ON THE NEGLECT OF FALLIBILITY IN MANAGEMENT LEARNING & EDUCATION: FROM *PERFECT* TO *ADEQUATE* MANAGERS

Dr Amanda Hay
Nottingham Business School
Nottingham Trent University
50 Shakespeare Street
Nottingham NG1 4FQ
TEL: +44 (0) 115 848 6118
amanda.hay@ntu.ac.uk

Author Bio

Amanda Hay (amanda.hay@ntu.ac.uk) is a Senior Lecturer in Human Resource Management and Organizational Behaviour at Nottingham Business School, Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom. Her primary research interests focus on the ways in which managers learn in both formal and informal settings.

ON THE NEGLECT OF FALLIBILITY IN MANAGEMENT LEARNING & EDUCATION: FROM *PERFECT* TO *ADEQUATE* MANAGERS

ABSTRACT

Fallibility is an integral yet silenced aspect of the lived experience of managing. While this is to the detriment of learning, management educators also collude in this silencing. In this essay, I propose that a process philosophical perspective offers educators one resource, which can voice, legitimize, and foreground the fallibility central to management practice to unleash its learning potential. I offer three contributions. First, I highlight how a processual lens allows us to see managerial fallibility anew as an inevitable effect of a world which is constantly 'becoming', rather than a sign of individual weakness which is pathologized and denied. Second, I show how this rethinking invites an alternative focus for management practice- one that avoids the pursuit of perfection, and instead focuses on 'practical adequacy'. I suggest that this expands possibilities for management practice by providing a relieving power that enables managers to work *with*, not against, fallibility. In doing so, I highlight the unstated value of the processual lens as a resource *for* coping. Third, my call to action considers how management educators might embrace fallibility to reimagine their teaching stance, content, and methods to lay the foundations for the development of the 'adequate manager'.

Keywords: fallibility, management education, process philosophy, coping, adequacy

INTRODUCTION

Dominant managerial discourses are implicitly characterized by themes of perfectionism and infallibility, such that managers are expected to be all knowing, always right, in control and ultimately successful (Corlett, Mavin, & Beech, 2019; Hay, 2014; Rostron, 2022). This stands in sharp contrast to the lived experiences of managing where "given the complexities and ambiguities of processes of organizing, managers are hardly able to come close to such ideals" (Schweiger, Muller, & Guttel, 2020: 414). Managers then oftentimes do not know, are wrong, make mistakes and fail. Fallibility, simply defined by its Latin roots as being liable to error, (cf Kvalnes, 2017), that is, to outcomes which are experienced as negative and unexpected (Harrowell, Davies, & Disney, 2018), then constitutes a key aspect of managing (Deslandes, 2020). Yet since fallibility also involves a 'felt sense' or unsettling which reveals a vulnerability to harm (Segal, 2011), it is typically conceived as individual weakness, and as such, is routinely silenced. Crucially, this is to the detriment of learning.

When learning is understood as a holistic, embodied, responsive process in which we are 'struck' and moved to change our ways of being, talking and acting (Cunliffe, 2002), then lived experiences of fallibility provide one important form of unsettling which carry transformative potential. Perhaps surprisingly, embracing our fallibility might mean we are less likely to err and fail. Given these possibilities for learning, I propose that recognizing, and embracing, fallibility becomes a central concern for management educators. However, the current management education context neglects these possibilities, since the "refining of empirical sensitivity" to "real goings-on in the world" (Chia, 2017: 114) has been overlooked as an integral part of the business school's learning agenda (Cunliffe, 2022). As such, management educators stand accused of colluding in the silencing of fallibility (Hay, 2022; Petriglieri & Petriglieri, 2015; Sadler-Smith & Cojuharenco, 2021).

In this essay, I propose that a 'becoming' processual philosophical perspective (Chia, 1999; Chia, 2017; MacKay, Chia, & Nair, 2021; Tsoukas & Chia, 2002) provides management educators with one important but overlooked resource, which can voice, legitimize, and foreground the human fallibility central to management practice as lived. In doing so, I offer three specific contributions. First, I highlight how a processual lens allows us to see managerial fallibility anew as an inevitable effect of a world which is constantly 'becoming', rather than a sign of individual weakness which is pathologized and denied. Second, I show how this rethinking invites a questioning of the limits of the management task to suggest an alternative focus for management practice- one that avoids the pursuit of perfection and completeness, and instead unashamedly focuses on 'practical adequacy'. I suggest that this expands possibilities for management practice by providing a relieving power that enables managers to work *with* rather than against their fallibility. In doing so, I extend discussions of processual perspectives which have alerted us to an understanding of managerial work *as* a form of coping (Chia & Holt, 2006; 2009), to consider how this can also be mobilized as a resource *for* coping. Third, my call to action considers how we as management educators might recognize and embrace fallibility to reimagine our teaching stance, content, and methods to lay the foundations for the development of the 'adequate manager'.

My essay is structured as follows. I begin by considering how dominant managerial discourses silence fallibility in ways which inhibit the process of management learning, before describing how the current management education context colludes in this problematic dynamic. I then describe the 'becoming' worldview of process philosophy (Cooper & Law, 1995- see Chia, 1995), and highlight how this reconsideration of our taken for granted understandings of reality allows us to see managerial fallibility anew. Next, I outline how this rethinking challenges expectations of the management task to invite a focus on 'practical adequacy'. In these ways, I suggest that relieving insights from process philosophy can provide important resources *for*

coping which can improve management practice. Finally, I consider the practical implications for management education to offer examples of how we might recognize and embrace fallibility in the classroom to begin to promote the development of the 'adequate manager'.

THE NEGLECT OF FALLIBILITY IN MANAGEMENT LEARNING

Human beings are undeniably capable, but they are also fallible and vulnerable (Deslandes, 2020). Insights into our fallibility have been gleaned from fields such as psychology, which reveal the limits of our capacity to acquire, store and process information (Janis, 1972; Johnston & Dark, 1986; Kahneman, 2011; Simon, 1972), as well as economics, which highlights the "unavoidable imperfection of man's (sic) knowledge" (Hayek, 1945: 530) in the organization of societies which pose an ongoing threat of unintended as well as intended consequences (Crowe, 2016, Shah, 1991, Soros, 2013). While these kinds of insights are important, Crowe (2016:45) highlights that "a culture of denialism" of fallibility prevails. In part, at the individual level, this relates to the psychology of our limitations, which ironically work to both "prevent us from realizing how fallible we are" (Crowe, 2016: 46), and protect us from fallibility's evoked discomfort (Segal, 2011). In addition, at a societal level, dominant social discourses that embody modernist ideals of the application of rational analysis to social, political, and economic affairs centred on securing greater control over the world (Watson, 2005) work to contribute to its 'disappearance' (Fletcher, 1998).

Reflecting this broader denial of fallibility, as outlined above, it is also silenced in dominant managerial discourses (Deslandes, 2020) which, fuelled by contemporary grandiose pre-occupations with leadership (Ford & Harding, 2007), work to depict managers as infallible, all knowing, always right, super heroic miracle workers (Hay, 2014; Rostron, 2022). On a superficial level, dominant understandings might be viewed as functional since they provide an illusory comfort when faced with the lived ambiguity and unpredictability of managerial

work, which brings managers face to face with their fallibility and its associated unsettling. Put differently, as Petriglieri and Petriglieri (2015) contend, they may serve a defensive purpose. However, on a deeper level, they are ultimately dysfunctional since they amplify the very feelings they seek to assuage when inevitably unrealistic expectations of perfection remain unmet by the fallible manager (Hay, 2014). Feelings of inadequacy (Ford, 2019), 'dejection, burnout and suffering at work' (Deslandes, 2020) then potentially follow. Moreover, coming full circle, dominant managerial discourse then denies and pathologizes the uncomfortable feelings it creates (Hay, 2014; Smith & Ulus, 2020).

