

MONASH UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS

**'EVEN WE ARE SHEEPS': CULTURAL
DISPLACEMENT IN MANAGEMENT
EDUCATION***

John W. Selsky

*Working Paper 38/98
April 1998*

ABSTRACT

An increasing number of university lecturers and students are engaged in classroom activity in national-cultural contexts which are "foreign." The foreign context confronts these culturally-displaced people with distinctive yet unfamiliar cultural practices and norms related to management education. These contexts are fraught with misunderstandings and with unintended consequences, both comic and tragic, as both the indigenous and the culturally displaced people struggle to make sense of their shared experiences.

I recount a novel classroom experience which emerged while I, an American university lecturer, was on sabbatical in Turkey. After test cheating was recognised as an important issue for both students and myself, the rules about cheating were re-negotiated. This enabled the students to take a "collective midterm" test, which proved to be a peak experience for many of them - and for myself.

The experience is framed as a critical incident in a wider case of cultural displacement. The case is used as a lever to raise and reflect on a number of issues in cross-cultural management education that can be expected to become more salient in the future. These include the social construction of cheating; power and control dynamics in university classrooms; and the management of cultural displacement. Thus the case may be usefully interpreted not merely as a technical problem of the control of cheating, or even as an adaptation problem of culturally displaced lecturers and students, but also as a systems problem concerning the effective design of learning contexts.

* This is an adaptation of a paper presented at the *Fred Emery Memorial Conference on the future of universities and education*, Istanbul, Turkey, April 1998.

'EVEN WE ARE SHEEPS': CULTURAL DISPLACEMENT IN MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

During a recent midterm examination, 52 students in a Management class at a Turkish university were observed looking at each other's papers, whispering among themselves, and exchanging answers. They were not cheating. They were participating in a special event concerning the social construction of cheating called a "collective midterm." The event developed out of my exasperation with systemic cheating that I observed during the first midterm given in the conventional manner to my class of 62 upper-level undergraduate students in *Organisation Theory*. This occurred during a sabbatical semester as a visiting assistant professor at an English-speaking university in Turkey.

In this paper I want to share with others interested in the future of business school education my experience in re-framing conventional understandings of test cheating in the classroom. I also want to reflect on that experience in terms of how test cheating gets socially constructed and how we can design more effective learning contexts. At issue is the displacing of norms (in this case about cheating) from one cultural context to another. What happens in such situations, and what are the consequences? Going beyond the cultural displacement of norms, learnings from the collective midterm event radiate out to several key notions in open systems thinking.

Test cheating is usually defined as giving or receiving help from others (Harvey 1984). This conception of cheating has been operationalized into six types of behaviour in an empirical study,¹ in which 76% (!) of a business school sample admitted cheating behaviour in a self-report survey. Harvey (1984) remarks that the conventional conception of cheating thwarts the expression of altruistic behaviour, and suppresses the potential for synergistic effects. In a move that was controversial both to students and other faculty members, Harvey reconstructed the definition of cheating in his OB classroom as "the failure to assist others on the examination if they request it" (p.6). He estimated that 95% of students altered their test-taking behaviour toward cooperation when the new definition prevailed. However he did not assess changes in students' test-taking performance that may have occurred as a result of their helping each other.

Others have designed and reported experiments in group decision making in test-taking situations in management courses. Watson, Michaelsen and Sharp (1991) used a highly structured design to assign students to same-size, heterogeneous groups; they discovered an increment in test performance with group as compared with individual test-taking conditions. Throop (1995) used more organic design principles to create a group decision making "commons" in the classroom over an entire semester, allowing the class to discuss and implement their own behavioural rules in repeated choice situations which resembled prisoners dilemmas and which were evaluated as quizzes. All of these experiments serve to reframe tests as consequential occasions for learning some aspect of organisational behaviour, and not just for evaluating individual performance.

These examples are also representative of the research in this area: It is largely American and hides the assumptions that the instructor and all the students share the same underlying understandings about what is legitimate and what is illegitimate behaviour while taking a test, and about what is important to learn and evaluate in management classrooms. In my situation, however, I was an American instructor on a short term teaching contract in Turkey. I was unfamiliar with the cultural norms and mores of the society I was teaching in, and the Turkish students in that OT class were unfamiliar with American professors and what their expectations were. These kinds of cross-cultural encounters are becoming more common in the peripatetic world of global business education. Thus this paper has relevance to the growing number of business-school instructors trying to make sense of, and be effective in, these encounters.

