



**KI
FORUM**

**Leadership:
Reflective Human
Action**

Volume 9, Number 1
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KAPPA OMICRON NU FORUM

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Contents

Leadership: Reflective Human Action

Guest Editors' Message	2
<i>Frances E. Andrews & Virginia L. Clark</i>	
State of the Society	4
<i>Carol E. Avery, 1995 Chair, Board of Directors</i>	
1997-98 Fellowships	9
Call for Papers	10
Capturing the Spirit of Leadership	11
<i>Terrence E. Deal</i>	
Aesthetics and Reflective Human Action: Implications for Leaders	20
<i>Marsha Rehm</i>	
Reasoning Strategies for Achieving Ethical Leadership	34
<i>Joan I. Quilling</i>	
Creating a College Capstone Course Based on Reflective Human Action	43
<i>Connie J. Ley</i>	
Editor's Message	52
Guidelines for Authors	54



Guest Editors' Message

Frances E. Andrews & Virginia L. Clark

Given the right circumstances, from no more than dreams, determination, and the liberty to try, quite ordinary people consistently do extraordinary things (Hock, 1995).

This issue of *FORUM* provides insight into leadership from a reflective human action perspective through application to a community of practice and through enrichment of the theory. As our world becomes more complex, as the amount of information that must be managed by each person every day expands at an astonishing rate, and as the need to do more with less, the challenges multiply for anyone who aspires to become a leader. Leadership theories and strategies which were once successful no longer work! Yet, the need is more critical than ever for leaders who lead from the head and the heart to establish the context wherein others are empowered to get the job done.

"Reality changes constantly, so leaders must enable people to act within the processes of the organization. It is impossible for a plan, vision, or value to become real for people until they interact with it. When people use information by engaging with each other, events, and ideas, they gain feeling, meaning, and ownership. . . . Only after acting are we able to see what has been created" (Andrews, Mitstifer, Rehm, and Vaughn, 1995, p. 5). Leaders of today must be able to bring people together and facilitate their work so that the outcome (whether on the job or in an organization) is responsible, reasoned action based on the core features of reflective human action: authenticity, ethical sensibility, and spirituality.

Leadership is critical for our profession. We are living in a time when professionals must step forward and be able to take leadership in ways that "cement" the need for including (rather than excluding) family and consumer science professionals in work, social, and policy issues affecting individuals and families. The reflective human action model provides an avenue for this type of leadership.

This issue of *FORUM* provides articles which give the reader information and ideas about varied aspects of leadership, all with direct relationship to the reflective human action model. We invite readers to contemplate and (whether in agreement or disagreement) to add to and refine their approach to leadership in relation to the ideas presented.

Deal reminds us that the "heart of leadership is in the hearts of the leaders." He encourages us to find our "own treasure store" and

discover what makes sense for us as we find our own way in leadership. He suggests that leadership today involves "much more" than leadership of yesterday—much more looking inside ourselves and finding the "common spirit that gives meaning and purpose to life and gives life to organizations."

"Aesthetics and Reflective Human Action: Implications for Leaders" provides a model for creating meaningful forms from complexity. Rehm provides background and explanation of this approach, as well as some suggestions of concrete ways to use an aesthetic approach in a variety of situations. An aesthetic approach informs and enriches the perspective of leadership as reflective human action.

Quilling explores the concept of ethical leadership. How are ethical leadership skills developed? What role can hermeneutic circles play in leadership? How can ethical leadership motivate higher aspirations? Through her article, Quilling helps readers consider each of these questions.

The challenge is always present to help our students in higher education units become leaders. Ley's article provides a description of one approach to addressing this issue. Her Family and Consumer Sciences Department has used the reflective human action model as a basis for a proposed capstone course, required for all majors in the Department.

Each paper in this issue of *FORUM* addresses one or more aspects of leadership as reflective human action. Each provides the opportunity for reflection to improve the quality of thinking about leadership. Although all people do not aspire to be leaders, in reality all people do take a variety of leadership roles throughout their lives. "In reflective human action all participants have the opportunity for creative engagement, for leading—even though some will choose not to. . . . More and more individuals and groups are discovering that the capacity to act together is inseparable from the ability to think and reflect together. The healthy community of practice is one that has good internal health-making forces. Thus a new and different leadership culture is needed. . . ." (Mitstifer, pp. 1-2).

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State of the Society

Carol E. Avery, 1995 Chair, Board of Directors

Perhaps this past year can best be characterized as one of "settling in." Many of the changes visualized by previous leaders are now in place, and Kappa Omicron Nu is recognized as an outstanding leader in the family and consumer sciences profession. We, the members, owe a debt of gratitude to our leaders—past and present—for having the vision, the courage, and the determination to make this Society one of which we can all be proud.

When the Board of Directors met in Orlando in January, one of its purposes was to conduct an environmental scan of trends and conditions that can be expected to make an impact on our profession and organization in the years to come. Under the leadership of Kaye Boyer, we identified important environmental factors, reaffirmed the use of the Carver model of governance, and reviewed and refined the mission, ends, and strategies from the previous year. We believe the ends—having to do with leadership/scholarship/research, organization, and affiliation networks—and the accompanying strategies, will enhance the ability of Kappa Omicron Nu and its chapters to prepare scholars and researchers as leaders for the 21st century.

Leadership, Scholarship, and Research

Leadership can be conceptualized as providing the visionary skills that enable members to provide direction to the profession and empower themselves and others to meet their full potential. Strategies in pursuit of this goal are well underway.

When the proposed Leadership Academy held a visioning session, under the direction of Julia Dinkins, in Arlington, Virginia, in September of 1994, the response was enthusiastic. Twelve different organizations committed to the idea of collaboration with each other for the purpose of developing a cadre of competent leaders dedicated to promoting research and leadership development. An award in honor of Dr. Marjorie M. Knoll, Professor Emeritus of Penn State University, has been dedicated to the support of this Academy.

The first product of the Academy funded by Kappa Omicron Nu, the leadership module developed by Frances E. Andrews, Dorothy I. Mitstifer, Marsha Rehm, and Gladys Gary Vaughn, was the focus of the 1995 Leadership Conclave. The authors

developed a theoretical framework called *Leadership: Reflective Human Action* that provides a comprehensive approach to leadership that will serve the common good of the profession and of society. The module is largely based upon Robert Terry's *Authentic Leadership* and Margaret Wheatley's *Leadership and the New Science*. This is the fifth module developed by Kappa Omicron Nu, and it has already generated considerable interest both inside and outside the profession.

Honorary Membership was presented to Dr. Terrence Deal, Conclave keynote speaker and professor at the Peabody College of Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. A Distinguished Professor of the American Association of School Administrators, National Academy for School Executives, Dr. Deal specializes in the study of organizations and is the author of numerous books and articles, including *Leading with Soul* coauthored with Lee Bolman. He was honored by Kappa Omicron Nu for his concern with leadership issues, his scholarly productivity, and his teaching abilities which have had, and will continue to have, a major impact on the world's educational organizations. He was especially recognized by KON for his efforts to put soul back into leadership.

Another strategy for the development of leadership is to recognize and encourage scholarship and research. In 1995, a total of \$52,000 was expended on this strategy. This includes money that was given directly to 56 chapters for local scholarships, to recipients of the competitive fellowship and research grant awards, and to other projects and awards.

Chapter Awards of Excellence—Brigham Young University, Carson-Newman College, East Tennessee State University, Eastern Illinois University, Kansas State University, Pennsylvania State University, and Southwest Missouri State University.

Advisor Awards of Excellence—Linda M. Morrow of Penn State University and Alice C. Pecoraro of Nicholls State University.

Fellowships—Six fellowships in the amount of \$11,000 were awarded as follows:

- Marlene Breu, University of Minnesota—Kappa Omicron Phi Hettie M. Anthony Fellowship.
- Noaleen Ingalsbe, University of Alabama—Kappa Omicron Phi Dorothy I. Mitstifer Fellowship.
- Priscilla Samuel, University of Tennessee-Knoxville—Omicron Nu Research Fellowship.



- Garlon M. Webb, University of North Florida—Kappa Omicron Phi Mildred Dransfield Fellowship.
- Scott Ketring, Brigham Young University—Omicron Nu Eileen C. Maddex Fellowship.
- James H. Swain, CSU-Northridge—National Alumni Chapter Fellowship.

National Alumni Chapter and New Initiatives Research Grant

- Sally Hansen-Gandy, Carol Darling, and Bonnie Greenwood, Florida State University—Facilitating Multicultural Programming in Family and Consumer Sciences Cooperative Extension.

Coordinating Council of Honor Societies Undergraduate Research Paper—Kristie Roehr, Iowa State University.

Conclave Undergraduate Paper Presentations—Roberta Dagenais, Northern Illinois University; Shellie Arndt George, Central Missouri State University; Alisa Gish, Michigan State University; Kari C. Maxwell, Brigham Young University; Daniel C. Sulzen, Brigham Young University; Camye Thibodaux, Nicholls State University.

Since the formation of Kappa Omicron Nu in 1990, a total of more than \$200,000 has been awarded for scholarship and research.

Another major coup for the organization was the publication of a monograph, a state-of-the-art scholarly and theoretical paper by Marjorie M. Brown and Edith E. Baldwin, *The Concept of Theory in Home Economics: A Philosophical Dialogue*. Reviews of the paper were supplied by Scott Wright, Donald Herrin, Anne MacCleave, and Joan Quilling. To continue the dialogue, Drs. Brown and Baldwin responded to the reviewers.

A second edition of *Mentoring: The Human Touch* has been published and is being used in the Joint Mentoring Project with Michigan State University. The authors continue to make presentations and conduct workshops to promote the concept of self-managed mentoring.

Both *Dialogue* and *Kappa Omicron Nu FORUM* have been redesigned into handsome new formats to better showcase the high quality of our research and scholarship and to improve communication with members. Additional theme issues related to the society's mission and ends will be forthcoming.

Organization

Strategies have been implemented to create an organizational and management environment that supports mission-driven programming. Feedback from the 1993 Conclave and the membership survey were used to set priorities and to revise the

budget to reflect these priorities. The new governance model, the *Policy Governance Handbook*, and constitutional changes in 1995 provided the structure to achieve this end.

Kappa Omicron Nu has continued to work with Phi Upsilon Omicron in the Coordinating Council of Honor Societies (CCHS). A well-attended luncheon was held at the AAFCS meeting in New Orleans where a joint award of \$750 was given for an outstanding undergraduate research paper and presentation. CCHS also sponsored the Graduate Program Showcase, an opportunity for colleges and universities to introduce their graduate programs to prospective students. Excellent attendance and high interest ensure the continuation of the program.

Some of the members lost because of the dues increase have returned, allowing \$4,000 to be added to reserve in the General Fund. Adjusted 1995 expense budget figures showed 60 percent for leadership, scholarship, and research (scholarship/research, leadership, communications), 30 percent for affiliation networks (chapter/member services), and 10 percent for organization (management).

Liabilities and Fund Balances

9/30/94		9/30/95
	General Fund	
\$ 48,791		\$ 50,134
	Restricted Funds	
\$ 314,077		\$ 294,808*

* Conclave requires a major expense from the delegate scholarship restricted fund.

