TITLE: Kant & Dignity for a theory of business-in-society:

Cultivating reflective judgement for community-oriented, reality-facing *sensus communis*

Dr. Walter P. Jarvis

University of Technology Sydney (Australia)

Walter.Jarvis@uts.edu.au

&

Dr. Natalia Nikolova

University of Technology Sydney (Australia)

Natalia.Nikolova@uts.edu.au

Abstract

Within the philosophy of management field – especially management education – we address the increasingly urgent need for a normative basis to understanding business-in-society by building upon Donaldson and Walsh's (2015) conceptualization of the "Human Dignity Threshold" as a premise and guide for business practice and business education. We focus on the seminal significance of dignity in Kant's and Kantian scholars' work and the importance of *sensus communis* – engaging reflective judgement for reasoning in public (Kant's "enlarged mentality") – especially as it is appropriated by Arendt. In doing so, we shift focus from achieving consensus over actions and policies, which (for Arendt) only flattens reality, to seeing the realities of those actions or policies as experienced by stakeholders, together, in communities. This requires learning and sharing various perspectives of "what it is like" for

others, and more specifically, understanding the situated (socio-material) circumstances of felt experiences – facing realities - from multiple perspectives. This approach to ensuring plurality fosters reasoning for an enlarged sensitivity to situations which undermine the Categorial Imperative (i.e., the Dignity Threshold). Crucially, this reasoning is undertaken in public spaces (essential to publicity). We draw from our pedagogical experience with post graduate students to raise opportunities for cultivating deeper normative grounding of business practice and education.

Key words: Kant; Arendt; enlarged mentality; dignity threshold; reflective judgement, business education.

Introduction

In the wake of 2007-2010 GFC and ongoing public outrage at poor corporate behaviour in some sectors (examples from Australia include 2018/9 Australian Banking and Finance Royal Commissions followed by a 2019/20 Royal Commission into Aged Care), the default standing of shareholder primacy in neoliberal economics (and Anglo-US Business Schools) for the last 40 plus years has been exposed and widely denigrated (Ghoshal, 2005; Khurana, 2007; Ulrich, 2008; Stout, 2015; Parker, 2018; McDonald, 2019; O'Brien, 2019; Mayer, 2019). And while Ed Freeman's Stakeholder Theory (Harrison, et al, 2019) is being slowly revisited in some board rooms, we support claims for a more ambitious change agenda where moral foundations are explicit as the justification of business purpose. We argue that Donaldson and Walsh's call (2015) for a social movement to underpin a theory of business purpose holds great promise. They identify, inter alia, the "Human Dignity Threshold" as a conceptual and practical premise and guide for business practice and business education.

Yet, what this dignity threshold means and how it can be developed through business education is still unclear. This is not helped by the myriad definitions of dignity and lack of clarity how it can be cultivated through business education to support morally responsible actions and behaviours. To shed light on what the dignity threshold might mean for business practice and how it can be cultivated through business education, here we focus on the seminal significance of dignity in Kant's and Kantian scholars' work. The Humanity formulation of the Categorical Imperative is Kant's most commonly cited example of *a priori* (transcendental) moral reasoning, where "we ought never to use people merely as means but

always as ends, worthy of respect for their inherent dignity" (Kant, in Wood, 1999: 111-150). For Kant, respect for a person's dignity is not only foremost, it is beyond price; for Barak, it is an unconditional absolute (Barak, 2015). Kant's view of the absolute standing of human dignity has been pivotal in shaping national constitutions (e.g., Germany, 1947) and international conventions/obligations, e.g., the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Charter of Human Rights (Donaldson & Walsh, 2015: 192).

Fundamental to our understanding of dignity is Kant's notion of maturity – his view that maturity is a process of learning, and that independent thinking and reasoning (along with what Kant called an "enlarged mentality") are required for personal autonomy/self-regulation. Maturity means "letting go" of the subservience to traditional and entrenched views of authority as vested, long before and still during Kant's time, in the Crown (Monarchy) and/or the altar (Rome). The notion of "enlarged mentality (or thought")) is drawn from Kant's third major critique (after the Critique of Pure Reason and the Critique of Practice Reason), his Critique of the Power of Judgment (CPJ). The CPJ primarily addresses aesthetics and introduces distinctions of reflective and determinate judgement – matters central to this chapter. Briefly, in Kant's view, we make judgements about something (such as a work of art) that it is beautiful. This judgement is subjective and private – "it is beautiful to me". But he claims we also want to share that judgment with others – and ideally have them also agree that it is beautiful. Kant claims that to move from the private judgment to a shared judgement will mean we need to persuade (or "woo") others of our view (Nedlesky, 2001: 107). He further argues that for us to persuade or "woo" others we need to be able to view the object of our judgement (the work of art for example) from others' perspective – we build on our own judgment by using our imagination to consider how others might also judge the same piece. "We test our judgment against what others would say … and the capacity to do this is 'enlarged thought'" (Nedlesky, op cit). Hannah Arendt appropriates and extends that enlarged thinking from Kant to moral and political concerns – a shift which is also central to what follows. We argue that Kant's notion of an enlarged mentality is essential to the growing relevance of public accountability for business and management.

To that end we frame our contribution according to firstly how we might understand Kant and Kantian notions of "dignity" and then how that understanding helps shape public engagement for normative legitimacy of the dignity threshold in business practice and education. In line with Sangiovani (2017) we argue that "dignity" means *treating persons as*

moral equals. In our view this moral issue is a major, systemic factor contributing to poor organisational and management behaviour across the globe and sectors.