Hofstede (1985) found that Anglo and Mediterranean societies are cultural opposites on his four dimensions:

¹ The six types are: "using crib notes on a test, copying from another student during a test, using unfair methods to learn what was on a test before it was given, copying from another student during a test without their knowledge, helping someone else to cheat on a test, cheating on a test in any other way" (McCabe & Trevino 1995: 206).

power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism and masculinity (assertiveness). Anglo cultures have a low acceptance of power inequalities, high tolerance of uncertainty, and high assertiveness and achievement orientation. In addition they have an individualistic orientation, in which individuals are expected to take care of themselves. In contrast, Mediterranean cultures like Turkey have a high acceptance of power inequalities, low tolerance of uncertainty, and low assertiveness and achievement orientation. In addition there is a collectivist orientation, in which "individuals can expect their relatives, clan, or other in-group to look after them, in exchange for unquestioning loyalty" (p.348; emphasis added). These Mediterranean qualities, initially so puzzling to my Anglo sensibilities, became more sensible as I interacted with the students during the semester.

We supposedly are living in a world that is rapidly globalizing. Distinctive national-cultural practices and norms are said to be eroding as universal values emerge. The management education industry is no exception to these trends, but anyone who has taught, studied or consulted "overseas" knows that this emerging global culture is far from totalizing. The uptake of admired practices and norms of one culture by members of other cultures is uneven at best. Specific contexts where this uptake can occur are fraught with misunderstandings and with unintended consequences, both comic and tragic. Some "culturally accident prone" actors can continually find themselves enmeshed in situations which are personally embarrassing or threatening, and which can seriously compromise learning goals.

The "Collective Midterm" Event

In my situation I was not so courageous as Harvey, who put his re-constructed definition of cheating on his OB syllabus. I backed (was backed?) into my informal "experiment" in collective evaluation in the following way.

The first midterm in my Turkish class was administered in the conventional manner, with another proctor joining me in watching the students in the class "like hawks." Nevertheless I became aware of an enormous amount of cheating during the midterm. McCabe & Trevino's statistic seemed about right! In the class after that first midterm I shared my observations and frustrations with the students, and got the distinct impression I had violated a cultural taboo by calling attention to this topic.² At first reluctant to talk about it, the students gradually warmed to the issue and acknowledged that a great deal of cheating always occurred during tests. I asked the students how organisation theory concepts might be used to deal with test cheating. Slowly the idea of a "collective" test emerged.

In subsequent negotiations among the students, the department chairman and myself, the following policies and procedures were agreed upon for the next midterm:

- Each student would have the choice of taking either a conventional, "individual" midterm for which s/he would receive his/her individual grade; or a "collective" midterm, for which s/he would receive the average grade of all students taking the collective exam.
- The two groups would take the test in separate rooms.
- The midterm questions and time limit would be exactly the same.
- Students taking the collective midterm would have to sign an agreement accepting the average grade.
- There would be no subgroups in the collective group for averaging purposes (too difficult for me to enforce boundaries).
- I would retain the right to cancel the collective option up to the last moment if I heard that any student was being pressured into taking the collective test. (I suggested they could let me know anonymously, e.g., unsigned note under my door.)

² I should note that this university has strict written rules against cheating, plus an elaborate multi-step procedure to verify instances of suspected cheating. I observed this procedure first hand when, in a separate incident, I brought allegations of cheating against two students in the first midterm.

In the week preceding the second midterm, no more than twelve students expressed interest in the collective option, in a show of hands in two successive classes. Hence I estimated that a dozen students (20%) would follow through with the collective option, thereby creating a small group for comparative purposes. I hypothesized - with what I now recognize as a culturally biased assumption of individual ownership of competency - that the more knowledgeable students in the class would be inclined to take the individual exam, and the less knowledgeable ones the collective exam. Knowledgeable was defined as high performance on the first midterm. In addition I hypothesized that a small-group synergy effect would operate among the collective group, raising their average grade above that of the first midterm.

The exam consisted of 19 multiple-choice questions, five one-sentence answers and one short essay, totalling 60 possible points. Three additional proctors besides myself were enlisted, two for each room.

