

A photograph showing two men in business suits in a meeting. One man is standing and gesturing, while the other is seated at a table with laptops and documents. The background features a whiteboard with a bar chart and some icons.

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A photograph of a woman in a dark blazer and a man in a suit shaking hands over a table. The woman is smiling warmly at the man.

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A photograph of two young girls wearing white t-shirts and gloves, participating in a community cleanup. They are focused on filling a large blue plastic bag with trash.

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# A Liberal Art in Management: The Hartwick Humanities in Management Institute's Enduring Impact

Jeffrey Nesteruk

<sup>1</sup>Department of MBA

Administration and Accounting, Hartwick College, Oneonta, New York, USA

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## Abstract

"The goal of studying the liberal arts is to broaden your mind and understanding of the world rather than to train you for a particular job," as MiriamWebster.com (2014) puts it. Is the social sciences explicitly omitted from this concept of business? Is business "just" a preprofessional curriculum, and has the liberal arts community always rejected it as a field that lacks both humanities and social science? The above comment clearly implies a lack of interest in business studies among younger generations, if not an outright dismissal of the discipline. Even rebranding business studies with the more posh word "management" to describe their core competencies was, at best, a nebulous replacement. As the twentieth century came to a close, it seemed as if the academic fields of business and management and the liberal arts would stay completely apart from one another.

## Introduction

Despite repeated calls for a merger of liberal arts and business education, silos continued to exist. According to Chew and McGinnis-Bowers (2004), Charles William Eliot, who was president of Harvard University in 1890, advocated for the incorporation of liberal arts principles into commercial practices. At the Aspen Institute in the 1950s, a philosopher provided leadership training (Creelman, 2007). In 1959, the Ford Foundation and the Carnegie Foundation both pushed for stronger ties between business and the liberal arts at universities (Gordon & Howell, 1959; Pierson, 1959). Just as managers are frequently forced to deal with problems that contain nuance and partial solutions, literary critic Frye (1963) recognized the importance of a liberal arts education for management decision-making, writing, "The kind of problem that literature raises is not the kind that you ever solve" (p. 2). Thus, managers may benefit from literature reviews in order to better handle the "ambiguity, emotion, complexity and interpretation" (Creelman, 2007) that comes with managing people and making choices. Business, according to Drucker (1989/2001), is all about making decisions. Since more information leads to better decisions, it stands to reason that studying business should incorporate knowledge from the social sciences, the humanities, and the natural sciences to help managers make better decisions. In the 1980s, forward-thinking business professors started a unique challenge to the liberal arts and business schools' tendency to remain isolated from one another by incorporating classic literature into management courses. Many of these professors had strong backgrounds in the liberal arts and sciences themselves, and they saw the classics as a fresh and relevant way to teach students about business topics like ethics, strategy, organizational behavior, and leadership. While discussing "management of social function and liberal art" in *The New Realities* (1989, reprinted 2001), Peter

Drucker made the following statement: "Management is thus what tradition used to call a liberal art—'liberal' because it deals with the fundamentals of knowledge, self-knowledge, wisdom, and leadership; 'art' because it is also concerned with practice and application" (Drucker, 1989, reprinted 2001, p. 13).

Although Drucker placed an emphasis on the liberal arts as a means of imparting moral and leadership principles to students, other professors of management were already incorporating literary concepts into their curricula on a broad range of topics. For example, Sheila Puffer (1991, 1996) enhanced standard management theories of several organizational behavior themes with literature, building on seminars given in the mid and late 1980s. *Management Insights from Literature* (1991) by Puffer followed the traditional "individual-group-organization" format of organizational behavior textbooks. The textbook introduced students to classic management writings and literary works, such as "On the Folly of Rewarding A, While Hoping for B" by Kerr [1975] and "The Development and Enforcement of Group Norms" by Feldman [1984]. To help bring the many sources together, she gave discussion questions.

In addition to incorporating literature into a broad range of management subjects, forward-thinking business educators drew on an ever-expanding selection of literary works. A number of authors' works were included, including those of Geoffrey Chaucer, George Bernard Shaw, Sinclair Lewis, Joseph Conrad (Brawer, 1998), and Ernest Hemingway (Ferris, 1991). To illustrate certain management topics (such as leadership, initiative, and risk taking, for example) Ferris presented a true "how-to" section (1991, p. 57) that drew heavily on classic literature. Moreover, Ferris provided evidence in favor of this integrative strategy by displaying the

overwhelmingly favorable assessment comments from students (e.g., "Assistant helped me to broaden my perspective, examine various scenarios, and prepare for future challenges"; p. 64). This led Ferris to suggest using fictional "leaders' internal monologues" to better understand how future leaders should handle stressful situations (1998, p. 26).

