produce applied, interdisciplinary research, and share the fruits of such research in their teaching. Doing this successfully presented a major cultural challenge to academics whose research success and scholarly reputations depend on excellence within single disciplines and established definitions of research excellence, including in the award of a PhD (OECD, 1972; Blackwell *et al.*, 2009; McEwen *et al*., 2009). Though the effect for an academic of stepping outside their discipline has been likened to living as a foreigner in a new culture (Bauer 1990, p. 110), many research-excellent UK universities including Manchester and Southampton introduced cross-discipline module options along the lines of US undergraduate provision – raising the question of whether their students will or even should aspire to reconcile their learning across different disciplines (McEwan *et al.,* 2009; Blackwell *et al.*, 2009; Chettiparamb, 2007).

Interdisciplinary subject areas became increasingly important to universities with the expansion of applied, more vocational postgraduate education. As confirmed in the most recent HEFCE figures for England and Wales, postgraduate demand has remained strong despite increasing costs, with a 46% increase in total postgraduate numbers between 2002/03 and 2012/13, and in Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences programmes (including business and management) from 79,900 in 2002/03 to 121,030 in 2013-14 – an increase of 51%, representing 78% of the total postgraduate numbers, though with a decline from peak intakes in 2010/11 (165,155 in total, 127,125 in Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences). International students played a major role in sustaining such educational offerings, especially in the US, the UK and Australia; and increasing visa restrictions in England since 2010 have been another major strategic factor for the universities (Association of Business Schools, 2014). From the 1980s onwards, business schools became the main providers of applied postgraduate education, arguably even the 'cash cows' of the sector with the expansion and continuing dominance of the MBA (Starkey and Tiratsoo, 2007, p.8).

Though government funding had shifted so strongly to STEM subjects in the UK, student enrolments on 'business and administrative' programmes continued to grow: between 2004–5 and 2011–12, it was the largest category of choice for undergraduates and postgraduates, with an increase of nearly 16% to over 336,000 students (Universities UK, 2014, Table 4). These increases in the UK were to some extent at the expense of humanities courses, with the increase in business enrolments reflecting women's more vocational choices for their studies (Mandler, 2015).

The status of the university as the key provider of knowledge was also increasingly brought into question with the 'critical turn' from the late 1980s, with scholars across disciplines arguing that all knowledge must be acknowledged as uncertain, ambiguous and constructed in this 'post-normal' age, even knowledge about our 'selves' (Barnett, 1997; Bruner, 1991, 2002; Gergen, 2000). Applied and globally urgent debates such as the nature of climate change and appropriate responses to it (Millner, Dietz and Heal, 2013), meanwhile, showed that the same uncertainties encompassed scientific knowledge in an intellectual environment characterised by both complexity and the continuing uncertainties of quantum physics (eg Bohm, 1980). Contrary to the traditional modes of teaching in universities, these arguments suggested, universities could not offer secure, complete knowledge to their students, even within single disciplines; and must therefore engage them in that uncertainty and associated debates, and do so in terms which made sense to them in the context of the world around them (Land, 2015). And the urgency seemed to be accelerating: expert commentators such as Schwab (2016), for example, argued that the world itself had become characterised by such disruptive innovation that we were now in a 'Fourth Industrial Revolution', a robotic age which demanded increasingly sophisticated IT and design skills.

The universities' potential to contribute to 'life-long learning' for increasing numbers of students was widely heralded in 1990s, and enshrined in the 1999 Bologna Agreement, which established a European Qualifications Framework and aimed to introduce comparability, shared provision and transferability of university qualifications across Europe (European Higher Education Area, 2010). In this context, as also endorsed in the pending TEF legislation for English and Wales (Department for Business Innovation & Skills, 2016), to achieve programme accreditation by employer bodies became an increasing, audited priority for universities, at the same time as awarding bodies such as Creative Skillset suffered major funding reductions and the considerable costs of accreditation shifted to the relevant courses themselves – effectively creating a dual market where only large courses in rich institutions would be able to apply and achieve relevant 'kite marks', and where the university's role in the increasing emphasis on graduate apprenticeships was also as yet unclear (Department for Business Innovation & Skills, 2016). In this context of uncertainty and change, there was a growing need for educated adults to continue to learn and develop their skills, a need which can be seen as a major strategic opportunity for universities, especially in areas relating professional education such as business schools (Canals, 2011, p.26).

