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***Why Should Business Education  
Care About Care?  
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*Kevin André*

## **WHY SHOULD BUSINESS EDUCATION CARE ABOUT CARE?**

### **TOWARD AN EDUCARE PERSPECTIVE**

**Kevin ANDRE<sup>1</sup>**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This article considers the potential contribution of care ethics in business education through the lens of a new perspective, called “educare.” This paper will first give a definition of educare as a pedagogical strategy which aims to make all students free to care. We will then look at why the educare strategy is relevant for business ethics education, given the intense challenges it is presently facing. Lastly, we will see how educare could be implemented effectively through service-learning.

## **KEYWORDS**

ETHIC OF CARE; EMPATHY; BUSINESS ETHICS; BUSINESS EDUCATION;  
SERVICE-LEARNING; EDUCARE.

## INTRODUCTION

The US business education model has come under significant criticism, despite tremendous growth in enrollments in graduate business administration since the 1950s and its replication throughout the world. Jeffrey Pfeffer has written a number of articles about this topic with his colleague Fong, especially in the *Academy of Management Learning and Education* journal. In a mediated article of the inaugural issue of 2002, they question the effectiveness of business education, stressing the fact that there is no correlation between career success and possessing a MBA degree. They criticize Connolly's research on the positive rate of return on the MBA degree based on an increase of starting salary (2003). They conjecture that the US business education model may have become overly market driven at the expense of program quality (2004). Such "for-profit education" is broadly criticized by philosophers such as Martha Nussbaum (2010). Pesqueux discusses the rise of "academic capitalism" (2003).

The recent financial crisis and corporate scandals have broadened this criticism to ethical issues. In their accusations aimed at corporations, especially in the financial world, many people wonder to what extent business schools have been "complicit" (Swanson & Frederick, 2001) or "co-conspirators" (Mitroff, 2004) of the criminal behaviors of their alumni. If some empirical research has been conducted to demonstrate that business education is not responsible for the decline in morality among their students (Neubaum et al., 2009), there is still little consensus about the effectiveness of business ethics education (Adkins & Radtke, 2004). Some programs have demonstrated their impact (Gautschi & Jones, 1998), but it seems to be generally weak and short-lived (McCabe, Dukerich, & Dutton, 1994; Weber, 1990). Some studies highlight an impact on actual behavior, without, however, an inducement of "internalized ethical decisions," as students choose more ethical behaviors only when they are made public (Mayhew & Murphy, 2009).

Either as a consequence of this lack of effectiveness or as a consequence of a process of self-selection induced by management education (Pfeffer, 2005), business students are particularly deficient in their ethical skills (Wood, Longenecker, McKinney, & Moore, 1988). This is obvious when they are compared to students from other disciplines (Lampe, 1997; Lau & Haug, 2011). Their main concern is to become better off, and they feel less concerned by justice or the meaning of life. They are more likely to cheat (McCabe & Trevino, 1995; McCabe, Butterfield, & Trevino, 2006). They are also reported to be more narcissistic than others (Westerman, Bergman, Bergman, & Daly, 2012). Business schools are encouraged by their students, who consider themselves to be “customers,” to deliver “toolkits” and one-size-fits-all answers to operational issues (Godfrey et al., 2005). Lessons which cannot be used directly for future professional life are therefore often ignored. This “transactional” vision does not leave much room for moral issues, and this situation clearly undermines the legitimacy of business ethics education. It requires professors and scholars of business ethics to constantly justify the field's legitimacy rather than explore new pedagogical practices (Swanson & Fisher, 2011). It can also lead to suspicion regarding the credibility of business education in these subjects, and this may suggest that ethics courses are there for “ethics-washing,” without any real expectations regarding their impact.

This article proposes to look at the potential contribution of care ethics to address this situation: why and how might care ethics contribute to the effectiveness and legitimacy of business ethics education? The “ethic of care” construct arose in the context of the controversy between Carol Gilligan (1982) and Lawrence Kohlberg (1981) in the field of moral development psychology (Donleavy, 2008; Reiter, 1996; Thompson, 1995). As far as business ethics education is concerned, much more research and teaching has been conducted

based on Kohlberg's position<sup>2</sup>. The ethic of justice has been considered to be the mainstream approach, and business ethics education has been mainly cognitive (Furman, 1990). This is probably still the case, even if alternative models have been proposed since, such as character education (Hartman, 2006) or critical management education (Grey, 2004). Surprisingly, care theory is little used in the field of business ethics education. Research has been done on the relevance of care ethics for business, for example in the recent book *Applying care ethics to business* (Hamington & Sander-Staudt, 2011), but it includes no chapter on education. There is actually a very small share of articles in the literature that deals with the potential contribution of care ethics to business ethics education (DeMoss & McCann, 1997; Furman, 1990; Rabouin, 1997; Reiter, 1996). Very few courses - or even none - are reported currently to have been conceived from a caring perspective. Yet, principles for caring education have been proposed by Nel Noddings (2002). Her work is known in the business literature (Simola, 2007), but has not been applied to an educational perspective.