Voicing managerial fallibility becomes increasingly difficult since it is both unacceptable and shameful (Harrowell et al., 2018). Unsurprisingly, when confronted with fallibility, managers often react defensively (Corlett et al., 2019), in ways such as those noted by Watson (2001: 178) where he "observed managers being rude to their staff, refusing to listen to advice given to them…curtly announcing unexplained decisions, losing their tempers with people…[and] creating rows with fellow managers". Crucially, this closes opportunities for learning (Kvalnes, 2017) since it can lead to "the avoidance of difficult questions, myopic thinking, repression of doubt, and the stifling of reflexivity" (Saggurthi & Thakur, 2016: 181), resulting in what Alvesson and Spicer (2015) term 'self-reinforcing stupidity' where no space is left for inquiry or improvement. Ironically, avoiding the transformative potential of fallibility's unsettling might mean that error and failure are more likely leading to grave social consequences. Knights and McCabe (2015) for example, highlight how the unquestioned abilities of infallible managers whose future visions could 'apparently be planned and realized', in practice proved unsound and ultimately contributed to the financial crisis of 2007-08. In sum, the silencing of managerial fallibility would seem to matter.

THE COLLUDING ROLE OF THE MANAGEMENT EDUCATION CONTEXT

While fallibility's silencing matters since it is detrimental to management learning, ironically as management educators we collude in this problematic dynamic through our continued neglect of the development of an enhanced sensitivity to the lived experiences of managing (Chia, 2017, Cunliffe, 2022). We do this in three main ways. Firstly, we are complicit in reinforcing dominant managerial discourses through our reliance on content which presents idealized images of managers (Vidaillet & Vignon, 2010). This "unwittingly filters out the predicaments, the intractable problems, the agonizing-over and the sleepless nights that characterize the actual lived world of management practitioners" (Chia & Holt, 2008: 476). Such sanitized content leaves managers numb to the lived experiences of managing (Cunliffe, 2022; Mintzberg, 2004), including their fallibility.

Secondly, processes of learning in management education are often reduced to the acquisition of techniques (Grey & Mitev, 1995). As Deslandes (2020:134) notes, "for many students and learners, management is seen as toolbox that they can dip into to solve daily difficulties or to avert risks in the future…. [and that] … any failure would simply be a sign of their personal inability to mobilize the right tools in the right situations". Crucially, this technicist framing which dominates mainstream approaches (Petriglieri & Petriglieri, 2015), downplays the uncertainty and unpredictability of our lived worlds, which severely impedes the unproblematic application of technique (Chia & Holt, 2008; Deslandes, 2020). Moreover, it produces "the inevitable disillusionment which arises when managers find that, in practice, reality is more complex" (Grey, 2004: 182). A focus on techniques which as lived, often fail, arguably amplifies managerial fallibility and fuels feelings of inadequacy.

Thirdly, as educators we typically adopt an expert stance where "all intelligence and responsibility is projected on to the teacher… whose *job* it is to know" (Raab, 1997:167). As

Petriglieri and Petriglieri (2015: 633) note, teachers are assumed to be "knowledgeable, passionate, and preoccupied with presenting relevant insights that teach leaders [or managers] what they need to do to succeed". In short, we are expected to have solutions for managerial troubles. However, this stance avoids the classroom's lived discomfort of not knowing (Raab, 1997), and in so doing, overlooks an important opportunity to recognize and learn through our human fallibility. In sum, following Starkey et al's (2019: 603) analysis, in neglecting fallibility, management educators "play their role as rhinoceroses in their own theatre of the absurd"- offering absurd management foci, following the herd, and denying what it means to be human.

Perhaps now it is timely to question this absurdity to offer a fresh and honest dialogue into ways forward. I propose that management education needs to help aspiring and incumbent managers to recognize, learn from and work *with* their human fallibility. As outlined earlier, I suggest that a processual philosophical lens provides one important means to do so. I now turn to consider its key features before detailing how this provides possibilities for embracing managerial fallibility as a starting point to develop the 'adequate manager'.

TOWARDS A PROCESS PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVE

The writings of process philosophers, notably Henri Bergson, Martin Heidegger, William James, and Alfred North Whitehead, increasingly provide potential to the development of the management field, as evidenced in the publication of 'The Handbook of Process Philosophy and Organization Studies' (Helin, Hernes, Hjorth, & Holt, 2014). As Helin et al (2014:15) highlight, process philosophy is not a specific theory "but rather a way of thinking…[that] might make us see things anew". In the discussions that follow, I purposefully focus on the work of organizational scholar Robert Chia since this has been notable for making process philosophy accessible to our field (Mutch, 2016). Moreover, as we will shortly see, it is also

Chia's work that has alerted us to understanding managerial work *as* coping-which has particular relevance for our arguments here.

As Chia's extensive work has documented, "Western philosophical outlooks have been shaped by two contrasting and competing worldviews…one [which places] emphasis on the ever-fluxing and changing nature of ultimate reality, and [another which insists] on its permanent and unchanging nature" (Mansley-Robinson, 1968 – see Chia, 2017: 109). The former has been described as a '*becoming*' worldview and the latter labelled as a '*being*' worldview (Chia, 1999; Tsoukas & Chia, 2002). While Chia (2017) acknowledges that there have been attempts to reconcile these positions, indeed, the 'becoming' perspective gives rise to the 'being' perspective (Chia, 1995), he observes that it is the 'being' perspective which has been foregrounded in Western thought. This foregrounding evokes a distorted understanding of reality, and as we will see shortly, has arguably played a part in management educators' neglect of managerial fallibility. The key differences between being and becoming worldviews are summarized in Table 1 and elaborated on below.

Insert Table 1 about here

A *being* worldview is informed by a metaphysics of substance (Chia, 1999) in which "the 'thingness' of things, social entities and their properties and attributes" (Chia (1995: 585) are seen as fundamentally real and self-evident. This privileges thinking in terms of 'states', static attributes and sequential events (Chia, 1995), and views reality as permanent, stable, and unchanging: it views the world as 'ready-made' and 'out there' (Chia, 2017). It upholds a linear perspective of temporality assuming the past, present, and future as discrete, sequential points which facilitate simple and identifiable cause effect relationships. In Whitehead's (1985) terms (see Chia, 1999: 214) this reflects the "mistaken assumption of 'simple location' whereby matter and hence causal mechanisms are assumed to be simply locatable at specific coordinate

points in space-time". Reality then lends itself to accurate naming, classification and categorization since 'things' and entities are understood to be 'isolatable' (Chia, 1995). Importantly, this includes individuals who are construed as concrete, ready-made, pre-existing, autonomous units who act *on* the world (MacKay & Chia, 2013). As Chia (2017) elaborates, the individual actor assumes a detached position, able to survey the world in advance, relying on clearly defined route maps which facilitate their navigation. A being worldview then prioritizes investigation of outcomes with an effort to understand their underlying causes.

In contrast, a *becoming* worldview is informed by a metaphysics of process (Chia, 1999), which privileges action, movement, process, and emergence (Chia, 1995). This views reality as ever fluxing and changing: 'things' are emergent or becoming and hence, always in the making (Nayak & Chia, 2011). It is to assume process *is* reality (MacKay et al., 2021). Accordingly, a far more precarious and indeterminate view of reality is offered. Reflecting this fragile and dynamic stance, 'the present is not merely the linear successor of the past but a novel outcome of it… each happening or 'event' represents the actual realizing of one of the many possibilities presented by the past configuration of events" (Chia, 1999:220). As such, "the past, present, and future are *immanently* telescoped into one another" (Chia, 1999: 226), offering an understanding of non-linear, continuous phenomenon characterized by chaotic dynamics. Given such a dynamic understanding, it is impossible to accurately represent reality: "the raw bruteness of the 'real' far exceeds the limiting logical structures of language" (Chia, 1995: 590). Attempts to do so risk mistaking "the map for the territory' and to commit a 'Fallacy of Misplaced Concreteness' (Whitehead, 1926/1985, p64)" (Chia, 2017: 110).