Since 2000, the research and pedagogical practices of most current universities have found themselves almost universally criticised and facing constant change. Policy makers, funding bodies and practitioner communities, especially in professional and IT contexts, called for universities to focus primarily on research and teaching which could be 'evidenced' in quantitative terms and applied directly to current practice (eg in the UK Browne *et al.*, 2010 and Department for Business Innovation & Skills, 2016); and those calls were linked directly to funding and establishing the legal frameworks within which universities functioned. These conditions were most sharply seen in the pressures on US State universities to give Creationist explanations equal weighting with evolutionary theory and to withdraw funding from research and teaching informed by critical scholarship; while the students as role as 'consumers' was institutionalised at national level in the UK, drawing on their feedback as a measure of staff management and even state funding for their programmes, schools and even institutions (eg Department for Business Innovation & Skills, 2011 and 2016).

From within the academy, meanwhile, many adult educators working in the critical tradition promoted reflective goals and practices with the specified aim of questioning such commercial and policy demands on higher education (eg Brookfield, 2015a, 2015b). Though both long-standing and more recent contributions to this debate emphasised the role of arguably unquantifiable educational practices in building and sustaining a just society and a democratically responsive, ethical citizenship (e.g. Dewey, 1916; Brookfield and Holst, 2011), its context become one of audits and measurement, linked directly to the state funding upon which public universities worldwide continued to rely. As Barnett (2011) pointed out, more innovative definitions of the university were to be found in the private sector, outside the debates within publicly funded institutions, but the majority of student and faculty experiences of HE were dictated by the public sphere.

Some commentators saw disruptive innovation as the biggest strategic challenge to the future model of universities as the main providers of graduate and postgraduate education. Christensen and Eyring (2011) especially highlighted the rise of online providers in the US, citing the rise in student numbers at the University of Phoenix to highlight the urgency of rethinking the sustainability of the generalist, expert research university. The more recent experience of such online providers, however, confirms the difficulties of learning online, and the continuing role of campuses, mentors and being part of a physical learning community: from a high of 460,000, journalists estimated the University of Phoenix's enrolment numbers to have fallen to 213,000 in 2014 (Jackson, 2015, citing Gillespie, 2015). This is not to ignore the promise of digital innovations within university teaching, or its increasing role in student management as well as pedagogy (Laurillard, 2012); but to position the role of interaction-enabled teaching within the broader context of students' experience of face-to-face teaching.

What *is* a university? That remains the fundamental question against which studies such as this must be seen. A recent statement by March, a highly respected business school dean, tellingly summarised the continuing need to remember the humanistic origins and function of the university as an institution, despite the financial and social demands with which it is assessed:

> '… learning is a manifestation of faith in what it means to be a human being…. It is a place where learning and scholarship are revered, not primarily for what they contribute to personal or social well-being, but for the vision of humanity they symbolize, sustain and pass on.' (March, 2003, p.206)

The business school

To establish the context within which the arts in management movement is located, in this section I focus more specifically on the current strategic conditions facing business schools.

Historical context

The history of the business schools in the 20th century reflected the predominance of US models of business, especially in the practices of global venture finance companies. There can be no doubt of the scale of teaching activity within global business schools: the established entry examination for postgraduate management studies, the GMAT, was required in 2014 by 5,700 programmes worldwide, including both MBAs and the smaller but growing market for more specialised Masters

(Schoenfeld, 2016, p.4). The aspirants are surveyed annually by the Graduate Management Admission Council, and their analysis for 2015 categorized their ambitions as 'Career enhancers' (34%), 'Career switchers' (38%) and 'Aspiring entrepreneurs' (28%, a growing category). Entry to the most prestigious business schools worldwide was highly selective and sought after – though there was evidence that once there the students are more concerned with networking to establish their future career prospects than attending classes. In Khurana's critical terms, such 'academic credentialling' defined the business school as more a 'gatekeeper rather than a transmitter of knowledge and values' (2007, p.352).

The status quo appeared to be changing rapidly from the start of the 21st century. European schools were credited with some of the most innovative current practices including partnerships, internationalisation, shared provision across the European region, and, more recently, pedagogical innovations including the arts (Barsoux, 2000; Fraguiero and Thomas, 2011; Thomas, 2012; Amdam *et al*., 2003). Canals concluded that European schools represented a 'European identity and style in management education' (2011, p.8), e.g. SKEMA in France, AALTO in Finland and Reading/Henley in the UK; and both IESE and ESADE in Barcelona, the first funded by Opus Dei in partnership with Wharton and Harvard, and the second supported by the Jesuits (Thomas *et al.*, 2013). INSEAD had been especially innovative, seeking to show themselves to be a 'business school for the world' by establishing a campus in Singapore and another in Abu Dhabi, and partnerships with Wharton (US), Tsinghua University (China) and Fundação Dom Cabral (Brazil), with funding from the governments of Singapore and the UAE (Thomas *et al*., 2013).