Hence, this paper intends to propose and explain the potential contribution of care ethics to a new agenda for business ethics education. I propose to call this new strategy of business ethics education based on care ethics "educare" (Pesqueux, 2011). The first part of the paper will explicit what educare is. I will first propose a two-part definition of the ethic of care, and then we will gain insight into the goals of educare. The second part of this paper will show what educare can bring to business ethics education in terms of legitimacy and effectiveness. I will lastly show how educare can be implemented through service-learning, a pedagogical approach that is well known in business education and has proven to be effective

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<sup>2</sup> Which is generally referred to as the "ethic of justice" (Bauman, 2011; DeMoss & McCann, 1997; French & Weis, 2000; Kittay, 2001; Reynolds, 2003; Simola, 2011; Taylor, 1998), and less frequently as "cognitive moral development" (Ishida, 2006; Rabouin, 1997; Thompson, 1995) or "principle-based ethics" (Brady, 1999; Furman, 1990).

for various learning goals. However, to our knowledge, service-learning has not yet been related to the development of care ethics. This paper intends to fill this gap.

## **THE EDUCARE PERSPECTIVE**

### **The two sides of the ethic of care**

#### ***Empathy disposition***

One of the fundamental elements of care is that ethics should not be primarily embedded in reasoning ability, contrary to what Kohlberg and other Kantian moralists have stated. Indeed, rationality has been attacked as a source of amorality. Antonio Damasio has shown, especially in the Phineas Gage case study, that emotions are essential for reasoning ability and for acting as a moral agent, and that “cold-bloodedness” can lead to undesirable moral actions (2000). Chen-Bo Zhong showed, in a recent experimental study, how the primacy of reason in morality should be challenged because unconscious and intuitive factors help us avoid unethical choices: “participants put in [a] deliberative condition were almost twice as likely to lie as those in [an] intuition condition” (2011: 10). Morality is not solely abstract and based on logical conceptualisation; it is also embodied and relies on somatic and affective states. This is consistent with the philosophical standpoint of David Hume, who stated in *A Treatise of Human Nature*: “Morals excite passions, and produce or prevent actions. Reason itself is utterly impotent in this particular” (2003: 325).

The fact that morality can be based on passions and not on reason could be worrisome if one believes that human beings are fundamentally selfish. Yet, this pessimistic vision of human nature – Thomas Hobbes being one of the prominent philosophers of this vision: “man is a wolf to man” -- has recently been undermined by the emergence of empathy in the



understanding of human nature through various scientific domains: anthropology, ethology, psychology, and neuroscience. Empathy can be defined as “a psychological disposition to put oneself in someone else's shoes”<sup>3</sup> (Berthoz & Jorland, 2004: 19). The discovery of mirror neurons in the 1990s showed that our brain grasps what other people feel through unconscious mechanisms (Rifkin, 2011). Animals and human beings have developed, via evolution, cooperation mechanisms that are much stronger than we had previously believed (de Waal, 2010). With animals, we share the unintentional dimension of empathy, but there is another dimension specific to human beings, in which one can intentionally look at things from someone else's point of view (Decety, 2005). In this research perspective, we see evidence of the Smithian vision of human nature which was grounded in what was called, at that time, “sympathy:” “how selfish so ever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortunes of others” (Smith, 2002: 11).

Care ethics relies on this embodied vision of human beings as being capable of empathy. Care theory shares strong affinities with Smith’s moral theory (Terjensen, 2011) and with moral sentimentalism generally speaking, as developed by the Scottish philosophers of the 18th century: Hutcheson, Hume, and Smith (Tronto, 1993). Some care theorists clearly put forward this embodiment of ethics: “care denotes an approach to personal and social morality that shifts ethical considerations to context, relationships, and affective knowledge in a manner that can only be fully understood if care’s embodied dimension is recognized” (Hamington, 2006: 4). Slote also relates care ethics to empathy in his book *The Ethics of Care and Empathy* (2007). Noddings prefers to speak of “engrossment” rather than empathy (1984), as the former involves a more active and less receptive attitude than the latter, however, Slote criticizes Noddings' conception, arguing that engrossment is actually just one

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<sup>3</sup> Translated from French by the author

kind of empathy. Empathy is indeed recognized as multidimensional (Davis, 1996). I argue that care ethics relies on the disposition of human beings for multidimensional empathy.