Crucially, in this scheme, "actors, organizations, and environments…[are] themselves temporary and precariously configured casual effects of self-sustaining unowned process complexes" (MacKay & Chia, 2013:211). Put differently, social entities, including individuals, are "constituted out of the flow of process" (MacKay & Chia, 2013:210). In these ways

'methodological individualism', which assumes the primacy of autonomous individual agent, is challenged (MacKay et al., 2021). It follows that individuals are immersed with *others* in an 'ongoing present' (Schultz & Hernes, 2013:1), which is "prior to mental representation and deliberate intentional action" (Chia & Holt, 2006: 640-1). Individuals then act *in* the world and so have 'no privileged 'birds-eye' view' or advanced understanding of their situation, and hence, with others, "must act by 'reaching out' from wherever they find themselves, feeling their way toward a satisfactory resolution of their immediate circumstances" (Chia & Holt, 2008: 477). As Chia (2017) elaborates, immersed actors 'know as they go' and so are predominantly concerned with 'wayfinding'. This suggests that it is everyday *coping* actions which generate social and organizational orders. Competent practical coping then is "a kind of flexible responsiveness to a situation as it unfolds" (Chia & Holt, 2006: 649), which depends upon collective *practices*- "socially transmitted sensitivities and predispositions…that enable [members]…to respond effectively in their day-to-day engagements" (Chia, 2017: 110). A becoming worldview then prioritizes a focus on the practices which constitute organization (Nicolini & Monteiro, 2017) to facilitate 'understanding organization as it happens' (Miettinen, Samra-Fredericks, & Yanow, 2009). Such prioritization is visible in fields such as strategy as practice, (Samra-Fredericks, 2003a; 2005; Whittington, 2007) and leadership as practice (Caroll, Levy, & Richmond, 2008, Raelin, 2016), and is especially well exemplified in approaches which mobilize ethnomethodology (e.g., Samra-Fredericks, 2003a; 2005).

RETHINKING MANAGERIAL FALLIBILITY

A process philosophical perspective then foregrounds an understanding of organizing *as* practical coping. In addition, I suggest that it is a stance which can also provide important resources *for* coping as it offers opportunities to rethink managerial fallibility, and in so doing, presents possibilities to work *with* rather than against this. As we have seen above, a process philosophical stance alerts us to an understanding of the ever changing and fluid nature of

reality. This highlights three important facets of what we take reality to be, which remain insufficiently entertained in dominant understandings of management (MacKay et al., 2021), and which in turn invite us to see fallibility differently. First, in a world that is constantly coming into being, uncertainty is inevitable. As MacKay and Chia (2013: 211) note, the essence of reality "is not the certitude of identifiable agents, definable strategies, key events of stable states but the irreducible equivocality actors face in their everyday coping actions- for every action taken in real time is taken in response to a perceived uncertainty (von Mises, 1949: 105)". Crucially, for our discussions of fallibility, this questions the extent to which managers have agency. Since individuals are themselves inextricably immersed and intertwined in the flow of organizing, as MacKay and Chia (2013: 2011) note, "the potency of agency is…necessarily compromised as an inevitable feature of social existence". It is to understand that actors cannot escape their world to survey it and then straightforwardly act on it. As Chia (2017: 114) comments, "in the actual world of organizational realities…detached surveying is unrealizable". This processual insight challenges simplistic notions of individuals' deliberate doings *on/to* the world with easily identifiable causes and effects which determine success or failure.

Second, the uncertainty of the unfolding flow also alerts us to the existence of a multiplicity of possible outcomes. As highlighted above, a becoming worldview accepts the complex and dynamic emergence of phenomena whereby the past interacts with the present in infinite ways to produce both intended *and* unintended outcomes (MacKay & Chia, 2013). Unexpected outcomes are always then possible, and as such, "otherness- must be a constant shadowy presence in the narrative accounting of organizational situations" (MacKay & Chia, 2013: 211). Notably for our discussions of fallibility, managers' immersion in the chaotic dynamics of the emergent flow also then limits their abilities to steer the unfolding flux. As Barnes (2001:34) also reminds us, since we do not stand alone in the flux, managers "stand revealed in their

practice as profoundly interdependent, mutually susceptible social agents". The dynamic nature of reality then ensures the permanent possibility of actions not intended by managers.

This does not however suggest that managers are completely at the mercy of the flux. Rather, it is to recognize that since actors are secondary ontologically to the flux, they are not its masters. It is to understand, following Heidegger (1985: 174), that the actor "discovers itself as already and always thrown into a way of being". As MacKay and Chia (2013: 211) elaborate "decisions and actions are ultimately arbitrary acts of 'incision' made into the flow of reality". In MacKay and Chia's (2013: 209) terms, this accepts an 'unowned process perspective'- one which contends that "unintended outcomes and states of affairs may arise not from sheer environmental forces, but from the *interaction* of deliberate choices made by organizational actors with chance environmental circumstances". It is to take seriously the ongoing presence of chance, environmental uncertainty, and unintended consequences alongside purposive action. Success or failure then, "cannot be wholly attributed to the deliberate choices that leaders make or pre-existing environmental forces" (MacKay & Chia, 2013: 211). This is to accept a far more modest view of agency, where it is conceptualized as creatively adaptive, though not always successfully so, since the ongoing presence of unintended consequences ensure that failure is always a possibility. Following Michaud (2013: 229) (see Deslandes, 2020) it invites us "to return to a *human* conception of control: (that is) neither complete (the fantasy of control) nor impossible (abandoning control), but relative and measured". In these ways, managers are necessarily vulnerable since they are always exposed to the threat of failure, that is, to outcomes which are unintended or unexpected (Harrowell, et al., 2018).

Third, an acceptance of the unintended or unexpected implies an incomplete understanding of our worlds or an 'unknowing', which Zemblylas (2005: 142) defines as "a realization of inadequacy to anything approaching full and comprehensive understanding". As Allen (2017) notes, the ongoing flux ensures the perpetual impossibility of individual knowing: knowing is

necessarily temporary and remains beyond our full grasp. Seen through a processual lens, "knowledge can be compared to the elusiveness of the White Rabbit [in Alice in Wonderland], for as we attempt to explain or control it…it scurries away and 'is no longer to be seen' (Carroll, 2008: 5)" (McCabe, 2016: 963). Reflecting insights from process philosopher William James, knowing then eludes any one person and knowledge itself changes over time (Weick, 2008). Accordingly, unknowingness becomes an inevitable aspect of managerial existence.

Moreover, living in this pervasive unknowingness is disturbing and uncomfortable since feelings of anxiety and doubt are typically evoked (Allen, 2017; Hay, 2022). Indeed, in Heidegger's (1985) account, it is in such anxiety that human beings come 'face to face with their being-in-the-world'. Experiences of this existential anxiety disrupt our immersion in our everyday worlds and demand our noticing. A processual lens therefore invites us to reconsider embodied aspects of managerial fallibility such as anxiety and doubt, not as clinical conditions, but as primary aspects of human experience (Salecl, 2004).

In sum, process philosophy views uncertainty, unpredictability, and unknowability as systemic features of reality- they are inescapable and unavoidable. Significantly, for our present purposes, this provides possibilities for rethinking managerial fallibility which are summarized in Table 2. Given the inescapability of uncertainty, unpredictability, and unknowability of our worlds, I suggest that managerial fallibility and its allied feelings of anxiety and doubt, are inevitable effects of attempts to cope with a messy, fluxing reality. Fallibility then is not taken as evidence of individuals' shortcomings or weaknesses, but rather is an embodied effect of the doings of practice. Fallibility, rather than expressing an abnormality, itself constitutes practice and is not easily resolvable. However, this is not to suggest that it should continue to be perceived as a hindrance to be denied, but rather that it should be seen as a central and expected aspect of managerial practice, which demands our ongoing attention (cf Weick, 2001). Indeed, this comprises an integral aspect of what Chia (2017:114) drawing on Whitehead, terms

an "'aesthetic appreciation' for the concreteness of lived experience, a refined empirical sensitivity to real goings-on in the world". Moreover, as outlined next, recognizing, and tuning into fallibility's unsettling, opens opportunities to improve management practice by challenging expectations of the management task to invite an alternative focus- 'practical adequacy'- which I argue might enable managers to cope more productively in the ongoing flux, and in so doing, make them less likely to err and fail. As we will see, it is an approach which differs markedly from popular pleas to embrace fallibility, such as notably Facebook's mantra to 'move fast and break things', which remain committed to the pressurizing pursuit of perfection.

Insert Table 2 around here

THE PURSUIT OF PRACTICAL ADEQUACY

Here, recognizing fallibility and embracing its unsettling is seen to provide an important opportunity to change our ways of being, talking and acting (Cunliffe, 2002), since it begs a questioning of what management can realistically achieve. Crucially, I argue that it evokes a challenge to the dysfunctional and ultimately self-defeating nature of the pursuit of perfection. However, it is also essential that a viable alternative is offered. As Schweiger et al (2020: 428) highlight, the abandonment of the heroic ideal is difficult for managers, and "the burden of never satisfying one's aspirations seems less frightening than…having to face the fact that one cannot control the complex situations they are part of". Their insights suggest that fallibility's unsettling can become so overwhelming that it threatens a retreat to the perverse safety of the pursuit of the heroic, perfectionist ideal.