## HARTWICK HUMANITIES IN MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

A small liberal arts college in rural upstate New York was home to two professors, John K. Clemens and Douglas F. Mayer, who would later create a famous and extensively used curriculum that combined the humanities with management. At the same time that these instructors were developing courses that integrated business content with humanities literature, they were also working on something else. Their chance meetings and shared interests led to their groundbreaking work together, *The Classic Touch* (Clemens & Mayer, 1987), which applied ideas from classic literature to contemporary business problems. *The Classic Touch: Leadership Lessons from Homer to Hemingway* (Clemens & Mayer, 1999) and *Movies to Manage By* (Clemens & Wolff, 1999) were updated versions of this book. In an effort to disseminate these management principles to a wider audience, John Clemens established the Hartwick Humanities in Management Institute at the same time that he was writing and publishing *The Classic Touch*. While Professor Clemens and Professor Mayer's work in the fields of business and liberal arts resulted in the establishment of the Hartwick Humanities in Management institution in 1985, the idea for the institution had been simmering for a long time. Similar to the liberal arts, Clemens's journey to Hartwick included several fields, civilizations, and points of view. Professor Clemens was born and raised in San Francisco, attended college at Illinois (BS/MS), served two years as a junior officer in the Navy, and then spent fifteen years as a corporate executive. During that time, he held positions such as brand manager at Pillsbury ("fudgy, nutty and frosted brownie mix") and Lawry's Foods ("famed sea salt"). He also worked as a West Coast advertising executive for "Liquid Plumr Drane [sic] Opener, Litter Green Cat Litter, and—god help me, Kingsford Charcoal" (Clemens, 2012), from which he ultimately escaped. It took his actual departure from corporate life to bring him full circle to embrace the mix of his business management expertise and liberal arts background, which he had previously paired with the skills and duties of supporting corporate America. One night in San Francisco, when he was living his life on his own and experiencing a philosophical awakening in his perception of the world and himself, the plans for his departure from his commercial practice started to come together. He had abandoned the business conflicts for the Peloponnesian War, having been receptive to the idea that leadership practices from the Old World may be useful in the New.

The Great Books of the Western World and the Syntopicon, a two-volume index of these books (Hutchins, 1952), were found by Professor Clemens while he was exploring the attic of a villa he later rented. Despite his "too busy" status, he had always wanted to delve into the greatest leadership and management manuals ever written, including works by Homer, Shakespeare, and Arthur Miller (Hartwick in Humanities Institute, n.d.-a). The details that he remembered are:

Professor Clemens knew he wanted to go back to the United States and teach others what he had learned after spending five years in different Mediterranean ports and immersing himself in the Great Books. Several institutions in the United States received his applications for teaching faculty posts after reviewing his distinctive resume and collection of experiences. Upstate New York's Hartwick College provided him with the answers he sought (Hartwick Humanities in Management Institute, n.d.-a). Along the way, he crossed paths with Hartwick College's former president, Philip S. Wilder, Jr., whose support and encouragement paved the way for the establishment of the Hartwick Humanities in Management Institute. President Wilder traveled to Michigan to meet with the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, keeping in mind Professor Clemens's new humanities and management curriculum. The Hartwick Institute for the Humanities was established in 1985 thanks to a one-million-dollar grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, which was made possible by these meetings. This institute, according to Professor Clemens, was "a non-profit research, education, and publishing organization... its pur-pose... to promote the study of leadership for emerging leaders in educational, corporate, profit and not-for-profit set-tings" (Arts Learning Residency Handbook, n.d.). Hartwick Humanities in Management Institute states that Professor Clemens "transform- ing great books into practical lessons in leadership [for] the leadership development classroom" with the support of the Kellogg award. *The Classic Touch* (1987), written by Professors Clemens and Mayer and released at the same time as the institution to provide teaching instances to academics, laid out the theoretical and practical links between the public and enterprises via the fields of management and the humanities: In their discussion of leadership, motivation and rewards, and mergers, among other management policies and issues, Clemens and Mayer drew on a number of classic works and authors, such as Homer's *Iliad*, Machiavelli's *The Prince*, Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, and a selection of Shakespeare's works, to demonstrate the relevance of classical ideas to contemporary business. Appendix 1 contains the detailed descriptions and lessons generated from chosen situations that Professor Clemens presented in his 2012 lecture, "Lessons from the Classics" (Clemens, 2012). In addition to classroom-based examples, Professor Clemens aimed to apply these management principles to prestigious companies. The Arts Learning Residency Handbook states that the Institute started providing "Hartwick Leadership Seminars for corporate clients and for academic institutions, as