### *Interpersonal practices*

Research shows that people who have high levels of empathy are willing to help even if they can escape easily from the situation (Batson, Duncan, Ackerman, Buckley, & Birch, 1981; Toi & Batson, 1982). Yet, there may be several reasons for not transforming empathy into altruistic behaviors. Personal distress, that is to say, “personal feelings of anxiety and discomfort that result from observing another's negative experience” (Davis, 1980: 2), can lead to avoidance. Pessimism may further lead the empathetic person to acknowledge that there is an issue, yet believe that there is nothing that can be done to address it. One can also choose to focus on one’s own life and that of one’s relatives. Self-caring should also be taken into account, and care ethics do not state that one should prioritize the care of others over the care of oneself (Gilligan, 1982). Hence, empathy as a disposition is not enough to achieve care ethics. The practical dimension is essential, because care is both a “disposition” and a “practice” (Tronto, 1993).

The concept of “practice” should be opposed to the idea of the “dilemma” at the heart of pedagogy in Kohlberg's approach. Moral dilemmas are rare. I had the opportunity to ask business students to spontaneously name moral dilemmas they had faced. I found that they often struggled to give an answer. Rather than spontaneous, their replies often required significant memory efforts. Conversely, many care practices are part of our day-to-day lives and can easily be brought to mind: helping the elderly cross the street, spending time working in community services, helping a younger brother/sister do his/her homework, etc. Care ethics

is an approach that draws on our day-to-day lives, leaving the principle-based approach for extraordinary circumstances only.

What is the scope of caring practices? Tronto's definition is very broad: "A species of activity that includes everything we do to maintain, contain, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, ourselves, and our environment" (Fischer & Tronto, 1991: 40). Noddings' perspective is narrower and focuses on dyadic relationships, drawing on a maternal perspective. This paper will choose to focus on Noddings' interpersonal perspective, which has also been chosen by other scholars when they try to define care in the context of organizations:

Caring represents a personal investment that must always remain at the level of "I;" caring at the more abstract level of "We" is an illusion. This quality of particularity is essential -- caring lives in the relationship between me, an individual, and you, another individual. Without this particularity, the caring connection is lost and we must re-label the new process: no longer "caring," it becomes "problem-solving," in Noddings' terminology (Liedtka, 1996: 183).

Relying on a "relational anthropology" (Renouard, 2011) and the acknowledgment of the need for social connection embedded in human nature (Cacioppo & Patrick, 2008), I argue that the specificity of care ethics lies indeed in interpersonal practices. The originality of care theory is that sustaining relationships becomes a moral issue, equally as important as justice principles (Garrau & Le Goff, 2010). Hence, I will not use the broader definition of care given by Tronto and propose to consider the ethic of care as *an empathic disposition that turns into interpersonal practices for the sake of human beings*. I stress the fact that both dimensions, empathy and practice, are needed. While morality is futile if it does not lead to *praxis*, practices without moral sentiments are just as irrelevant for care. If there is no specific attention to the other, it takes away much of the value of what is given. Through attention and action, there is a process of recognition of the other as a person and not as a thing (Honneth, 2007).

Educare is a pedagogical strategy that aims to develop these two aspects of care ethics, disposition and practice. I will explain now why all students are affected by this issue, even if the goal of educare is not to impose care ethics as a behavioral norm, but rather to develop the freedom to care.

## **Developing the freedom to care for all students**

### *Universalism of educare*

When we look at the scarce research on the contribution of care ethics to business education, we find the idea that it could help the curriculum be less male-oriented and more adapted to female psychology. Indeed, when scholars refer to care ethics, they interpret it as a “feminist” theory most of the time (see for instance: Borgerson, 2007; Cavanagh, Moberg, & Velasquez, 1995; Derry, 1996; Liedtka, 1996; Machold, Ahmed, & Farquhar, 2008; Maier, 1997; Moberg, 1994; Rabouin, 1997; White, 1999; Wicks, Gilbert, & Freeman, 1994). DeMoss & McCann found that a correlation between gender and moral orientation (e.g. “care” or “justice”) does indeed exist (1997). According to them, the integration of a care approach in business ethics education will “help business schools to revise their curriculum in order to address the impact of demographic diversity on organizations” (1997: 436). Care orientation could address diversity not only in terms of gender, but also in terms of culture (French & Weis, 2000), race, and class (Bass, 2009). Care, because of its “intersectionality” (Bass, 2009: 620) of gender, race, class, and culture, could be used to create a “pedagogy of the oppressed” (Freire, 1996) -- a way to take into account the point of view of minorities applying for higher education.

I assert that this vision of care ethics is not appropriate for building educare. Firstly, there are doubts about the fact that women are more caring than men. Studies done by E.E.