Affiliation Networks

The Board of Directors believes that strong networks are needed to develop empowered leaders through the current campus and alumni chapters—the backbone of Kappa Omicron Nu. Many enhancements have been made to encourage networking, especially among students and faculty, and to meet member requests for improved services and benefits. Efforts have been made to enhance the role of advisers and to increase the use of modules by chapters. An 800 telephone number was added for the convenience of chapters and members, and a plan has been developed to introduce communication through e-mail and the Internet. A two-fold increase in promotional communications to students, parents, administrators, and opinion leaders has led to the initiation of 2,675 new members, the highest number yet in a single year. In September a total of \$15,500 was awarded to eligible chapters for local scholar-



ships. One-year gift memberships, worth \$80,000, were presented to graduating seniors and first-year graduate student members. A new chapter was installed at Harding University in Searcy, Arkansas, in October.

The highlight of the year, and of my term of office, was the 1995 Leadership Conclave, held at the Bismarck Hotel in Chicago on August 3-6. Participants had the unique opportunity of being among the first to use the *Reflective Human Action* leadership model in either a student or a professional workshop track facilitated by Frances E. Andrews, Mary E. Pritchard, Virginia Clark, and Gladys Gary Vaughn. The delegates to Conclave approved the Assembly of Delegates Process that clarifies the governance responsibility of official delegates. Delegates participated in identifying priorities for the next two years. Three new student representatives were elected to serve through the 1997 Conclave: Elizabeth A. DeMerchant, Virginia Tech University; Scott A. Ketring, Brigham Young University; Jill N. Robinson, University of Arizona.

Board members whose terms expired in 1995 are Carol E. Avery, Chair; Julia M. Dinkins, Vice Chair/Finance, and Student Representatives Angela Higgins, Ayodele Jordan, and Susan Poch.

Committee members who served Kappa Omicron Nu so ably this year included: *Awards I*: Shirley Reagan, Peggy Berger, Alice Darr, Geraldine Olson; *Awards II*: Barbara Woods, Merlene Lyman, Ellen Renber, Anna Roberts; *Awards III*: Mary Andrews, Connie Ley, Gwendolyn Newkirk, Jan VanBuren; *Constitution and Bylaws*: Kaye Boyer, Amelia Brown, Betty J. Church, Edith G. Neal, Karen Schrader; *Honorary Membership*: Flossie M. Byrd, Virginia B. Vincenti, Mary E. Zabik; *Nominating*: Julia M. Dinkins, Mary J. Beaubien, Shirley Hyman-Parker, E. Marie Ashley Moore, Juanita Odom, Pamela Olson; *Editorial*: Sharon K. Nickols, Karen C. Arms, Wilma P. Griffin, Francine Hultgren, James D. Moran, III, Gwendolyn Newkirk.

Summary

This has been a wonderfully exciting year, one marked by continued growth and major accomplishments under the inspired leadership of Executive Director Dorothy Mitstifer. In the words of Fran Andrews (1995 Conclave), "I would like to thank all of you who assisted us in our journey in learning to accept chaos, to share information, to recognize and appreciate diversity, and to embrace vision in order to make a difference by creating and building the community that results when people work together."

1997-98 Fellowships

Master's Fellowships—application deadline April 1

Eileen C. Maddex Fellowship, \$2,000—awarded annually from an endowment in the Omicron Nu Fellowship Fund in honor of her contributions as Omicron Nu Executive Director.
National Alumni Fellowship, \$1,000—awarded by the National Alumni Chapter.

Doctoral Fellowships—application deadline January 15

Hettie M. Anthony Fellowship, \$2,000—awarded annually for doctoral research from an endowment in the Kappa Omicron Phi Fellowship Fund in honor of her as founder of Kappa Omicron Phi at Northwest Missouri State University.
Omicron Nu Research Fellowship, \$2,000—awarded annually for doctoral research from the Omicron Nu Fellowship Fund.
Alice Koenecke Fellowship, \$2,000—awarded for doctoral study from the Kappa Omicron Phi Fellowship Fund in honor of her service as National President, 1978-82.
Dorothy I. Mitstifer Fellowship, \$2,000—awarded from the Named Fellowship endowment in the Kappa Omicron Phi Fellowship Fund in honor of her service as Executive Director of Kappa Omicron Phi and targeted primarily to chapter advisers for graduate or postgraduate study.

Research/Project Grants—application deadline February 15

One or more grants are awarded annually that meet the criteria of the Kappa Omicron Nu research agenda. Cross-specialization and integrative research is the research priority for the honor society. Multi-year proposals will be considered.

National Alumni Chapter Grant, \$500—awarded annually as a project of the National Alumni Chapter.
New Initiatives Grant, \$3,000—awarded annually from the Kappa Omicron Nu New Initiatives Fund.

Applications and further information about fellowships and grants may be secured from the Kappa Omicron Nu National Office, 4990 Northwind Drive, Suite 140, East Lansing, MI 48823-5031—Telephone: (517) 351-8335; Facsimile: (517) 351-8336.



Call for Papers

for publication in *Kappa Omicron Nu FORUM*, the journal of
Kappa Omicron Nu Honor Society

Topic—Leadership: Up Close and Personal

Drs. Virginia L. Clark and Frances E. Andrews, Guest Editors

Objective—The overall goal of this theme is to use the knowledge of self as an essential skill in the practice of *reflective human action* in communities of practice (family, neighborhood, organization, business, institution, government).

Overview—The feature article in the July 1995 issue of the *Kappa Omicron Nu Dialogue* summarizes the theory of and rationale for *reflective human action*, and the *Leadership: Reflective Human Action Module* (Fall 1995) details the theory and introduces experiential activities to promote understanding and application. Applied manuscripts are encouraged.

The rationale for this theme was a desire to encourage reflection and to improve the quality of thinking about leadership. Authors are invited to

- Explore processes in which innate (personal) qualities have been developed and used as strengths to support leadership in communities of practice. e.g., responding to stress, adapting to change, maintaining joy, reclaiming soul (spirit), showing respect for others, building trust, listening, developing relationships, creating inner harmony, cultivating vision, maintaining renewal, becoming centered, taking risks, cultivating teamwork, encouraging story-telling, etc.
- Show the value of mentoring to leadership as reflective human action.
- Present specific case studies to show how self-knowledge has led to conviction that diversity in the workplace is a strength toward the accomplishment of common goals, and
- Propose a well-thought-out plan for reflective human action as a means of balancing the multiple components of the lives of leaders for others to adapt and use.

Information and Deadline—*Kappa Omicron Nu FORUM* is a refereed publication outlet for both members and nonmembers. Manuscripts are due January 15, 1997. For further information or to obtain a copy of "Guidelines for Authors," contact:

Dr. Dorothy I. Mistifer, Editor
4990 Northwind Drive, Suite 140
East Lansing, MI 48823-5031

Telephone: (517) 351-8335 • Facsimile: (517) 351-8336

Capturing the Spirit of Leadership

Speech delivered at *Kappa Omicron Nu Conclave*, Chicago,
Illinois, August 3, 1995.

Terrence E. Deal
Peabody College, Vanderbilt University
Honorary Member, Kappa Omicron Nu

From that introduction you probably wonder if I had a difficult time holding down a job. And you might ask what those multiple careers have to do with leadership. One of the things that I learned from those early experiences is that America is crying for leadership. Your organization is putting together a piece on reflective human action, and I encourage all of you to take advantage of it. Unless we can develop leadership capital, we are going to continue to have America suffering from lack of passion and purpose.

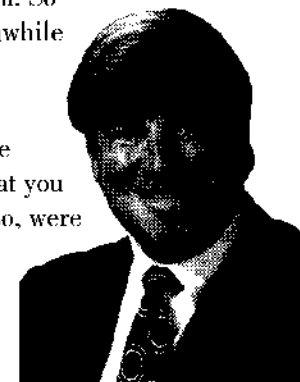
Organizations are mechanical; they're querulous. They just don't touch people in the ways that organizations should. We have an awful lot of work to do, and the people that are going to do that work are right here in this room.

Every so often we look outside ourselves and ask: Where are our leaders? Without realizing it, we are part of the problem. In this room, a lot of you, I am sure, know the career you want to be in. The question is this: If you want to be a leader, what do you need to do?

There is stuff out there telling you what you really have to do—you have to have all these skills, you have to be a problem solver, etc. What often happens is that people develop the skills, and then they go ahead and use them even if they are not working. If you give a little boy a hammer, the whole world becomes a nail. There are a lot of people who are scared to death that when their leaders go off to a conference they are going to come back with a solution looking for a problem. So the result is that people decide that they will just wait awhile and this, too, shall pass.

Lee Bolman and I think that, first of all before you start talking about skills and about characteristics and all the rest, you need to make sense out of all the situations that you find yourselves in on a daily basis. In the last week or so, were you in a situation that you simply couldn't understand? Maybe it was in a relationship, in a classroom, or in a store where someone wasn't responding to you in a way that you could decipher.

“Organizations . . . don't touch people in the ways that organizations should.”





We think that we need leaders who have the ability to look at things in multiple ways—every organization is a **family**, a **factory**, a **jungle**, and a **temple**. Every organization has to be able to satisfy the individual needs—deal with feelings. Organizations have to provide structure—have plans. Organizations have to deal with power and conflict—develop schemes to help people get their share of scarce resources. And, more importantly than anything else, organizations have to give meaning to what people want to do—deal with dreams.

I want you to think a little about what you say when people ask you what you do for a living, or what institution you go to. How do you respond? Do you respond with pride? Do you make up something that sounds good? When I first came to Vanderbilt, all the kids were wearing Harvard sweat shirts, or something similar, because the institution at that time had no meaning for them. Wherever I go I ask people what they do for a living. One time I asked my seat mate on an airplane what he did for a living.

I administer in the non-profit sector of the economy.

What kind of business is that?

Oh, that's a people-processing business—a big one.

What is your role, Sir?

Middle management.

Are you the principal of a high school?

I didn't want to say that that's what I am.

What is going on out there? What's going on is that there are a lot of people who are empty shells; they have forgotten that life has a bigger purpose. And so we wrote *Leading with Soul* because we kept finding, in all of our studies of leadership world-wide, that what distinguished effective leaders was their ability to deal with symbolic perspectives—to focus on those very intangible things that give meaning to our lives.

I do an experiment in my undergraduate class to make the point about intangible meanings. Anyone who will come forward in the class to tell one sorority or fraternity secret, I offer an A and the opportunity to never have to come to class again. Guess how many acceptances I've had to that offer in eleven years. Zero. After I made the same offer to a girl last year and she declined, a football player remarked that she was

“
... every organization is a family, a factory, a jungle, and a temple.”

stupid. So, I offered him the same thing. All I needed was the play book. He said that he couldn't do that, and besides the play book is important. I didn't have to deal with that; the class did. And he won't ever say that again. Symbolic perspectives—culture, spirit, meaning—are the things that hold everybody together. And any human group, anywhere, needs leadership that understands this.

Not long ago Lee and I had lunch with the president of our publisher, Jossey-Bass, and he asked us what we would really like to do.

We'd like to write about spirit.

Go for it!

We walked out, and I couldn't believe what we'd agreed to. Lee turned to me and said, “We know a lot about organizations and leadership, but what do we know about spirit? What do we know about meaning of life?” So, we checked out all kinds of books, anything we could get our hands on. We started to read and to talk. We began to go through layers of stuff inside that we had built up over the years when we closed off our wounds, closed off our disappointments, closed off our joys. We discovered ourselves in that journey, meeting our demons, meeting our angels—we discovered our hearts and our souls.