There were many other examples of innovative partnerships, including the TRIUM consortium (TRIUM, 2016) which was launched in 2002 as a joint Global Executive MBA taught by academics from New York University, Hautes Écoles Commerciales, Paris and the London School of Economics. The website of the Kellogg–HKUST Executive MBA (Kellogg–HKUST, 2016) celebrated its top rankings over several years, with a curriculum which combined modules from of the two institutions to appeal to executives in the fast-growing Asian marketplace.

Meanwhile, local business schools in South Asia and Asia had grown dramatically in number, reputation and student numbers (Brailsford, 2012), prompting commentators to warn that business schools as currently constituted in the developed economies will need to innovate to survive. Thomas *et al*. (2013, pp.106, 107 and 115) compiled telling statistics and projections for the sector, suggesting that by 2020, China's economy was projected to be the largest global economy, but would be overtaken by India in 2050; that India already had over 3,000 private management schools, and would be the biggest MBA-level global provider by 2020; and that the Indian Schools of Business were already working in partnership with business schools from across the world, including for active student exchange programmes, and took over 500 MBA students annually with one of the highest global GMAT averages. Thomas *et al*. (2013) also cited Scrimenti's (2010, p.7) estimate that China would need 75,000 additional English-speaking MBAs over the next decade, many of them likely to be drawn from Western business schools.

Thomas *et al.* also cited global demographics to support their argument for the need for business schools to reflect global trends, including meeting the distinct needs of older, more experienced students, providing shorter programmes, and finding ways to deliver quality programmes in the face of competition for expert academic staff as the business school sector grows globally (Thomas *et al.*, 2013, p.99).

The literature offered numerous examples of innovations within MBA teaching which could begin to meet these challenges. Datar, Garvin and Cullen (2010), for example, described an innovative creativity programme run for the CIA around data for Firefox downloads provided by Mozilla Corp. The project involved 'observation', 'brainstorming' and 'prototyping', all implementing an 'ideation' process to identify and test potential designs. They quoted one of the instructors' description of the programme as being akin to 'a traditional Beaux Arts class', with everyone involved generating and critiquing ideas and solutions as they developed, a process which they described as 'an iterative process that is characteristic of design thinking' (Datar *et al*., 2010, p.147). They concluded from this example that business schools could respond to current skills needs by embedding 'emergent discovery' within their curriculum. Their other examples included the Ross School's Multidisciplinary Action Projects, 'complex projects in ambiguous contexts that require students to identify problems, navigate organizational politics, and formulate multidisciplinary solutions' (2010, p.149); Harvard's Leadership and Corporate Accountability module which included a reflective analysis of project outcomes from both 'the shareholder maximization perspective and the multiple stakeholder perspective' (2010, p.160); and Stanford's Critical Analytical Thinking core module (one of 7) in a 2007 MBA revision, with a 'deep and tailored' second year (2010, p.303) – an exception to what they described as a general difficulty faced by US courses in providing an integrated, applied curriculum rather than a series of research modules (2010, p.323).

Despite these and other examples, many of the most creative innovations in the business school sector appeared to be emerging from private rather than publicly funded universities in the US, not least in their wholehearted exploitation of the opportunities of interactive learning. Not all such providers were private institutions: the Open University, Instituto de Empresa in Madrid, Henley's Open University Business School and the Warwick Business School had long-established reputations as providers of distance and blended learning MBAs, for example. The University of Phoenix's online MBA was however perhaps the most telling illustration of both the scale of student demand for flexible, global business school education and the difficulties of successfully managing large-scale, purely online programmes. The largest of the fully online MBA providers in the US or UK, they enrolled over 350,000 students in 2009, about 150,000 more than the ten campuses of the University of California (Christensen and Eyring, 2011, p.8). Their highest year of enrolment was estimated by Gillespie (2015) as 460,000 in 2013, with a reduction to 213,000 in 2014 (Gillespie, 2015). The cost of study clearly was clearly also a major issue for many of their American students: while 12% of American students were enrolled in courses with private, distant providers such as Phoenix in 2013, they accounted for more than half of that year's student loan defaults (Gillespie, 2015, citing US federal data). Meanwhile, the Phoenix example has been emulated in India's Manipal University's introduction of an online MBA alongside its high-ranked engineering courses – an initiative which has already attracted students from 57 different countries and looks set for impressive growth (University of Manipal, 2016).