Skoe, who designed a method to measure the ethic of care called the “Ethic of Care Interview” (ECI) (1993), demonstrate a lack of correlation between ECI and gender (Pratt, Skoe, & Arnold, 2004; Skoe, 2010; Skoe & Lippe, 2002; Skoe & Diessner, 1994; Skoe & Marcia, 1991; Skoe, Pratt, Matthews, & Curror, 1996). Moreover, a meta-analysis has shown that women indeed seem to demonstrate more ethical attitudes than men, but those attitudes include the ones that correspond to the ethic of justice (Borkowski & Ugras, 1998). Secondly, if we seek to give a voice to people who were not previously heard, namely women, this maintains them in a state of oppression, as the privileged do not feel implicated in this moral orientation. In that regard, this remains a “patriarchal” understanding of care (Gilligan, 1995). This vision does not allow for change, as each individual is tied to his or her condition. I propose to consider care ethics as neither feminist nor feminine. Because it is about not only disposition but also practice, educare should invite all students to develop care ethics, regardless of their sex, race, class, or culture. Care is not only for the “oppressed,” it is also for the “privileged,” especially since a kind of “privileged irresponsibility” (Tronto, 1993) exists: the privileged class is not always aware of the care they rely on and of the care people need from them. Therefore, educare should target *all* students.

### ***Freedom to care***

This universalism of care ethics should not be understood as hegemonic. Some authors have tried to show the superiority of care over justice, such as Kittay (2001), who criticized justice for not including people with severe disabilities. I do not argue that the ethic of care is superior to the ethic of justice. Actually, I argue further that it is not better to care than not to care. Care ethics is a framework that does not say what is good and what is bad. Care ethics falls into what the Roman Catholic tradition has called “supererogation” (Puka, 2011: 176).

Supererogatory acts are the ones that are “good to do but not bad not to do” (Heyd, 2011). This can be illustrated by the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke, 10:30-37). The priest and the Levite did not disobey the Law by avoiding the traveler who had been left to die by the roadside, since they did not have the right to touch a dead man. The Samaritan helped the injured man. He was not compelled to do so by divine law; this was only a manifestation of his goodness (relying on his empathic disposition, since it is written that the Samaritan “was moved with compassion”). In this story, there is a “good guy,” but no “bad guys.”

Hence it is not bad not to care. Caring practices for others are supererogatory. Self-caring, as we said before, should also be taken into account, and care theories do not state that we should always prefer others to self. Moreover, care-giving does not always lead to a positive impact. Even with the best possible intentions, a care-giver does not always have the intended effect and may, in some cases, fail to generate positive changes in the life of the care receiver. Indeed, the best way to care may sometimes be to do nothing. Humanitarian action has proven to backfire on occasion. If educare is to target all students, they should not be told “I will teach you how to care because it is bad not to care for others.” This would be a complete misinterpretation, since care ethics is contextual and supererogatory. However, care merits attention, and not taking it into consideration would mean cutting off one important aspect of our morality. To be free to care, one should not be compelled to care, but one should rather feel authorized to care. I will show now that the business perspective does not give this freedom to care. The main goal of educare is to provide for an authorization to care in the business context. Drawing on a new anthropology, this can lead to a new form of legitimization of business ethics and new opportunities for integrating ethics in daily organizational behaviors.

## **WHY APPLY EDUCARE TO BUSINESS EDUCATION**

### **Toward a new anthropology for business education**

Economists have demonstrated that exposure to a model where self-interest is considered to be the only human motive encourages self-interested behaviors (Frank, Gilovich, & Regan, 1993). Economic theories can be “self-fulfilling,” in that they create both institutional and behavioral norms for promoting the self-interest model (Ferraro, Pfeffer, & Sutton, 2005). Business theories are also very much infused with biased and partial economic theories based only on self-interest. As for economic theories, they can be performative, and some authors argue that bad management theories can therefore destroy good practices (Ghoshal, 2005).

Self-interest is seen as normal and healthy when doing business, whereas there is a deeply rooted conception that caring is not relevant in a competitive world. In a recent survey conducted among business students, empathy is ranked lowest in a list of the required skills for leadership (Holt & Marques, 2011). Showing concern and compassion for the difficulties of others is usually considered bad for business (Hamington & Sander-Staudt, 2011). Being “tough” is more valued. Otherwise, we are considered victims of the so-called “slave morality” (Puka, 1990), in reference to Nietzsche's philosophy and his criticism of Christian morality, which sees martyrs and those who are oppressed as the real “heroes.” Business education should seek instead to create “winners,” modeled on the mythical figures of great entrepreneurs. It is assumed that the “winners” do not waste time feeling sorry for the “losers.” Thus, business students should learn how to win, how to become true leaders, and not how to care for others.

This situation is problematic because we have to take into account the fact that human beings are not only selfish, but also altruistic. As the Noble Prize winner Muhammad Yunus puts it:

The biggest flaw in our existing theory of capitalism lies in its misrepresentation of human nature. In the present interpretation of capitalism, human beings engaged in business are portrayed as one-dimensional beings whose only mission is to maximize profit. [...] No doubt humans are selfish beings, but they are selfless beings, too. Both these qualities coexist in all human beings” (Yunus, 2010: xv).