Drawing on Kant and Kantian scholars, we argue that dignity can be cultivated in two key and related ways. First, building upon Kant's *Critique of the Power of Judgment* (1790), and drawing on Hannah Arendt's appropriation of Kant's reflective judgement, we argue that reflective judgement supports the development of an "enlarged mentality" (mentioned earlier) so as to progressively engage with others in *testing* judgements (Degryse, 2011) via what, again Kant (along with Arendt), identify as *sensus communis* (a form of common sense) – but a distinctly community-oriented, reality-facing *sensus communis*. The "reality-facing" approach resists the move to consensus in public reasoning (Arendt calls it "flattening reality"). Instead it insists on protecting plurality by recognising the extent of different contexts persons face. According to Degryse (2011), this community-oriented *sensus communis* is surprisingly neglected in the scholarship of Kant's *Critique of Judgment*. In the case of business, this community-oriented, reality-facing *sensus communis* would imply that executives and various leaders test judgements (re pressing situations with widely distributed impacts) via a Town Hall styled audience comprising an enterprises' primary stakeholders (e.g., employees, customers, suppliers, shareholders, agencies). In these circumstances leaders ostensibly present not just key decisions but grounds for those decisions, seeking feedback and hearing stories from those present. In this process, testing one's judgements and actions ideally exposes the grounds of those decisions and actions, i.e. whether and to what extent the decision-maker has not only viewed but treated those others as morally equal (i.e., in accordance with the dignity threshold). Depending on the context, a larger agenda of co-agency could emerge.

Second, based on personal experiences of being an 'other', we suggest that the development of personal action-guiding principles (Onora O'Neill 1996; 2015) contributes further to the development of an enlarged mentality and an accountability towards treating others with dignity. Onora O'Neill defines action-guiding principles as principles that guide practical (moral) judgement and action. We progressively link action-guiding principles and the neglected community-oriented judgement testing *sensus communis*, both of which contribute to an "enlarged mentality", to Donaldson and Walsh's "dignity threshold" based theory of business. In so doing we outline a distinctive orientation for business and management

education, one far more attuned to public broadly normative expectations of management and corporate behaviour.

We argue that educational approaches where Kant's moral philosophy is at the heart of a threshold concept for teaching management and leadership, can underpin business education with significant positive outcomes for a justly critical and demanding public. We illustrate this by outlining a case study of a postgraduate management and leadership course we designed, offered bi-annually over the last six years at an Australian Business School. A key focus of the course is to support students in understanding "dignity" as *treating persons as moral equals* (Sangiovani, 2017), and experiencing the effect this has on others (via experiential learning elements). Data from the course illustrates that this Kantian frame breaks new ground for students' learning toward maturity. This account will also point to further developments in those pedagogical ambitions.

In the following, we first outline Kant's Humanity formulation and how it has informed understandings of dignity and expand this understanding by drawing upon Sangiovanni. Next, we discuss reflective judgement – drawing extensively on Arendt's appropriation of Kant's analysis of aesthetic judgment for political and moral considerations. This larger perspective, which Arendt also called "representative thinking", will invite students to imagine and anticipate the influence of various stakeholder interests in their business judgements and decisions – but now, more pointedly, with implications for *testing* those judgments for the sake of a community-oriented, reality-facing *sensus communis*. This is followed by the role of developing personal action-guiding principles (O'Neill 2005) to assist cultivating an orientation that sees dignity as a key premise for human behaviour. We then illustrate how these Kantian concepts can be used to design business education that focuses on developing reflective judgement for practitioners increasingly subject to, and from the point of normative legitimacy in their actions, largely dependent on public scrutiny. We conclude with implications for business practice and education.

Dignity as a moral threshold

The prospect of identifying broadly agreed guideposts on the breadth of meanings and contested perspectives relating to the concept of "dignity" can be glimpsed by pointing to three dedicated academic sources. Two of the most respected academic publishing houses, Cambridge University Press with the Cambridge Handbook on Dignity (2014) and Oxford

University Press with the British Academy Conference on dignity in 2013, have alone produced over 100 chapters seeking to capture and describe various perspectives on human dignity.

In these massive repositories variations of interpretations on dignity are typically drawn from legal, cultural, philosophical and religious perspectives. Such a diversity risks a loss of normative meaning. This loss occurs when the term "dignity" becomes so diversely interpreted as to stand for almost anything and therefor stand for little other than be deemed cliched. At that stage dignity is devalued and progressively, nihilistically dismissed as irrelevant. Such an outcome corrupts humanity and leaves open perverse, authoritarian views of ends and means (Arendt, 1951/2004).

In this paper, we focus on a limited range of dignity-related concepts, filtered via (i) the aims of Donaldson and Walsh (2015) and (ii) our own management educational research and pedagogical practices. A key criterion in our selection of authors on dignity is that they are recognised as Kantian scholars, a dominant influential orientation on human dignity which is consistent with the moral philosophy underpinning our contribution, and a grounding orientation in Donaldson and Walsh's (2015) normative theory of business.

We start with a minimal definition of dignity. So as to offer a consistent line of argument in limited space we draw on Michael Meyer (2001). In the Routledge Encyclopedia of Ethics (2001) Meyer identifies dignity as a distinctive normative concept. There are minimally two senses of dignity; first, "through some action humans are said to express dignity, i.e. persons are said to 'speak with dignity' or 'carry themselves with dignity'". Second, persons are said to have dignity—an attribution of a characteristic value to humans. It is this second sense of having or possessing dignity that is "philosophically and ethically most fundamental … and a moral ideal" (Meyer, 2001: 405). Meyer further identifies Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) as "without doubt the most influential proponent of the view that all human beings have dignity … in that all things have either a price or dignity … (in that) when things have a price this entails that there is something for which it would be morally acceptable to trade them, … whereas for human beings there is nothing - neither power, not pleasure, not good consequences for all of society - for which it is morally acceptable to exchange any human being" (ibid).

This distinctive perspective of the unique value and status of human persons is captured in Kant's "Categorical Imperative" (*The Groundwork for Metaphysics of Morals*, 1785). The Humanity formulation is one of Kant's four variations of the Categorial Imperative and is deemed by Kant (in his later *Metaphysics of Morals*, 1789) and many Kantian scholars (e.g., Wood, 1999; Formosa, 2017) as his most influential. It states:

> So act that you use humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end and never merely as a means (Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, 1785, 4: 429).