The alternative which arises from our processual lens replaces the pursuit of perfection with the pursuit of 'adequacy'. Crucially, as we will see below, adequacy in processual terms has a much deeper and more complex meaning than our limited everyday understanding which

equates adequacy with mediocrity. Indeed, it follows an emerging stream of work that challenges us to see the hidden value of supposedly negative ideas such as weak management (Deslandes, 2020) and negative capability (Saggurthi & Thakur, 2016), which paradoxically are associated with improving managerial outcomes. Moreover, adequacy might also provide a provocative value necessary to shake the seductive hold of perfectionism, while in turn also offering an underappreciated relieving power through its inherent acceptance of the limits of management. As Deslandes (2020: 137) observes, "when management recognizes its finitude…it will (ironically) regain its power".

Accepting fallibility as an inescapable aspect of an ever-fluxing world suggests that the management task is limited to the pursuit of what I term 'practical adequacy', that is, to the development of necessarily imperfect but adequate understandings of immediate circumstances which are *enough* to *go on* (Chia & Holt, 2009; Giddens, 1979). A focus on adequacy arises from Garfinkel's (1967) ethnomethodology- a stance patently consistent with process philosophy-where members work *is* to temporarily arrest an open-ended stream of possibilities by settling upon an 'adequate account', which enables them to move forwards. An adequate account provides a plausible and defensible justification of the current situation which is sufficient for all practical purposes. It stabilizes the flux enough for members to act purposefully in response to a deluge of competing and attention seeking external stimuli (Chia, 1999) to provide a 'workable level of certainty' to cope effectively (Weick, 1979: 6), and is necessarily always a situational accomplishment (Rawls, 2008). Importantly too, it has a provisional, *for now* nature which recognizes the account may demand future adjustment. Ontologically then, a 'practical adequacy' is all that is ever possible since a complete understanding can never be reached. Yet it is also important to recognize the enormity of skilful effort that lies behind its production. It is to appreciate the 'extra-ordinary organization of the ordinary' (Boden, 1994) to understand that the pursuit of practical adequacy (the process) does

not imply adequate performance (the outcomes) (cf Nurick, 2012). Indeed, it might ensure better outcomes for management practice.

Better outcomes for management practice potentially follow since a focus on practical adequacy provides a basis for more generative actions which work *with* fallibility. Firstly, practical adequacy invites humility since it foregrounds the presence of something greater than self (the flux), which begs a self-awareness of fallibility, generating an openness or willingness to learn with and from others (Morris, Brotheridge, & Urbanski, 2005). Accepting that a complete understanding of our circumstances evades us *all*, allows the manager to put aside their ego and seek out different voices and opinions to furnish the most sufficient account that is practically possible. Secondly, as practical adequacy is concerned with accountability to the here and now, it also encourages care-ful attention to the present moment, to the "cunning in capitalizing on 'ripening' situations that present themselves at a specific point in time" (Chia & Holt, 2008: 477), including tuning into and tolerating fallibility's embodied effects such as anxiety and doubt, which offer invitations for further exploration. Thirdly, the impermanent, *for now* nature of practical adequacy also promotes a sensitivity towards unexpected outcomes and permits a flexibility of future adjustment in response to the unfolding flux without shame (Christian, 2013). Put differently, it supports changes of mind in the event of unexpected outcomes reducing concerns of getting it 'wrong'.

These generative actions which embrace fallibility potentially facilitate robust and creative management outcomes, as evidenced in alternative forms of organizing such as sociocracy and its parent Quakerism, which mobilize an approach broadly consistent with the pursuit of practical adequacy. While not offering a panacea, Rack (2002: 23) notes that surprisingly the approach "does work quite well, quite often". Robust outcomes emerge from both the collective development of limited individual perspectives (Allen, 2017) as well as the reflexive accountability to immediate circumstances (Rau & Koch-Gonzalez, 2018, see also Samra-

Fredericks, 2010). Creative outcomes are also made possible through the tolerance of fallibility's unsettling which invites novel ways of coping with the situation to reveal themselves (Heidegger, 1985), as well as the experimentation that the provisional nature of practical adequacy permits (Christian, 2013). Ultimately, a pursuit of practical adequacy which works *with* our fallibility might be the very means through which we cope more effectively in the world (cf Heidegger, 1985). A processual lens then may also offer underappreciated resources *for coping* and make us less likely to err and fail. As MacKay and Chia (2013: 208) note, drawing on Tolstoy's War and Peace (1869/1993) "while Napoleon thought he was in control of events, the Russian general Kutuzov knew that neither of them were, and so made fewer mistakes".

EMBRACING FALLIBILITY IN MANAGEMENT EDUCATION: A CALL TO ACTION

So far, I have argued that a processual lens offers us a new view of managerial fallibility. Viewed through a processual lens, fallibility is not seen as a sign of individual weakness to be pathologized and silenced, but rather an unavoidable effect of a world constantly 'becoming' which requires our ongoing recognition and engagement. In turn, I have suggested that this rethinking challenges the limits of the management task to invite an alternative focus for management practice- one centred not upon the pursuit of perfection and completeness, but upon the pursuit of practical adequacy. Moreover, I have suggested that this expands possibilities for management practice by providing a relieving and generative power, which can facilitate more constructive responses to experienced fallibility, making us less likely to err and fail. In doing so, I have highlighted the unstated value of the processual lens as a resource *for* coping. In the final part of this essay, I turn to consider the implications of this argument for management education. Fundamentally, I make a call to action for educators to end their current collusion in the silencing of managerial fallibility, and instead, embrace

fallibility by leveraging these processual insights as a starting point to develop the 'adequate manager'. Simply put, this is one who recognizes fallibility and embraces its unsettling, to accept that the management task is limited to the development of necessarily imperfect but practically adequate understandings of immediate circumstances which enable them to go on. An adequate manager is one who then works *with* their fallibility to display humility seeking to learn with and from others; provides care-ful attention to the present moment including its emotional disturbances, and shows a sensitivity towards, and flexibility to respond to, unexpected outcomes. To be clear, a focus on adequacy does not lower aspirations for management education, but rather acknowledges that the realization of better outcomes for management education may require counterintuitive means (Harrison et al., 2007). As I outline next, this has practical implications for the stance adopted by educators, as well as the content and processes of teaching that we mobilize. The suggestions that follow, which are summarized in Table 3, are not intended to be exhaustive but serve to highlight examples of how we might recognize and embrace fallibility to lay the foundations for the development of the 'adequate manager'.

Insert Table 3 around here

My first call to action invites management educators to reimagine the stance that they adopt in the classroom to create the conditions which allow managers to recognize fallibility and embrace its unsettling. Typically, as noted earlier, educators tend to adopt the position of an expert "whose *job* it is to know" (Raab, 1997: 167). Yet, if we accept that we are equally unable to escape a perpetually fluxing reality to teach managers, the occupation of this position becomes problematic since we cannot avoid our own unknowing (Hay, 2022). Like the managers we teach, we are secondary to the ontological flux. Instead then, educators may have to accept a rather less grand position (Hay & Hodgkinson, 2008), one which crucially displays "more humility concerning the limits of their expertise" (Grint, 2007: 243). This is to accept

our own fallibility and to recognize that we can't be heroes any more than the managers we seek to educate (cf Callahan & Elliott, 2020). I therefore call for a shift in the framing of the management educator role: away from one which claims to answer all questions and resolve all managerial troubles towards one which aims to facilitate coping and its pursuit of practical adequacy. This shift challenges the simplistic division of power central to mainstream teaching approaches where it is assumed that "the teacher knows, the student does not" (Vince, 2010: S26), in ways which broaden possibilities for the educator role beyond that of detached knowledge purveyor (Dehler & Welsh, 2014). A recognition of educators' fallibility which challenges our elevated expert status, potentially (re)connects us to our students (Corlett et al, 2019) and promises a more equal faculty student relationship where the expertise of managers is also acknowledged. Our task then becomes more concerned with helping managers to make sense of their considerable experience: to develop an "aesthetic appreciation of the concreteness of lived experience" (Chia, 2017:114), which, as noted earlier, is strangely absent from the business school's current learning agenda. Doing so, would respond to Cunliffe's (2022) plea to humanify the educator role. Our value would then come from drawing managers' attention to the 'seen but unnoticed' (Garfinkel, 1967) aspects of their practice, which become so given their immersion in the ongoing flux, and by doing so, provide enhanced possibilities for coping. For our present purposes of course, a key aspect of the 'seen but unnoticed' is that managers are both capable *and* fallible. Educator's illumination of this aspect serves to begin to encourage its transformative learning potential.