This idea of a pluralistic vision is shared by other economists, such as the Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen, who does not reject self-interest as a driver for human behavior, but states that it is certainly not the only one (1988). Actually, this refutation of the one-dimensional vision of human beings in economics is as old as Adam Smith, whose conception of human nature is also multidimensional (Skinner, 2011), embracing both “sympathy” (Smith, 2002) and “self-interest” (Smith, 1999). Economics should draw upon a “pluralistic” vision of human beings who are able to “span from mercilessly exploiting their social partners to sacrificing their lives for others” (Sober & Wilson, 1999: 336).

As we have seen, care ethics is relevant here because it emphasizes the empathic nature of human beings and the natural need for relationships and cooperation, which should not be considered secondary in moral theories. The educare strategy is to balance the self-interest model by affirming the caring dimension of human beings. It is therefore a powerful framework which could change the business school agenda in favor of a “pluralistic promotion of self-interest and altruism rather than a focus on self-interest alone” (Birnik & Billsberry, 2008: 986). If students are cheating, if they are targeting a better income rather than a better life, maybe it is not because of their bad character or because they are intrinsically selfish. Maybe it is also because they think business is all about self-interest and does not leave room for moral sentiments such as empathy. Perhaps educators should not solely focus on students' individual weaknesses in terms of ethics, but rather look at the



“worldview” behind curricula (Giacalone & Thompson, 2006). This shift in worldview could free students to care in the context of business.

### **Toward a new legitimacy of business ethics**

This multidimensional anthropology can therefore give a new answer to the tough question: why should we teach ethics in business curricula? Usually, teachers and scholars demonstrated the relevance of business ethics to students in two possible ways, both of which I consider to be ineffective.

The first one, which I propose to call “instrumental,” argues that ethics is essential for business. Its goal is to convince students that conducting business without ethics is a dead-end: “The best and perhaps the only way to have a flourishing and enduring business enterprise is to maintain a reputation for integrity and fair dealing” (Solomon & Martin, 2003: 1). Yet this argument has often proved to be idealistic and actually contradicted by the facts. As Solomon acknowledges himself immediately after, “there are some counterexamples, of course.” But there are many, actually... To pick just one, the US Securities and Exchange Commission has regularly allowed firms such as Citigroup, Bank of America, JPMorgan Chase, and UBS to settle cases by paying hundreds of millions of dollars without having to admit any wrongdoing. Wall Street firms seem to see SEC settlements as “a cost of doing business.”<sup>4</sup> These companies make sustainable profits while ignoring moral requirements, and will continue to do so as long as the courts allow it. Moreover, when we consider ethics solely as a management technique, this leads us to weaken the ethical position and thus its

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<sup>4</sup> Wyatt, E. 2011, *Judge Blocks S.E.C. Settlement With Citigroup*. The New York Times. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/29/business/judge-rejects-sec-accord-with-citi.html>, November 29, 2011.

instrumental value (Van Parijs, 1991). Usually, we consider an action to be ethical when it is made precisely for non-instrumental reasons.

Another avenue has been pursued to convince business students that ethical behavior in business is important, which I propose to call “normative.” Students are told to be ethical not because it is good for business, but because it is their duty, their obligation. Ethicists guide them according to what they *should* do. These prescriptions are not necessarily grounded in empirical analyses of actual practices (Donaldson & Dunfee, 1994). This approach is consistent with the CSR literature, which is based mainly on the idea that businessmen have social *responsibilities* (Bowen, 1953). The role of business schools is therefore to build awareness of this responsibility among students (Acquier, Gond, & Pasquero, 2011). This approach can be criticized as not being relevant since it can be reduced to a legal matter (Van Parijs, 1991). Students will become responsible managers only insofar as the law forces them to be. Howard Bowen himself expressed doubts about the effectiveness of the CSR concept: “my experience and observation since then have led me to the conclusion that the social responsibility concept is of minimal effectiveness and that an economy that serves the people can be built in America only if corporate enterprise is brought under social control” (Acquier et al., 2011: 637).

Educare provides an interesting alternative perspective: the goal is no longer “to “sell” students on the importance of ethics in business and its relevance to their success” (Lampe, 1997: 7). It is rather drawing on the fact that students *do* care: “the language of care begins with the premise that we *do* care, not that we have a responsibility to care” (Freeman & Liedtka, 1991: 97). The supererogatory specificity of care ethics implies that we do not aim to change human nature, instead, on the contrary, we invite people not to shed who they are when they are doing business. One should abandon “a false duality that asks individuals to be managers from 9 to 5 and humans for the duration of their day” (Freeman & Liedtka, 1991:

97). Therefore, the legitimacy of ethics in business curricula is not based on what people should do, but on what people are. This is, in our view, a much stronger argument, since it is easy to question the “ought,” but it is more difficult to question the “is.” This acknowledgment of the caring nature of people in the business context is a new form of legitimation of business ethics. It also provides new opportunities for students to apply ethics in their careers.