Another initiative from a private provider might provide a model for business school innovation driven by an innovative approach to both the business curriculum and the management of academic staff. The Lorange Institute of Business Zurich was established by the former economist Peter Lorange (2005, 2010, 2012) in 2009 when he purchased GBSA Zurich. Its stated aims (Lorange

Institute of Business, 2016) were to provide an immediately relevant curriculum to executives, with modules delivered flexibly and repeatedly during the year, each ‘supervised by at least one faculty member who is a world leader in their field’ and supported by ‘a network of world class professors and experienced practitioners’, all with ‘many years of experience in training leaders’ (Lorange Institute of Business, 2016). As Lorange described the aims in Thomas *et al*. (2013, p.132), they included catering for the needs of executive students for flexible teaching provision with blocks of teaching to explore ‘living cases’ in conversation with business leaders, all taught by top-rated scholars and practitioners who would be employed as consultants rather than staff members – and who would be either world-class researchers or practitioners. Acknowledging also, perhaps, that the qualification itself would not be core of the appeal of his new institute, he introduced a staged qualification, with the award of an ‘Executive MSc’ through one of six strands, any of which could be converted to an accredited MBA with the completion of additional credits: ‘wealth management and management of financial institutions’; ‘high-value goods marketing (luxury goods)’; ‘shipping, with its emphasis on taking advantage of business cycles’; ‘human resources management’; ‘use of information technology and communications science to generate new business revenue’; and ‘sustainable strategies’ (Thomas *et al*., 2013, p.130).

Critiques of business schools

Since the 2001 Enron scandal, there had been a crescendo of critique of the business school, especially as represented by the behaviour and capabilities of MBA graduates from the top American business schools. As it was company policy at Enron to recruit top MBA graduates, the reputation of the MBA as a qualification was struck by ‘Enron-itis’: ‘what these recruits lacked was a broader perspective of the role of business’ (Starkey *et al.*, 2004, p.1526).

Pfeffer and Fong (2002) contributed to this debate by analysing innovative MBA-level syllabuses offered by small and private business schools, arguing that the major MBA providers had allowed their offerings to become both too distant from practice, and had positioned themselves within their universities as academic departments rather than professional schools. Given the many new, competitive entrants to the business school marketplace, they urged business schools to realign their curricula to reflect the needs of their potential students, and to generate research which reflected current business practices. Not to change might ‘pose a substantial and growing threat to their continued prosperity, if not to their very existence’ (Pfeffer and Fong, 2002, p.93).

Mintzberg’s (2004) widely quoted critique of the MBA defined management as a lived, craft experience which could not be conveyed in a classroom, and especially not through the study of cases; and challenged the efficacy of providing young postgraduates without management experience to learning experiences within a ‘distorted’ idea of management which had encouraged ‘two dysfunctional styles of practice: *calculating* (overly analytical) and *heroic* (pretend art)’ (Mintzberg, 2004, p.10) – the latter through teaching and assessment practices in MBAs based on the verbal presentation of the students’ analyses of case studies in competitive and even conflictual classroom contexts.

Sumatra Ghoshal (2005) linked the amoral behaviour of the Enron managers to the application of economic theories based on the work of Milton Friedman (2002). He called on business school academics to reconsider ‘truth-claims based on extreme assumptions’, and aim instead to ‘reengage with the scholarships of integration, application, and pedagogy to build management theories that are broader and richer than the reductionist and partial theories we have been developing over the last 30 years' (2005, p.87). In 2011, after the 2008 financial crisis, Locke and Spender (2011) extended Ghoshal's argument, and showed how such business school theorising based purely on economics could be linked to financial managers' choices and ethics. The basic difficulty lay in the explanation such theories provided for how markets worked and how wealth would be created 'and collective good somehow arises as a by-product' (Starkey *et al.*, 2004, p.274). Instead, Starkey *et al.* argued for the teaching of law to 'serve as a more compelling, inclusive and realistic account of how management as stewardship can and should operate' (2004, p.279).

At the World Economic Forum in Davos in 2007, before the financial crisis, Schwab, its founder, criticised business as a whole as being 'detached from society' (quoted in Starkey *et al.,* 2004, p.271). Khurana (2007) was also strongly critical of the language of business schools themselves and of AACSB reports which ignored the pedagogical context of the business school and described business school teaching as a 'value proposition' for its 'customers', i.e. students.