When I entered the "collective" room a few minutes before the start of the exam, I was shocked to find 52 noisy students there. I decided to get the remaining 10 students started on their individual exams, attended by one proctor, then return to deal with the collective group. By the time I returned to the collective room, the group had arranged the desks in a large circle; a smaller, embedded circle of seven students was located in the front of the room. In the center of the large circle stood one student giving directions in an authoritative manner (mostly in Turkish) while everyone else was quiet, listening.

Essentially the class had organised themselves into three roles: a "Production Unit" of seven of the brightest students, one "Enforcer" and 44 "Line Workers" (my terms, not the students'; see Personal Reflection at the end of this paper). Each group had a specific part to play. I was told by one of the Turkish proctors that the student speaking (I called him the "Enforcer") was telling the group that the line workers were to keep very quiet so that the production unit could work. He also told them that everyone was to write down exactly what the production unit said they should write. He also asserted, "We are going to get a 55 [90%] on this exam!"

They did.

During the test the Enforcer had to control the noise level in the class by barking orders to his classmates; he was effective in doing so. The Production Unit conferred among themselves on the answers to each question and arrived at a consensus. Then one member stood up and read the answer aloud. A review of the test papers afterward revealed almost everyone copied the answers verbatim. In the multiple-choice section there were only ten total "defections," by only three students, out of 988 possibilities (19 questions x 52 students).

The students felt a palpable sense of exhilaration and excitement during and immediately after the test. Something significant had happened. This was confirmed in a debriefing of the event the next day in class, and in repeated allusions to it for the rest of the semester.

In this event 84% of the students took advantage of the reworking of the rules on cheating. This compares to Harvey's (1984) rough estimate of 95% with groups of American students, who had to change their socialized norms to comply with his new rules about cheating. Moreover, there is little doubt that cooperative behaviour helped them to achieve their goal of an A grade on the second midterm, and that they experienced a strong sense of empowerment and self-efficacy. One student commented:

*Student A:*³ First of all, I want to thank you for that course. I learned from this Collective Midterm that grading or taking high grade is not very important for the instructor (not all of them!). You just want to teach us, what was organisation like in real life, because we must establish a perfect

³ This is the first of six examples of student comments about the collective midterm, reported as responses to final exam question #24: "Using course concepts (of design, structure, decision making, control, power and/or change management), evaluate what you learned from participating in the experience of the Collective Midterm. You can focus on any phase of it - from the initial idea discussed in class, to the return of the midterm papers last Friday in class." These are verbatim quotes from the students, whose native language is not English. Identities are not revealed. My interpretive notes are in brackets.

organisation to get high grade in the collective midterm.

I enter [X] University in 1990 and I never seen such an exam before. You made us like a fish [?]. That fish have only an aim; work together and get a high grade, just like a team. It is a siprit [spirit] only can learn in such kind of an event. For gaining that siprit, I have to thank you again.

Participating in that midterm taught me that if you want to achive something in large group, you have to forgive [forego?] something. For example you can act like a sheep (which you said). We have to act like sheep unless we couldn't achive such a thing... Our role is being sheep...

I want to thank you again for participating such an experience. Maybe who enters individually missed lots of thing. They miss the siprit which I have never seen before, and may be we couldn't see anymore. So thank you for everything, even we are sheeps.

Because this event appeared so figural in the students' experience of the course, I included a question about it on the final exam; some of the responses are included in the rest of the paper. Performance results are given in the Appendix.

Discussion

Just after the end of the exam, one of the proctors, a second-year Turkish MBA student in the department, commented that this event revealed the deep structure of Turkish society - a few people doing the work, and everyone else waiting around to enjoy the benefits. However, during the debriefing session in class the next day, one female student in the class, who had never spoken up before, disagreed vehemently. Trying to be provocative, I called the line workers "sheep" and she was rather offended by that. Those students, she said, performed a useful function in that system by keeping quiet and letting the production unit work. (This apparently was not totally voluntary; written comments later indicated there was very strong peer pressure to keep quiet, lest the noise contribute to a lower grade.)

The comments of the proctor and the student point to the distinctive features of this event: the mode of intervention, the learning goals and outcomes, the power-control dynamics, and the cultural connection. Each feature is discussed below.