### **New opportunities for ethics in business as usual**

We observed earlier in this paper that business students are less ethical than non-business students. However, more and more business students want to find ways of including societal considerations in their future job. Net Impact studies conducted over several years by the Aspen Institute show that there is a growing concern among business students about the social value they may deliver (McGaw, 2011). When they are asked: “What factors will be most important in your job selection?,” 32% in 2008 said: “Potential to make a contribution to society.” Only 15% in 2002 answered accordingly. In 2008, 33% said that one of the primary responsibilities of a company is to “create value for the local community in which it operates” (as opposed to only 25% in 2002). Business education must therefore consider how to meet these aspirations: “How do schools of business help students who place a premium on being able to have a positive impact on society in their work realize that opportunities for the greatest impact may lie in what seem to be unlikely places”(69)?

One answer given by research is to posit that business ethics should lead to CSR. Carroll considers that the “ethical” dimension is “embodied” in the “social responsibility” of the firm (1979: 499). Ethics in business should lead to actions undertaken by the firm for society. Another recent avenue is social entrepreneurship, which has become an increasingly significant international phenomenon, gaining growing attention from academics (see the

forthcoming special issue in the *Academy of Management Learning and Education* journal on this topic). It has become another option for business students who wish to turn ethical aspirations into action. Hence, business ethics courses would be the place for students to explore what they want to do and the range of organizations they want to join (Hartman, 2006). If some students want to contribute to alleviating society's problems, curricula should help them either to find organizations which care about societal value or to create their own social initiatives.

Such an approach is necessary. However, it is not suitable for students who want to join regular companies and do not want to work in the CSR department or create social enterprises, but nonetheless still want to do good and not only do well. Even worse, the fact that an organization's aim is to create social value does not prevent it from having unethical behaviors within it. Research has shown that charities, for instance, which are expected to show true concern for societal issues, may still mistreat some of their employees or beneficiaries and be in a state of ethical hypocrisy (Foote, 2001). Educare stresses the importance of daily work relationships, which is applicable in every business. This is a way of implementing ethics on a daily basis whatever the organization may be. Everyone can decide to care for others at work. Educare is therefore a pedagogical strategy that aims to teach students to implement "organizational care" (McAllister & Bigley, 2002) at an individual level and teach them how to do "care management" (Guérin et Calvat, 2011). The goal is to teach students "to dare to care" - as the 2010 AOM Annual meeting proposed - in their daily role as managers.

However, it is neither automatic nor easy to do so. Forging a conception of an organization based on collaboration and cooperation can be a fashionable way of framing things, but relational behaviors very often "disappear in practice" (Fletcher, 2001). As we have seen, caring is not valued as an organizational behavior for managers and leaders. It is

even considered to be detrimental to one's own interests. Many studies have shown indeed that agreeableness – which is included in caring practices, since it aims to maintain the best possible relationships -- is negatively correlated with earnings (Judge, Livingston, & Hurst, in press). Management books try to promote “The Power of Nice” (Thaler, Koval, & Leno, 2006), the “Kindness Revolution” (Horrell, 2006), or how to “Lead With Love” (Czarnecki, 2010), but the fact remains that the less caring we are, the better off we are. If we look closer, research does not claim that “nice guys” are less successful than those who behave in a more brutal way. Being nice is not correlated with job performance in general (Wiggins, 1991). Trying to maintain the best possible relationships is not incompatible with being competent and efficient. However, some studies suggest that being harsh in the professional context and less concerned for others is correlated with being *perceived* as competent: “while agreeable people might be well-liked, their warmth may undermine perceptions of their competence relative to their disagreeable peers who may, in fact, be no better equipped for the job” (Judge et al., in press: 8).

By promoting a pluralistic vision of business agents, educare will teach students that one dimension is not inconsistent with the other. Caring and self-interest are assumed to be incompatible with each other. Yet one can be demanding regarding the organization's objectives and also attentive to the needs of the people around oneself. Educare desires simply to teach students that business cannot be sustainable if it prevents people from being empathetic and acting accordingly. It aims at changing business education so that students can be free to express and listen to their inner motives, which are not exclusively rationally self-centered. Ethics can therefore be implemented on a daily basis in work relationships. Students will learn not to judge people who are caring, no longer viewing them as less competent. As a supererogatory behavior, they will be able to consider it not as a *lack* of leadership but as a *style* of leadership (Holt & Marques, 2011). This paper will now turn to the implementation of

educare. We will see that service-learning is a powerful pedagogical tool to achieve the goals of educare.