Formosa (2017) identifies the Humanity formulation as central to what he terms Kant's Ethics of Dignity. That is, he sees it as Kant's core normative principle—deepening an understanding of human dignity to vulnerability. Sangiovanni (2017) does much the same in arguing for human dignity as treating others as moral equals, i.e., respecting a person's inherent vulnerability by refusing to treat persons as moral inferiors. Sangiovanni names inferior treatment as dehumanising persons by treating them as objects, as instruments, like animals in need of restrain and control by a superior, or through stigmatization, being excluded on account of some physical property, character or background (Sangiovanni, 2017: 74). Such practices and attitudes change the nature of the social relations in which people stand to one another – as it is cruel – involving wrongful use of another's vulnerability to cause severe harm or suffering (Sangiovanni, 2017: 75). Coupling dignity with vulnerability helps expose a defining perspective also vital to Donaldson and Walsh (2015) normatively grounded theory of business' purpose to avoid negative or adverse impacts on human dignity.

Cultivating an orientation towards preserving human dignity via reflective judgement

We argue that an understanding of how to develop an orientation towards preserving human dignity can be cultivated via Kant's aesthetic analysis of reflective judgment appropriated by Arendt for the public sphere. Both Kant and Arendt emphasise that judgement is not private, it is intersubjective (Schwartz, 2016) – it starts as an opinion but becomes a judgment when shared in public. The implications are significant for higher education but profound for business schools and management education especially.

In order to see the connection between dignity and reflective judgement we draw next on Kant's third critique, his Critique of the *Power of Judgment* (CPJ) (1790). We argue that when Kant's explanation and illustrations of reflective judgement is extended from aesthetic

applications, i.e. what it means to judge a work of art or a spectacular scenic view as "beautiful", to relational engagements, seeking to persuade others about the beauty of that art or natural scene (via Arendt, 1951/2004 and Ferrara, 2008, 2019), reflective judgment is central. We argue that this shift from an aesthetic judgment to testing those justifications via the community-oriented, reality-facing *sensus communis* provides a relevant context supporting Donaldson and Walsh's public call for a social movement where "the dignity threshold" is a premise for a Theory-of-Business in society.

We follow (inter alia) Hannah Arendt's Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy (1989) and Alessandro Ferrara's work (2008, 2019). Arendt and Ferrara appropriate Kant's illustrations of reflective judgement in aesthetics but go beyond into those domains which are for management and organisations no longer deemed the relatively private inner circle concern of shareholders, but are now inescapably intersubjective, relational and public, i.e., political and moral domains relevant for enterprises when viewed as embedded in global society (Polanyi, 1947) and natural ecologies.

What is reflective judgement? In the introduction to CPJ Kant draws a fundamental distinction between determinant and reflective judgement. According to Rudolf Makkreel, "Determinant judgment proceeds from a given universal to subsume a particular under it, whereas reflective judgment proceeds from a given particular to a universal. Determinant judgment is rule-bound and subordinate. Kant expects reflective judgment to arrive at its own rule …. Another way to think of the determinant-reflective judgment distinction is to see the former as directed from without and the latter as self-orienting" (Makkreel, 2008: 29-30). Indeed, the task of reflective judgement is finding universals for particulars. For Jane Kneller that task calls for imagination – of presenting what is not present. Further, the kind of judging involved is for Kant more holistic than determining judgements of the understanding (Kneller, 2007: 102.). Makkreel likens reflective judgment to being interpretative (Makkreel, 1990).

Two central concepts in Kant's CPJ serve our interest in connecting dignity with reflective judgement. Both are in ways related; the first is Kant's notion of *sensus communis* and the second is of an *enlarged mentality*.

For Kant his original use of *sensus communis* was in relation to aesthetic judgement, where he sought to illustrate how forming a judgement (e.g. regarding the beauty in a work of art)

was something we would want to share with others, or at least explain if not justify to others. For our purposes, it is Hannah Arendt's study of Kant's political philosophy which has contributed an enduring influence on the role of reflective judgement. Arendt comprehensively appropriates Kant's aesthetic context for judgements for the political and moral domains. For Arendt *sensus communis* was far more political and moral, i.e., it refers to matters of judgement not just concerning but essential to public reasoning within the public domain. According to Hayden, Arendt regards the capacity for judgment as the political faculty par excellence (Hayden, 2014: 167).

We see the connections between Kant's and Arendt's references to *sensus communis* when we recognise that Kant advocated three maxims to cultivate the judgement needed for sharing ideas with others. These three maxims also constitute the means to recognise his Categorical Imperative regarding respect for the dignity of persons, never to be used solely as means but always as ends, viz:

1.   To think for yourself.

2.   To think from the standpoint of others – to develop an "enlarged mentality".

3.   To do so consistently.

Arendt championed the same "enlarged mentality" (also as "representative thinking") not for the purposes of empathy but through exposure to situated (socio-material) realities for others, not to the feelings of others (Acreman, 2018: 73). Being awakened to the realities of others' lives means maximal exposure to their situated stories so as to understand what is heard, felt, seen, and needs to be accounted for (p. 101). Arendt suggests that such mental enlargement would be fostered if one was to "go visiting" (Arendt, 1961). The aim of developing an enlarged mentality is so we can "face reality together" (p. 98).

In his analysis of Arendt's ideas on judgement, Jonathan Schwartz offers a powerful image of cultivating judgement via the enlarged mentality:

> The process (of cultivating judgment) is something like climbing a high hill. We begin at the bottom with an uncultivated and crude understanding that is trapped in our individual private conditions and our community's prejudices and unreflective understandings, what Kant had called "common human understanding." But as we

cultivate our judgment, we, so to speak, climb up the mountain and as we get higher our perspective can take in more and more of the landscape, we can take in the viewpoint of more and more perspectives. The essential point, however, is that this is still my own perspective. I have two different vantage points, one that is based in my subjective private conditions, and one that takes in a broader political landscape of perspectives (Schwartz, 2016: 175).

Rudolf Makkreel argues drawing upon Kant's early work in anthropology and geography that we can orient ourselves/find our way in the world in much the same way we know the physical difference between our left and right. By drawing on our imagination across a diverse range of concepts to form reflective judgements (concepts mentioned above) we are learning to discern variations of our understanding and evaluations in the formation of our own maxims. In so doing Makkreel is not only demonstrating the unity of those cognitive faculties but pointing the way ("orienting our thought") in which we participate in the world (Makkreel, 2008: 48).