And that is what you all have to do. You have to embark upon a journey where you get inside yourself and get in touch with who you really are. You need to answer the questions: Who am I? What do I really want to do? What do I really want to lead? What kind of a life do I want to live? What kind of a difference do I want to make? Some of those questions are very rarely asked.

Our book, *Leading with Soul*, has become very popular. As a matter of fact, Nancy Austin (of Peters & Austin fame) questioned in a magazine article why such reputable authors had jumped off the deep end. We responded that there's a lot about life that has a deeper message. She wrote back about three weeks later and said, “Hey, guys, I kinda hit a nerve out there. The magazine received more mail than it ever got on an article. Unfortunately, most of it was in your favor.”

I think that, right now, there are a lot of people thinking that there's got to be more to life than they're experiencing. And getting in touch with that is the first thing that you have to do if you want to be a leader. I am sure that there are a lot of you,

“
Symbolic perspectives—culture, spirit, meaning—they are the things that hold everybody together.”

perhaps most of you, who are really very different inside than you radiate outside. We often go around touching shells and never ever connect heart to heart, or soul to soul. So if you want to be a leader you need to know that the true heart of leadership is in the heart of the leader. I hope that each of you will say, I'd better do a little reflecting on who I am, where I've been, where I want to go. You need to ask: Where is my heart? Where is my soul? Where is my center? Because unless you do that you don't really qualify for leadership. When you have done that, you can begin to engage in what leadership is all about; leadership is relationship. Once you have found your own treasure store of spirit, then you can offer it to other people or organizations. Lee and I have tried to say that we think there are four gifts that a leader can give as a way of beginning to infuse organizations with passion and purpose: the gift of love, the gift of power, the gift of authorship, the gift of significance.

The Gift of Love

First, let's begin with love. The other day after I talked on the radio, my wife Sandy asked me what I said on the air.

Everyone one is coming up to me saying that you said that bosses should love employees.

Yes, love is about caring; it is about compassion. And that gift of caring and compassion given by a leader is going to start coming back the other way. Love is one of those gifts that keeps on giving.

I've found that it works in my classroom. When I see people that don't seem to be alright, I pull them aside and ask them if they are O.K. Guess what comes out? I just failed five tests last week, including yours. My parents just got divorced. I just broke up with my boyfriend. I will say, "Let's talk about it." "Or here's my home phone number; call me if I can be of any help." Now what happens is that it starts to become reciprocal.

... the true heart of leadership is in the heart of the leader.

Last semester I walked out the door after a lecture, and a young woman came up to me and said,

Are you O.K.?

Yeah, why?

Well, your lecture wasn't up to par.

Come to think about it, no. It has been a lousy day, the Dean is on my back again, Sandy and I have had a fight, and this has been an absolutely lousy kind of week.

Professor Deal, you will never know how much we care about you.

She gave me a hug, and I walked away feeling pretty good because I was the recipient of a gift. Once a gift-giving relationship begins to take place, then the organization can thrive and prosper and tick. So that's the gift of love.

The Gift of Authorship

The gift of Authorship means giving people the opportunity to put their signature on their work. Think about how it used to be in General Motors when you were on the assembly line and you just didn't care because nothing of you was really going into that car. You were going through the motions, everyone else was taking credit for it, you didn't get a lot of feedback one way or the other, and you didn't even have a chance to sign-off on the product.

Now Saturn, on the other hand, has turned the whole thing around. If you read the owner satisfaction surveys you know that Saturn is up there with some of the highest priced cars. At Saturn, workers are putting their signature on the cars. At Saturn, they leave notes in the cars for the new owners. At Saturn, employees stop on the side of the road if they see a Saturn to ask if everything is O.K. At Saturn, when workers are on vacation they stop at dealerships and ask how their cars are doing. At Saturn, an employee drives a car home, checks it out, and leaves a note which says, "I'm Joe Smith, and as far as I know the car's perfect. Give me a call if it is not." What Saturn has done is to give employees that feeling of authorship.

Gift of Power

The gift of power—sometimes we try to hoard power, we try to keep it to ourselves, and what happens is that the organization ends up powerless. Leaders give other people power. I give power to 100 graduate students; they shape the class. About two years ago one student raised her hand and asked,

Is Chapter 13 on the exam?

Yes. Why?

It sucks.

Once a gift-giving relationship begins to take place, then the organization can thrive and prosper and tick.



Why do you think that?

(She gave me her reasons.) Was there anything in that chapter that made sense?

Yes, on page 35 one paragraph makes sense.

O.K. Everything except that paragraph is off bounds.

And the next time we revised the book, we rewrote that chapter. It doesn't suck now. How long would we have gone on with that bad chapter if that student didn't think she had power? The students all feel like they have power. Once they begin to figure that out, once they accept the gift, once we start to roll, then we have a class that is really what education is all about. My colleagues say,

What do you run? A zoo? They talk back to you, they are raising issues with you.

Do you want to compare evaluations? On a 5 point scale, you are happy with 1.2, and I don't like anything below a 5.

That's the gift of power.

Gift of Significance

But the most important gift of all is the gift of significance. Significance means belonging to a cohesive group that produces something of value. Think about your own situation. How cohesive is it? Do people really feel that they are offering something of value to the rest of the world—so that they are leaving a legacy. The way we encourage significance is through all the old fashioned ways that have been sterilized out of most of our organizations. That's the whole idea of music.

A guy I know who is a mechanical engineer called me and said, "Terry I don't want you to quote this anywhere, but I just went to pick up my new Saturn. And you know what happened, all the clerks and mechanics came out and sang to me. I felt like I was joining a family, not just getting a car. Don't tell anyone; I'm a mechanical engineer, I'm tough. Don't let anyone know that I was touched by that." Singing is the way we draw together—the alma maters, the songs we sing. Think about when you hear a song and everything comes back—the feelings, the good feelings, the bad feelings. The whole idea of music is that you touch people. My wonderful assistant drives like a fiend. I won't even ride with her. Stop signs seem to

mean to avoid eye contact and accelerate. That's the way she drives. The other day she got a ticket for going 80 in a 35 zone. A landscape architecture friend of mine was over to our house and told me that she saw the woman who works for me in court the other day. The judge said,

How do you plead?

Not guilty.

What is your justification, your excuse?

Well Sir, when I was driving I was listening to Persian music and when I hear Persian music I cry and through the tears I can't see the speedometer and I am very sorry.

So he let her go.

Ritual and ceremony and celebration and story-telling—they're also what bind people together. They help us touch each other in very deep ways, to experience that common spirit that holds us together. The Mary Kaye Cosmetics company is a genius at this. That company puts on display what it believes. In the pageantry at their annual meetings, the sales people of the year are recognized, and those people indeed feel significant. Stories tell values, they draw us together. One of the reasons I take teaching so very seriously is that before I teach I tell myself a story about my father. My father taught school in the L.A. public schools for 30 years. When he retired, he started to go to seed, he wasn't feeling very significant. But he called me one day and said he had to tell me what had happened to him. The other day when he was bowling, a waitress set a drink down by his scorecard.

I didn't order that.

That man back there did.

He turned around and recognized a student he had 25 years ago. He recognized him instantly because he had only one arm. He had taught him to play ball, and the student had wound up as an all-star baseball player in high school and college.

Mr. Deal, my wife and I would like to take you and your wife to dinner.

My father and mother were waiting to be picked up for dinner, and a stretch limousine arrived to take them. Well, that really impressed my father; he'd never had a ride in a limousine. On the way back home, the student said that he'd been waiting 25 years to repay him.

“
Ritual and ceremony and celebration and story-telling . . . help us touch each other in very deep ways . . .
”

I keep retelling myself that story—when I walk in that classroom, it's not what information I get across but what may I say or do today that will make a difference in the life of another human being. And it may be a long time, if ever, before I know it. But by telling myself that story, I have faith that it will happen. And so, music, celebrations, rituals, ceremonies, stories—these are what make people feel a part of the whole and remind them of the deeper purposes that their activities serve. That's the fourth gift.

Summary

If you go inside yourself to find and rekindle your heart and soul, that's when you can relate your center with other people's hearts and souls and find the common spirit that gives meaning and purpose to life and gives life to organizations.

That's what leadership is all about. It's not about meetings and memos and strategic plans. Those are all important in managing organizations, but they're not what touch people in a meaningful kind of way. Each of you has inside of you the capacity to find your own treasure store and to offer your gifts to other people. And that's what your Reflective Human Action curriculum is all about. That's why it is so important that all of you take advantage of what Kappa Omicron Nu has to offer you. Without reflection you're not going to be able to find yourself.

Let me close by reminding you of the whole message here—and that is: it's all inside you. We spend so much time looking for leadership outside that we don't go inside. Inside (inside individuals and inside organizations) is where we really find the "stuff" of leadership. But what we keep doing these days is looking for wizards—looking for wizards to provide the leadership, looking for wizards to provide the answers.

“

I'd like to remind you of the Wizard's advice to some of the characters on the yellow brick road. The Wizard acknowledges that he is a common man and can't deliver his promises.

[L]eadership is . . . not about meetings and memos and strategic plans.

”

Can't you give me brains? asked the Scarecrow. You don't need them. You are learning something every day. A baby has brains, but it doesn't know much. Experience is the only thing that brings knowledge, and the longer you are on earth the more experience you are sure to get. . . . But how about my courage? asked the Lion. You have plenty of courage. . . . All you need is confidence in yourself. (Baum, 1960, p. 189)

All you need is confidence in yourself.

I'll say it again, the heart of leadership is in the hearts of leaders. And so there aren't any answers; there's no one to give you direction; you're going to have to find your own way. By giving the gifts of love, of power, of authorship, of significance, you will infuse your life and organizations with passion, purpose, and meaning. And that's leadership.

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Aesthetics and Reflective Human Action: Implications for Leaders

Marsha Rehm

Reflective human action is a mindful process of meaning-making that emphasizes authenticity, ethical sensibility, spirituality, and features of action. Because reality is constantly changing, we must continually take reflective human action to create meaningful forms of experience from diverse parts. One approach that can help us create meaningful forms from complexity is the aesthetic—an approach that highlights the following qualities in our activities: receptivity, reciprocity and playfulness, engagement of emotion and value, and imagination. Thus, an aesthetic approach can inform and enrich reflective human action. Implications for leaders include: fostering opportunities for engaging the senses and imagination, building a working environment that is rich in relationships, and encouraging the arts of storytelling and playfulness.

As “an active, mind-engaging process of meaning-making in a community of practice” (Andrews, Mitstifer, Rehm, & Vaughn, 1995, p. 15), reflective human action can lead to the thoughtful creation of personal and social lives. Reflective human action offers a meaningful concept for leaders because it weaves authenticity, ethical sensibility, and spirituality together with action (Andrews, Mitstifer, Rehm, & Vaughn, 1995; Terry, 1993). Such a mindful process of meaning-making is important to family and consumer sciences leaders working in a world where reality is constantly changing. “What endures is process—dynamic, adaptive, creative” (Wheatley, 1994, p. 98).