## **HOW TO APPLY EDUCARE TO BUSINESS EDUCATION?**

### **Service-learning and business education**

The US National Service-Learning Clearinghouse website defines service-learning as “a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.” Numerous studies have shown the positive impacts of service-learning at various levels (Eyler, Giles Jr, Stenson, Gray, & At, 2001). Service-learning has, in particular, a positive effect on the understanding of social issues, personal insight, and cognitive development (Yorio & Feifei Ye, 2012). Some of the research about service-learning has also demonstrated its impact on moral development. It should be noted, however, that all of these studies use DIT methodology, which is based on Kohlberg’s understanding of ethics (Bernacki & Jaeger, 2008; Boss, 1994). To our knowledge, no study has explored the empirical correlation between care ethics and service-learning.

Research has also been conducted on how service-learning could benefit business education. There have been special issues in the *Journal of Business Ethics* (1996) and in the *Academy of Management Learning and Education* journal (2005). Some authors see service-learning as an opportunity for management education to create “some breadth” (Godfrey, Illes, & Berry, 2005) and to train “global responsible managers” (Pless, Maak, & Stahl, 2011). It can also be relevant for building meaningful courses on sustainable development (Brower, 2011). Some prefer to see service-learning as a morally neutral pedagogical tool that aims for “effective management education” (Kenworthy-U’Ren, 1999). Even if goals assigned to

service-learning differ, it seems that there is a consensus on the effectiveness of service-learning as a pedagogical tool for business education. It is important to stress this fact since the effectiveness of business ethics education is challenged, as mentioned previously.

### **Service-learning and educare**

The idea that service-learning can be used as a tool to develop care ethics in business education has not yet been analyzed. The acronym “WE CARE” has been used to “summarize the key practices specific to the application of service-learning in management education” (Kenworthy-U’Ren & Peterson, 2005: 272), however, it does not focus on the ethics of care. To our knowledge, Skoe (2010) is the only author who bolsters the perspective that service-learning could be a potential application of educare:

The curriculum should include opportunities for students to choose from diverse community service activities (called ‘service learning’) to take part in and to reflect on. Such service experience combined with reflection may help students to discover their connections to others and to gain the insight that active care and compassion benefits the giver as well as the receiver (206).

Her statement is general and not specific to management education. So what are the grounds on which service-learning would be effective for educare in the specific context of business education?

First of all, to develop the capacity to care, one must engage in caregiving activities (Noddings, 2002). The first way to develop the freedom to care is to develop opportunities to care. Very often, people become sensitive to caregiving because they have a relative who needs care from them: young children, elderly parents... Service-learning programs can address the lack of caring opportunities in the business context, which may condemn students to careless attitudes. Care may not be very hard to learn because the best way to learn to care would be to care: “learning to care is not an exercise in sweat and tears, like dieting or

working one's way up the corporate ladder, rather it is relatively easy to accomplish" (Puka, 2011: 178). Even if the people involved are not straightforwardly empathetic and get involved in service-learning for utilitarian reasons (getting a good grade to pass exams), they will tend to gain in empathy throughout the program since our minds struggle against inconsistency and tend toward "dissonance reduction" (Puka, 2011: 178). Besides, if the community service provided is useful and meaningful, students volunteering will find proof that they can act and be responsible for the well-being of others and will maintain their desire to practice care. Finally, we know that when one engages in helping another person because one has been solicited to do so, it is more likely one will engage in helping again in the future: "we have been able to verify that one was more inclined to alert an experimenter whose role was to pretend to lose a packet, when another experimenter had asked one earlier to monitor during a few moments his bag. The first behavior of helping (solicited) prepared in a way the second (unsolicited)" (Joule & Beauvois, 1989: 85).

But not all service-learning projects can be used for *educare* as we have defined it. Service-learning can be seen to be aligned with *educare* when it gives students the opportunity to care for someone in particular or a group of people in particular, with a direct and personal connection to each person. Raising money for a charity, for instance, can be a very effective service-learning program for teaching marketing. But is it not *educare* if students have not encountered the people for whom they raise money and if the beneficiaries did not express their need for money. Care ethics is about personal relationships and is not about "problem solving," as pointed out by Noddings (Liedtka, 1996).

Another related remark is that a community project without proper reflection is not a learning experience, "it is only a project" (Mintzberg, 2004: 48). The reflective part of service-learning is necessary because volunteering needs to be analyzed and criticized. Service-learning should give space for reflective work as well as community service, both of



which are necessary for moral development (Leming, 2001). Caregiving in itself is not enough; one should also understand how care is received and the impact it has: What is the opinion of the beneficiaries regarding the intervention? What could be done better so that the actions could be more helpful? Caregivers must accept being challenged in order to maintain the relational characteristic of care, whereby both the caregiver and care-receiver are affected by the relationship: “Because care theory is fundamentally relational, we recognize the contributions of the cared-for as well as those of carers in maintaining the relation” (Noddings, 2002: 6).

