Speaking in Poetry: Community Service-Based Business Education[1]

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ABSTRACT. This is a story of the development of a community service for business education project in Florida International University's Business Environment Program. The Project, as it is called, had its practical origins in student involvement in community activism-type projects. Its theoretical foundation is found in the concept of increasing community discourse – following Dewey (1954) – as a vehicle for strengthening the business and society bond. Student community service projects are described including the largest group to evolve, a group dedicated to feeding Miami's homeless and taking the name the FIU Foodrunners. The Project is now in its third year with approximately five-hundred students per year working twenty-five hours per semester on community service projects. The community service requirement directly as a result of experiences with the Project has expanded beyond the Business Environment courses to offerings in other departments and is now part of a University-wide recently institutionalized structure designed to stimulate student community service efforts.

Today was our third run, the third Sunday of waking up early. Now that I have been reading Aram and putting the pieces together, I can see how this concept of business and society comes together.[2]

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Introduction

The title of this article is derived, in part, from the experience the author had with one of his undergraduate "Business and Society" students, Richard, a guitar-playing, management information systems major. Richard, working on a community service project, had asked Jerome, a homeless man he fed every Sunday: "How ya' doing'?" Jerome had answered: "No more tears left to cry". Richard had approached me in class several days thereafter indicating he was deeply troubled by Jerome's "poetic" response. He said he had tried to weave the response into a poem, but had failed. I asked him if he wrote poetry and received a response that he did not, but he did write music. I suggested that he try to write music describing the experience, much in the same way he and other students were writing journals. He left and returned the following class period with a musical piece that, from all indications, allowed him to work through for his life the ramifications of a person known to him,[3] having "no more tears left to cry".

Much conversation exists today about conceptualizing the business organization as a "boundaryless" entity.[4] The community service in management education enterprises underway at Florida International University's College of Business Administration and elsewhere are, to bring a great number of us up to speed very quickly, truly boundaryless education. They are enterprises of education not training, of experience not fact absorption, of process not object, and of value-recognition not value-neutrality/value-rejection.

Community service in management education offers faculty the opportunity to enrich

educational experiences in several ways. It brings immediate relevance to classroom learning. It increases the complexity of those who participate in it. It exposes and draws tighter the bonds of community among all those who participate, e.g., students, community group, politicians, those seeking social justice, faculty, even university administrators. Through that process, a result of increased discourse across organizational and social boundaries, it increases the respect "one has for other".[5] And, it forever lifts the curtain which had previously hid the value-based social context of all human behavior, be this behavior described as educational, political, economic, or otherwise.

Beginnings

The course out of which the Florida International University (FIU) College of Business Administration Community Service Project (hereafter simply Project) grew was, appropriately and perhaps with a bit of destiny attached, labelled Business and Society. FIU is South Florida's publicly-owned and -operated university. It serves 26 000 students (*c.* 1994) on two campuses, both located in the Miami metropolitan area. Business and Society is a required course in the undergraduate BBA curriculum and is generally taken in the junior year. Roughly 1200 students enroll each year, with six full-time and two adjunct faculty or Ph.D. students responsible for the area. Faculty are individually responsible for the design of their courses, but a generic model tends to hold: a text (business and society, of course), a casebook, and supplemental readings.

Students are primarily of lower-middle and middle income families, predominantly from first or second generation Caribbean or Latin/South American heritage. Roughly three-quarters of these students are full-time students with full-time (most) and part-time (some) employment in the financial, service and entrepreneurial sectors which dominate South Florida economic activity.

The Project arose out of experiences in Business and Society sections taught by this author. In the Summer of 1990, three community groups with which the author is associated expressed a need for student workers on projects. At the same time, a course design was being developed to allow students to work on group projects associated with matters of immediate public concern about business and society issues. These two ideas came together, with some groups working on such matters as toxic chemical releases in Florida, ozone depleting chemical releases by Florida military contractors,[6] supermarket pricing variations by ethnic neighborhoods, male/female pricing variations by dry cleaners, and so on. Other projects related to public issues of immediate concern to the local community and directly stimulated the development of the Project. Examples of these student group projects were business students collaborating in efforts to bring together a leadership forum for Miami's Black community and helping a church-based community development organization hold its annual convention with tri-lingual − Spanish, English, and Creole − simultaneous translation.