An aesthetic approach can foster meaningful engagement with multifaceted and complex issues because it enables us to “see the parts of a whole and how they work together” (Cox-Bishop, 1989, p. 20) and helps us express significant values in our everyday experience (Broudy, 1972; Kupfer, 1983). This article explores how aesthetics can inform and enrich reflective human action. The first section provides a general overview of several features of aesthetic experience. The second part illustrates how aesthetic qualities are related to features of reflective human action. Finally, suggestions for leaders in family and consumer sciences are presented.

Aesthetics: Unified Diversity

Kupfer (1983) argues that “a variety of everyday interests and activities can (and should) be rich in aesthetic values” (p. 3),

e.g., poetry, drama, and unified diversity. We often rely on aesthetic cues in areas as diverse as education, sports, decision making, weddings and funerals, choosing political candidates, homemaking, and family life (Broudy, 1972; Dohr, 1984; Moore, 1992). Because an aesthetic approach enhances the imaginative integration of parts to create meaningful experiences, it can contribute to reflective human action within family and consumer sciences.

According to Kupfer (1983), aesthetics is involved whenever we create new wholes from diverse parts with sensitivity and meaningfulness:

In aesthetic experience, we respond to what is presented to us by discriminating among its constituents so as to integrate them into a unified whole. The whole is formed out of the interaction among its parts. While these parts are distinct, . . . their relations with one another and their place in the whole is [sic] decisive for their meaning and their value. . . . The parts are interdependent, forming a kind of community. (p. 4)

Several qualities that contribute significantly to aesthetic forms of everyday experience include: receptivity, reciprocity and playfulness, emotion and value, and imagination.

Receptivity

In aesthetically informed experience we oscillate between receptivity and activity, “taking in” and “doing.” We initially must adopt an attitude of receptivity in order to fully appreciate the diverse elements, interesting relationships, and sensory riches in the world around us. If we do not perceive qualities around us, we cannot interpret meanings or take action surrounding those qualities (Fisner, 1990). We must take time to “let the world in, to perceive it” (Moore, 1992, p. 289) so we can discover significance in our experiences. “Art, broadly speaking, is that which invites us into contemplation—a rare commodity in modern life. In that moment of contemplation, art intensifies the presence of the world. We see it more vividly and more deeply” (Moore, 1992, p. 286).

“To experience life aesthetically is to sense the drama in every event of nature, in every moment of life, in the conflict of colors and shapes, sounds and rhythms.” (Broudy, 1972, p. 37). deBono (1992) argues that we can develop a habit of pausing to reflect whenever we perceive something dramatic, interesting, perplexing, amusing, or in other ways engaging. The more often we stop to ponder and meditate, the more likely we are to

“Because an aesthetic approach enhances the imaginative integration of parts to create meaningful experiences, it can contribute to reflective human action”

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gain insight into new connections and to make surprising discoveries. We must be open to the “interpenetration of poetic image and ordinary life” (Moore, 1992, p. 303-304) if we are to perceive aesthetic wholes from the swirl of chaos around us.

Reciprocity and Playfulness

The creation of new wholes “grows, first, out of the relationships between an individual and the objective world of work and, second, out of the ties between an individual and other human beings” (Gardner, 1993, p. 9). Because an aesthetic whole is formed out of the interaction of diverse parts, relationships and reciprocity of parts are also significant. The meaning of each part of aesthetic experience is influenced by its relation to the others and by its place within the whole. Kupfer (1983) points out that “parts or moments enhance and deepen one another” (p. 38) and a change in any one aspect will affect the others. If we spend time carefully and intimately engaging with a subject or project, much like a connoisseur, we eventually penetrate the depths and nuances pertinent to the task at hand (Broudy, 1972).

Reciprocity includes attending to the balance, harmony, resolution of conflict, beauty, complexity, theme, and variation on theme as we engage with our projects and with each other. Eisner (1990) compares aesthetic practices to jazz improvisation, both requiring the ability to “compose in a constantly changing context” (1990, p. 80). If we simply act on impulse, our experience disintegrates into fragmented actions. But with aesthetic reciprocity, we respond to what is presented to us by forming new relationships that further contribute to a developing whole. Over time there is a fluidity from the developing rhythm, moments of grace, and dramatic tensions that arise and become resolved.

A sense of playfulness, defined as “an exploration of possible worlds of meaning” (Jardine, 1988, p. 34), is demanded if we are to fully carry a situation forward. Play spawns the freedom, imagination, emotional intensity, fun, mystery, and surprise that are so often absent in our “serious” efforts to succeed. Huizinga (1955) argues, “It may be that the aesthetic factor is identical with the impulse to create orderly form, which animates play in all its aspects. . . . Play casts a spell over us; it is ‘enchanted,’ ‘captivating.’” (p. 10). Thus, play often “endures as a new-found creation of the mind, a treasure to be retained by memory” (Huizinga, 1955, p. 10). Although tension and uncertainty reign

as we “play with” resolving an issue, all meaningful achievements involve a sense of playfulness (Huizinga, 1955; Jardine, 1988).

Engagement with Emotion and Value

According to Broudy (1972), values and feelings are expressed in aesthetic images and forms. He argues that we must learn about and cherish the most valuable forms: “Enlightened cherishing can be thought of as a love of objects and actions that by certain norms and standards are worthy of our love. It is a love that knowledge justifies” (p. 6). By caring about the things in our world that express values such as love, caring, freedom, and justice, we can deepen our relationships and strengthen our ability to express values in aesthetically rich forms (Broudy, 1972; Moore, 1992).

One of the most powerful emotions in aesthetic experience is the sense of drama. “Tension, suspense, surprise, and drama are needed for the kind of absorption in life that happiness requires” (Broudy, 1972, p. 9). The emotions that we feel most strongly direct us, challenge us, lead us into deeper understanding, and leave us changed. Emotion helps us integrate diverse bits and pieces of experience into deeper, more meaningful relationships and practices. “New relations emerge, new priorities are entertained, new facets brought together, as the ordinary is shown to be pregnant with the momentous” (Kupfer, 1983, p. 85).

Imaginative Powers

In aesthetically informed experience, we are required “to make imaginative connections, as the form is not handed over ready-made” (Kupfer, 1983, p. 159). The complexity and richness of aesthetic experience suggests new combinations and multiple interpretations “from the free play of the imagination” (Kupfer, 1983, p. 159). We imagine the future and interpret the past within a network of meanings—how well goals harmonize with interests and emotions, possible effects on others, effects on our own development, where we need to change, and so forth. “Applying the aesthetic ideal can lead to a discovery of possible courses of action by which greater integration, diversity, or growth are achievable” (Kupfer, 1983, p. 165).

The story form is exceptionally generative of imagined possibilities. Guided by the aesthetic ideal, we can “evaluate the imagined living as if it were a work of narrative art” (Kupfer, 1983, p. 167). Good stories stir the imagination by bringing to life vivid details of

character, setting, event, intention, and outcome within a meaningful theme. Because “stories create a reality of their own—in life and in art,” (Bruner, 1986, p. 43), we use them to critique our current situations and to imagine possible lives (Bruner, 1987).

In summary, we need to strive for sensitivity to the world, reciprocal and playful interactions, and emotionally rich and value-laden images and stories in family and consumer sciences. In aesthetically developed experience we create deep and varied connections among diverse parts—guided by overarching thematic wholes. The more artfully we imagine diverse details and connections, the better we can compose aesthetically informed life in our organizations.

Aesthetics and Reflective Human Action

Terry (1993) states, “Many of us sense a deep, pervasive, and profoundly disturbing disconnection between the world that we experience as we actually live in it and the world that we create and describe in our rhetoric and imagination” (p. 113). Fortunately, reflective human action emphasizes the authenticity, ethical sensibility, features of action, and spirituality needed to reestablish meaningful connections. The task of leaders in family and consumer sciences, therefore, is to rejuvenate and strengthen relationships by taking reflective human action. More specifically, an aesthetic approach can contribute to the authenticity, ethics, and spirituality of reflective human action.

Authenticity

Authenticity is a central issue in reflective human action and leadership (Andrews, Mitstifer, Rehm, & Vaughn, 1995; Terry, 1993). According to Andrews, Mitstifer, Rehm, & Vaughn (1995), authenticity means establishing truthful relationships with ourselves, others, and situations:

Authenticity is genuineness, it is trustworthiness; it entails action that is both true and real, within ourselves and in the world. We are authentic when we discern, seek and live into truth as persons in diverse communities and in the real world. (p. 25)

The aesthetic ideal teaches us to remain open to relations in everyday life and to imaginatively consider ways parts might deepen and enhance each other. By seeking aesthetic unity from diversity, we can learn new truths about ourselves and others.

Terry (1993) argues that “lived authenticity is a prerequisite required to build an enduring, thriving, and hope-filled future” (p. 142). An aesthetic approach can help us make more authentic

decisions as we project ourselves into the future, imagining various repercussions, consequences, joys, and pains of alternative story lines. “This imaginative play enables the individual to foresee not merely moments of pleasure and pain, but relations among far-reaching habits and interests” (Kupfer, 1983, p. 141).

“Authenticity requires embodiment; it propels us to participate in life; it empowers” (Terry, 1993, p. 128). Authentic action requires us to actively engage in relationships with people and our world. The aesthetic qualities of receptivity and playful responsibility can empower us to embody new and more authentic forms. When we think of life as an art, we consider it open to the creation of new solutions. We remain open to the world, imagining innovations and newness.

Art focuses on the journey as a historical trip but highlights the receiving and creating aspect of human dwelling, the flow of past and future into each other that clarifies sense and significance for the journey itself. Art is that process which reveals our being to us, gives shape and substance to the journey, calls us not only to attend to ourselves and others, but also to stand, to present ourselves, to articulate values, and to be centers of authenticity. (Terry, 1993, p. 179)

The aesthetic goal of achieving harmonious form from complexity implies that there is always hope that a vision can become real. In aesthetically oriented organizations, we strive to shape our journeys based on genuineness and truth in concrete situations. Complex emotions, values, aspects of character, and action can become integrated into harmonious—yet fluid and playful—forms.

Ethical sensibility

Ethical principles such as responsibility, love, participation, freedom, and justice guide reflective human action (Andrews, Mitstifer, Rehm, & Vaughn, 1995). Reflective human action involves considering the needs of others, discussing ethical meanings, and using ethical methods in goal achievement. As Terry (1993) states, “One aspect of ethics is knowing what to do, the other is doing it” (p. 153). Although it is not always clear how we should practice these principles in specific situations, we should seek answers in the spirit of the common good. Once we arrive at a vision of the common good, we need to carry through with our action.

Because reflective human action is inclusive of relationships among all people, it “can transform apparent opposites into polarities and typologies, reaching out to embrace differences while holding to a recognizable center” (Terry, 1993, p. 127).

A deep sense of connection and responsiveness underlies both ethical and aesthetic sensibilities. If “relationships can both communicate a social message and can be characterized by beauty and dignity” (Bowers, 1990, p. 76), aesthetic criteria can guide ethical action in our communities. Like good art, a good community cherishes reciprocity among many parts, a sense of the whole, and shared ends. As Kupfer (1983) puts it, creating a community is essentially an aesthetic pursuit:

A social community is a whole, complete in itself. Since it consists of people in relation to one another its existing for the sake of itself as an ongoing whole implies existing for the benefit of its members and their relations. The strength of the whole requires the integrity and autonomy of its constituents as well as their mutual support. (p. 74)

Kupfer adds that the contributions of all members are essential to the whole, and the community “squanders none of the talent, industry, or capacity of its members” (p. 74).