well as books, case studies and audio visual materials" in order to achieve this purpose. Professor Clemens published *Movies to Manage* By later in 1999, expanding the institute's services to include movie-based management education (Clemens & Wolff, 1999). Concurrently, *The Classic Touch—Lessons in Leadership from Homer to Hemingway* (1999) was released by Professors Clemens and Mayer, who revised and updated the original 1987 study. Out of the 57 literature-based cases and teaching notes published by the Hartwick Humanities in Management Institute (2014, p. 4) (Appendix 2) and the 29 film-based case studies and notes (2014, p. 5) (Appendix 3), the only two works that overlap on the lists are *Gandhi* and *Lord of the Flies*. More than 180 educational institutions have used the examples in their curricula (Appendix 4).

### PROGRESS TODAY

Opportunities to delve into management's origins as a liberal art are opening up in the lively conversation happening now between business and liberal arts education. One possible origin of this deep conversation is the almost three decades-long work of the Hartwick Humanities in Management Institute to advance the study and practice of literature as it relates to management, ethics, and leadership in the corporate world. In the teaching of leadership and ethics in the Harvard University MBA Program and, as Clemens had predicted, in corporate training, classic literature such as "The Love of the Last Tycoon" by F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Death of a Salesman" by Arthur Miller, "Antigone" by Sophocles, and "The Secret Sharer" by Joseph Conrad has been incorporated (Badaracco, 2006). The MBA class taught by Susan Sucher (2014) at Harvard University on moral leadership also makes use of works by Machiavelli, Conrad, Shackleton, and Achebe. This nontraditional certificate program at Indiana University aims to teach students "to analyze issues critically, evaluate problems from multiple perspectives, and hone the communication skills needed to meet challenges, both great and small, from an informed, creative, and ethical point of view" (Liberal Arts in Management Program, 2014), which is similar to the Business and Society Program at New York University and Franklin and Marshall's Business, Organizations, and Society major (Lavelle, 2013). The modern fertilisation of business and liberal arts education is greatly facilitated by business ethics (Nesteruk, 2012). There has been and will be ongoing discussions regarding the role of liberal arts education in business, with some arguing for a more professionalized business sector (Khurana, 2007) and others predicting that business curricula will incorporate more practical ethical exercises (e.g., Christian & Gumbus, 2009; Golden & Dechant, 2006). However, it is now integrated with the manner in which more in-depth criticisms of business schools highlight the institutions' concealed contradictions (e.g., Donaldson, 2000; Ghoshal, 2005; Giacalone, 2004). Both the intrinsically critical nature of a normative discipline like ethics and the fact that ethical inquiry relies upon robust

traditions within liberal arts education, such as those in philosophy, contribute to the merger of liberal arts and business. More diverse viewpoints, particularly those offered by literature and movies, may be brought into the business classroom by applying a critical eye to present-day corporate practices. Given the wide range of perspectives that may be considered, it is not unexpected that business scholars have begun to place a greater focus on integration and collaboration across disciplines (e.g., Quelch, 2005; Pfeffer & Fong, 2002; Bennis & O'Toole, 2005). The original goal of combining literature and management has expanded to include visual elements such as cinema and television (Clemens, 2012; Clemens and Wolff, 1999; Champoux, 1999; Bumpus, 2005) in addition to classic art (Clemens, 2012). Various forms of "case, metaphor, satire, symbolism, meaning, experience, and time" may be learned and taught via visual media (Champoux, 1999). Short & Ketchen (2005), Dr. Suess (Comer & Holbrook, 2005), poetry and the visual arts (Morris, Urbanski, & Fuller, 2005), and graphic novels (Short, Randolph-Seng, & McKenny, 2013) are just a few examples of the recent expansion of course offerings by other business teachers.

We discover fresh interpretations and potentials of substance in the contradictory and dramatic narrative arcs of these works of literature and cinema. Various works by managers (e.g., Denning, 2006; Hawes, 1991; Jabri & Pounder, 2001; Linde, 2001) highlight the importance of narratives in managerial theory for comprehending leadership, organizational development, and workplace communication, among other important aspects of organizational life. There is a rising convergence of business and liberal arts education, which is aided by initiatives to refocus liberal arts education. While literature and other classic liberal arts subjects provided the foundation for what is now known as "contemporary liberal arts education," a new movement is emerging within the field that places more emphasis on the importance of a liberal arts education in shaping individual character traits and skill sets. As a result of this focus, the potential contributions of fields outside of liberal arts education, such as business, to students' lives may be considered (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2002). An excellent illustration of the value of a liberal arts education in developing future corporate leaders is the manner in which exposure to literature and the visual arts may encourage the development of character traits and competences crucial to effective management. Business academics have called for a more holistic approach to business education that incorporates liberal arts principles (e.g., Duncan, 2004; Grey, 2004; Schwandt, 2005). This kind of participation demonstrates the potential for innovative program creation in business courses.

### LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

E. Byron Chew and Cecilia McInnis-Bowers (2004) proposed a blending model for business education, which is

complementary to their efforts to refocus liberal arts education. Chew and McInnis Bowers advocate "blending these two domains, rather than bridging the phantom yet palpable chasm" (p. 56) instead of proceeding from the notion that business and the liberal arts are distinct silos. The information sources available to students and the usefulness of the options they come up with for future business strategy decisions may both benefit from exposure to more diverse information contexts and content. Academics and practitioners alike stand to benefit from this methodology in the long run. The Business, Organizations, and Society program at Franklin & Marshall College is only one of several departments that demonstrate the liberal arts inside business (Nesteruk, 2008), but Harwick's project uncovered business within the liberal arts (Lavelle, 2013). In addition to highlighting the synergistic potential of the blending model, this shows that management is a liberal art that naturally develops from the classics of humanities and has a more profoundly human aspect. As the conversation about business and liberal arts education continues to spread from philosophers to practicing consultants, the Hartwick Institute has served as a model for how to engage both academics and businesses (see, for example, Duncan, 2004; Grey, 2004; Hartman, 2006; Schwandt, 2005). The way this wide-ranging conversation is gradually being ingrained in conventional wisdom about business schools bodes well for the future of this humanistic method of teaching managers. Colby, Ehrlich, Sullivan, and Dolle (2011) pointed out that the most current national research of business and liberal arts education, the BELL (Business, Entrepreneurship, and Liberal Learning) project, funded by the Carnegie Foundation, was unambiguous. "Put simply," the Carnegie writers said,

With its status as the most recent nationwide research in the field, the Carnegie project presents a chance to enhance and broaden the impact of literature on management studies. To make the most of this chance, literature will need to be included into the larger framework of liberal education and business. This may be achieved by combining the capabilities fostered by the liberal arts with the substantial substance that literature may provide. There has been a lot of talk about how literature and management perspectives may enrich management research by shedding light on the ways in which narratives can elucidate abstract ideas. Brief narratives, according to Puffer (1996), "can serve a similar purpose as traditional business case studies—specific, concrete situations that lend themselves to discussion and analysis of management concepts and issues" (p. xiii). When describing his use of cinema to educate management, Champoux (1991) followed a similar line of thinking. The following passage is from his textbook on management topics: "I have found students respond positively to the link between film scenes and abstract theories and concepts." The handbook covers topics including leadership, motivation, conflict management, and organizational transformation and growth. Cinema provides a visual representation of ideas that are presented in more theoretical forms in books and classrooms" (p. v).

The BELL research by Carnegie elucidates the capabilities inherent to liberal education rather than the subject matter of liberal arts disciplines as it relates to the integration of liberal and business education. Colby et al. (2011) state that these abilities revolve around analytical thinking, multiple framing, reflective exploration of meaning, practical reasoning, and the ability to go beyond reflection to deliberate and decide on the best course of action within a particular situation. Analytical thinking "abstracts from particular experience in order to produce formal knowledge" (p. 60), multiple framing "the ability to work intellectually with fundamentally different, sometimes mutually incompatible, analytical perspectives" (p. 60), and reflective exploration of meaning (p. 60). The writers from Carnegie see literature as a fertile intellectual ground for cultivating these four fundamental liberal education competencies. As a means of introducing liberal arts concepts to business courses, they highlight the potential of classic literature. As an example, they discuss how the course materials "include readings and cases from business practice as well as an extensive set of liberal arts classics by authors such as Anton Chekhov, Walt Whitman, Confucius, Plato, Cicero, and Machiavelli" (p. 81). Literature may do more than just provide the meat for the application of business ideas and concepts; the research highlights four basic capabilities of liberal learning that point to this. The analytical thinking ability is crucial to this application, but the other three skills may be undeveloped since "particular aspects of experience are categorized according to some scheme of general concepts" (p. 61). Critical views on business theories and ideas may be developed via the use of abilities such as multiple framing, introspective investigation of meaning, and practical reasoning. These talents help to expose the limitations, gaps, or ambiguities in these areas. Business students often see the theories and ideas they learn about "as simple and complete descriptions of reality" (p. 6), rather than as instruments "to be employed for specific purposes" (p. 6), which is why the Carnegie writers stress the need of critical discernment (p. 6). It would be a worthwhile endeavor for the future to combine the two fundamental functions of literature: first, to provide clear and substantial material for business ideas and concepts; and second, to encourage wider capacities that allow for more critical discernment of these theories and conceptions. This work has the potential to improve literary and managerial endeavors by grounding them in the liberal arts tradition and its broader ideals and views. "Management as a liberal art" will remain a central tenet of Aspen and Drucker's respective missions moving forward in the field of business education. The idea "hits the sweet spot" of the Aspen Undergraduate Business Education Consortium" (Claire Preissler, personal communication, June 17, 2014). Both in 2012 (Appendix 5) and 2014 (Appendix 6), the consortium brought together their network of undergraduate instructors. According to Wertzman (2009), the Drucker Institute is determined to see more business academics include more humanities in their lessons. In fact, according to the Carnegie Foundation's BELL (Business, Entrepreneurship, and Liberal Learning) project's future vision for management