A useful starting point is for educators to foreground their own fallibility in the classroom, to begin to normalize it and grant students' permission to likewise recognize and engage with theirs. As Tomkins and Ulus (2015: 603) observe, "surely we will be better able to teach and inspire our students if we try to practice what we preach". This might be achieved by sharing silenced stories of our doubts in the research process (Locke et al., 2008); challenges to our

claimed expertise so central to the publication process (Gabriel, 2010) or ultimately, our research failures (Harrowell, et al., 2018). However, doing so is likely to be undeniably threatening for both management educators and students given its deviation from current expectations of the management educator role which demand expertise and success (Petriglieri & Peshkam, 2022; Sinclair, 2007). An additional and important part of our role then becomes to contain and soothe fallibility's unsettling- both our own and that of our students- to create a safe environment which lays the foundations for managers to experiment with different ways of being. Learning sets, for example, may constitute an important part of such an environment where students can explore their discomfort with trusted others (Corlett et al., 2019).

My second call to action invites educators to then draw upon content which further validates fallibility to stimulate a questioning of the limits of the management task. If as suggested above, a key role of the educator is to bring attention to the 'seen but unnoticed' features of management practice as lived, and here, particularly that managers are capable *and* fallible, then current curricular offerings which overemphasize capability, need to be supplemented with materials emerging from the processual lens, which alert us to the inescapability of our fallibility. Introductory courses might, for example, purposefully integrate understandings of a becoming world view to challenge mainstream management education's overly static and often naively simplistic views of the nature of our worlds. Chia's work from 1995 and 1999 might be especially helpful here given his accessible language. This highlights the often forgotten messy and complex nature of reality, which gives rise to our fallibility and enables us to reframe fallibility as an unavoidable part of systemic reality rather than an individual weakness. Doing so relieves the burden of managerial infallibility to open possibilities for working with fallibility.

Following such initial grounding, educators might then introduce content from the growing practice-based turn (Gherardi, 2009; Miettinen et al., 2009), which builds on this philosophical

underpinning, at relevant points across the curriculum. Examples can be found in fields such as strategy as practice (Chia & Holt, 2006, 2009; Samra-Fredericks, 2003a, 2003b) and leadership as practice (Carroll et al., 2008; Raelin, 2009). Offering fine-grained analyses of organizing as lived, this work slows down the flux to illuminate the 'seen but unnoticed' situated, interactional, and provisional nature of our worlds. It empirically illustrates managing as coping with an ever-fluxing reality which can be used to develop understandings of management as limited to achieving practical adequacy. Samra-Fredericks (2003b) for example, illustrates how transcribed strips of recorded interaction emerging from her practice-based investigation of strategy work, which surfaced managers' 'lived ambiguities and dilemmas', can be shared in the classroom to facilitate a critical exploration of the scope of managerial agency. This exploration can in turn invite considerations of the need for different ways of being- for greater humility, care-fulness and flexible responsiveness to work with the constraints of the management task. For example, educators might then supplement this with content which voices embodied aspects of managerial fallibility as one route to foster care-fulness to the present moment. However, given their neglect and echoing Petriglieri's (2020) call to 'humanize organization theory', further research is needed to produce such resources. Nevertheless, work on anxiety and doubt evoked by our unknowingness (Allen, 2017; Hay, 2014; 2022), as well as empirical accounts of managerial vulnerability (Corlett et al., 2019) offer initial and modest help to facilitate their effective noticing, which as outlined above, is integral to the development practical adequacy.

While such content undoubtedly offers important possibilities to help students re-examine the nature of the management task to understand its limits, and in ways which begin to invite working with fallibility, it must also be acknowledged that educators may need to make accounts of practical coping more 'student friendly'. For example, Tourish (2020) lambasts Chia and Holt's (2006) contribution for what he sees as unnecessary complexity. However, at

the same time, this content might be more welcomed by our students than we estimate (Hay, 2022; Petriglieri & Petriglieri, 2010; Samra-Fredericks, 2003b). As Chia (2017: 115) comments, processual accounts which uphold a view of "organizational life as immersed, ongoing practical coping is one familiar to many experienced managers, even though it conflicts with much of managerial talk that emphasizes decisiveness, certainty and clarity of action".

Moreover, this unpredictable receptivity also further indicates that educators might need to reconsider *how* we suggest our content might be mobilized in practice by managers. As noted previously, technicist thinking continues to dominate mainstream approaches, which uphold that management education offers a body of knowledge that straightforwardly facilitates managerial effectiveness through the simple transfer and application of such knowledge (Grey & Mitev, 1995). A processual lens however challenges such thinking. Firstly, the 'fallacy of misplaced concreteness' (Whitehead, 1926/1985- see Chia, 2017), reminds us of the limits of this body of knowledge and alerts us to the dangers of 'mistaking the map for the territory'. This is not however to suggest that our conceptualization efforts are worthless, but rather since our efforts can never fully represent reality, it is important that we do not reify concepts, treating them as if the phenomena were 'out-there' and stable. Instead, as Blumer (1954) implored us to recognize, concepts themselves are fluid and can be thought of as useful to 'think with'. This recognition suggests that we might more helpfully present our concepts as resources for coping rather than ideals to fall short of. It is to acknowledge and challenge the notion that concepts project "an 'ideal' that must be properly 'executed' for a concrete outcome to be realized" (Chia, 2017: 109). Put differently, while we might be able to conceive of the perfection of abstractions, we can never experience it or live it (Weick, 2008). Secondly, seen in these ways, simplistic notions of knowledge transfer are also problematized. Indeed, work which provides insights into how our offerings are mobilized by managers in their practice,

find that content is not 'transferred' in any straightforward sense (Hay & Hodgkinson, 2008, Heusinkveld, Sturdy, & Werr, 2011). Learners are not passive but rather adapt, develop, and re-create knowledge as they work with it in-situ. Indeed, given a perpetually fluxing reality, they cannot do otherwise. Our concepts might then be thought of as being utilized in creative ways which furnish practical adequacy. Yet, the dynamic nature of the unfolding flow also reminds us that our offerings will also play out in a myriad of ways- some intended and others unintended (MacKay & Chia, 2013). This alerts educators and students to the ongoing possibility of 'failure' of our offerings, and importantly, sees this as unavoidable aspect of reality rather than a sign of "personal inability to mobilize the right tools in the right situations" (Deslandes, 2020:134). In sum, educators and students might need to accept more a more modest and fallible relationship between formal learning and practice.

My third call to action invites educators to mobilize the processual lens to re-imagine our teaching methods, in ways which foreground the pursuit of practical adequacy and encourage working with fallibility. This both invites us to work differently with familiar methods as well as to embrace unfamiliar approaches. For example, the highly familiar (and often criticized) case study might itself become other when working with a processual lens. As it is currently used with its requisition for students to diagnose situations and definitively prescribe solutions (Mintzberg, 2004), it tends to reinforce the technicist thinking described earlier by, for example, leading students to pre-determined answers (Currie & Tempest, 2008) suggestive of complete solutions as well as fuelling mythical, heroic notions of managers (Collinson & Tourish, 2015). This upholds understandings of individuals unproblematically acting *on* the world in ways which downplay fallibility. Yet, as Bridgman, Cummings, and McLaughlin (2016) note, there are also under explored opportunities for the case study to be used in broader ways. The case study is therefore not 'fixed' but can be used fluidly. For our present purposes, we might position the case study processually as a temporary fixing of reality, a transient snapshot, which

then invites questions such as, how did it *become* so, what is said and what is not said, and hence what don't we know, does this make us feel uneasy, what outcomes, both those expected *and* unexpected, might follow from acting *in* the world based on our suggested ways forward, do others have different suggestions, and ultimately is a complete and perfect solution possible? This type of questioning highlights the limits of managerial agency and directs effort towards the development of necessarily incomplete but sufficient understandings of situations which are enough to go on. In turn, this can invite managers to begin to understand the importance of working *with* fallibility.