Mode of intervention. The collective-midterm event was not pre-planned, as were other events based on the altered evaluation schemes discussed above. Instead it was an emergent response to an uncomfortable situation - uncomfortable for me because I was offended by the cheating on the first midterm; uncomfortable for the students because I kept talking about it. It was novel because it involved altering the conventional protocols for test taking in the classroom, so that group decision making could be enacted legitimately. Thus as an intervention it was similar to Harvey's (1984) cooperative structure and Watson et al.'s (1991) team learning designs. In this event, however, I took the additional step of allowing for self-organising for decision making by the system's participants, which was also Throop's (1995) strategy in designing his classroom commons. That is, whereas Watson et al. formed groups deliberately (e.g., small, same size, heterogeneous), in this case the task of organising was left to the students themselves. What they did was divide by self-selection into two "divisions" - individual and collective; then those in the collective "division" further organised themselves into three functional roles.

Unlike Watson et al.'s. or Throop's designs, this was a single experience; the groups did not persist for the entire semester. An important finding in Watson et al.'s study was that group effectiveness continued to improve over time. With the additional constraint of self organising relaxed, would group effectiveness still improve over time?

Learning goals and outcomes. At the time of the event I justified this adventure in novel evaluation methods in terms of two learning goals for the students: (1) to provide a lesson on the social construction of cheating by (2) applying organisation theory concepts in a consequential experience. Regarding the latter goal, many

students gained a sense of efficacy by successfully applying concepts they were learning from the textbook.⁴ This is evidenced from this typical student comment:

Student B: I think the best thing that I get from these experience is the importance of organising and managing people in right way, right place and right time. I think like that, because at the beginning, this is just an idea about preventing people from cheating. But what happens is that (it is not good to say that but) people in the class formed an organisation in a way that every participant knows his duty and followed it, it was important because we have a consistent goal and we have to reach it....

...In fact, far from initial point, it is legal way of cheating, and we all know that is not so ethical, fair or correct behaviour. But from my point of view, it is important to combine theoretic knowledge and practices, which we did in that midterm. It is not an example of good behaviour, but other side of the coin shows how we can transform theoretic knowledge in to practical work and I think whole organisation is successful, we get so many important things from you and your lessons....

However it is important to note that the experience actually occurred at two levels: team collaboration among the seven students in the "Production Unit"; and a mechanistic diffusion of information to 44 "Line Workers." Not surprisingly the learnings from the two groups differed. The Production Unit presumably functioned in a way similar to the small groups in Watson et al.'s (1991) design, with team interdependence and a synergistic dynamic. Their learnings tended to focus on control, uncertainty management and productive power, as evidenced in this typical comment:

Student C: The purpose of the collective exam...was to enable people who want to cheat. Before the experiment took place, chaos and uncertainty was expected. However this didn't happen. There was a control mechanism: A leader was chosen and he directed the exam allocating time needed for each question and the students who had considerable grip over the subjects were chosen to answer the questions. Everyone was told not to mark or answer the question different from one another... As the student were dependent on us as we were answering the questions, a sense of power came into us (me because we were the ones giving orders). But last Friday when the papers were returned to us the realities struck me as Prof. Selsky said the words "How far can someone carry this...can you cheat your father, mother,... [continuation dots in original] I see this collective midterm as an experiment.

On the other hand the Line Workers functioned not as a team but as an aggregate, with no more than pooled interdependence among them. Their learnings tended to focus on dependency and oppressive power, seen in these two typical comments:

Student D: I learnt from the collective midterm that, the ones who can control others or the ones who are not dependent to the others can get power and authority. The others can not be disagree with their uppers. ->(who study hard) Like a vertical authority, they began to use their power and govern the others. (Control them totally). I think it comes from Human nature, if you understand that the others is a few need to you, like a professional authority master, you began to govern him. it is not humanistic, not social, not etc... But I learn that it is true... [parentheses and continuation dots in original]

Student E: It was one of the most interesting exams I had taken in my life. We were like a firm. The board of directors were consisting of five students which worked as a brain-storming group to solve the problems. All the rest just stayed in their chairs and wrote what they heard. The structure was mechanistic. Since they had more expertise in topics of second midterm they had more power than us. Not all, but two of them sometimes shouted or tried to make fun with the class; that was really disgusting. It showed me how (even this kind of a very temporary) power can change some people. So I would say, "no thanks" for another collective midterm. I better go by myself.