Because each person is vital to the success of the whole, all members must participate. If members feel they are an integral part of the whole, they will cherish the community’s existence and take time to artfully shape it for the good of everyone. There is an emotional deepening when we are “anchored in a sphere wider than ourselves” (Kupfer, 1983, p. 83). Free play is needed for individuals to respond to each other in the ongoing experiences of community-making (Jardine, 1988). To Huizinga (1955), a “magical” bond tends to form when “sharing something important” (p. 12) in a play community.

By virtue of the fact that “both the reconciliation of tensions and dovetailing of the diverse call for freshness in invention and vision” (Kupfer, 1983, p. 77), an aesthetic approach to ethical issues challenges everyone to fully use their imaginations. Diversity and tensions are viewed as essential elements that excite and enrich the greater whole. Because stories capture numerous details, themes, and possibilities, they provide a “major link between our own sense of self and our sense of the social world around us. The common coin may be provided by the forms of narrative that the culture offers us” (Bruner, 1986, p. 69). Artful organizations honor the “tribal storytellers,” experienced members who pass on the history and values that bond individuals into a group (DePree, 1989). Ethical sensibility can emerge if aesthetic ideals—harmony from diversity, resolution of dramatic tensions, and balance of interests—are held as a community continues to develop a shared story.

Spirituality

According to Terry (1993), spirituality exhibits faith and courage as we engage with the world, even when there are no answers. “In the broadest sense, spirituality is an aspect of any attempt to approach or attend to the invisible factors in life and to transcend the personal, concrete, finite particulars of this world” (Moore, 1992, p. 232). We have faith that “any authentic act, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant, is upheld by the universe as worthy and honorable” (p. 274). “For what we do, in the final analysis, rests solely on our faith that our actions in our families, communities, associations, institutions, and the world contribute to the well-being of all those we touch and serve” (p. 274).

The aesthetic approach can heighten imagination and deepen the sense of connection within a greater whole. “When imagination is allowed to move to deep places, the sacred is revealed” (Moore, 1992, p. 289). Aesthetic experience is about creating beauty and transforming the ordinary into expressions of deeper and wider meanings. In our organizations, the “stuff of the world is there to be made into images that become for us tabernacles of spirituality and containers of mystery” (Moore, 1992, p. 301). We can reflect the poetry, beauty, rhythm, emotion, and value of spiritual meanings in our projects, conversations, and traditions.

Every time we engage in action, we are demonstrating spiritual faith that we can artfully create a meaningful future for ourselves and communities from previously unconnected parts. Spirituality “thrusts us back into life with all its hurts, paradoxes, and evils” (p. 272). Artful organizations are comprised of people who share much more than talents and joys; people become so intimate with their work and the group that they can weep for each other’s sorrows, betrayal of ideas and principles, or other disappointments that afflict the spirit (Chappell, 1993; DePree, 1989).

Features of Action

Of course, one of the most crucial elements of reflective human action is action itself. Regardless of the specific action, every action has seven features. The reader is invited to consult Terry (1993) and Andrews, Mitstifer, Rehm, and Vaughn (1995) for a full discussion of these features, but they can be summarized briefly here:

1. Mission: the purpose, vision, goal, or direction toward which action is directed



2. Power: the decision, commitment, and passion that gives energy to action
3. Structure: the arrangements, plans, forms, and processes through which to accomplish action
4. Resources: anything usable and measurable to accomplish a mission
5. Existence: the ecological and historical setting of action
6. Meaning: the why of action, values, reasons
7. Fulfillment: the completed act, the embodiment of action.

By carefully examining each feature of action, we can frame issues and resolve problems more authentically.

Aesthetically framed questions can lead to new insights: What needs to be changed in the mission, power, or structure so that people can respond with authenticity and cherishing? What can be changed in the resources, structure, or mission to deepen identity and meaning? What do stories within the organization reveal about weaknesses and strengths of each feature? What tensions arise between the features of action, and how can they be used for dramatic meaning? Are resources aesthetically unified with the mission and other features? Are beauty and poetry needed in any of the features? The imaginative application of aesthetic criteria offers a fresh way to assess and carry out action.

Implications for Leaders

Family and consumer scientists are challenged to take reflective human action in an age of uncertainty:

In this new world, you and I make it up as we go along, not because we lack expertise or planning skills, but because that is the nature of reality. Reality changes shape and meaning because of our activity. And it is constantly new. We are required to be there, as active participants. It can't happen without us and nobody can do it for us. (Wheatley, 1994, p. 151)

If aesthetic qualities inform our ability to unify diverse ideas, personalities, information, and materials into meaningful forms (Kupfer, 1983), we must attend to organizational aesthetics. In short, leaders must actively cultivate the creative, form-making capacities of each member in communities of practice.

Because the care we give to our surroundings reveals much about how we care for ourselves and others (Broudy, 1972; Moore, 1992), leaders must maintain an aesthetically pleasing environment. "If persons enjoy a sense of satisfaction and total involvement in their visual experiences and what they perceive" (Dohr, 1984), they are more likely to connect with their

Leaders apply an aesthetic approach by:

1. Cultivating the creative form-making capacities

2. Maintaining an aesthetically pleasing environment

spirituality and authenticity (Moore, 1992). "The use of space and objects creates new attention to seeing and knowing. Viewer's imaginations are stimulated through the freedom to create meaning for themselves" (Dohr, 1984, p. 595).

Leaders should ensure that the work environment is full of texture, color, shape, sound, pattern, and imagery so that authentic and imaginative possibilities will be generated. Every person needs a place they can call their own, seating arrangements should be circular so each person can participate equally, and desks and other physical barriers between conversing people should be removed (Chappell, 1993). When possible, work and meetings can be conducted in places that generate receptivity, playful reciprocity, emotional investment, and imagination—be it in coffee shops, parks, or homes.

The entire process of solving problems should be viewed as an aesthetic opportunity for enjoying beauty, creating meaningful form, and expressing emotion and value (Dohr, 1984). Leaders need to stop asking people to get things right; they need to start asking people to engage in life with a level of playfulness (Wheatley, 1994). Aesthetic freedom to experiment is needed so everyone can be "delighted by the surprises" (Wheatley, 1994, p. 142). Leaders must invite the play atmosphere which prompts dramatic tensions, diversity, responsivity, and imagination.

The aesthetic abilities of all members must be tapped so that the organization can become an authentic play-community—where people share an aesthetic sense of togetherness (Huizinga, 1955) and a spiritual faith in the future. But because many family and consumer scientists lack a solid education in the artistic side of life (Cox-Bishop, 1989), leaders may need to take direct steps to cultivate aesthetic sensitivities within their organizations. Artists and scholars of aesthetics could be asked to conduct educational workshops to help members become more accustomed to the aesthetic approach.

Kappa Omicron Nu's professional development module, *Leadership: Reflective Human Action* (Andrews, Mitsifer, Rehm, & Vaughn, 1995), includes several exercises designed to increase aesthetic understanding. For example, individuals and small groups can be asked to describe their organization specifically in terms of art concepts such as: color, shape, pattern, beauty, style, poetry, dance, contrast, rhythm, tension and resolution, and drama. They can be asked to notice interesting details in their environment and to share what is appealing to them.

3. Viewing problem solving as an opportunity for enjoying beauty, creating meaningful form, and expressing emotion and value

4. Sharing an aesthetic sense of togetherness

Neck and Barnard (1996) argue that professionals improve their performance, confidence, and feelings concerning their work if they reflectively assess their mental patterns. If individuals observe and record their beliefs and assumptions, mental imagery, and inner dialogue surrounding specific issues, they then can analyze positive and negative patterns. Family and consumer scientists can be asked to keep records of thought patterns surrounding important issues—followed by individual and group assessments of how these patterns relate to aesthetic qualities and how to enhance an artful approach to thinking.

Although each individual needs to fully tap personal aesthetic sensibilities, Wheatley (1994) also reminds us that achievements emerge from groups that are rich in relationships:

Innovation is fostered by information gathered from new connections; from insights gained by journeys into other disciplines or places; from active, collegial networks and fluid, open boundaries. Innovation arises from ongoing circles of exchange, where information is not just accumulated or stored, but created. (p. 113)

If leaders must help initiate relationships by widely distributing information (Wheatley, 1994), ethically and spiritually satisfying organizational forms will be multiplied.

Leaders can initiate opportunities for diverse individuals to interact and respond to each other concerning aesthetics. For example, Rowley and Hart (1996) suggest that video case studies be used to enable groups to share experiences and reflect together on common issues. Leaders in family and consumer sciences can identify educational (or even realistic fiction) videotapes that focus on a pertinent organizational issue, then ask members to analyze issues according to aesthetic criteria (such as balance of parts, harmony, rhythm, spiritual meanings, imaginative expression). If people are willing, actual organizational meetings and other activities could be videotaped, then analyzed for aesthetic qualities and areas needing improvement.

5. Assessing mental patterns and inner dialogue

6. Developing rich and diverse relationships

7. Developing unique evaluation models

Sahakian and Stockton (1996) argue that teachers should collaborate to generate their own models for observing each other—rather than relying on the leaders to observe and evaluate performance using existing evaluation forms. Each team can establish its own issues, ask questions about how to approach issues, and arrive at reasons for choices. Similarly, teams in family and consumer sciences organizations can be formed to arrive at ways to help improve the artistry of tasks and interac-

tions: How can tensions be resolved? What parts of the whole need attention? Are emotion and play integrated? Is each person spiritually connected to the on-going organizational drama?

One powerful mode of meaning-making is through storytelling. An aesthetically ordered group will celebrate diversity and dramatic tensions, all within shared themes (Bruner, 1986, 1987) in the continuing organizational story. If leaders consider all members to be “great weavers of tales, outdoing one another around the campfire to see which stories best capture our imaginations and the experiences of our lives” (Wheatley, 1994, p. 142), a continuing group narrative can develop. Members should be encouraged to imagine many possible worlds as they anticipate the future through stories (Bruner, 1986).

Leaders can structure opportunities for storytelling within their organizations in several ways. Ackerman, Maslin-Ostrowski, and Christensen (1996) suggest that members of a group can gain new understandings and explore imaginative possibilities by sharing written stories. Participants might write a one-page story about a real life work experience—developing the personality of a lead character, giving a title, and detailing dialogue—to share and discuss in small groups. Leaders in family and consumer sciences similarly could use members’ stories to reflect on a wide variety of organizational issues—authenticity, ethical relationships, spiritual needs and strengths, features of action, value expression, or imaginative opportunities, to name a few.

Chappell (1993) believes that people need to share personal stories as well as professional stories in order to develop deep bonds that build unity and “send the message to the community that it has permission to be fully human at work” (p. 74). Family and consumer scientists could adapt several of Chappell’s techniques: bringing members together specifically to tell personal stories ranging from “How I met my spouse” to “My greatest failure,” taking time to ask people about events in their lives, celebrating events of common living such as birthdays and retirements, beginning meetings by telling a brief story, relaying stories in newsletters, and sponsoring cultural or educational events that weave the organization’s story into the community at large.