During Summer 1992, stimulated by extraordinary student and community response to the above projects, the author developed plans to integrate community service as a requirement in the Fall 1992 semester Business and Society class. Three factors influenced this process: (1) the success of loosely assigned group service projects; (2) two papers written by the author, both theoretically related to forming and solidifying the legitimacy of and need for service-based learning in the management education process[7]; and (3) the beginnings of a national dialogue on community service. Delayed by two weeks because of Hurricane Andrew, the author's Fall 1992 semester Business and Society class (enrollment of approximately 50 students) had a fifteen hours/semester "community service" requirement.

Theoretical context

What struck me about the home-less is that so many were not Black, then it struck me that I had

thought they were all Black. The Foodrunners helped me see the world better through my own eyes. I also could see how my own eyes saw the world.[8]

Several elements of integrating a community-service project as a required part of a business school education run counter to the grain of what we have come to accept in business schools as traditional educational wisdom.[9] The project, by recognizing the political and value content of all education, challenges the notion of education's *value- and political-neutrality*. It challenges the notion of business' *institutional separateness* from society. It challenges in many respects the *economistic* manner through which many of us train our students to see the world. It challenges several of our most common *institutional structures and separations*: the professor and student, the university and community, and the classroom as an educational but not human center. Finally, it challenges the concepts of business education as *management training*,[10] as opposed to education. In short, a community-service project presents a radical challenge to the philosophical, institutional, and personally-held structures we call "the business/management school experience". These are welcome challenges and might well provide the basis for business and management education moving into the next century.

These challenges are deeply integrated with "the ways in which the world is changing". The Project, interactive with these changes, has its bases in the deep philosophical bases reformed for our time, corresponding changes in educational philosophy and practice, and in the resulting manner in which politics and values become an inescapable part of all educational discourse. These interwoven components – the shift to the philosophical tradition of American pragmatism, the shift to naturalist-based inquiry and education, and the shift to, after Whyte's *Participatory Action Research (PAR)*, Participatory Action Teaching (PAT), illustrated in Figure 1 – all form the theoretical context out of which the Project arose.

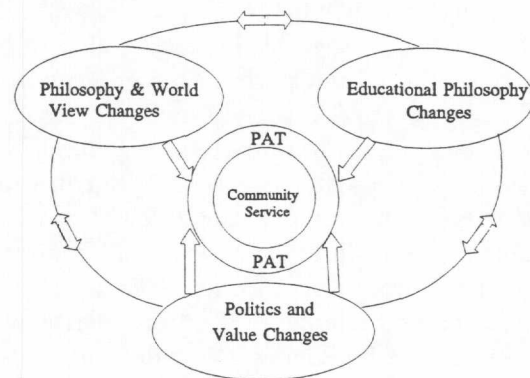The philosopher and management educator R. Edward Freeman once remarked: "I thought

Fig. 1. The context of business school community service.

positivism[11] was dead, until I walked into the world of business schools".[12] His reflection presents a deep insight into what we can call the prevailing "structure of management education". Deep inside management and other departments in our respective schools, we continue as if untouched by the extraordinary changes in understanding taking place "outside".

What does it mean to say "positivism is dead"? As a guide to answering this question there exist still the remnants of the heady philosophical debates accompanying positivism's demise. Regarding ontological questions, i.e., the nature of reality, reality no longer is to be "single, tangible and fragmentable", but "multiple, constructed, and holistic". Epistimological questions relating to relationship between *knower* and *known* are now seen as answered through seeing knower and known in an interactive, inseparable relationship, not an independent, dualistic one. Generalizable knowledge, nomothetic statements, are no longer possible. Only idiographic statements reflecting "time- and context-bound working hypotheses" are possible. Causal linkages are now to be knower-related, with "all entities in a state of mutual simultaneous shaping", and temporal precedence no longer suggests causal understanding. Finally, the demise of positivism moves inquiry from its value-free context to one inescapably value-bound.[13]

What does this mean for education, and business/management education in the specific

case? *It means* that whatever behavior we undertake as educators – in the classroom, in our research, in whatever professional or community activities we engage in – is behavior that has now-obvious value components. *It means* that what has come to the *separate* components of our profession, our service, our research and our teaching, are all linked activities and cannot be closeted off from one another. *It means* that the educational experience in business/management schools cannot be seen as a fact-delivery system, but rather a rich, value-laden, and interactive process with structured student-teacher roles accepted only as manufactured understandings. *It means* that other symbolic walls we have constructed – university/community, business/society, professor/political person, and so on – are walls that must stand the constant test of day-to-day pragmatism. In a very simple sense, the demise of positivism means many of the constructs upon which we in business and management schools build our day-to-day experiences are no longer accepted as part of an evolving and emerging world view. Ideas have collided and the world changes. Now business schools, in part through community service projects, are changing as well.