Focusing more directly on the MBA curriculum, Datar, Garvin and Cullen (2010) identified 'eight unmet needs' across MBA programs, including critical thinking, the fundamentals of the role and responsibilities of business, understanding 'the limits of models and markets', the need to develop global awareness and leadership skills, being able to integrate information and accurately identify and address issues that arose within an organisation, and 'acting creatively and innovatively' (Datar *et al*., 2010, pp.8–9) – many of which present considerable pedagogical challenges.

Not all commentators were so critical: Derek Bok, former President of Harvard University, noted that 'among the faculties none has a greater sense of purpose than the business school' (Bok, 2006, p.6). Other scholars also argued that the business school could generate the innovations and reforms needed to sustain the future of the university itself, reflecting their position 'at the fault line where the future of the university and the future of society intersect' (Starkey *et al*., 2004, p.1527). To realise this future, business school leaders and public-facing commentators would need to influence what Starkey *et al*. described as 'a crisis of trust in business, a surge of antagonism towards business… and, by implication, what business schools or at least their graduates, value' (Starkey and Hatchuel, 2014, p.273, citing Harvard Business Review, 2012).

Business schools and pedagogy

As can be seen from this brief review of the strategic context of the business school, tensions between knowledge and practice have characterised their mission and practices since their foundation: do they exist to equip their graduates to 'know how' to perform in business, as managers or leaders; or is their primary aim to equip their graduates to 'know what' (Ryle, 1945) knowledge which is at the forefront of each element of their curricula? Such choices reflect the values of the individual academic teachers themselves, and also the shared values of their organisations (Handal and Lauvås, 1987). This section reviews previous research relating to the pedagogical practices of business schools, with a particular emphasis on Masters-level postgraduate offerings.

Pedagogical approaches

The case study mode of reaching, strongly associated with the MBA and with Harvard in particular, had been developed and applied since the establishment of the Harvard MBA in the early 1900s. It had also been soundly criticised, not least by Mintzberg (2004), for developing skills in analysis and competitive presentation with reference to created, space-limited narrative cases which were 'bounded and prepackaged' (Datar *et al*., 2010, p.95) and could not reflect the range of issues implicit in the real-life contexts under analysis. As Starkey *et al*. also pointed out, Harvard cases which focused on leadership at Enron and the Royal Bank of Scotland must call into question 'the ability of business school "research" to generate a science of business or narratives of business worthy of respect' (Starkey *et al.*, 2004, p.272).

Case studies were however only one aspect of the tools of management education, as analysed by Jain and Golosinski (2011, p.72) in their 'Table 2' (see below). The Note to the table argued that 'Across time, each category grows cumulatively, incorporating earlier models and methods into later approaches' – but, as Bok (2006) pointed out, much business school teaching continued to rely on lecturing. This might arguably continue to fulfil many students' expectations of a business school experience, but had also fuelled global 'interchangeable pedagogy' and 'Powerpoint teaching' by management gurus (McKiernan and Wilson, 2014, p.260).

Table 2: Evolution of management education

Time period	**Up to mid-1960s**	**Late 1960s to late 1990s**	**2000-2008**	**2009 and beyond**
Pedagogical tools used	Case studies	Theoretical frameworks driven by academic research	Analytical frameworks and experiential global learning	Analytical frameworks, experiential global learning and renews risk management models
Decision-making driven by	Judgment and intuition	Data analytics	Business insights and corporate ethics	Business insights, corporate ethics and global challenges
Focus on	Business relevance	Academic rigor	Academic rigor and business relevance	Academic rigor, business relevance and social impact

Source: Jain and Golosinski, 2011, p.72

Jain and Golosinski also proposed four 'pillars' for the education of 'responsible global leaders' (Jain and Golosinski, 2011): 'intellectual depth' (defined as 'thought leadership through coursework'. p.76), 'experiential learning' ('team leadership through collaboration', p.77) , 'global perspectives' ('market leadership through cross-cultural diversity', p.79) and 'ethics values & people skills' ('civic leadership through community outreach and social responsibility', p.80). Though more active pedagogies were implicit in these definitions, Jain and Golosinski did not consider the more participative or interpersonal learning outcomes, including simulations, role plays and group projects, that now form a key part of business-school curricula, especially in leadership programmes.