Finally, research studies should be conducted regarding the aesthetic dimensions of leadership and organizational development in family and consumer sciences (Cox-Bishop, 1989;

8. Using stories to reflect on issues and build community

Rehm, 1992-93; Van Dommelen, 1975). Interpretive studies are needed to reveal the nature and meanings (Hultgren, 1989) of aesthetics in the organizational work and leadership in consumer and family sciences. Critical studies could illuminate oppressive personal and social conditions (Plihal, 1989) that prevent members and leaders of our organizations from engaging in aesthetically satisfying work.

There is no limit to the possible ways that leaders can aesthetically approach an organization's authentic values, ethical sensibility, spiritual essence, and actions. According to Wheatley (1994), "We need to be able to trust that something as simple as a clear core of values and vision, kept in motion through continuing dialogue, can lead to order" (p. 147). From an aesthetic perspective, organizational members' imaginations will grow as they engage in the world with the reciprocity of a dance. "Knowing the steps ahead of time is not important; being willing to engage with the music and move freely onto the dance floor is what's key" (Wheatley, 1994, p. 142-143).

Conclusion

If leadership is "to take responsibility for ourselves in concert with others, seeking to create and build a global commonwealth worthy of the best that we as human beings have to offer" (Terry, 1993, p. 275), the aesthetic perspective can teach leaders to do so with beauty and poetry. Leadership can become a playful rhythm of receptivity to the world, responding to what is presented, building connections, and creating unified forms from diverse parts. Organizations can become authentic and spiritual communities, bonded by a continuing story with dramatic questions and imaginative visions. Aesthetics can empower each individual to express a unique voice and each group to create unified forms of action (Rehm, 1993). "Those who give voice and form to our search for meaning, and who help us make our work purposeful, are leaders we cherish and to whom we return gift for gift" (Wheatley, 1994, p. 135).

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Reasoning Strategies for Achieving Ethical Leadership

Joan I. Quilling

Ethical leadership is humanistic and visionary in nature. It is couched in such core values as that of trust, respect, and fairness. Leadership can be more effective within groups when decisions are viewed as open, interconnected loops that raise human aspirations. Of the several approaches available for developing ethical leadership skills, hermeneutic circles provide a sound means for interpreting and assessing ethical action. When coupled with core values, hermeneutic circles enable leaders to envision the impact of individual and group actions upon social networks.

Democracies depend upon the willingness of individuals and groups to participate in setting agendas for action. Implementing the desired actions of individuals and groups rests in the hands of elected and appointed leaders. Preferably, those individuals are chosen by an objective process that limits bias in their selection.

Leadership is a complex term involving numerous facets. Traditional perspectives of leadership may view it as a complex of styles and/or behaviors (Daniels, 1983). Or, in democratic settings, leaders command and/or guide groups (Beal, Bohlen, & Raudabaugh, 1962). These traditional perspectives of leadership have given way to more fluid conceptions of the term. Recent discussions of leadership have focused upon leaders as visionaries, as individuals capable of empowering others, and as individuals who follow acceptable standards of behavior, i.e., ethics (Boatman & Adams, 1992; Wilcox & Ebbs, 1993). From his research, Terry (1993) proposed a theory that combined six historical views of leadership with authentic action.

This paper compares autocratic and humanistic organizations in discussing the role of ethics in organizations, describes various approaches for developing ethical leadership, and explores, in depth, the concept of hermeneutic circles as a means of interpreting and assessing ethical action. For purposes of simplicity of discussion in this paper, the leaders of the newer, more humanistic, values-based approaches of leadership will be called ethical.

Organizational Contrasts

The social nature of organizations is frequently overlooked. The setting in which leaders function is tied to perceptions of leadership. Although organizations are goal oriented around a certain

mission, they are also social in nature. The social nature of the organization is frequently classified as autocratic or humanistic. Much time and group effort, however, are expended in policies and guidelines governing performance. deVries (1986) believes that humans follow the laws and precedents they create and that social structures are cultures that influence performance. The autocratic organization stresses lines of command, specific positions, and controlled performance. Such organizations, according to Smith (1992), help to create inequality.

Humanistic organizations, on the other hand, stress nonhierarchical structures, webs of relationships, equal opportunity, and a sense of community. Leaders of these organizations are viewed as having a frame of reference that better supports the core values of trust, respect, caring, responsibility, justice, fairness, and citizenship (Bunting, 1991).

Core values are the foundation of ethical behaviors (Walker, 1993). In humanistic organizations, the leader's ethics are crucial. Ethical leaders help to hold the cultural group together (Barge, 1994). Ethical perspectives in autocratic organizations may be less subject to question because the lines of command are well defined. People are relegated to specific line and staff positions from which there is little deviation. And, they are encouraged to be obedient in following directives from those above them who have more seniority or prestigious positions. In humanistic organizations, groups form and reform around changing tasks. The ethical stance of the positional leader becomes a part of the work and social networks within the organization. As the leader moves from group to group, dialogue about group tasks and social relationships occurs. How people are treated with regard to core values across groups affects performance significantly.

When individuals have the autonomy to initiate and carry out independent tasks versus directed tasks within autocratic organizations, motivation comes from within versus outside the individual. Core values become the driving force behind individual initiative. As Boatman and Adams (1992) suggest, "[w]hat begins with the individual in a single organization could ultimately affect a community, a society or even the world" (p. 62).

Blyder (1994) points out that Western cultures are dominated by a focus on "initiatives and power" (p. 126). Retaining the status-quo or keeping an organization on a fixed course reduces uncertainty and increases control. As control increases, greater accuracy in prediction occurs. Scientific research is based upon this premise,

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and leaders holding this perspective seek control so that outcomes can be assured. When groups and organizational settings are dominated by control, the non-ethical values of money, power, and prestige, among others, take precedence. The dominance of non-ethical values in organizations makes them static and less capable of change because individual achievement is stressed over group achievement.

With ethical leaders, however, core values take precedence; they transcend time and place (Walker, 1993). Core values provide leaders with the capacity to create the state of mind of societies (Boatman & Adams, 1992). Leaders of groups or organizations connect people to outcomes. When the connection focuses upon performance, monetary gain, and self promotion, the outcomes of group activities become lost in the ongoing effort to compete. Ethical leaders, on the other hand, look at the impact of what they do related to not only their organization but to ones that interconnect. The give-and-take that occurs through these connections impacts ever greater numbers of people, ultimately transforming cultural groups (Deshler & Selener, 1991).

Ethical leaders view groups as open loops. These loops continuously expand to encompass related entities. The groups touched by the ethical leader reform ideas and decisions to better reflect new data entering the organizational loop. As ethical leaders infuse core values throughout the interconnected loops, they continuously raise human aspirations and performance (Boatman & Adams, 1992).

Performance Strategies for Ethical Leadership

As societies develop global orientations, core values become a dominant force. They assure that group interactions are dependable. If diverse groups cannot interact on some unified basis, relationships are tense or disunity occurs. Leadership grounded in core values is emancipative. It frees individuals from ethical relativism so they can concentrate on group goals whether it be trade, human rights, a sharing of the arts, or other forms of interaction (Deshler & Selener, 1991).

“
Leadership grounded in core values is emancipative.”

As global interactions increase, leaders encounter ever more diverse groups. The majority of us work in small, closed societies or groups within a larger culture. We expect our leaders to seek out and interconnect our group with others having similar goals for the mutual benefit, support, and/or profit of all. Collaboration and teamwork help to raise the “level of ethical aspiration” (Wilcox & Ebbs, 1993, p. 38).

Group members hold high expectations for their leaders. They are quick to criticize leaders when jobs are lost, goals are not met, conflicts erupt, or other negative outcomes occur. Leaders capable of navigating the shark infested waters of leadership typically have to develop their skills through personal initiative. There are some limited forms of leadership training such as working one’s way up the ranks while learning from mentors, or attending training sessions designed to prepare leaders with specific skills. Because the goal for leaders is to express themselves fully, they must discover “who they are, what their strengths and weaknesses are, and how to fully deploy their strengths and compensate for their weaknesses. . . . The key to full self-expression is understanding one’s self and the world, and the key to understanding is learning from one’s life and experience” (Bennis & Goldsmith, 1994, p. 23). Leadership development, therefore, is highly personalized.

A variety of strategies have been suggested for developing ethical leadership. Several of these are discussed below. The list, however, should by no means be construed as exhaustive.

One strategy that can be used to help leaders develop ethical behaviors asks them to commit a code of ethics to memory. The majority of professional groups have developed such codes. These codes reflect a variety of core values. Core values “govern human effectiveness” (Bunting, 1991, p. 40), help leaders make informed judgments (Wilcox & Ebbs, 1993), and clarify personal biases (Evans, 1993). Preprofessional education can easily require such a skill. Individuals can be graded on how well they remember each principle. Memorization is one of the oldest teaching/learning strategies. This approach may still have merit. But, memorization does not assure performance; grades do not guarantee use once the course is completed.

Another approach for developing ethical leadership involves observation of the behavior of others when faced with an ethical dilemma. Follow-up dialogue is required to examine and interpret ethical performance. An observation instrument can provide the standards (core values) for ethical performance as a means for recording the observation. An observation process can help each person better recognize when their own behavior is less than ethical. Dialogue regarding professional applications of core values in specific settings helps individuals understand their application. This approach requires a highly skilled discussion leader to help preprofessionals and professionals interpret the ethical applications of core values.

Strategies for developing ethical leadership:

1. Memorizing codes of conduct
2. Observing and assessing human performance

A third approach for developing ethical leaders involves dependence upon the leader's intuition or common sense. Wilcox and Ebbs (1993) suggest that leaders imagine themselves in various dilemmas and then compare possible decisions with what they intuitively know to be right. The questions that arise include: How do leaders develop such critical intuition? Do we expect them to come to the profession with the core values in place and fully functioning? Such an expectation is probably naive. The majority of individuals have had only limited testing of their core values over time. Those tests may not have been accompanied by opportunities to analyze and reflect upon decisions made. Thus a leader may lack skill in applying core values to ethical dilemmas.

A fourth approach to developing ethical leadership involves ethical decision making (Walker, 1993). An eight step process consists of the following approaches:

- Analyzing the situation
- Identifying the problem
- Identifying the stakeholders in a decision
- Developing options
- Eliminating unethical options
- Evaluating consequences of ethical alternatives
- Selecting the most ethical alternative
- Implementing the choice

The author cautions that when striving to make ethical decisions, choices may require sacrifice and not be beneficial to all who might be affected by the decision. In addition, individuals can know the logic of decision making, but emotions, attitudes, and cultural norms can override logic. Personal preferences (non-ethical values) frequently take precedence over core values.

The fifth approach is grounded in hermeneutic circles. Hermeneutics is a philosophical approach that focuses upon "underlying principles which guide . . . interpretations of text" (Pepinsky, 1982, p. 83). The philosophy was proposed by Habermas in an attempt to resolve divisions between values, facts, theory, and practice (Ewert, 1991). Hermeneutics is a "comprehensive theory of rationality sufficient to encompass science, morality and art . . ." (Ewert, 1991, p. 346). Hermeneutic circles are designed to respond to paradoxes or contradictions in thinking. They help to reveal the hidden values in our thinking. Keep in mind that text analysis is the primary medium used to apply these ideas.

deVries (1986) points out that hermeneutic circles are open loops or incomplete circles. There is always a need to seek new understandings. We may live and work under a set of principles,

but the ethical leader continuously contributes to the ongoing development of the principles. S/he fully realizes that open loops help us rise to "higher levels of understanding" (p. 143). Similarly, Andrews, Mitstifer, Rehm, and Vaughn (1995) label such leaders as authentic; they tend to "cultivate a sense of openness and wonder" (p. 6).