What is clear from this brief if not cursory account of Kant's CPJ is that the shift to judgement is not intended to identify a single dimension from which to focus but to recognise the defining human need for judgement as a powerful means for coping with complexity. Secondly and related, nor is the shift to judgement intended to isolate judgement from understanding and or imagination. Indeed, as Robert Fine emphasises, both Kant and Arendt champion not separate faculties, but the unity of judgement, understanding and imagination, and do so in order to reconnect the life of the mind with renewing connections to the world (Fine, 2008: 157).

For what we see in connecting "the dignity threshold" to Kant's reflective judgment the following extensive quote from Ferrara (2008) is warranted:

Alongside the force of *what is* (facts/things/habits/customs/practices) and of *what ought to be* (ideas/principles/the moral point of view/the best argument/the good life), a third force gives shape to our world: the force of *what is as it should be* or the force of the example. For a long time unrecognized and misleadingly assigned to the reductive realm of the aesthetic, the force of the example is the force of what exerts appeal on us in all walks of life—in art as in politics, in religious as in moral matters, in economic as in social conduct, in medical practice as in managing large organizations—by virtue of the singular

and exceptional congruence that what is exemplary realizes and exhibits between the order of its own reality and the order of the normativity to which it responds. Authenticity, beauty, perfection, integrity, charisma, aura, and many other names have been attributed to this quality of bringing reality and normativity, facts and norms not just to a passing, occasional, and imperfect intertwining but to an enduring, nearly complete, and rare fusion (Ferrara, 2008: 2-3, items in brackets are Ferrera's, pp. 1-2 op cit).

We argue there is merit in adding "the dignity threshold" to the above list of *universal normative examples*, especially when coupled or illustrated with the experiences of Sangiovanni's distinction of being treated as morally equal, or as morally inferior, when instrumentalised, infantized, coerced, objectified, dehumanised (Sangiovanni, 2017: 4-5). By so doing the force of the example (in this instance, "the dignity threshold") can help to illuminate ways to transcend the limitations of what is (e.g. management's frequently dehumanised practices of instrumentalization in restructuring) and expand the reach of our normative understandings (e.g. clearer, more explicit understanding of corporate social responsibilities) (Ferrara, 2008: 3). Moreover, Ferrara's "Force of the Example" (2008) is directed at developing the exemplar for understanding the normative dimension in the public sphere – the space where public reason operationalises Kant's *sensus communis* by promoting an "enlarged mentality".

Relevant for our pedagogical responsibilities preparing future practitioners to be directly and indirectly engaged with and morally accountably to others, we build upon Kant's ambition for vindicating public reasoning and personal accountability by identifying human dignity as a norm, which is broadly understandable and followable by plural agents (O'Neill, 2015). To that end we draw on Onora O'Neill's work which has focused on the development of principles to guide practical (moral) judgement and action (O'Neill, 1975; 1996; 2013; 2015). O'Neill's doctoral dissertation and subsequent work over decades on action-guiding principles offers practical example of how reflective judgement can lead to *an enlarged mentality* via personal action-guiding principles.

Action-guiding principles are principles that could be universalised (i.e., they are law-like principles). O'Neill (1996: 205) offers two examples of socio-material based principles relevant for our pedagogical purposes—one institutional, the other personal—both steeped in Kant's Categorical Imperative of being universalised:

(i) Institutional - avoiding damage (to social fabric and or the material basis of life) through indifference and neglect.

(ii) Personal - avoiding injury (to social fabric and or the material basis of life) through indifference and neglect.

We argue that human dignity represents an example of enacted law-like principles of the Categorical Imperative—drawing on Kant's maxim to think from the standpoint of others (i.e. the maxim of "enlarged thought"). We might get a first glimpse of implications from this by considering Stephen Darwall's second person standpoint (Darwall, 2006) which operationalises the moral equality between persons in that each can demand reasons and make claims on each other. Clear extensions of this would embrace, first, key stakeholders' interests, and second, "distant others". O'Neill suggests that "it means seeking to see one's own initial judgements from the standpoint of others" (1990: 46).

Illustration of how Kant's principles contribute to cultivating reflective judgement for community-oriented, reality-facing sensus communis

A 6-year case is used to illustrate postgraduate business students' transformations as they complete a course on Managing, Leading and Stewardship (MLS) which we developed based on the above outlined principles at an Australia business school. Since the course commenced, more than 1500 postgraduate students have completed it. Here, we refer to our experience in the course as an illustrative example of our pedagogy underlined by theoretical concepts and constructs drawn on the basis of the work by Kant and Kantian scholars[1].

Our pedagogical approach consists of three key components. First, the powerful relevance of Kant's moral anthropology is illustrated in our teaching program via several role plays based on real case studies, which students engage in during the 12 week duration of the course. In these role plays students assume the role of a manager/leader who faces complex decisions, or the role of a stakeholder/other impacted by these decisions (e.g., employees, customers, shareholders, supplies, the broader community). Students are asked to imagine what it is like to be a manager/leader or a stakeholder and to become aware of feelings, assumptions and

---

[1] While we focus in this chapter on Kant and Kantian constructs, in the MLS course we also draw heavily on Aristotle's *phronesis* (practical wisdom) in cultivating moral insights and capabilities in that same course. See Berti, Jarvis, Nikolova, Pitsis (2020) *Embodied Phronetic Pedagogy: cultivating ethical and moral capabilities in postgraduate business students.* **Academy of Management Learning and Education**.

constrains they would be facing in this context. This is supported by embedding students into the specific socio-material context by providing rich descriptions including visual clues about the context. They then are asked to role play the testing of the judgements made by those playing a manager/leader in town hall style meetings with the students playing the others putting forward their views and perspectives to challenge management/leadership decisions.

Second, students are asked to reflect in teams on their experiences of the role plays. This challenges students to share their reflections with each other to gain further perspective into others' views. In the aftermath of these experiences, Kant's Humanity orientation is highlighted, in particular "the obligation to respect the dignity of each human person" (listed as one of two hyper-norms in Donaldson and Dunfee, 1994: 267).