As "teachers", what then do we "know" as each of our sciences in turn hammers its nail into positivism's coffin? First, we know that value-free understanding – just the facts, only the facts – is a practical and philosophical impossibility. This is true not only for physics[14] and chemistry, but the more complex and human social sciences, and accounting and finance as well. Second, we know that the social engineering and social control functions of our profession have deep value – social, political, as well as economic – implications. Third, we know that we are left with at least four main choices as we continue to construct our roles. These choices are described in Table I.

The changes in our understandings of who we are as persons and as professionals leads to deep changes in how we are to *behave* on a day-to-day basis as we act out these roles. If we are concerned about democracy and advancing social justice, these concerns become an integral part not only of our personal lives but of our professional lives as well. For doing *research*, this feature has been well-defined as Participatory Action Research (PAR). Whyte, Greenwood and Lazes define PAR as a process through which those "under study" actively participate in the full research process.[15] PAR "opens up", or demystifies, the scientific process to allow those formerly "without power" into the process. PAR, in a philosophical sense, engages those being studied in the scientific and social discourse of the study. Process, not object, rule.

Insofar as classroom teaching is concerned, Participatory Action Teaching (PAT) – commu-

TABLE I
Value/politics recognition: Decision choices for educators[26]

1. *We can make no choice regarding our roles.* If we choose this path, then others who by reason of their political, economic, bureaucratic, or economic power choose for us. We thereby validate the social engineering or social control functions of the work we do.
2. *We can become functionaries in the social control system.* We can make clear choices to stifle movements for social, political and economic justice, to participate in the revolution, albeit with the privileged and poweful.
3. *We can choose to become advocates for the powerless.* We can promote better social policies through better knowledge, where "better" is understood to represent a more equitable balance on the scales of political, social and economic justice.
4. *We can choose to empower the underprivileged.* Here, our job is to comfort an educate the disempowered. The knowledge and social visions we build increases the potential for individual and collective "justice-seeking" action.
5. *We can chose to organize the revolution.* Here, teaching becomes the direct task of empowerment. Direct, collective action is necessary, and our role is one of clarifying the "strategic decision making process."

nity service-based experiential learning, is a derivative of PAR. Teaching moves from a classroom-based "fact delivery system" to an open process integrating students and community members, along with us teachers, into the learning process. PAT recognizes the political and value basis of all educational activity, classroom-bound or not.[16] PAT's discourse, finally, assumes a more open educational process. The so-called "walls of the classroom", with PAT, move outwards till they are no longer seen. Classroom walls may be a newspaper or a community group meeting, an interstate highway underpass or a Federal Courtroom.

All of the above, all of it, can be summarized by the following: Our professional lives are intertwined with our "other" lives and are in community with the lives of others. Constructs – of science, of law, of bureaucracy, and so on – we establish to segment our roles and our responsibilities are just that . . . constructs. They are not objects through which we must live, but rather institutionalized patterns of behavior and understandings to which we are subject and which are subject to us.[17]

How are the institutional structures established and subject to our will if they are not "out there"? After Berger and Luckmann (1966), they are part of our social constructions, based on the day-to-day symbolic interactions with others. These interactions weave for us the social fabric of our lives, including notions about what is "out there" and "in here" as well as the boundaries of "out and in". These symbolic interactions, following Dewey (1954) and in the same but more current stream, Rorty, may be called the *social discourse* nature of our being.

That fact – that social discourse is the manner not only through which we know the world, but it *is* the world, for we can only know that world through that discourse – is of critical concern for understanding the place of community service in business education. Let us establish some resulting propositions (Table II).

The circle closes. Community service-based education in business/management education is but one method – but a powerful method – for changing contemporary discourse about business. This experiential learning process is a system for changing our understandings about business, its rights, responsibilities, and so on. Further, given the above-described nature of business' reality, it is also a system for changing what business *is*. After Rorty, the increased dimensionality and substance of discourse that only experience can establish is the only path through which increased

TABLE II
Business and society propositions

Proposition 1: Business is not a thing, or an object out there. It is but a part of the complex fabric of social life established through our symbolically-based communications with each other.