When using hermeneutic circles, deVries (1986) suggests three processes to use in their application.

First, we must examine the culture that surrounds our interpretations.

Second, we follow the policies of the organizations to which we belong but we also contribute to their continuous development and interpretation.

Third, we constantly seek higher levels of understanding of the policies we use so that truth and justice are a part of our decision-making process.

Two examples in the following text attempt to apply the hermeneutic circles process to human interaction.

Example I

Janice is a young entry level professional who has recently been asked by her employer to choose a supplier for a large number of advertising posters for her company. She meets with several suppliers. Supplier A provides a low bid for the work but the product lacks color and impact. Supplier B can provide a colorful, high impact poster but would charge \$3,000 dollars more than the low bidder. Supplier C can meet the low bid and provide a colorful product, but the paper stock is inferior. Supplier C also offers a free trip to a health spa if the company sends them business. Janice's typical standard is to select the lowest bidder. Janice discusses what she has found with a colleague. The colleague, Marsha, tells her that most buyers look at low bid but also consider the perks that are offered by the supplier. In fact, Marsha just returned from a cruise provided by one of the suppliers she selected for a company project.

In analyzing this situation, Janice needs to realize that whatever course of action she chooses, satisfactory closure of the decision may not be possible although a supplier can be selected. The ethical leader is well aware that (a) policies are typically incomplete because they serve as guides versus strict structures

3. Using common sense

4. Carrying out ethical decision-making strategies

5. Using hermeneutic circles to analyze contradictions in behavior and policy

of performance; (b) interpretations of decisions can vary widely among individuals and groups so we must analyze the culture surrounding our decision; and (c) one needs to be open and seek out alternative solutions because of the incompleteness of most policies (deVries, 1986). No matter which bidder Janice selected, she would face some desirable (reasonable price, special treatment) and undesirable (lack of color and impact, excessive cost, or inferior paper stock) consequences. Contradictions are involved in whatever choice she makes. deVries (1986) suggests that such dilemmas hone the ethical leader's skills in making the organization function more effectively. An awareness of hermeneutic circles coupled with a solid grounding in core values enables the ethical leader to point out contradictions to others, seek new facts and ideas to support a position, help others participate in resolving dilemmas, and reevaluate the usefulness of policies. A knowledge of core values, ethical decision-making strategies, and hermeneutic circles helps leaders perform ethically in humanistic organizations.

Example II

Arthur is teaching a family relations class at a local university. He is responsible for several sections of the class three times a week. One of the class sections includes 50% African Americans, 10% Hispanics, and the remaining students are white. When class discussions occur, Arthur frequently asks penetrating questions of white students but relatively simple yes/no questions of the African Americans and Hispanics in the class. When African American students compare their graded papers with others in the class, they note that the white students receive a more critical analysis of their work than they do. They also notice that Arthur spends considerable time after class discussing ideas with the white students. When African Americans and/or Hispanics join the group, the discussion tends to end rapidly. The university which employs Arthur has an affirmative action office and clear policies outlining nondiscriminatory behaviors.

Students in the class face contradictions between faculty behavior and university policy and between the core value of equal treatment and their role as students whose grades may suffer if a faculty member's discriminatory behavior is reported to the affirmative action office.

In this hermeneutic circle, (a) the faculty member does not subscribe to policies which are in place; (b) there are a variety of ways this problem could be dealt with, ranging from speaking to

the faculty member and dealing with the consequences of such action to registering a formal complaint with the affirmative action office; and (c) a discrepancy exists between the policies and their application. Awareness of this discrepancy can lead to a clearer focus on value positions and problem solutions versus resorting to violence or class disruption to bring about changes in policy interpretations. The contradictions can be used as a basis upon which to set an agenda for action on the part of the students, faculty, and/or administration. By clarifying how and under what circumstances the contradictions contribute to inequities and the oversight of core values, policies and core values can be interpreted more effectively and equitably. The use of the hermeneutic circle enables leaders to initiate a quest for ethical balance and justice for the groups which experience the impact of the decisions. Its use will not prevent errors in judgment but can foster the development of sound rationales supporting organizational decisions. The hermeneutic circle was designed for use in analyzing written policies. An attempt was made here to broaden that analysis to encompass the human dimension impacted by these policies.

Summary

As societies become more globally oriented through electronic, economic, and personal linkages, core values become the foundation for guiding organizational behavior. Ethical leaders reflect core values through the strategies they use to interconnect groups for mutual profit and human welfare. A variety of strategies can serve as guideposts in helping leaders create greater unity among groups. Some of these strategies include memorizing codes of conduct, observing and assessing human performance based upon core values, using common sense, carrying out ethical decision-making strategies, and analyzing contradictions in behavior and policy through the use of hermeneutic circles. The latter strategy, when coupled with a comparison and contrast of policies with the core values involved in human interactions, can provide leaders with a clearer vision of those behaviors that reflect a critical standard or guide for human behavior and enhance ethical decision-making.

Memory, intuition, common sense, and knowledge of ethical decision-making individually lack the depth of analysis necessary to assure ethical performance. The complexity of ethical behavior requires a depth of analysis that is grounded in core values and ethical in nature if organizations and societies are to survive in an



increasingly interdependent and confrontational world. The use of hermeneutic circles can strengthen a leader's ethical role in organizations. Their use can contribute authentic action which involves the "search for the common good among the diversity of perspectives" (Andrews, Mitstifer, Rehm, and Vaughn, 1995, p. 13). Their use will not prevent ethical blunders but can cause a leader to pause and cross-check decisions against a process that focuses upon the contradictions within our decisions and the value premises that guide the outcomes we choose.

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Creating a College Capstone Course Based on Reflective Human Action

Connie J. Ley

This article describes one academic unit's experience with developing a capstone course based on the reflective human action model. This illustration, while unique to one program, may suggest applicability to other family and consumer science units in higher education.

"The Place of Family and Consumer Sciences in Higher Education" was the theme of the Spring 1995 issue of *Kappa Omicron Nu FORUM*. Authors in this volume explored the possible fate of the discipline in higher education. The case was made for a model of integration to address pervasive problems confronting society (Lerner, Miller, & Ostrom (1995)). Several authors made recommendations for creating strong well-grounded programs that will in the end sustain the profession. Fahm (1995) championed educating strong leaders, and Weiner (1995) stressed the importance of maintaining program viability and visibility. One significant way family and consumer sciences can heighten visibility and remain viable within the university community is through its participation in the general education program offered by the institution.

The Department of Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) at Illinois State has played an active role in the university's general education program for more than two decades. In 1990, the university community felt compelled to examine its general education program. The entire university faculty questioned the expanse of the program which provided only one common course for students university-wide and a selection of nearly 300 courses which students self-select from among eight course groupings in the university studies program. Thus began the venture of redesigning a meaningful, provocative general education experience for Illinois State students. An explanation of the total process of developing this new general education program is perhaps more appropriately described in another manuscript prepared by the university committee who labored on the development of the project. The commentary in this article focuses primarily on one department's efforts to create a valid capstone course for FCS students as a culminating academic experience for both general education and the majors. Student comments, in their own words, are shared to indicate their valuable contribution to planning.

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Applying University Criteria

The Department was obliged to develop a course based on criteria established at the university level. Figure 1 includes the capstone guidelines provided by the university committee that created the new general education program.

In addition to the specific directives, the course would need to adhere to an overall philosophy and to goal statements that had been determined for the new general education program, approved by the Illinois State University Academic Senate on February 23, 1991.

Creating a Disciplinary Capstone Theme

The Department of Family and Consumer Sciences at Illinois State University has offered a required senior seminar for majors since 1987. "Contemporary Issues in Family and Consumer Sciences" is a one-credit course which gives students an opportunity to synthesize their undergraduate experience; look toward their future as professionals; and examine enduring issues in the field generally and in their areas of specialization particularly.

The proposed general education program requires all students to complete a capstone course which is intended to synthesize their general education experience. The Department viewed the need to develop a new and different capstone course for majors as an opportunity to expand on some important content and processes which had only been touched upon in the one-hour seminar. In addition, the new course could incorporate new ideas and themes.

Several FCS faculty members discussed the possibility of including leadership as a worthy theme for a capstone course. From this spark of interest, it became apparent that leadership could in fact become the focal point, the organizing theme of the entire capstone experience. Coincidentally, the Kappa Omicron Nu module on *Leadership: Reflective Human Action* was acquired by the Department. In reviewing the university goals for the course, it was easy to relate to the theory of reflective human action, particularly as in regards to leadership development. Thus it evolved that the capstone course proposed by the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences at Illinois State University became known by the title "Leadership as Reflective Human Action." The course builds on the existing FCS 300 capstone course, "Contemporary Issues in Family and Consumer Sciences,"

and on the model proposed by Andrews, Mitstifer, Rehm, and Vaughn in the Kappa Omicron Nu professional development module, *Leadership: Reflective Human Action* (1995).

Figure 1

University Guidelines for Developing a Capstone Course for General Education

Course Title:

Disciplines, Diversities, and Solutions: A Capstone Seminar

Prerequisites:

All other General Education Courses
Senior Standing

Content: In *Disciplines, Diversities, and Solutions: A Capstone Seminar*, students actively examine disciplines, included in their own major, recognizing how they interact with social, cultural, business, political, and environmental phenomena. They identify current local and global issues and disciplines that bear on them, obtain pertinent knowledge from the disciplines, and apply that knowledge to the development of reasoned solutions to problems raised by the issues. Students assess the consequence of their proposed solutions, recognize responsibility for them, and understand and respect the perspectives and values of others. Capstone activities incorporate fundamental concepts learned in General Education and encourage students to explore the interplay of ideas among the many knowledge areas as applied to various disciplines.

Two varieties of *Disciplines, Diversities, and Solutions: A Capstone Seminar* are:

1. Trans-disciplinary (or university wide) capstone courses, and
2. Disciplinary capstone courses.

Both versions of the course will fulfill the same goals and meet the same criteria. Version 1 will emphasize a set of disciplines and reference the major fields of the students enrolled, while version 2 will emphasize a particular discipline and reference others.

Goals: In *Disciplines, Diversities, and Solutions: A Capstone Seminar*, students will:

1. Learn about the historical, cultural, scientific, economic and social aspects of substantive disciplinary issues;
2. Understand the impact of society and culture on interpretations and values set by persons with opposing viewpoints on a subject of interest;
3. Evaluate their own attitudes about life in relation to the values of others;
4. Learn about the social and intellectual origins of positions and issues within and about their major discipline.
5. Learn about the effects their discipline has and may have on the wider intellectual, social, economic and political communities;
6. Apply skills in critical thinking and reflective reading and writing to particular issues related to their major discipline and its applications, and;
7. Develop goals, skills, and strategies for the transition to life beyond the baccalaureate degree.

Criteria: In developing a course in *Disciplines, Diversity, and Solutions: A Capstone Seminar*, faculty will attend to the following criteria:

1. The issues selected should have significance to society and should incorporate differing perspectives;
2. The issues selected must permit reasonable examination from multiple disciplines;
3. The course should be taught in a way to facilitate the ability to generalize to issues beyond those introduced in the course;
4. The course will reflect the essential relationship between disciplines and General Education goals and student outcomes.