Third, students are asked to write an individual reflection at three points during the course (as one of their assessments) and to formulate their personal action-guiding principles in light of their experiences during the course.
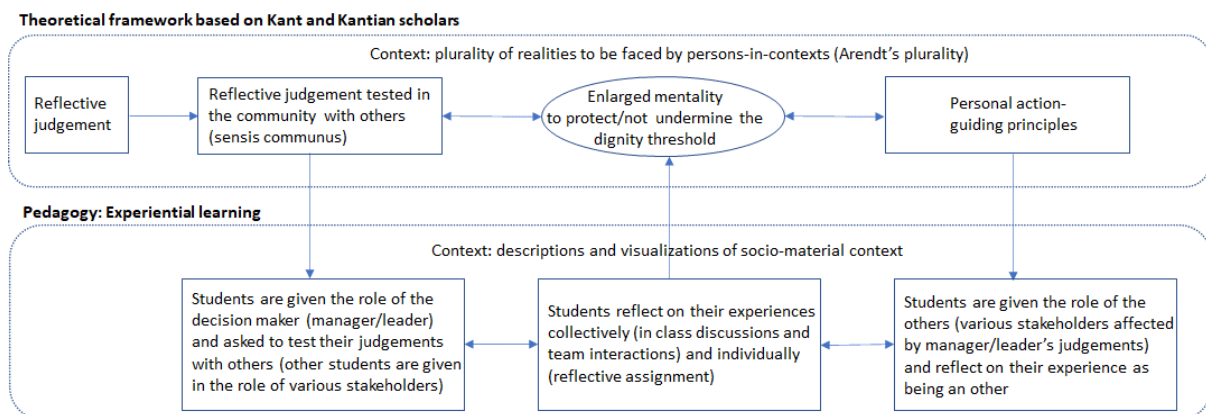
Based on the work of Kantian scholars as outlined above, we explore with students what the obligation to respect human dignity means:

- The notion of "dignity", when unpacked, means (inter alia) persons being treated as moral equals (Sangiovanni, 2017). Moral emotions (anger/outrage) become central to class discussions, team reflections and students' own reflections on forming personal action-guiding principles, as students experience situations in which they, as the other, are not treated as moral equals. Moreover, the students role playing managers and leaders often feel stressed and anxious during the role play (after volunteering to assume these roles), as they realise that the behaviour and practices they display in the role play (which are based on their experiences as organisational members) lead to treating others as morally inferior.
- These role plays, discussions and reflections in turn open engagement, questioning and critiques on the premises and assumptions underpinning commonplace organisational theories and management systems and processes.
- When students begin to surface this ignored/dismissed moral equivalence as an obligation to respect dignity in persons, much that underpins business oriented organisational theory/management practices becomes morally problematic, e.g., agency theory, shareholder theory, business ethics (as ethics appropriated by business – Jones, Parker

and ten Bos, 2005). Recognising moral problems is inescapably an essential first step to breaking "new ground" for developing students' enlarged mentality.

For example, students are confronted with a stark contrast through a lived/real case of a plant closure (Jarvis and Logue, 2016) where redundant employees were told, after the closure, that they left with dignity (deemed an appropriate description for how they as employees accepted without any aggression an executive decision to close the plant). And yet when students play the part of employees, they find their treatment by the executives to be anything but respected. There is palpable anger in hearing that they have no say in the closure, that they have in fact been treated as "moral inferiors" (Sangiovanni, 2017) – below the dignity threshold. For most students this plant closure experience triggers deep questioning of many commonplace management assumptions – exposing a threshold of dignity where students learn what it is like to be treated as moral inferiors – dehumanised as mere "numbers on an excel spreadsheet". Our research of students' reflective journals illustrates the impact this experience has in helping them craft their own action-guiding principles. Dignity is no longer just behaviour; rather, it is seen by many as a defining quality of autonomy – one which many also describe as commanding respect. Indeed, we now consider "dignity" in this status sense as a major threshold concept (Meyer and Land, 2006), a defining educative concept at the centre of much curriculum design (Bajada, Trayler and Jarvis, 2016). Students' heightened awareness of dehumanising attitudes enables deeper engagement with community sensitivities to poor corporate and management behaviour. Figure 1 visualises how our theoretical framework and pedagogical choices contribute to the development of an enlarged mentality exposing the need to protect/not undermine the dignity threshold.

Insert Figure 1 about Here

Theoretical framework based on Kant and Kantian scholars

Context: plurality of realities to be faced by persons-in-contexts (Arendt's plurality)

Reflective judgement → Reflective judgement tested in the community with others (sensis communus) ↔ Enlarged mentality to protect/not undermine the dignity threshold ↔ Personal action-guiding principles

Pedagogy: Experiential learning

Context: descriptions and visualizations of socio-material context

Students are given the role of the decision maker (manager/leader) and asked to test their judgements with others (other students are given in the role of various stakeholders) ↔ Students reflect on their experiences collectively (in class discussions and team interactions) and individually (reflective assignment) ↔ Students are given the role of the others (various stakeholders affected by manager/leader's judgements) and reflect on their experience as being an other

Both Kant (for his aesthetic judgement) and Arendt (who applies Kant's aesthetic analysis to her political and moral judgement) lay the groundwork for public discussion and testing (sensus communis) by promoting an "enlarged mentality". Indeed, reflective judgement and an enlarged mentality could be seen as working interdependently. Fostering an enlarged mentality cultivates capacities for reflective judgement, and vice versa - with each exposed to realities of needing to protect and not undermine the dignity threshold. For MLS students, the experience of learning what it is like (the realities) of being an employee (at Foxconn, Apple, King Gee, Enron) is to experience and reflect on insights from Sangiovanni, in these various instances recognising through their roles whether, in the role plays we run, they were treated as a moral equal or inferior (i.e., understanding the dehumanising experiences of instrumentalism: being treated as mere means leading to infantalisation). As mentioned from the outset, these moral inferiority issues for stakeholders (customers, employees, the broader public) are at the base of extensive public concerns regarding corporate and management attitudes and behaviour over more than a couple of decades (O'Brien, 2019).