Proposition 2: Business' "thingness", or objectified nature, is a working tool we use to simplify our daily lives. It is a *pragmatically-based* convention – invention – we rely on for understanding social fabric.

Proposition 3: What business therefore "is" is then a direct result of symbolically-established and understood boundaries. The placement of these boundaries, and resulting understandings responsibilities are tied to our "other" political, economic, social, economic, and moral being, as well as to the broader powered interests associated with each of these.

Proposition 4: Business, then, is a symbolic construct existing in our social discourse. Its potential and limitations are but of the same making. If historical possibilities – politics, values, and beliefs – so dictate and allow, as business' pragmatically-based legitimacy begins to change, changing business to establish further legitimacy demands a changing social discourse.

Proposition 5: Changing the social discourse through which we understand business and which is business demands changing the experiences for those destined to work in it. Community service projects are an evolving element of that changing base of experience and discourse.

social, political and economic justice can be achieved. That is in both a theoretical and practical sense what the Project seeks seeks to accomplish.

Project goals

The Project at Florida International University was established with a single goal in mind: *to build through broader and more substantive social discourse a more just and thereby more legitimate institutional structure for and of business.* This was to be accomplished through a series of steps:

> STEP 1: Build a firm theoretical base for students to understand the social, political, and philosophical context of their educational experience in the Project.
>
> STEP 2: Engage students in a community experience outside the university with sectors of the community they would ordinarily not come into contact. In general, these experiences, through the "community" nature of the organizations they work with, are engaging visions of greater social justice.
>
> STEP 3: Force "in the classroom" discussion about the experiences to stimulate both self-reflection and open up the experiences as a learning device.
>
> STEP 4: Encourage the individual or group projects to be self-managed. Teacher prescriptions necessarily interfere with the development of new forms of social discourse.

In general, the goals of the plan and the guidelines for managing it merge and are contrary to the existing paradigm of business/management education. The Project was to be continually experimental, to demystify the classroom and fact-based value/politics-free nature of business and university education, and to open and allow for restructuring of teacher-student-community relationships.

The project

Community Service as a required component of MAN3701 started in the author's Fall 1992 semester class with fifty students enrolled. The syllabus assignment was simple:

> In the following week submit the name of a community service organization in which you will serve fifteen hours of community service. You will be required to hand in at the end of the Semester a "Community Service Report" detailing your activities and certifying (through the organization) your work there.

Over the next two class sessions, in-class discussion defined acceptable and non-acceptable service. Consensus-based decisions excluded service for pay and activities that either State laws (e.g., prohibitions against support of political candidates) or the U.S. Constitution (e.g., activities that would be considered State support of religion) excluded. Examples of permitted and non-permitted community service activities are presented in Table III.

Three outstanding programs developed in that first semester. Several students worked in ARISE Foundation's newly-established ENVIRO-MENTORS Program in the Dade County Public School System (DCPS). The ENVIRO-MENTORS Project developed as FIU Business and Society students working as "older brothers and sisters" with DCPS ENVIRO-COPS Clubs, Grades 2–6. ENVIRO-COPS, some 200,000 strong in Dade County, are sworn to protect the environment, their community, their family, and their own bodies. It is a program designed to empower kids and build respect for their "IN-VIRONMENT" and their "EN-VIRONMENT".

The ENVIRO-MENTORS Project was designed by this author as a program to help better institutionalize the ENVIRO-COPS Program in the DCPS. All ENVIRO-MENTORS who started in the Fall Semester continued voluntarily in the Spring Semester, and some continued into a second year of ENVIRO-MENTOR activity. In at least one case directly related to ENVIRO-MENTOR activity, an accounting major graduated and is

TABLE III
Examples of community service activity

Allowed Activities	Disallowed Activities
FIU Foodrunners	Working for Political Candidates
ENVIRO-MENTOR Program	Bible Study Class Mentors
Reading to Elderly Programs	Paid "Service-Type" Work
Hurricane Andrew Relief Efforts	On-Campus Service Activity
Private Companies	Library Volunteer
Radio-TV Stations	Office Assistance
Relief Agencies	Required Sorority/Fraternity Service
Churches	
Homebound Feeding Programs	
Community Library Volunteers	
After-School Care Programs	
Church-Based Programs	
After-School Care	
Feeding the Elderly	
School Classroom Volunteers	
Food Bank Volunteers	
Handicapped Assistance Programs	
Trainers for Children's Athletic Programs	
Hospital Volunteers	
Police Aide Volunteers	

now working to complete a master's degree in early childhood education.[18]

The second project to develop was the Reading to the Elderly Project. This project developed out of one student's experiences in a first semester project. After spending one semester visiting a home for the elderly and reading correspondence and newspapers for them, he developed a longer term project. Now in its second year, he is managing a team of students who visit this home, read books, articles and letters for the home's clients, and talk with them about each other's lives.