Like Jain and Golosinski, however, other commentators have also called for a broader interdisciplinary business curriculum which would integrate the social sciences, philosophy and the law; and for a global perspective which considered shared, global issues and developed the students' cultural awareness. For success, such initiatives would also call for the integration of reflective practices and an explicit emphasis on the development of metacognition. Petriglieri and Petriglieri

(2010), for example, called for a more explicit recognition in curricula and pedagogical design of the role of the business school as an ’identity workspace’.

I found Mintzberg’s (2004) emphasis on introducing the ‘art’ as well as the ‘craft’ of management practice into management studies as a more fruitful theme for the analysis of arts-based management education. In place of the ‘unbalanced MBA’, he recommended a curriculum which would balance ‘The three poles of managing’, with Art contributing ‘comprehensive synthesis, in the form of insights and visions’ (Mintzberg, 2004, p.93).

The future for business schools

Most of the research commentators surveyed for this paper agreed that the business school model was on the point of transition involving more external partnerships (Starkey *et al*., 2004) and internal consultancy, research and teaching collaborations to establish ‘*interdisciplinary innovation hubs* within universities’ which can generate applicable knowledge and equip students to aspire to careers which would be ‘*broadly significant*’ as well as ‘*materially successful*’ (Jain and Golosinski, 2011, p.69). Hommel and Thomas (2014) described the potential for such shifts to develop ‘T-shaped’ graduates with disciplinary knowledge of business studies combined with analytical skills informed by encounters with the and ‘having achieved significant *disciplinary breadth* through a liberal education involving critical, synthetic and analytical thinking and appropriate *depth training* in the important functions and languages of management education’ (Hommel and Thomas, 2014, p.25).

Conclusions

The debates reviewed here have echoed Barnett’s definition of the ecological university as a ‘feasible utopia’ (Barnett, 2011, p.7) in their concern with questions of knowledge and with the potential for universities and business schools, like their graduates, to aspire to ‘*[dare] to make the world a better and safer place*’ (Jain and Golosinski, 2011, p.91). For example, Barnett’s emphasis on ‘wisdom-inquiry’ rather ‘knowledge-inquiry’ (2011, p.66) was echoed in Weick’s vision of the future of business school education emphasizing ‘wisdom rather than vocation, character rather than technicalities, and mindfulness rather than rationality’ (Weick, 2001, p.574); and in the risks identified by the philosopher Martha Nussbaum of educating ‘technically competent people who have lost their ability to think critically, to examine themselves, and the respect the humanity and diversity of others’ (Nussbaum, 1998, p.300).

The current calls for engagement with the world and making a difference, including in the arts-in-management debates, echo Barnett’s definition of the potential for the ecological university:

> ‘The ecological university does what it can, within its compass, to be a good for the world.’ (Barnett, 2011, p.5)

For example, the debates reviewed here about the future of the university and the business school also emphasised concepts such as ‘the good’, especially with reference to teaching. Starkey *et al*. (2004) advocated an emphasis on ‘shared’ rather than share value, questioning for example the sustainability of shifting manufacturing round the world in pursuit of lower wage bills instead of generating ‘clusters’ of development (Porter and Kramer, 2011); other researchers within a more humanistic tradition called for business school teaching focussed on ‘wisdom’ and, essentially, gestalt experiences of ‘being’/conscious engagement in the world – though this has attracted critiques (see for example Statler, 2014).

Barnett's analysis of the 'being' and potential 'becoming' of the university can also be extended to business schools and the current pressures upon them. Alongside the medical school, the business school encouraged the shift from the 'ivory tower' university to the 'entrepreneurial' university and, arguably, provided the analytical tools and managerial assumptions which underpinned the 'corporate' and 'bureaucratic' nature of the 'professionalised' university. Calls for greater depth of scholarship, especially from the middle of the 20th century, saw the business school emulate more of the overriding scientific goals of the modern university, and led to the distancing from business practice that inform current critiques of the MBA which led to curricula changes to embed consideration of ethical issues within the business school curriculum.

To review current arts in management scholarship in detail is beyond the scope of this paper, but its aspirational, ethical, transformational and at times spiritual arguments in favour of arts-based initiatives within management studies arguably embody the 'iconoclastic utopianism' which for Barnett characterised the potential of the ecological university (Barnett, 2011, p.149, citing Jacoby, 2005). To return to the theme of the associated conference workshop, many of the most vocal voices of the arts in management debate, including Nancy Adler, are also artists as well as management educators (cf Adler, 2015; Sutherland, 2013; Darsö, 2004) – and therefore speak from multiple academic identities, described by Barnett (2011, p.77) as a characteristic of the increasingly liquid and therapeutic as well as, potentially, ecological university.

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