Discussion and Conclusion

Following Sangiovanni (2017) we argue that many commonplace practices (especially in economistic neoliberalism) expose attitudes which treat persons as inferiors, i.e. in ways that undermine the supposed foundational principle of respect for human dignity. Doing so also exposes asymmetries of power and justifications to and for others (Forst, 2017). In most US/Anglo structures managers and managed are anything but equal. Elizabeth Anderson goes so far to describe this current inequality (again, in most US/Anglo structures) as reflective of private government – that is where management sets and dictates terms and where the managed respond without security and confidence in their standing, i.e., bereft of equality (Anderson, 2017). In management parlance respecting human dignity means seeing managers and managed (workers) jointly and equally responsible for both the recognition and protection of human dignity in their relations. The consequences of this equal moral recognition and protection are profound. Herein lies the focal point for what we see as the threshold of human dignity: it means seeing management as the warrant for protecting and not undermining that inherent human respect reflected equally in workplace relations. Like Anderson we see much of that moral equality in, for example, almost a century of publicly supported success of German co-determination (Silvia, 2013; Logue, Jarvis & Clegg, 2012;

Clegg, Berti & Jarvis, 2017). Not so however in much that is US/Anglo management ideology.

Our approach to addressing how we can protect/not undermine the dignity threshold takes a micro perspective: an individual agent faces a complex situation which calls for moral judgement. Drawing on Kant's third Critique (of the power of judgement) (1790) we argue that the individual needs to seek approval from others for his/her judgement. Kant called this approval seeking process and outcome *sensus communis*. For our students a broader, stakeholder-based approval calls for developing an awareness of how various stakeholders to the decision/judgement (e.g. employees, customers, suppliers, agencies, communities) would individually be seeking to "face the issue/situation together" (Acerman, 2018), which Kant called "enlarged mentality". We revisit this wider orientation via Hannah Arendt's appropriation of Kant's aesthetics for her political theories – which we now see as being able to face "reality together" (Acreman, 2018) – as an inescapably complex context for the role of business in society outlook. Doing so presents significant curricula and pedagogical challenges and opportunities to business schools – factors we consider below.

We draw attention to the civic responsibilities and obligations of graduates regarding the human dignity threshold. This constitutes a profound development – proposing employer-transcending ground for graduate attributes. The empirical evidence of our experiential approaches to postgraduate moral awareness helps advance a view of the moral-justice foundations to understanding and progressing a maturity-cultivating philosophy of business/organisations-in-society. We point to clear shifts in student interpretations (seen in their reflective portfolios) as a foundation and motivation toward deeper postgraduate orientation in cultivating reflective judgement. We demonstrate how such an approach to teaching managing and leadership enables us to engage students in reflections structured toward graduate-based, public moral-relational accountability for the human dignity threshold, specifically by revisiting and reflecting on still deeply entrenched (Arendt's "thoughtless") amoral views of organisational purpose and managerialist attitudes (via Ghoshal, 2005; Khurana, 2007; Parker, 2018; O'Brien, 2019).

The significance of Kant for a framework for moral judgement and decision making is consistent with widening public demands for a Business-in-Society perspective, increasingly shaped by Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) values (Ghosh, 2020). In other words, corporate Business (and its relationship to society) post GFC and ongoing public

enquiries into poor corporate behaviour, is already a dominant interest for the public sphere. "Poor corporate behaviour" can be summed as the elements from Sangiovanni re treatment as a moral equal or inferior, that is, risking "a dilution of respect and dignity" (O'Brien, 2019: 55). A major feature of our argument is that the broadly viewed and thus contested notion of the "public realm" needs to be in the foreground of business schools' own public legitimacy. We close by suggesting that public legitimacy of business school qualifications is enhanced with a reorientation to profession-like formation for public accountability – which means engaging with a less instrumental and more formative humanistic and ecologically astute literature.

In terms of practical contributions, we put forward that pedagogical approaches to cultivating moral awareness in future managers and leaders based on Kant's moral anthropology provide rich ground for cultivating moral accountability in graduates. Empirical evidence from our course delivered of over 6 years demonstrates that engaging students in learning experiences based on the human dignity threshold is vital to get beyond conceptual understanding so as to cultivate humanly grounded (anthropologically informed) intelligent moral-civic accountability (via action-guiding principles) as a post-graduate attribute.

Perhaps ironically, our contribution not only foregrounds Kant's anthropology (subjective embodied reasoning) to counter the commonplace dismissal of Kant as formalistic and arid (objective a priori reasoning) (Louden, 2000, 2011, 2018). We also illustrate the unity of theoretical and practical (moral) reason in Kant's maturity principles (Hoffe, 2010: 416) and how doing so serves as a philosophical orientation in preparing our students to "make, defend and be morally accountable for their judgements …". We seek to do this through cultivating students' maturity in Kantian inspired moral thinking, in support of developing their own action-guiding principles for intelligent (moral-public) accountability (a distinctive post-graduate attribute and orientation re the community-oriented, reality-facing sensus communis). After engaging with Kant/Arendt's "enlarged thinking" we've effectively anticipated the perspectives of those stakeholders previously dismissed as being of instrumental use in the business of making money.

Our proposed orientation toward cultivating an "enlarged mentality" may be seen to be a little too parochial – predominantly Western and thus for example, ignoring systemic ethical and moral differences inherent in global politics. There are two responses – one based on Kant, the second based on Arendt's appropriation of Socrates – to this potential objection.

First, such a charge would miss the point of Kant's account of practical philosophy, where Kant defends his philosophy as grounded in what he believes are common felt moral experiences. In his "magisterial" work on moral philosophy (Beck, 1960), the Critique of Practical Reason (1788/1997), Kant illustrates this common, felt, experience-based understanding of morality through his famous analogy of the Gallows Man. Here a man is exposed to two hypothetical situations where hanging (thus the gallows) is one of only two outcomes. In the first situation he has to decide whether he accepts the sentence of hanging for satisfying his lust or whether he will save his life by choosing instead to control his lusts (his love of life). In the second situation, he must decide whether to face the Gallows for refusing to obey the command of his prince to harm an innocent other (deemed by the prince as his enemy). In other words he could choose life, and in so doing cause harm to an innocent other, or he could refuse the prince's command and be hanged by choosing to live by the moral law to avoid causing harm (Kant's favoured humanity formulation of his Categorical Imperative – "so act that you use humanity, whether in your own person or that of another, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means"). The Gallows Man is Kant's vehicle to make his case for the philosophical justifications of moral philosophy – i.e., that morality can be grounded in common felt experience of making choices between morality (the Moral Law/Categorical Imperative) and self-love (for the Pietist influenced Kant this is the driving inclination to pursue personal "happiness" – see Wood, 2020: 70). Grenberg (2013) provides a comprehensive and persuasive account of the common man's capacity to make moral judgements when faced with deciding between satisfying his own happiness (self-love) and a phenomenological felt sense of the moral law. It is an account however that would call for far greater depth of coverage than is available here. It is also an account not covered in our post-graduate course. As such the Kantian approach to grounding his moral philosophy in the phenomenology of felt moral experience is an ambition warranting further pedagogical development.