The third and most active group to emerge was the FIU Foodrunners. Its genesis was a student's complaint in the first week of class: ". . . that all students wanted to do was help those who were homeless because of Hurricane Andrew. There were plenty of people homeless before the Hurricane who really needed help". As a teacher, and as an organizer, my response was to put his name and phone number on the board and organize a group to work with him.

That first Fall 1992 semester four students worked as the FIU Foodrunners. The group grew to fifteen in Spring 1993 semester but dropped to seven students in the shortened Summer 1993 term. Thereafter in regular Fall and Spring semesters the FIU Foodrunners operates with 25–30 students, usually including several non-business majors or honors students working either independently or through an independent study project.

The FIU Foodrunners meet each Sunday morning at a local supermarket, impose upon themselves a "lab fee", buy food and staples, make sandwiches, then travel downtown to several of Miami's homeless communities to hand out food. The FIU Foodrunners imposed upon themselves an additional requirement, one the author adopted for general use in subsequent semesters: after each "run" they had to write down in a journal what they saw and *felt*. The Spring of 1993 brought another development: a benefactor gives the group approximately $ 1000/semester in supermarket certificates.[19] Students use these monies to buy for distribution

canned goods, health and hygiene goods, and a few items for children's activities and play. The group also operates, albeit sporadically, a used clothing distribution activity. The gradual increase in the number of women students in the group, from zero to now over one-half of the group, also meant it focused more on the clothing, health and hygiene needs of homeless women. "Others" became us, and behavior changed.

In the Spring 1993 semester the Community Service Requirement was increased to twenty hours. In the Fall 1993 semester it was increased to twenty-five hours. In both cases, these changes came about through students' suggestions to increase that component of the course.

The first semester of required community service, Fall 1992, used Timothy Lux's *Adam Smith's Mistake* (1990) as the reading accompaniment to the service requirement. The specific context Lux provided was one of showing how in a deeper and fuller understanding of market capitalism, even in a reading of Adam Smith's full works, community and social interest were to be at the forefront of reasoning for any economic/ business activity. In that first semester and thereafter, students also had a lectured surface introduction to the socio-cultural (Berger and Luckmann, 1966) and socio-philosophical (Dewey/Rorty) nature of business and social activity.

The Spring 1993 semester and the Summer 1993 term saw a shift to Bellah *et al.'s*, book *The Good Society*. Lux's book was (1990) unavailable and *The Good Society* provided an excellent framework: it explored the institutional basis necessary for individual understanding of and building for a community-based society. It had an added benefit in that its appendix provided an excellent overview of social pragmatism.

Starting in the Fall 1993 semester the author experimented with using Aram's *Presumed Superior* as the theoretical base for service-based learning. *The Good Society* had worked fine but the newer Aram work, an exploration of the often (in the United States) at-odds forces of individualism and community,[20] provided a firmer "managerial" focus. The classroom success[21] of *both The Good Society* and *Presumed Superior* resulted in a decision, effective with the Summer 1994 term, to offer both as required readings.

The importance of providing both a theoretical basis for the experiential service activity cannot be understated. In and out of class, and in all dimensions of their lives, students are finding old understandings inadequate. These new experiences in their lives, now including service-based learning, in an age with different and evolving philosophical, social and cultural bases, require a developing new theoretical basis for understanding. This point may be underscored with two anecdotal stories: the author, rounding a building corner, encountered two "South Florida surf buddies", both former business and society students and continuing FIU Foodrunners. Imagine the author's surprise to find them arguing an intellectual point made in *The Good Society*! In another instance, one of the founding members of the Foodrunners engaged a finance professor in a classroom morality and social justice oriented debate when, in the standard fashion of hopefully a past age, labor was referred to as a variable cost.