Other familiar teaching methods, notably research projects which are common components of many management programmes, offer multiple opportunities to understand the world processually, in ways which encourage students to work with fallibility. For example, as Hay (2022) illustrates, the unpredictability of the research process can be used to challenge students' understandings of linearity and invite a consideration of how our knowing in the world emerges relationally over time. This offers possibilities for educators to underscore the limits of our abilities to know alone and in advance, to encourage humility to others' perspectives and sensitivity to unexpected outcomes. As evidenced in Hay's study, learning to research can highlight how others' perspectives, integral to the data collection process, can enlarge individual understanding, as well as how unexpected research outcomes are inevitable effects of acting in a fluxing world rather than a weakness of individual foresight, to cultivate "sensitivity to the periphery, where black swans that broadside even the most well intentioned managers often originate" (MacKay & Chia, 2013: 226). Further, the presentation of eventual research findings also invites discussions of practical adequacy to facilitate an understanding that research accounts are always necessarily *for now*- incomplete and provisional but nevertheless must be robust and defensible.

Less familiar teaching methods such as, markedly, simulations of the Quaker method of meeting for business described by Allen (2017) and Burton (2017), also provide opportunities to promote the pursuit of practical adequacy in ways which encourage students to embrace fallibility. The Quaker 'business method' rests on the assumption that nobody individually understands a given situation or has an answer, and so consistent with our focus on practical adequacy, its central concern lies in a search for unity or 'sense of the meeting' (Burton, 2017) for how to go on together. The method therefore offers one means for educators to challenge the primacy of the individual agent, and in ways that simultaneously highlight the limits of an individual's knowing. Its implementation in the classroom can encourage both a humility towards others' views since they are necessary to develop collective wisdom, as well as a care-fulness towards anxiety of the present moment, which is understood as an expected and legitimate effect of 'being in the flow together' (Allen, 2017: 136), inviting further exploration.

In sum, reconsidering our stance, content and methods of teaching and learning through a processual lens, in ways which voice, legitimize and foreground fallibility to lay the foundations to develop the adequate manager, might "instead of fuelling the narcissism of students and instructors with ever more grandiose claims and hyped-up intellectual gizmos,…..rediscover the importance of unspectacular, craft and versatile learning, imbued with humility and a tolerance for imperfections and uncertainty" (Alvesson & Gabriel, 2016: 471). In so doing, we might mobilize the value of the processual lens as a resource *for* coping which enables managers to go on.

Of course, the extent to which the processual lens provides a valuable resource for coping requires empirical consideration. Future research might focus on developing specific activities which attempt to work with this perspective, such as for example, case studies deliberately deployed to invite consideration of the perpetually shifting nature of reality allied to the implications for working with fallibility. Research might then also consider how such attempts

are received by students. Do they for example provide a welcomed sense of relief as suggested by Chia (2017) and Hay (2022), or do attempts to foreground messy, chaotic worlds evoke defensive reactions, such as those experienced by Sinclair (2007)? In addition, what are the challenges for educators? How easy is it for example, to adopt a non-expert stance (Raab, 1997)? Further, while this piece has been informed by and written from an organization theory perspective, it is interesting to reflect how the ideas presented here may be received by different disciplines such as finance and economics who make strong claims to knowing.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this essay has sought to recognize and embrace managerial fallibility's unexplored learning potential. Specifically, it has utilized a processual lens as one route to voice, legitimize and foreground human fallibility, typically silenced in our efforts to educate managers. It has argued that a processual lens allows us to view managerial fallibility anew as an unavoidable effect of a world constantly 'becoming', rather than a sign of individual weakness which is pathologized and denied. Moreover, it has illustrated how this processual insight in turn offers promise to move managers to change their ways of being, talking and acting (Cunliffe, 2002) to work *with*, not against, fallibility. Once recognized as unavoidable, fallibility challenges perfectionist expectations of the management task to invite an alternative and perhaps more realistic focus for management practice and education- one centred upon the pursuit of practical adequacy. Crucially, this stance encourages the development of managers who act with humility, care-fulness and flexible responsiveness who can potentially deliver enhanced management outcomes, which may be less likely to fail. The work here has extended discussions of the processual lens which foreground managerial work *as* a form of coping (Chia & Holt, 2006, 2009) to consider how this can also be mobilized as a resource *for* coping. Arguably, this extension provides a more optimistic outlook for understanding managerial work as practical coping than that suggested by Tourish (2020). Yet ultimately, the value of

any academic work, of what it *becomes*, of course, depends on how it is received by us and our students in the management classroom and beyond. Nevertheless, the challenge of introducing the ideas offered here into mainstream management education, dominated as it is by technicist thinking, is noted. Overcoming this challenge, will undoubtedly require perseverance and ongoing conversation. My hope would be that over time, if enough join our conversation, we may reach a point were working with fallibility *becomes* effortless.

References

Allen, S. 2017. Learning from friends: Developing appreciations for unknowing in reflexive practice. ***Management Learning,*** 48: 125-139.

Alvesson, M. & Gabriel, Y. 2016. Grandiosity in contemporary management and education. ***Management Learning***, 47: 464-473.

Alvesson, M. & Spicer, A. 2015. ***The stupidity paradox: The power and pitfalls of functional stupidity at work***. London: Profile Books.

Barnes, B. 2001. Practice as collective action. In., Schatzki, T. R. Cetina, K. K, & Von Savigny, E. (Eds.), ***The practice turn in contemporary theor****y*: 25-36. London: Routledge.

Blumer, H. 1954. What is wrong with social theory? ***American Sociological Review*** 19: 3-10.

Boden, D. 1994. ***The business of talk***. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bridgman, T., Cummings, S. & McLaughlin, C. 2016. Restating the case: How revisiting the development of the case method can help us think differently about the future of the business school. ***Academy of Management Learning and Education***, 15: 724-741.

Burton, N. 2017. Quaker business method: A contemporary decision-making process. In S. Angell & P. Dandelion (Eds.), ***Quakers, business and industry: Quakers and the disciplines*** 4: 242-262. Friends Association for Higher Education.

Callahan, J.L, & Elliott, C. 2020. Fantasy spaces and emotional derailment: Reflections on failure in academic activism. ***Organization***, *27*: 506-514.

Carroll, B., Levy, L., & Richmond, D. 2008. Leadership as practice: Challenging the competency paradigm. ***Leadership***, *4*: 363-379.

Chia, R. 1995. From modern to postmodern organizational analysis. ***Organization Studies,*** 16 :579-604.

Chia, R. 1999. A 'rhizomic' model of organizational change and transformation: Perspectives from a metaphysics of change. ***British Journal of Management,*** 10: 209-227.

Chia, R. 2017. A process-philosophical understanding of organizational learning as 'wayfinding'. Process, practices and sensitivity to environmental affordances. ***The Learning Organization***, 24: 107-118.

Chia, R. & Holt, R. 2006. Strategy as practical coping: A Heideggerian perspective. ***Organization Studies***, 27, 635-655.

Chia, R. & Holt, R. 2008. The nature of knowledge in business schools. ***Academy of Management Learning and Education,*** 7: 471-486.

Chia, R & Holt, R. 2009. ***Strategy without design: The silent efficacy of indirect action***. Cambridge: CUP.

Christian, D.L. 2013. Transparency, equivalence, and effectiveness. How Sociocracy can help communities, Part 1. ***Communities***, 160: 59-63.

Collinson, D. & Tourish, D. 2015. Teaching leadership critically: New directions for leadership pedagogy. ***Academy of Management Learning and Education***, *14*: 576-594.

Corlett, S., Mavin, S. & Beech, N. 2019. Reconceptualising vulnerability and its value for managerial identity and learning. ***Management Learning***, 50: 556-575.

Crowe, J. 2016. Human fallibility and the separation of powers. ***Policy: A Journal of Public Policy and Ideas***, *32*: 42-46.

Cunliffe, A. L. 2002. Reflexive dialogical practice in management learning. ***Management Learning***, 33(1), 35-61.

Cunliffe, A.L. 2022. Bridging the gap: Relationality and reflexivity in learning and work. ***University Forum for Human Resource Development***, online, 8th-10th June.

Currie, G. & Tempest, S. 2008. Moving towards reflexive use of teaching cases. ***International Journal of Management Education***, 7: 41-50.