What of the risk of a self-interested appropriation of the enlarged mentality? Wouldn't it be easy for a person to be self-deceiving by appropriating the larger perspectives through the prism of self-interest? Isn't there a need for Socratic humility? This brings us to the second response. Here we believe Arendt's appropriation of Kant (by extending Kant's enlarged mentality to political issues) is matched by her appropriation of Socrates as her exemplar of reflexivity, bringing together thinking, judging and willing, using not just the metaphors of Socrates as "stingray" and "gadfly" but also "midwife". As Amoureux (2016: 84) points out,

"where the stingray paralyses the self and others to 'stop and think', a gadfly stimulates and arouses others to engage in questioning and acting, and a midwife delivers and judges the vitality of the infant…". Fostering that range of Socratic activities would hopefully serve to cultivate "an enlarged mentality" of ethical-moral humility in reflexivity. This would be accentuated by the socio-materiality focus to ensure greater and deeper awareness of plural contexts. Kant also addressed this concern by viewing humility not as a single frame to guard against delusional and corrupting inclinations but in a larger frame, i.e., as an essential dimension to the moral disposition (Grenberg, 2005). In her analysis of Kant's critical oeuvre, Munzel argues that Kant's approach to humility can be seen as cultivating a character (Munzel, 1999), a meta-disposition as a moral agent (not competitively inferior or superior; but mindful of respect for self, respect for persons and awareness of common capacity for causing harm to others).

In addition to exploring the above questions there is arguably a research orientation opening to wider scholarly recognition of relevance for the Kantian "dignity threshold" (re autonomy and moral equality) described in this chapter. Human dignity here is referred to as "the linchpin to interpreting modern business" (Donaldson, 2020). This still widening recognition of dignity is reflected in a scholarly movement to bicameral democracy (Ferreras, et al, 2020), with roots in Ferreras' earlier work (Ferreras, 2017). This bicameral reframing builds on the enlarged mentality discussed in this chapter to embrace the challenges of executive governance of a firm with two chambers – one representing the interests of capital investors, the other chamber representing the interests of those who have invested their labour and related capacities (employees). Based on historical grounding to recognise, separate and balance powers equally (e.g., House of Lords and House of Commons), the executives of this bicameral firm would not only be appointed by both chambers but will have to, by definition of their role, balance and satisfy the interests of both chambers. This equal balance of interests is a step-up from the German co-determination model (Mitbestimmung) where in practice a majority of the supervisory board is vested with a vote generally favouring investors' interest (du Plessis, 2018). Efforts to revise Corporate Law (esp. in Anglo-US circles) to ensure wider recognition and greater equality of interests is attracting wider community interest and warrants further research (King, 2016; du Plessis, 2018, 2020). Bicameral democracy of the firm is also a strong, practical manifestation of Donaldson and Walsh's "dignity threshold".

After more than 10 years since the GFC, and in the wake of public outrage at hearing that "making money" was the default purpose of (neoliberal) business, perhaps there's a rising awareness of the need to restore public trust in how those affected by management decisions are seen as passing the dignity threshold. Doing so would make not just for a higher business purpose (beyond profit) but would help equip future business and management graduates recognise that the role of the business school from which they graduated was to prepare them for profession-like skills and dispositions – not least would be their ability to engage fruitfully and respectfully with the community-oriented, reality-facing *sensus communis*. That would be a purpose a bruised public, having endured the Covid19 pandemic, post long term corporate indifference and neglect, would respect – a business school more embracing of its roles as part of public universities, preparing graduates for their defining public roles not merely in business, but also as global citizens.

References

Aldred, J. (2019) A License to be Bad: How Economics Corrupted Us. London, Penguin.

Amoureux, J. (2016) A Practice of Ethics for Global Politics: Ethical reflexivity. London: Routledge.

Anderson, E. (2017) Private Government: How Employers Rule Our Lives (and Why We Don't Talk about It). Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Barak, A. (2015) Human Dignity: The Constitutional Value and the Constitutional Right. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Bajada, C, Jarvis, W, Trayler, R & Bui, AT (2016) Threshold concepts in business school curriculum – A pedagogy for public trust. Education + Training, 58(5): 540-563.

Beck, L.W. (1960) Borges, M. (2019) Emotion, Reason and Action in Kant. New York, Bloomsbury.

Berti, M., Clegg, S. R., & Jarvis, W. (2017). "Future in the past: a philosophical reflection on the prospects of management". The Oxford Handbook of Management.

Berti, M., Jarvis, W., Nikolova, N., and Pitsis, A. (2020) Embodied Phronetic Pedagogy: Cultivating ethical and moral capabilities in postgraduate business students. Academy of Management Learning and Education.

Clewis, R. (2009) The Kantian Sublime and the Revelation of Freedom. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press

Donaldson, T. and T. Dunfee (1994) Toward a unified conception of business ethics: Integrative social contracts theory. Academy of Management Review 19(2): 252-284.

Donaldson, T. and J. P. Walsh (2015) Toward a theory of business. Research in Organizational Behavior 29(35): 181-207.

Donaldson, T. (2020) In personal correspondence with one of the authors. 15 May, 2020.

du Plessis, J., Grobfeld,B., Luttermann, C., Saenger, I., Sandrock, O. and Casper, M. (2017) (Eds) (3rd Edition) German Corporate Governance in International and European Context. Springer.

Ferreras, I. (2017) Firms as Political Entities: Saving Democracy through Economic Bicameralism. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ferreras, I., Battilana, J. and Meda, D. (2020) Let's democratize and decommodify work. Boston Globe, May 16, 2020.