In addition to the three main group projects, students have worked on individual or partner projects. Groups or agencies students have worked with include elementary schools, libraries, programs for feeding the homebound, after-school programs for children, neighborhood development projects, Habitat for Humanity, and so on. In all but a few cases, the service students provide is of a citizen, not business student, nature; i.e., they are not there as marketing students, or as budding financial or accounting advisors, but rather as community members there to serve and communicate with other community members.

The allocation of effort requirement for the Project has risen from 20% to 25% of each student's grade. Grading is accomplished through the Community Service Reports, the students' own classroom descriptions of their activity (Did they really "get it"?), and reports received from agency or group supervisors. These supervisors are usually other undergraduate students who, after a semester's service work, have been "promoted" to managing positions. Generally,

students start the class with full credit for service activity. They then get bonus points for extraordinary work or significant point reductions for minimal or slack effort. In a few instances, e.g., where students' or supervisors' reports offer "clues" prompting further inquiry as to whether or not service activity was actually undertaken, students have failed the course directly as a result of a "F" grade for service.[22]

Project outcomes

> *What I know is that after working as a Foodrunner I have a better understanding of the homeless situation we face. I know Jerome and Marie and all the others on the streets. When I get a job and am inside a business working, that business will be different because I am different.*[23]
>
> *The first time I went to Habitat I was afraid of the neighborhood, and my husband drove the car. Now I am a "flyer", an expert roofer, and I have gone alone. My husband still wants to go and work. But I am the flyer.*[24]

At the end of each semester, time is allocated to review many of the students' service activities. This time serves not only to share experiences, but to form a base for improving the Project in subsequent semesters. The overwhelming impression from these self-described stories is that the community service activity has significantly changed students' lives.

Many students come to the class already involved in community service activity. These projects were not invented in business schools, they are only recently being adopted in them. The evolution of these projects comes at a time when community service is part of a growing national dialogue. As such, there are more students who already do community service or who are receptive to it. For these students, the theory of community that they get from the books and in the classroom was something they

felt, but did not know. The Project provides them with a deeper sense of who they are, and why they are that way.

Most students, however, come to the class without a clue – in the popular vernacular – regarding what community service is or why they should be doing it. The purpose of service, at least insofar as students traditionally see it – helping others not so fortunate – is shared with them, usually by other students. They too, by semester's end, are different people and see the world in a different manner.

The most significant outcome of the Project is one, however, that can only be accomplished in an educational environment. Many students do, indeed, get "it", i.e., that the service activity has its greatest impact on students and not on the community. Further, some of them are able to place what is happening in a broader, albeit elementary, understanding of social philosophy of Dewey, and for even fewer, Rorty. For these few, the melding of theory and practice, of university and community, has had an extraordinary effect.

There are other related outcomes. The Project now is a part of the Business and Society class requirements for three other professors, and one professor's management policy course. The University has started a Volunteer Action Center, a new arm of the bureaucracy designed to promote and coordinate student volunteer activity. Some Business and Society "service graduates" work with the Center providing strategic, logistical, and "grunt" support. It should be noted, and strongly so, that the Project's community service is *required* course assignment time. Discourse, as theory suggests, through broadening the base of historical conditions allows for reaching a greater optimal possibility for our individual and community lives.

Enhanced community relations and goodwill generation is another outcome. The Project has generated favorable publicity and donations to the University. Students report back that listing community work on their resumes evokes positive responses from recruiters and job interviewers. It seems recruiters' minds, as well, are shaped by evolving discourse.

Any endeavor similar to that described above, if it is to operate with a class of fifty or more undergraduates, has to be designed to be self-managing. That means extraordinary trust given students, and where group work is involved, self-management. There are additional benefits to this: boundaries to action or understanding presented by past ages are less possible to arise.[25] For a few service activities, e.g., the FIU Foodrunners, students will engage parts of communities where the statistics for violent crime are higher. In the FIU case, students are cautioned to make aware decisions when doing service. As adults, experience shows they guide their actions accordingly . Where there is the most perceived danger, students have elected to work in groups. Further, some students from previous semesters elect to work on independent study courses "managing" group service work. As group managers with at least one semester's experience in the project, they are able to quickly socialize students into correct and incorrect behaviors.