Dehler, G. E., & Welsh, M. A. 2014. Against spoon-feeding. For learning. Reflections on students' claims to knowledge. ***Journal of Management Education***, *38*: 875-893.

Deslandes, G. 2020. Weak theology and organization studies. ***Organization Studies***, 41, 127-139.

Fletcher, J. 1998. Relational practice: A feminist reconstruction of work. ***Journal of Management Inquiry***, 7: 163-186.

Ford, J. 2019. Rethinking relational leadership: recognising the mutual dynamic between leaders and the led. In Carroll, B., Wilson, S. and Firth, J. (eds), ***After Leadership***. London: Routledge, pp.157-174.

Ford, J. & Harding, N. 2007. Move over management: We are all leaders now. ***Management Learning,*** 38: 475-493.

Gabriel, Y. 2010. Organization studies: A space for ideas, identities, and agonies. ***Organization Studies***, *31*: 757-775.

Garfinkel, H. 1967. ***Studies in Ethnomethodology***. NJ: Prentice Hall.

Gherardi, S. 2009. Introduction: The critical power of the practice lens. ***Management Learning***, 40: 115-128.

Giddens, A. 1979. ***Central problems in social theory: Action, structure and contradiction in social analysis***. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Grey, C. 2004. Reinventing business schools: The contribution of Critical Management Education. ***Academy of Management Learning and Education,*** 3:178-186.

Grey, C. & Mitev, N. 1995. Management education: A polemic. ***Management Learning***, *26*: 73-90.

Grint, K. 2007. Learning to lead: can Aristotle help us find the road to wisdom? ***Leadership***, *3*: 231-246.

Harrison, R.T., Leitch, C.M. & Chia, R. 2007. Developing paradigmatic awareness in university business schools: The challenge for executive education. ***Academy of Management Learning and Education***, *6*: 332-343.

Harrowell, E., Davies, T., & Disney, T. 2018. Making space for failure in geographic research. ***The Professional Geographer***, 70: 230-238.

Hay, A. 2014. 'I don't know what I am doing!': Surfacing struggles of managerial identity work". ***Management Learning,*** 45: 509-524.

Hay, A. 2022. Exploring unknowingness in the DBA programme: Possibilities for developing an attitude of wisdom. ***Management Learning***, 53: 269-90.

Hay, A. & Hodgkinson, M. 2008. More success than meets the eye: a challenge to critiques of the MBA. Possibilities for Critical Management Education? ***Management Learning,*** 39: 21-40.

Hayek, F.A. 1945. The use of knowledge in society. ***The American Economic Review***, *35*: 519-530.

Heidegger, M. 1985 ***Being and Time***. Oxford: Blackwell.

Helin, J., Hernes, T., Hjorth D. & Holt, R. 2014, ***The Oxford Handbook of Process Philosophy and Organisation Studies***, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Heusinkveld, S, Sturdy, A. & Werr, A. 2011. The co-consumption of management ideas and practices. ***Management Learning,*** *42*: 139-147.

Knights, D & McCabe, D. 2015. 'Masters of the Universe': Demystifying leadership in the context of the 2008 global financial crisis. ***British Journal of Management***, *26*: 197-210.

Kvalnes, O. 2017. ***Fallibility at Work. Rethinking Excellence and Error in Organisations***. Cham, Switzerland: Springer Nature.

Janis, I. 1972. ***Victims of Grouptink***. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Johnston, W.A. & Dark, V.J. 1986. Selective attention. ***Annual Review of Psychology***, 37: 43-75.

Kahneman, D. 2011. ***Thinking, Fast and Slow***. London: Penguin.

Locke K., Golden-Biddle, K. & Feldman, M. 2008. Making doubt generative: Rethinking the role of doubt in the research process. ***Organization Science,*** 19: 907-918.

MacKay, B.R. & Chia, R. 2013. Choice, chance and unintended consequences in strategic change: a process understanding of the rise and fall of Northco Automotive. ***Academy of Management Journal***, 56: 208-230.

MacKay, R. B., Chia, R., & Nair, A. 2021. Strategy-in-practices: a process philosophical approach to understanding strategy emergence and organizational outcomes. ***Human Relations***, 74:1337-1369.

McCabe, D. 2016. 'Curiouser and curiouser!': Organizations as Wonderland–a metaphorical alternative to the rational model. ***Human Relations,*** 69: 945-973.

Miettinen, R., Samra-Fredericks, D. & Yanow, D. 2009. Re-turn to practice: an introductory essay**.** ***Organization Studies,*** 30: 1309-1327.

Mintzberg, H. 2004. ***Managers not MBAs. A hard look at the soft practice of management and management development***. London: FT Prentice Hall.

Morris, J.A., Brotheridge, C.M. & Urbanski, J.C. 2005. Bringing humility into leadership: Antecedents and consequences of leader humility. ***Human Relations***, 58: 1323-1350.

Mutch, A. 2016. The limits of process: On (re) reading Henri Bergson. ***Organization***, *23*: 825-839.

Nayak, A. & Chia, R. 2011. Thinking becoming and emergence: process philosophy and organisation studies. In: Tsoukas H, Chia R (eds) ***Philosophy and Organisation Theory. Research in the Sociology of Organisations***. 32: 281-309 Emerald Group Publishing.

Nicolini, D. & Monteiro, P. 2017. The practice approach: for a praxeology of organizational and management studies. In: H Tsoukas & A Langley (Eds.) ***The Sage Handbook of Process Organization Studies***. London: Sage.

Nurick, A. 2012. ***The Good Enough Manager: The Making of GEM***. New York: Routlegde.

Petriglieri, G. 2020. F**k Science!? An invitation to humanize organization theory. ***Organization Theory***, 1: 1-18.

Petriglieri G. & Petriglieri, J.L. 2010. Identity workspaces: The case of business schools. ***Academy of Management Learning and Education*** 9: 44-60.

Petriglieri, G. & Petriglieri, J.L. 2015. Can Business Schools Humanize Leadership? ***Academy of Management Learning and Education***, 14, 625-647.

Petriglieri, G. & Peshkam, A. 2022. Stranger Leaders: A Theory of Marginal Leaders' Conception of Learning in Organizations. ***Academy of Management Journal***, 65:1240-1273.

Raab, N. 1997. Becoming an expert in not knowing: Reframing teacher as consultant. ***Management Learning***, 28: 161-175.

Raelin, J.A. 2016. ***Leadership-as-practice: Theory and application***. London: Routledge.

Rack, P. 2002. **Quakerism in the 21st Century**. New York: William Sessions Ltd.

Rawls, A. W. 2008. Harold Garfinkel, ethnomethodology and workplace studies. ***Organization Studies,*** *29*: 701-732.

Rau, T.J. and Koch-Gonzalez, J. 2018. ***Many voices one song. Shared power with sociocracy***. Amherst, MA: Sociocracy for all.

Rostron, A. 2022. How to be a hero: How managers determine what makes a good manager through narrative identity work. ***Management Learning,*** 53:417-438.

Sadler-Smith, E. & Cojuharenco, I. 2021. Business Schools and hubris: Cause or Cure? ***Academy of Management Learning and Education*** 20: 270-289.

Saggurthi S & Thakur, M. 2016. Usefulness of uselessness: a case for negative capability in management. ***Academy of Management Learning and Education,*** 15: 180-193.

Salecl, R. 2004. ***On Anxiety***. London: Routledge.

Samra-Fredericks, D. 2003a. Strategizing as lived experience and strategists' everyday efforts to shape strategic direction. ***Journal of Management Studies*** 40: 141-174.

Samra-Fredericks, D. 2003b. A proposal for developing a critical pedagogy in management from researching organizational members' everyday practice. ***Management Learning***, 34: 291-312.

Samra-Fredericks, D. 2005. Strategic practice, 'discourse' and the everyday interactional constitution of' power effects. ***Organization***, *12*: 803-841.

Samra-Fredericks, D. 2010. Where is the 'I'? One silence in strategy research. ***Advances in Strategic Management Research***, 27: 411–444.

Schweiger, S., Müller, B., & Güttel, W. H. 2020. Barriers to leadership development: Why is it so difficult to abandon the hero? ***Leadership***, 16: 411-433.

Schultz, M. & Hernes, T. 2013. A temporal perspective on organizational identity. ***Organization Science*** 24: 1-21.