But if service-learning is an effective pedagogical tool for implementing educare with students who volunteer, what about students who do not choose to get involved? Should service-learning be mandatory in business curricula? If not, how can educare involve *all* students, as we proposed earlier? If yes, how can one maintain that educare is about the freedom to care? Mandatory versus optional is a tough question, recurrent in debates about service-learning, civic service, and volunteerism in general. Regarding the specific issue of educare in business education, I argue that the simple fact that caring practices be proposed through service-learning courses is a way to promote the pluralistic vision needed in business curricula. Even if students do not attend, they are told that business is not only about self-interest. This implies that these opportunities must be institutionalized by business schools, in order to show students that they have value for their education (Furco, 1996). Faculty should therefore acknowledge that service-learning programs are fully part of teaching business.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

### *Educare and other proposals for reorienting business education*

Other proposals for changing business education have already been made. Pfeffer and Fong (2002, 2004) proposed to get inspiration from professional curricula, such as medical or law school. Management could be considered to be a profession (Khurana & Nohria, 2008). Diplomas could be linked, for instance, to an oath like the Hippocratic one (e.g. the MBA oath at Harvard<sup>5</sup>). Supporters of critical management education do not agree with this approach. They argue that management cannot be based on the same kind of training as medicine. They stress the fact that values and context should receive attention in the classroom, since value-neutral reliable techniques are illusory in management (Grey, 2004).

Another influential vein is character education, based on Aristotelian virtue ethics. Teaching moral principles is not enough, because they are “usually vague, often in conflict, seldom unexceptionable, hence not reliably action-guiding” (Hartman, 2006: 68). It is not possible to mold the character of business students, but business ethics courses can at least help students to question and choose their interests, and reinforce their aspiration to “do good.” They can lead to a change in the choice of the organizations they want to enter, which is essential, as organizations affect character.

Educare has many features in common with critical management education and character education, such as the importance of *praxis* and the refusal of teaching techniques which do not take into account a variety of contexts. Still, educare is original for three reasons. First, it is focused on human relationships, whereas most of the time, the focus is either on ethical principles or on sustainability problems induced by business activities. Secondly, it does not discuss what should be done in a normative way or instrumental way.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://mbaoath.org/mba-oath-legacy-version>

The strategy of educare is not to impose a behavior but to make people freer. Thirdly, it is not about what students will do later in their career, but rather what they do during their business education. Service-learning provides the opportunity to do things that can change students here and now. All three of these dimensions have been discussed in other papers by other scholars for other educational frameworks. But the originality of educare, in our view, is that it draws on a care ethics framework in order to aggregate all these dimensions into one consistent pedagogical approach.

Since educare is based on non-compulsory service-learning programs, it does not aim to replace or compete with these other avenues for business ethics education. Even the cognitive- and principle-based moral education based on Kohlberg's approach should not be set aside by the educare perspective. Amartya Sen rightly pointed out, regarding Hume's moral theory, that we "concentrate almost exclusively on Hume's remarks denigrating the role of reason in morality, in favor of sentiments, without noting that he did see them to be interrelated." Hume's theory does not say "that reason is unimportant for morality or for motivating action. It argues only that reason cannot accomplish this entirely on its own."<sup>6</sup> Similarly, educare's perspective, based on the development moral sentiments, is a necessary complement to the cognitive approach, which cannot accomplish business ethics education on its own.

### ***Further empirical research needed***

Further empirical research is needed to further strengthen our statements. In particular, we should verify if there is indeed a correlation between volunteering in educare service-learning projects and the development of care ethics. Are students who have volunteered more caring

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<sup>6</sup> Amartya Sen, « The Boundaries of Justice » published in *The New Republic*, December 14, 2011

at the end of the program than at its start? Is this progression significant when compared to students who did not participate in the program? To our knowledge, only one empirical study has measured the impact of care ethics on business education programs (DeMoss & McCann, 1997). The use of ECI metrics built by the Norwegian psychologist E.E. Skoe (1993) could be used to fill this gap. This scale does indeed seem to be statistically robust and has been used in many different areas to address the psychology of moral development. However, it considers care to be a reasoning ability -- Skoe speaks of “care reasoning” (Pratt et al., 2004) -- since it is based on an interview consisting of four moral dilemmas. Research to come should help create assessment tools consistent with our alternative definition of care ethics based on multidimensional empathy and interpersonal practices. One would therefore be able to confirm whether educare is a valid method for promoting a more balanced moral education for business students through service-learning.

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