The author urges those contemplating such a project for their own University to proceed with the experiment. Part of this experiment means loosening control, letting students go, and learning from them what works well, or simply works, in situations neither the instructor nor the students have encountered before. Professors, as well, for many situations, will not "have a clue". Another part of the experiment will mean, in many cases, trying to design the project so it does not demand administrative approval. Principles of organizational inertia dictate such experiments are harder to stop once engaged. By their very nature, experiential community service learning projects challenge the *status quo* and, as a result, the bureaucracy's "mind's eye view" of business education. Many reasons can be found for saying no if asked: "Liability! Educational Value! Occupational Value! (_____, fill in the blank) Approval!" Only one reason can be found for going ahead with a required community service course component: "It is the right thing and the most relevant thing that can be done at this time".

Acknowledgements

Notes

[1] A previous version of this paper was delivered at the 1994 Academy of Management Meetings, Dallas, Texas.
[2] As quoted from an undergraduate business student's weekly journal for the community service project FIU FOODRUNNERS.
[3] The import of this concept, "knowing others", will be explored below.
[4] How in such scholarly conversation it may be both an entity and boundaryless stands as a credit to the flexibility of human discourse.
[5] Indeed, "other" becomes more and more a concept lacking any social meaning. See Rorty, R.: 1991, 'The Priority of Democracy to Philosophy', in R. Rorty (ed.), *Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge).
[6] This project was of such immediate public concern it was reported on the CBS Dan Rather Evening News.
[7] This theoretical foundation will be discussed in the following section of this paper. See also Hogner (1991, 1992a, 1992b).
[8] An undergraduate student's in-class reflection on a "run" feeding Miami's homeless.
[9] "Traditional educational wisdom" itself is part of the grain; it signifies a relationship between the *status quo* of social justice and economic and political power on one hand, and on the other all that and all whom stand to gain by those relationships being perpetuated.
[10] Business ROTC, it has been heard to be called.
[11] Positivism is used here and throughout this paper as describing a philosophical approach to epistimology – understanding the process of knowing – characterized, relative to this discussion, as permitting value-free inquiry and teaching based upon an objective, determinable reality, an observor-event dualism, generalizable knowledge free from temporal or historical contexts, and linear causality imposing cause-effect relationships.

[12] Personal conversation with author, 1992.

[13] Adopted from Lincoln, Yvonna S. and Egon G. Guba: 1985, *Naturalistic Inquiry* (Sage Publications, Inc., Newbury Park, CA).

[14] Witness the declining conversation regarding the "end" or "death" of physics as a science, and the emergence of conversation regarding the evolution of physics as an aesthetic.

[15] Whyte, W. F., D. J. Greenwood, and P. Lazes: 1991, 'Participatory Action Research', in W. F. Whyte (ed.), *Participatory Action Research*, pp. 19–55 (Sage Publications, Inc., Newbury Park, CA).

[16] A favorite opening exercise is to challenge students to identify which of their courses are "business and society" courses. Of course, at the close of the exercise they have identified all courses as such!

[17] See Bellah, R. N. *et al.*: 1991, *The Good Society* (Knopf, New York).

[18] She reports she is much happier, but not so for her parents.

[19] The FIU Foodrunners accepted this unconditional support without hesitation. However, they declined the offer of a food company that wanted to donate food . . . if the group's cars had the company's name displayed on the side. They made a counter-offer: "The company's name was ok, *if* company managers would show up on Sunday morning and help distribute the food". That offer went unanswered with the interchange providing excellent class discussion material.

[20] These forces, for Aram, are appropriately labeled *economic* individualism and *social* individualism.

[21] Success here is measured by solid classroom discussion relevant to community service and business/society relations.

[22] These lapses, through rare, are not hard to spot; e.g., a student who reports he "fed old people" for twenty-five hours.

[23] A student's response to an interviewer on a radio talk show featuring the Foodrunners.

[24] The classroom recollection of a Habitat for Humanity participant from Columbia.

[25] This point was made when members of the FIU Foodrunners, not practicing social workers, were invited to participate on the Dade County Homeless Board, a quasi-governmental board which formulates plans for spending the recently enacted "Homeless Tax" on certain services.

[26] Adopted from Firestone, William A.: 1990, 'Toward a Paradigm-Praxis Dialectic', in Egon G. Guba (ed.), *The Paradigm Dialogue*, pp. 105–124 (Sage Publications, Inc., Newbury Park, CA). See also Fay, B.: 1987, *Critical Social Science* (Cornell University Press, Ithica, NY), and Hogner, Robert: Winter, 1992, 'Exposing the Myth of Value-Free Teaching', *Journal for the Art of Teaching* 1(1), 5–7).

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