Segal, S. 2010. A Heideggerian approach to practice-based reflexivity. ***Management Learning***, *41*: 379-389.

Segal, S. 2011. A Heideggerian perspective on the relationship between Mintzberg's distinction between engaged and disconnected management: The role of uncertainty in management. ***Journal of Business Ethics***, *103*: 469-483.

Shah, R. 1991. Human fallibility in human organisations and political systems. ***Journal of Economic Perspectives***, 5: 67-88.

Simon, H. A. 1972. Theories of bounded rationality. ***Decision and Organization***, 1: 161-176.

Sinclair, A. 2007, Teaching leadership critically to MBAs: Experiences from heaven and hell. ***Management Learning***, *38*: 458-472.

Smith, C. & Ulus, E. 2020. Who cares for academics? We need to talk about emotional well-being including what we avoid and intellectualise through macro-discourses. ***Organization***, *27*: 840-857.

Soros, G. 2013. Fallibility, reflexivity, and the human uncertainty principle. ***Journal of Economic Methodology***, *20*: 309-329.

Starkey, K., Tempest, S. & Cinque, S. 2019. Management education and the theatre of the absurd. ***Management Learning***, 50: 591-606.

Tomkins, L. & Ulus, E. 2015. Is narcissism undermining critical refection in our business schools? ***Academy of Management Learning & Education***, 14: 595-606.

Tourish, D. 2020. The triumph of nonsense in management studies. ***Academy of Management Learning and Education***, *19*: 99-109.

Tsoukas, H. & Chia, R. 2002. On Organizational becoming: Rethinking organizational change. ***Organization Science***, 13: 567-582.

Vidaillet, B. & Vignon, C. 2010. Bringing back the subject into management education. ***Management Learning***, *41*: 221-241.

Vince, R. 2010. Anxiety, Politics and Critical Management Education. ***British Journal of Management***, *21*, 26-39.

Watson, T.J. 2001. ***In Search of Management. Culture, Chaos and Control in Managerial Work***. London: Routledge.

Watson, T.J. 2002. ***Organising and Managing Work***. Harlow: Pearson.

Watson, T. J. 2005. Organização e trabalho em transição: da lógica" sistêmico-controladora" à lógica" processual-relacional". ***Revista de Administração de Empresas***, *45:* 14-23.

Weick K.E. 1979. ***The Social Psychology of Organizing***. 2nd edition. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Weick, K.E. 2001. Leadership as the legitimation of doubt. In: Bennis W, Spritzer G and Cummings G (eds) ***The Future of Leadership***. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, pp. 91-102.

Weick, C.W. 2008. Issues of consequence: Lessons for educating tomorrow's business leaders from philosopher William James. ***Academy of Management Learning and Education***, *7*: 88-98.

Whittington, R. 2007. Strategy practice and strategy process: family differences and the sociological eye. ***Organization Studies***, *28*: 1575-1586.

Zembylas M 2005. A pedagogy of unknowing: Witnessing unknowability in teaching and learning. ***Studies in Philosophy and Education***, 24: 139-60.

Table 1: Being and Becoming Worldviews

Being World View	Becoming Worldview
Informed by a metaphysics of substance/presence	Informed by a metaphysics of process
Privileges 'states', static attributes, and sequential events	Privileges action, movement, process, and emergence
Reality is permanent, stable, and unchanging. The world is 'ready-made' and 'out there'	Reality is ever fluxing and changing. 'Things' are emergent and always in the making
Linearity- Past, present, and future as discrete, sequential, temporal points. Linear cause effect relationships presumed	Immanence- past, present, and future immanently telescoped into one another. Non-linear, continuous phenomenon characterized by chaotic dynamics
Reality lends itself to accurate naming, classification, and categorization	Impossible to accurately represent reality
Individual as isolatable, concrete, pre-existing, autonomous unit	Individual constituted out of the flow of process
Detached actor surveys world in advance and acts on the world: Navigating	Actor is immersed in ongoing local circumstances: Wayfinding
Intellectual Priorities: results or outcomes. Causal orientation.	Intellectual Priorities: micro-practices which produce phenomena of organization.

Table 2: Rethinking Fallibility

Traditional Understanding	Processual Understanding
Informed by being perspective	Informed by becoming perspective
Individual shortcoming	Inescapable aspect of systemic reality
Abnormal	Normal
Hindrance: avoided and silenced.	Resource: acknowledged and embraced.
Closes possibilities	Opens Possibilities
Pursues Perfection	Pursues Practical Adequacy
Pressurizing: Against Coping	Relieving: For Coping

Table 3 Mobilizing a processual lens to embrace fallibility for management learning: Laying the foundations for the development of the 'adequate' manager

Examples of Initiatives	Purpose	Actions and questions for management educators to embrace fallibility to begin to develop the 'adequate' manager
Educator Stance		
Adopt non-expert stance which recognizes our unknowingness as educators.	Reframes educator role beyond detached knowledge purveyor towards one who facilitates coping and its pursuit of practical adequacy. Humanifies educator role (re)-connecting us to students.	Highlight 'seen but unnoticed' aspects of lived management practice. Leverage understandings that managers are both capable and fallible to unleash fallibility's transformative potential.
Foreground our fallibility in the management classroom.	Grants students' permission to recognize and work with their fallibility. Normalizes their fallibility.	Share stories of our doubts, challenges to our knowing, mistakes, and failures.
Additional role as container of fallibility's unsettling.	Creates a safe environment to begin to experiment with different ways of being-i.e., adequate.	Expect and highlight resistance to working with fallibility. Validate student response and use to further explore unsettling e.g., through learning sets.
Content		
Introductory courses to include becoming worldview (see Chia, 1995; 1999) as alternative to being worldview.	Recognize fallibility as inspectable aspect of fluxing world. Relieves burden of infallibility to open possibilities for working with fallibility.	To what extent is fallibility expected in a fluxing world? Is this relieving or pressurizing? How should we respond to fallibility?
Practice based literature integrated at relevant points *across* the programme e.g., strategy courses (e.g. Samra-Fredericks, 2003a,	Builds on above understanding to illuminate the situated, relational, and provisional nature of our worlds. Empirical illustration of managing as a form of coping. Invites understandings of management as	What do we see and notice when practice is slowed down? How is this understanding of managing different from mainstream understandings? Does this challenge the limits of the management task?

2003b) and leadership courses (e.g. Carroll et al, 2008).	limited to achieving practical adequacy. Encourages humility, care-fulness and flexible responsiveness.	Does this suggest the importance of different ways of being and acting?
Draw on processual literature which foregrounds embodied aspects of managerial fallibility such as anxiety, doubt, and vulnerability (Allen, 2017; Hay, 2022; Corlett et al, 2019)	Develop understanding of totality of lived experience, to include a noticing of fallibility's 'felt sense'. Encourages care-fulness to the emotional disturbances crucial to developing practical adequacy.	Does this work resonate with lived experiences of managing? How do we typically respond to this unsettling? Does this help or hinder our ability to cope?
To position our content as a resource to think *with* (Blumer, 1954)	Shift away from ideals to fall short of towards resources mobilized creatively to furnish practical adequacy.	Can we experience the perfection of theories and tools? Are academic resources still useful?
Methods of teaching & learning		
Processual positioning of the case study as temporal fixing of reality.	Highlights the limits of managerial agency and draws attention to the pursuit of practical adequacy. Invites managers to begin to understand the importance of working *with* fallibility.	How did case study become to be so, what remains unknown, how does this make us feel, what expected and unexpected outcomes may follow from our suggestions, do others provide different suggestions? Is a complete solution possible? Does this suggest the need for different ways of being?
Deploying processual lens to understand learning to research (see Hay, 2022).	Conducting research highlights the limits of our ability to know alone and in advance. Encourages humility to others' views and sensitivity to unexpected outcomes. Written research accounts also invite discussions of practical adequacy.	Do we know in advance or as we go? How do research participant's views inform our knowing? How should we treat unexpected outcomes? Are research findings complete and final?
Simulations of Quaker Business Method (see Allen, 2017; Burton, 2017)	Challenges the primacy of the individual agent and highlights their unknowing. Encourages humility towards others' views and care-fulness to anxiety as expected effect of being in the flow together.	How is our knowing influenced by other's knowing? How does this make us feel? What is our assessment of the collective outcome?