Formosa, P. (2014) "The role of vulnerability in Kantian ethics", in Mackenzie., Rogers, W., and Dodds, S. (Eds) Vulnerability: New Essays in Ethics and Feminist Philosophy. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Formosa, P. (2017) Kantian Ethics, Dignity and Perfection. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Forst, R. (2017) Normativity and Power: Analyzing Social Orders of Justification. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Ghosh, I. (2020) Powering Prosperity: A Citizen's Guide to Shaping the 21st Century. New York: Bombardier Books

Ghoshal, S (2005) Bad Management Theories Are Destroying Good Management Practices. Academy of Management Learning & Education, 4(1): 75-91.

Grenberg, J. (2005) Kant and the Ethics of Humility: A Story of Dependence, Corruption, and Virtue. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Grenberg, J. (2013) Kant's Defense of Common Moral Experience: A Phenomenological Account. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Harrison, J., Barney, J., Freeman, R.E., and Phillips, R. (2019) The Cambridge Handbook of Stakeholder Theory. Cambridge, University of Cambridge

Hoffe, O. (2002) Categorical Principles of Law: A Counterpoint to Modernity. University Park, PA, The Pennsylvania State University Press.

Jarvis, W. P. and Logue, D. (2016) Cultivating moral-relational judgement in business education: The merits and practicalities of Aristotle's phronesis, *Journal of Business Ethics Education*, 13: 349-372.

Jones, C., Parker, M., and ten Bos, R. (2005) For Business Ethics. London: Routledge.

Kant, I. (1781/1998) "Critique of pure reason", in Guyer, P. and Wood, A. (Eds). Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Kant, I. (1785/2002) Groundwork for a Metaphysics of Morals. Wood, A. (trans), New Haven, Yale University Press.

Kant, I. (1786/1991) "What is orientation in thinking?", in Reiss, H.S. (Ed) Kant: Political Writings 237-249. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Kant, I. (1788/199) "Critique of practical reason", in Gregor, M. (Ed). Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Kant, I. (1790/2000) "Critique of the power of judgement", in Guyer, P. and Wood, A. (Eds). Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Kant. I. (1797/1996) "Metaphysics of morals", in Gregor, M. (Ed.) Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Kant. I. (1798/1997) "Anthropology from a pragmatic point of view", in Louden, R. and Kuehn, M (Eds). Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

King, M. (2016) Chief Value Officer: Accountants Can Save the Planet. London: Routledge.

Khurana, R. (2007) From Higher Aims to Hired Hands: The Social Transformation of American Business Schools and the Unfulfilled Promise of Management Education. Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Lorch, A. and T. Beschorner (2018). "Integrative economic ethics: Concept and critique" in, E. Heath, B. Kaldis and A. Marcoux (Eds) The Routledge Companion to Business Ethics. New York, Routledge.

Louden, R. (2000) Kant's Impure Ethics: From Rational Beings to Human Beings. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Logue, D. M., Jarvis, W.P., Clegg, S.R. and Hermens, A. (2015) Translating models of organization: Can the Mittelstand move from Bavaria to Geelong? Journal of Management and Organization **21**(1): 17-36.

Mayer, C. (2018) Prosperity: Better Business Makes the Greater Good. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Meyer, M., (2001) "Dignity" in Becker, L and Becker, C. (Eds) Encyclopedia of Ethics (2nd Ed). New York, Routledge.

Macdonald, D. (2017) The Golden Passport: Harvard Business School, the Limits of Capitalism, and the Moral Failure of the MBA Elite. New York, HarperCollins.

Merritt, M. (2020) Kant on Reflection and Virtue. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Munzel, G. F. (1999) Kant's Conception of Moral Character: The "Critical" Link of Morality, Anthropology, and Reflective Judgement. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Munzel, G. F. (2012) Kant's Conception of Pedagogy: Toward Education for Freedom. Evanston, Illinois, Northwestern University Press.

Munzel, G. F. (2014) "Indispensable education of the being of reason and speech" in Cohen,A. (Ed). Kant's Lectures on Anthropology: A Critical Guide. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Munzel, G. F. (2018) Cultivating moral consciousness: The quintessential relation of practical reason and mind (Gemut) as a bulwark against the propensity for radical evil. Educational Philosophy and Theory.

Munzel, G. F. (2018) The objective and subjective sides of human moral consciousness and their relation: Author's reply to reviews of Kant's conception of pedagogy. Studies in Philosophy and Education.

Nedlesky, J. (2001) "Judgment, Diversity and Relational Autonomy" in Beiner, R. & J.Nedlesky (Eds) in U. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

O'Brien, J. (2019). Trust, Accountability and Purpose: The Regulation of Corporate Governance. Cambridge University Press.

O'Neill, O. (1990) Constructions of Reason: Explorations of Kant's Practical Philosophy. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

O'Neill, O. (2013) Acting on Principle: An Essay on Kantian Ethics. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

O'Neill, O. (2018) From Principles to Practice: Normativity and Judgement in Ethics and Politics. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Parker, M. (2018) Shut Down the Business School: What's Wrong with Management Education. London, Pluto Press.

Ricoeur, P. (1994) Oneself as Another. Chicago, University of Chicago Press

Sangiovani, A. (2017) Humanity Without Dignity: Moral Equality, Respect and Human Rights. Cambridge, Ms, Harvard University Press.

Sensen, O. (2011) Kant on Human Dignity. Berlin: DeGruyter

Silvia, S. J. (2013) Holding the Shop Together: German Industrial Relations in the Postwar Era. Ithaca, Cornell University Press.

Stoner, S. A. (2018) Thinking through Kant's conception of pedagogy. Studies in Philosophy and Education.

Stout, L. (2012) The Shareholder Value Myth: How Putting Shareholders First Harms Investors, Corporations, and the Public). San Francisco: Barrett-Koehler Publishers.

Ulrich, P. (2008) Integrative Economic Ethics: Foundations of a Civilized Market Economy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wilkinson, A., Armstrong, S. J., & Lounsbury, M. (Eds.). (2017). The Oxford handbook of management. Oxford University Press.

Williamson, D. (2018) "Respect, in Every Respect", in Sorensen, K. and Williamson, D. (Ed) Kant and the Faculty of Feeling. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Wood, A. W. (1999) Kant's Ethical Thought. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Wood, A. W. (2020) Kant and Religion. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.