The other learning goal was to provide a lesson in the social construction of cheating. What is legitimate

⁴ Daft's *Organisation theory and design (4th ed.)* - American authored and published, and replete with American corporate examples and cultural allusions. It had been pre-ordered for the course by the department.

behaviour and what is cheating behaviour are usually defined in a classroom by the instructor. Through control over rewards and punishments, s/he becomes an authority figure able to make and enforce rules which students must abide by. In this coercive relation (Emery 1980) the instructor defines legitimate test-taking behaviour in terms of individual work, and illegitimate behaviour in terms of any shared, collusive or stolen work. If permitted at all, cooperative behaviour is usually highly circumscribed; it is legitimized only under certain, often special conditions. The instructor adds rules to make cooperative behaviour either special or completely proscribed, thus framing it as deviant from "normal" behaviour.

This experience demonstrated that "normal" test taking behaviour can be stood on its head. The ten students who opted to take the second midterm individually were deviant, and their peers made them feel so. This calls into question our standard operating procedures in Management classrooms in several ways. Initially it leads to questioning norms of classroom behaviour and enables double loop learning (Argyris and Schon 1978) about the way tests are given. Once the procedures and norms that define cheating are problematized, we see that:

(1) The ethical problem we call cheating is revealed to be a constellation of policies, behaviours and embedded cultural norms that are arbitrarily and negatively sanctioned by an instructor-as-authority and imposed with great moral overtones on students.

After he observed the effects of his re-framing of test-taking norms to encourage cooperative behaviour, Harvey (1984) concluded that students "have a tremendous desire to help and be helped by others (p7)." Presumably this desire is suppressed under conventional evaluation systems. Throop agrees: "Rather than take any steps to organise [the students], I let them struggle to work out their own situation" (personal communication 1996). His students can and must organise themselves to achieve good performance, rather than having an organisation imposed on them in which they can perform. Thus, to allow group decision making in tests is not an extra step taken (as I described it on page 9), but a step left out.

This "step left out" allows for purposeful collective action. Emery (1988) suggests that

"If the environment is appropriately structured learning is essentially effortless - it arises in the course of instinctually or purposefully acting out in the situation. If the environment is inappropriately structured... 'learning' becomes training... - rote behaviours directed to controlling the reactions of the teacher-school environment" (p1).

In this case, structuring the learning environment appropriately involved reducing controls.

(2) Consequently cheating can be reframed/reconstructed to serve different ends and to produce different outcomes.

For example, when cheating is reframed positively as cooperative behaviour it can reinforce often latent norms of sharing, and can lead to improved performance and higher levels of satisfaction among students. This can be done without compromising, and even by enhancing, learning outcomes. For instance through this event the students were able to derive learnings at several levels:

- Performance and control systems (key topics in organisation theory) are culturally contingent. "Cultural" may mean student culture or national culture - or perhaps a natural human tendency?
- There are choices in the design of performance and learning systems. DP2 systems are possible in addition to the standard DP1, and the choice is consequential.⁵
- Students can experience intelligent, efficacious managerial behaviour in the management

⁵ "DP1" means "design principle 1", based on Emery's (1976) redundancy of parts. That is, each element in a system has a single skill or function; the work of these elements must be organised and coordinated externally. "DP2" means "design principle 2", based on the redundancy of functions. Each element in a system has multiple skills or functions, including the capacity to organise and coordinate their work themselves.

classroom.

(3) *Once acknowledged as constructed and not determinate, the boundary between cheating and not cheating must be deliberately negotiated by the members of the system.*

Evaluation rules can be jointly negotiated by the instructor and the students (and other interested stakeholders such as department chairs or potential employers), rather than imposed by the instructor.

Power-control dynamics. This three-part lesson in the social construction of cheating may be interpreted in terms of common-pool property rights. Standard classroom evaluation methods are constructed as an imposed, privatized solution to the problem of how to assess the production and distribution of subject competency among students. That is, in conventional classrooms regulations are enforced which "enclose the commons" of subject competency as it is distributed among a group of students (cf. Weick & Roberts 1993); competency is then treated as individual private property.⁶

When those imposed controls are relaxed it provides space for the emergence of different solutions to the problem, in other words different property rights regimes. Common-pool regimes are non-hierarchical systems consisting of the users of a resource, plus the rules which they collectively develop, implement and enforce for the appropriation of the resource (Ostrom 1990; Selsky & Memon 1995). They are DP2 arrangements. Such regimes provide space for and encourage self-organising behaviour (Emery 1976; Ostrom 1990). In this event the students entered that space and constructed "local" arrangements, then enforced them in the service of a shared goal (Ostrom 1990; Throop 1995). Whether that shared goal was learning, a good grade or some mixture is immaterial; what was important was that they took control of their learning situation. They created a new context for collective purposeful action, essentially transforming a problem of maintaining private-property rights into an occasion for the expression of common-pool processes. The behavioural outcomes under these two regimes differed substantially, as the performance results indicate (see Appendix).

