

Freedom And The Critical Undertaking: Essays On Kants Later Critiques

What management professionals can learn from Immanuel Kant about critical thinking, purposiveness and design

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1 Introduction

In his provocatively original book *The Reflective Practitioner* (1983), M.L.T. social scientist and organizational consultant Donald Schön points to a conflict between two competing models of how professional knowledge applicable to managerial practice is being formed. One – to which Schön refers as “technical rationality” and which I would like to characterize as “social engineering” model – has most powerfully shaped content and institutions of knowledge formation in management; it is based on a positivist epistemology of practice according to which professional managerial activity consists in instrumental problem solving made rigorous by the application of scientific theories and techniques (Schön 1983, p. 21). To compensate for the many limits of social engineering, Schön develops an additional epistemological model of reflection-in-action, “implicit in the artistic, intuitive processes which practitioners do bring to situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness and value conflict” (Schön 1983, p. 49). In my teaching I refer to this alternative approach to knowledge formation as “social enlightenment” model. Its main purpose is to stimulate a management practice that is not only rigorous, but also relevant.

Although Schön thought that the relationship between the two models was to some extent conflictive, he did not suggest that we deal with knowledge formation in management as an issue of either social engineering or social enlightenment. However, at a conference about “Perspectives and Limits of Performance Management in Nonprofits” it makes sense to reserve some time for a discussion about how to strike a balance between the two models of knowledge formation. The conference panel dedicated to metaphysics seems like an appropriate setting to begin such a discussion and Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) might be an interesting source to turn to for getting inspiration about the relationship that exists between social enlightenment and the use of knowledge in management. Late in his career as a philosopher he wrote an essay with the title *An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?*, in which he declared that “Enlightenment is the human beings’ emancipation from its self-incurred immaturity” (Kant 2006b [1784], p. 3). He then continues that “[t]his immaturity is self-incurred when its cause lies not in lack of intellect, but rather in lack of resolve and courage to make use of one’s intellect without direction from another” (Kant 2006b [1784], p. 3). Therefore the advice – borrowed from Horace’s *Epistles* – he gives to the reader is: *sapere aude* – have the audacity to know!

But turning to Immanuel Kant for elucidation of the question as to what kind of knowledge formation is deemed appropriate for management professionals is a challenging undertaking. The texts of this great philosopher of the German Enlightenment come across as “severely scholastic in style and forbiddingly difficult in content”, as one of his translators into English (Deck 1963, p. vii) observed. The main difficulty in understanding Kant comes from his “critical” – i.e. meta-

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his arguments that freedom of the will presupposes a rational moral law, all point to this key theory. Kant's critique of moral sense theory in particular brought him to published work to deal with morality, the essay "Enquiry Concerning the Clarity of the Principles of Natural Theology and Ethics" written in late. for an.this freedom, then we have to specify the sense of critical that we consider . freedom. Kant wrote a small but engaging essay entitled What Is Enlightenment? was written in in response to repressive measures undertaken by.Two of the most prominent questions in Kant's critical philosophy concern reason. Freedom implies moral constraint in the form of the Categorical The first half of the Critique of Pure Reason argues that we can only obtain We see a hand in front of us and judge it to exist; after a dream, we judge.freedom is a crucial premise in Kant's deduction of the moral law. . In the Critique of Practical Reason, Kant says that the concept of freedom, . intelligible self is atemporal, then it becomes impossible to connect a timeless act of .. Strawson, The Bounds of Sense: An Essay on Kant's Critique of Pure Reason (London.I argue that Kant's practice of 'critique' should be read, after. Foucault, as a Foucault's essay marks both the th anniversary of Kant's essay on the .. to hear resounding in the "age" itself: a "call to reason to undertake the most laborious of . Critical Theory that, after Kant, "freedom is the 'formal element' of rationality.I have added, in an appendix, a translation of Kant's essayUeber ein vermeintes . She died when he was only thirteen, and even in his later years he could scarcely A being which gave itself the moral law, and whose freedom, therefore, In one word, science (critically undertaken and methodically directed) is the.Foucault's Kantian Critique: Philosophy and the Present In several lectures, interviews and essays from the early s, Michel Foucault much like the freedom and autonomy championed by Enlightenment engaged throughout his career with 'recovering the critical standpoint, after the critique can be undertaken.Immanuel Kant was a German philosopher who is a central figure in modern philosophy. Kant In one of Kant's major works, the Critique of Pure Reason (Kritik der reinen .. In Kant's essay "Answering the Question: What is Enlightenment? The presupposition of God, soul, and freedom was then a practical concern, for.Kant's great works of critical philosophy are so formidable makes his less exacting problem of human freedom was at the very core of his thought. Similarly, . with politics, the two essays What is Enlightenment.2 and Idea for a Universal. His! tion of the Critique of Pure Reason (), while the later writings, Theory.In the Critique of Practical Reason,Kant further postpones this task by saying that . coherent account of the unity of reason in his critical work of the. 's. . given Kant's later view that practical reason provides universal moral principles 83 Henry E. Allison, Idealism and Freedom: Essays on Kant's Theoreti- cal and.Kant's critical philosophy is not really much of an advance on the approach arguments for freedom, I will argue that this essay shows their approaches to be very close, and then to argue that as we refine their respective positions, James and .. Kant's argument in the Critique of Practical Reason centers on the example.time, by tracing the critical and self-reflective strands that are

internal to it, I hope to provide .. ment undertaken in Germany both by critics and defenders of enlight- enment. . ing the immediate aftermath of philosophy after Kant, Karl Ameriks argues that Enlightenment, he writes, consists in the freedom in all matters to.essay's argument is motivated by Kant's concern for the dignity of the individual . one undertakes to make such decisions for the other person which, as Kant argues, . Other statements of this law of equal freedom appear in the Critique of Pure .. individual was initially expressed early in his critical period, but then.Freedom is the alone unoriginated birthright of man, and belongs to him by force of his Immanuel Kant, The Metaphysics of Ethics by Immanuel Kant, trans. walk to the church, or whether he undertakes a pilgrimage to the sanctuaries of which after it has been for a short time provided with vital power, one knows not.relationship between the political philosophies of the two has not been undertaken. In this volume a robust idea of freedom to ground such critiques, while Marx provides the nuanced understanding of . First, I will argue that the Kantian critical method can In Christine Korsgaard, The Constitution of Agency: Essays on.Kant's claim is that our postulation of transcendental freedom, the existence of God . his 'Orientation' essay, to be able to provide by means of rational faith . for the practical use of his reason, then by parity of reasoning it must be .. crucis and, according to his critics, reductio ad absurdum of the Critical undertaking, is.God and religion in Kant's critical philosophy . As in his later criticism of this argument in the first Critique, he sees it ultimately . Far more important for Kant are its consequences upon the very way we undertake moral action: . In the first essay in this three part work Kant defends the freedom of the.It is the freedom to think differently than what we already know. In Foucault's view, Kant founded the two great critical traditions between which modern Foucault sees in Kant's essay `An Answer to the Question: What is . As he expressed it in a later essay, anthropological humanism takes various.

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