education (Colby, et al., 2011), the role of the liberal arts in business education, like in other preprofessional undergraduate and graduate programs in the professions, needs to be inclusive rather than exclusive; it should be collaborative rather than competitive. The complexities presented by literature and movies may both complicate and deepen our knowledge of business ideas and concepts. It is precisely these complexities, together with the conflicts and tensions they cause, that captivate us as audience members. And it is in the dramatic escapades of these stories' plots that we discover fresh insights and opportunities. If we want to "think of our lives as a progression leading somewhere or in telling ourselves what is happening in the world" (p. 83), or "make sense of things" (as Culler (2011) puts it, we need stories. And the fundamental goal of both management and a liberal arts education is to help students make sense of the world.

The Hartwick Humanities in Management Institute: A Postscript on Its Legacy  
Future management students should anticipate and welcome the opportunities for development that arise from integrating the liberal arts with business content, building on the work of the Hartwick Humanities in Management Institute and other business professors who have used the liberal arts to teach management in the past and present. The Hartwick Humanities in Management Institute may no longer be a part of this never-ending pursuit of improved pedagogy and policymaking that ultimately benefits society. Although the institute's mission and output have been fruitful as a result of the sustained involvement of numerous donors and subscribers, its very existence is attributable, in large part, to the indomitable spirit of its founder, John Clemens. After the spring 2014 semester, Professor Clemens departed from Hartwick College and the institution. With immediate effect from June 30, 2014, Hartwick College will not be accepting any new students or applications.

Nobody knows what the institute's future holds. Will it be permanently closed? Could the institution adjust to new market demands, or does its current market niche still exist? For the 2014–2015 school year, what about the current clients who have already been in touch with the institution to inquire about case studies (administrative official, personal communication, May 5, 2014)? Is there a way to ensure the institution can keep meeting the demands of its present and future clients without going bankrupt? In the end, would Hartwick choose to sell or lease the institution's assets to someone else? Maybe a college that has already approached Hartwick to ask for permission to relocate the institute to their campus (administration official, personal correspondence, May 5, 2014). Appendix 4 includes a long list of current and former university and college clients. The authors believe that in the future, academic institutions will place more emphasis on teaching business as a liberal art. This is supported by the Bell Report's call for action, the growth of programs like Indiana University's Liberal Arts and Management Program, and the

growing interest and discussion in the literature (e.g., Sucher, 2014; Lavelle, 2013). As a result of this ongoing integration, liberal arts colleges may come to see business education for what it is: a social science. This might pave the way for more liberal arts programs to offer business courses. John Clemens, Professor Emeritus, deserves a great deal of credit for the idea behind the Hartwick Humanities in Management institution, which he established. This idea applies regardless of the result of the institution. In addition, the writers believe that the Clemens method of teaching business will continue to be a guiding light in the industry long after the school has closed its doors. A pioneer in the field of business and liberal arts education, the Hartwick Humanities in Management Institute has laid the groundwork for a new way of producing leaders who can have a positive impact on society. Starting with the institute's written and cinematic cases, students all around the globe will have access to cutting-edge literature, art, movies, and technology in the years to come, each with its own unique analysis and lessons to teach. These students will not only strengthen the combined role of business and the liberal arts, but they will also bring fresh ideas, different viewpoints, and energy to the workplace. "The liberal arts prepare you for your last job,.. your first job," and all other jobs in between, might be the current version of the old adage that states, "The liberal arts prepare you for your last job, not your first" (Anonymous), made possible by combining it with a business major.

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