However the evidence of a superior outcome is not unequivocal. A number of the students sought to encapsulate the experience as a special one-off event. Why would they want to do so, since it gave most of them higher grades and a sense of efficacy? Is it a Hawthorne Effect? The following student comment suggests an answer:

Student F: I think it was one of the most valuable experiences I've had in this university because it proved that people could actually get together and achieve a goal (which was quite a risky one) if they are under pressure. It was a fabulously simple example of the balance between powers. John Selsky probably hadn't thought about a collective exam before he instructed this class (frankly speaking he probably didn't need to!). But a need arose for him to both overcome a problem of illegitimate collective work and to teach some students (without going through firm punishments which was an alternative) a lesson! ... But overall I think this is an experience that should be lived once and the real intention of the existence of this organisation as in all others should be understood which also suggests that it shouldn't be repeated! [emphasis in original]

That is, many students believed there would be a tragedy of the commons in repeated trials. They believed that cooperation would erode, where cooperation is defined as first studying the material for the test, then contributing your knowledge to the collective effort. Many believed that non-cooperation in the form of shirking and relying on others would be imitated (cf. Axelrod 1984).

My interpretation of this attitude is that it reflects cognitive tension at a DP1/DP2 boundary. Most classrooms, even at the upper undergraduate level, are DP1: the standard hierarchical/coercive classroom based on a Lockean paradigm of knowledge (Emery 1980). Below the post-graduate seminar level DP2 is rare: the participative, negotiated classroom based on a Heider/Gibson paradigm of knowledge (ibid). In this event the

⁶ Harvey (1984) claims the consequences of this enforced individualism are widespread anaclitic depression, melancholia and other neurosis. This introduces an ethical critique into Anglo-conventional test taking norms.

learning environment was re-designed, and a system based on DP2 manifested in the collective classroom. Consistent with the theory of design principles, the students became self-managing when constraints against cooperative behaviour were relaxed.

However nearly all classroom activity is embedded in larger systems of institutional arrangements. The standard DP1 or the active DP2 tertiary classroom is usually embedded in a department in a university in a societal/cultural context. These embedding systems often consist of a "type II institution in a type III university environment within a type IV world" (Emery, undated). Currently the institutional pressures in many universities are to rationalise classroom activity, to turn it into discrete goal-based products with skill-based outcomes which the "user" (student-as-customer) purchases in a competitive market (other departments and universities). Such discourse reinforces the DP1 structure of most departments, and the natural bureaucratic tendency of most universities. In turn, the "users" put pressure on the DP1 systems for more transparency in pedagogy and more clarity in evaluation schemes. While it is difficult to argue against such "apple pie" sentiments, these rationalising trends can easily deaden the vital and very human encounter between lecturer and students which we call learning.

In his "even we are sheeps" comment, Student A internalises this cognitive tension. He is exhilarated (if not seduced) by the experience and sensed the "spirit" unleashed (created?) in the collective purposeful activity. Yet his self-concept within the experience is as a sheep, a docile farm animal prone to flocking behaviour. He believes he needs to be a sheep in the large group, in order to "achieve such a thing" as the A grade. Moreover he references his sheep self-concept to the whole group. He does not talk about a sense of personal power. I suggest this student's attitude reflects his recognition of the DP1 system that he normally operates in, and his function in it. He resolves the tension by trying to use the same cognitive/affective category (docile participant in a larger system controlled by more powerful others) to situate himself in this novel experience. Others (see Students C, E and F) also speak to this tension, as they try to encapsulate the collective midterm as a one-off, abnormal experience.