Source: Illinois State University, General Education Program, adopted for a Pilot by the Academic Senate, February, 1994, p. 12.



Using Student Ideas in the Course Design

Student insight was sought for the redesign of the existing capstone course. To help acquaint students with the proposed change in general education and to encourage their thorough examination of the course in which they were currently enrolled, capstone analysis became an assignment for students enrolled in FCS 300. More than one hundred students during two semesters were given the assignment at semester's end to compare and contrast the course they were studying with the guidelines for the pilot general education capstone course. This activity helped to inform students (who would soon become alumni) that a change was likely to occur in the university's general education program. It also gave students a real-life situation which needed a solution. It made them feel that their ideas and experience with the course could provide valuable assistance to the Department as the faculty wrestled with creating a capstone which met the needs of the students, the Department, and the University.

Student comments covered a wide spectrum of reaction. In most instances, they were thoughtful and revealed important perspectives that were useful to faculty as the new course design evolved. Although only a few students made direct reference to leadership as a gap in the existing capstone course, many students expressed sentiments which showed a strong connection with principles of the new reality (self-reference, information, relationships, and vision) upon which the reflective human action model is based.

In regards to self-reference or the ability to change and renew, students knew they would face change as they made the transition from college to another phase of their lives. They also indicated an awareness that change would just be part of what they had to face throughout their lifetime. One apparel merchandising and design major thought about working with people different from herself and the change that might necessitate, "... a person's attitude is going to affect how they do their job and just learning to be flexible and readjust your professional attitude would be helpful."

Being able to assess your own performance is a critical element to affecting change, yet most teachers know the difficulty in persuading students to practice self-evaluation. Most students who were surveyed about this capstone course said

that even though they did not like self-evaluation, it should be a focus of such a course. Remarks from a food and nutrition-dietetics major reflected the feelings expressed by various students: "Because there would be more time, it would be a good idea to increase opportunities for student self-evaluation." In addition, he and other students wanted to plan for the future, but realized that uncertainty was part of that future and that planning was just a piece of the puzzle they needed to fit together. His remarks represent student thinking on this matter: "It would be good to develop goals, skills, and strategies so we are preparing ourselves for the transition after graduation. On the other hand, is it actually possible to prepare students for something they might just have to experience? Getting along in the world might be more a matter of building post-graduation confidence and maturity skills."

"We will be working with so many different types of people after graduation; we should take the opportunity to interact more with the different types of people in our capstone class. Our group had minority students, students from foreign countries, older students, and students from different programs in the department. It would have been interesting to spend more time to hear how their values and ideas were different." These remarks from a housing and environmental design major were valuable insights.

Although most senior students are ready for a break from school, they recognize the need for a continuous stream of information to allow them to remain abreast of new developments in the field. The reflections of a human development and family resources major indicate the need for learning after graduation and the importance of current information. "It is important to be life-long learners and to keep up on current events and to share and receive information from fellow-colleagues. We should subscribe to a journal or several related to our field of study. It couldn't hurt to take a graduate class each semester to keep up on your field of study even if you are not working for a master's."

On the topic of the importance of relationships among events, ideas, and people, students also provided insights. From a student in housing and environmental design, "Issue analysis would have been a good group project. Had 2 or 3 people teamed up to work on it, I believe the projects would have been better. There are so few times when we are able to do group projects, and I think it is



very important to learn to work as a team since so much in the work world is done through collaborative efforts."

Another opinion offered about teams came from an apparel merchandising and design student: "What if this class was team taught! The semester could be divided up and one teacher from each sequence would teach a part of it. This way we can get a feel for the major as a whole and not just our individual sequence areas." This student also valued knowing how the parts of FCS contributed to the whole.

A vision for the future is a difficult task for students. The future that is their biggest concern is employment, internships, or graduate school following graduation. A few students did think beyond these personal issues. Among them, one individual majoring in apparel merchandising and design did offer this suggestion: "One way we might know about the future of FCS depends on what people in the different areas do. Maybe students from each program area could teach a lesson to the class on how they feel they will affect the larger society in the future after they graduate."

Student ideas were valuable in the preparation of the Department's proposal, but more importantly students supported the relevance of a leadership theme. It is believed that involving students in the creation of the capstone course not only enhanced the proposal but will have a positive influence on the university committee deciding which capstone course proposals are chosen for the pilot test.

Providing a Justification for the Capstone Experience

It was believed that a strong justification was one of the keys to success in having the course proposal accepted for pilot testing by the university committee. The proposal would also need to show a strong tie to the goals and criteria for a capstone course which were set by the university committee. In the justification for the FCS course the curriculum committee wrote,

"The development of this capstone experience is based on the premise that graduates of Illinois State and the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences will undoubtedly be called upon to play leadership roles in their communities, at their workplace, in professional organizations, and the like. It seems logical to use leadership development as an overarching concept for the capstone seminar which will allow students to actively examine disciplines, including their own discipline of

Family and Consumer Sciences, and how they interact with social, cultural, economic, political, and environmental phenomena. Leaders for the future will have to identify current local and global issues, disciplines that bear on them, obtain pertinent knowledge from the disciplines, and apply that knowledge to the development of reasoned solutions to problems raised by the issues. As they prepare for leadership roles, students will learn how to assess consequences of their proposed solutions, accept responsibility for them, and understand and respect the perspectives and values of others. This capstone seminar will not only incorporate activities which are based on the fundamental concepts learned in General Education but also in discipline courses of the major. This will give students the opportunity to explore the interplay of ideas among many disciplines" (Department of Family and Consumer Sciences Curriculum Committee, 1996, pp. 1-2).

The justification also cited inspirational views related to the concept of reflective human action as the basis for stimulating students' thinking about leadership roles and the issues leaders must face. We know when students become practitioners they will find themselves in positions of leadership in the family, in neighborhoods, in the workplace, and in a variety of professional settings. We also know that every day of their lives students who eventually will become alumni will find themselves in situations where they must accept chaos and find a way to order it. They must acquire and share information, the source of creative dynamism. They should develop a vision of purpose and direction for addressing issues and creating plans for satisfying goals. Most importantly they must form and analyze relationships.

Formulating Other Aspects of the Capstone Proposal

If the course proposal is selected by the University for pilot testing, the development of a full course syllabus and materials for the course will be funded by the University. Thus the original proposal featured only highlights of what the course would encompass. Besides the justification provided earlier in this paper, the proposal discussed some of the background of the proposed course including the already existing one-credit course, "Contemporary Issues in Family and Consumer Sciences," the involvement of students in the development of



the course proposal, and a brief description of family and consumer sciences as a discipline based on interdisciplinary perspectives. A course description, objectives, and a tentative course outline were also presented.

Another major facet of the proposal was a description of the nature of the pedagogy to be used in the course; also included were several examples of activities to be used in the course. Pedagogy was an important focus of the proposals because students' active involvement in learning was of paramount importance in designing the entire new general education package. Because the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences has had a history of providing active learning for students, our goal in this regard was to create innovative approaches which hadn't been used much in the Department. Here are some excerpts on pedagogy from the proposal.

"Another unique facet of this learning experience . . . will be the extension of particular concepts addressed in the [capstone course] into the other classes they [students] will be taking during the same semester. For example, instructors in senior level courses in the various departmental program areas will emphasize certain concepts during the same time frame as they are being addressed in the capstone class. One example . . . "persistent practical problems." This would help students to see the application of the idea of persistent practical problems and would not isolate the study of this idea to just the capstone course. It is also anticipated that a variety of instructors in the Department will take part in the activities of the capstone course, although there will probably be one individual responsible for the overall instruction. . . . The Department's faculty members, as well as faculty members from root discipline departments, will be invited to serve as resource persons for the class . . . as information sources, reflectors on disciplinary issues or events, or as mentors for various student projects. This type of involvement is seen as strengthening the notion of students and faculty as a community of scholars." (Department of Family and Consumer Sciences Curriculum Committee, 1996, p. 3)

Awaiting a Conclusion

As this manuscript is written, the Department awaits the decision of the university committee regarding the acceptance of the proposed capstone course for pilot testing. We are hopeful that this course can serve as a model for others in the

university, but regardless of the outcome, the richness of thinking and discussion among faculty and students portends a positive view of more innovative approaches to important content and processes for FCS students. The reflective human action model provided a unique perspective and framework for designing relevant education for our students. We invite other units to consider the benefits and opportunities of this approach.

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Editor's Message

I've discovered in the process of editing this issue, and the necessary thoughtfulness it entails, that there are two pet concerns I want to share.

Through my work with the development of the *reflective human action* theory, I've had the unique opportunity of sustained reading and thinking about leadership. Not many of you have that kind of luxury. (Some of you would give it a different description. J) At any rate, this is the context for what I'm about to say.

We need to focus on **leadership** instead of leaders. Even though characteristics, skills, and styles (and all the rest about leaders as persons) have great significance, it is **ACTION** and how action is encouraged that really matters. Cornell West's wonderful title, *Race Matters*, makes a succinct statement. So the concept of this paragraph is **Action Matters**. There are lots of leadership programs, but when you examine the content you often find talk *about* characteristics and skills—e.g., the leader must have vision. Instead, the subject should be the doing of visioning—how to live visioning. The culture needs to be changed: we need to *walk the talk*. Knowing about leadership is not enough; doing/acting is leadership. It takes less than three minutes to talk about the role of vision in leadership, but it might take three hours to learn to do it. I want to digress to clarify my point. I used to be involved with a 30-hour course on communication in an education program. Guess how much time the average teacher educator spends on the important process of communication: 30 minutes is generous. The underlying value needs to be addressed as well as the practical aspect. If one's value is for action, then other things have to go. And prioritizing is hard to do.

Much of the literature and rhetoric still deals with positional leadership. It is my opinion that improvement of professional practice, given the present realities of the world and a deeper understanding of nature, requires focus on nonpositional leadership. Here's why. By focusing on the solitary, heroic leader, we concentrate on the actor rather than the action. Also, the positional approach implies that leadership is a one-way process: leaders to followers; by concentrating on those in high position, others are relegated to a passive role. Thus, the resources of the group are underutilized—in other words,

squandered. In *Leading Change*, O'Toole (1996) reports that many executives now agree that shared purpose, shared vision, and shared values produce the kind of trust that provides the "glue" so necessary for transforming the institution or organization to accomplish its mission. Transformation is not led by a solo operator; instead the positional leader becomes a leader of leaders in dialogue about expectations, needs, and aspirations. Through inclusion and participation, the best interests of the community (the organization or institution and its members) will be served. There's an ethical position as well. How does a leader show appropriate respect for group members without emphasizing the nonpositional role of leadership? Perhaps the most cogent argument for nonpositional leadership is the fact that the very definition of a professional requires a responsibility for action relative to the common good. Thus, a professional, whether in high position or not, has a responsibility for leadership.

The newer scientific principles of the universe suggest that complex relationships, nonlinear processes, and order within constant change govern leadership in communities of practice. The challenges are to build trusting relationships, to accept that there is no cook-book process for successful leadership, and to create internal order from the chaotic potentials. And I believe that a focus on **leadership and its nonpositional nature** is a necessary foundation for meeting these challenges, today and tomorrow.

—DM



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