To complete the equivocality of assessments of the experience, I also sought to encapsulate it. The new context of collective purposeful action did seem to generate (more) genuine dialogue and reflection about cheating, organisation theory, and self-organising behaviour. The shared experience served to directly correlate the students and myself, previously separated by cultural and power/status gulfs. The general point is that the test taking system can be turned into an occasion for dialogue about management and organisation theory and about modes of learning those subjects. For example the evaluation event enabled (forced?) the students and myself to examine each other's cultural norms, as well as our mental models about organisation theory in practice. In addition I now harbor a vivid image of how the conventional test taking event suppresses cooperative behaviour and serves to disempower many students. These new appreciations were likely enabled by my being out of my normal work context: Because of the cross cultural context I was seeing the test taking event as if new, and was deeply affected by the palpable sense of power unleashed in the event. Despite the new appreciations, I reverted to conventional evaluation methods after the "peak experience." I encapsulated it cognitively as a special event, and also encapsulated it culturally - in Turkey and on sabbatical. Why? I retreated from the power unleashed in the DP2 arrangements; it threatened my deeply ingrained DP1 need for control over procedure and evaluation in "my" classroom.

Cultural connection. The interpretations above ring hollow unless we sweep in the national cultural context.⁷ In Mediterranean cultures like Turkey, preserving "face" is extremely important. A consequence of this in classrooms is what to Anglo eyes appears to be rampant cheating: If everyone tries to evade the rules, then everyone saves face by fighting "the system." Successful evasion of the rules (i.e. cheating and getting a good grade) confers status, honor and power on individual students. Cheating is the workers sabotaging the coercive system, as one would expect in DP1 arrangements. That they do so collusively and systemically in Turkish classrooms may be culturally distinctive.

⁷ I am indebted to Professor Peter Wilson, Department of Anthropology, University of Otago, for the following ideas.

By relaxing the usual controls, the collective midterm event completely destroyed the standard cultural matrix and created a new cultural space. The students were forced to re-order their relationships to each other and to the instructor in this space. The way they did so was to ritualize the event according to their cultural mores. They created a formalized pattern of three roles with associated status. What would a class of American, or Australian, or West African students do in this new cultural space? How would a class of diverse nationalities negotiate this space?

I will speculate that the way the Turkish students re-ordered their relationships in this new space also had the effect of altering their power relations. The locally organised cooperative system gave more power to students whose performance was held down under an imposed individual system. Consequently, the cooperative system may have reduced the power of the brightest students. This may provide an explanation for the two unexpected performance results.

First, why did the individual group's performance fall significantly in the second midterm? The individual group included most of the top performers in the first midterm. I would suggest that the shifting ground rules lowered their perceived self-efficacy because they removed themselves from the comforting matrix of the Group. Second, why did the collective group's performance rise from the first midterm to the final exam? I would suggest that the exhilarating experience of the collective midterm had a positive effect on their test-taking confidence. These interpretations are speculative, and are areas for future research.

A different, cultural explanation for students wanting to encapsulate the collective midterm event is that the students felt it would be too unsettling to their well established status system to have to ritualize repeated collective events.

Thus it is crucial to appreciate the Turkish context of this event. Most of the literature on classroom cheating and evaluation experiments is U.S. based, and uses American subjects (e.g. McCabe & Trevino 1995; Harvey 1984; Watson et al. 1991). Recognising the limited cultural context of this body of research invites management academics to problematize behavioural norms in classrooms which are increasingly culturally diverse, but largely Anglo-normed.

Sceptics may question my interpretations of this event by suggesting that I am applying Anglo categories to a Turkish cultural setting. I think that is too facile. The students were being taught organisation theory - with its long American and western European pedigree - in the English language at a private university that is trying to emulate American higher education practices. So the evaluation event was in reality a multi-layered, cross-cultural phenomenon fraught with ambiguous meaning and potential. It is true that I went into the event with a pre-conceived concept of cheating, drawn at least partly from my own American cultural background. However, through the event I have recounted, 62 students and I helped to re-interpret cheating and learning in a distinctive local context.

Implications for the Future of Management Education

Cultural displacement is not merely a technical issue regarding the control of cheating. I have shown how it is socially constructed in distinctive local cultural contexts. Cultural displacement is also partly an adaptation issue concerning lecturers and students in unfamiliar contexts which they must make sense of quickly. But even beyond adaptation, cultural displacement in its fullest sense is a systems issue with direct implications for the design of effective learning contexts.

Most basically, what is learning? The collective midterm incident served to re-focus the students' education about organisation theory from training-by-textbook to learning-by-doing. Emery (1988) put this as a shift from an L12 function in traditional education to an L21 function in more active-adaptive education.

Ironically, because this experience was culturally displaced, it provided an opportunity for authentic (L21) learning. Differences in norms were closer to the surface of classroom conduct and routine. Both the students and myself were attentive to cross cultural cues and miscues, even before the collective midterm event. There was a heightened awareness, a freshness that is all too easily extinguished in routine teaching-learning activity

in conventional university settings. We - the students, myself and my department chairman - found ourselves a little more open to experimentation with classroom norms. This suggests an important role for culturally displaced situations in management education. The actors in such situations may be more amenable to DP2 arrangements than in culturally fixed situations.

This invites us to re-centre the teaching process (Emery 1980: 63) in management education, toward stimulating intelligent behaviour, that is, behaviour that "occurs with reference to all the relevant factors in the behavioural situation" (ibid., quoting Chein 1945). Yet as shown above, when the students in the collective midterm event did take into account all of those relevant factors, including the embedding institutional factors, this led them to encapsulate the experience as abnormal.

How to break out of this attitude? It seems apparent that we need to operate on the task environment of the classroom. It is not enough to have DP2 classrooms; the embedding institutional arrangements within universities also need to be re-designed for effective learning to occur. DP2 arrangements allow system and environment (classroom and context) to co-evolve through the directive correlation of the goals of all the actors implicated in the learning enterprise. The risk of not re-designing learning contexts is great. Emery (1980) provocatively claims that

"[w]hat is clear is that the 'educational reproduction' that we see with our formal educational systems has as little to do with the natural reproduction of intelligence as eunuchs have to do with sexual reproduction" (p58).

If classroom norms are not designed in a culturally contingent way with DP2 underpinnings, then more misunderstandings, more culturally accident prone behaviour, and more missed opportunities for effective learning are likely.

In this paper I have discussed the issue of temporarily culturally displaced lecturers. However there are wider implications for all participants in management education. This includes culturally displaced students who must scramble to learn the norms of the countries they are sent to study in (e.g. Malaysians and Indonesians in Australian universities). Language differences can of course be the first of those "norms." This also includes culturally displaced institutions which send their academics temporarily to, or set up permanent facilities in, "foreign" countries; e.g. Monash University's recent decision to set up a campus in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

I offer the three lessons in the social construction of cheating as propositions to other business school instructors in cross- and multi-cultural milieux. They derive from my attempt to challenge a mistaken assumption I believe many of us make, that the rules of test taking are universal, or universally understood. In fact this event demonstrated to me, and perhaps to the students, the embeddedness of classroom cheating rules and norms in deep cultural norms and values. The lesson for practice is to experiment with test taking norms, and more generally evaluation norms, in terms of the subject matter you are teaching as well as the (cross/multi-) cultural context you are teaching it in.

REFERENCES

- Argyris, C. and D. Schon. (1978). *Organizational learning: A theory of action perspective*. Reading: Addison-Wesley.
- Axelrod, R. (1984). *The evolution of cooperation*. New York: Basic Books.
- Emery, F. (1976). *Futures we are in*. Leiden: Martinus-Nijhoff.
- Emery, F. (1980). Educational paradigms, an epistemological revolution. In M. Emery (ed.) *Participative design for participative democracy*. Canberra: Centre for Continuing Education, Australian National University. 1989.
- Emery, F. (1988). Theories of perception and learning: A note. Unpublished. May: 1-5.

Emery, F. (undated). Type II institutions in a type III university environment within a type IV world. Unpublished.

Harvey, J. (1984). Encouraging students to cheat: One thought on the difference between teaching ethics and teaching ethically. *Organizational behaviour teaching review*, 9(2): 1-13.

Hofstede, G. (1985). The interaction between national and organisational value systems. *Journal of management studies*, 22, 4 July: 347-357.

McCabe, D. and L. Trevino. (1995). Cheating among business students: A challenge for business leaders and educators. *Journal of management education*, 19(2): 205-218.

Ostrom, E. (1990). *Governing the commons*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Selsky, J. and P.A. Memon. (1995). Managing complex common property resource systems: Implications of recent institutional reforms in New Zealand. *Research in corporate social performance and policy*. Supplement 1. Greenwich: JAI Press: 259-290.

Senge, P. (1990). *The fifth discipline*. New York: Doubleday.

Throop, G. (1995). Tragedy of a free-for-all or a commons? A classroom simulation of a managerial dilemma. Working Paper. Clarkson University School of Business, Potsdam, New York.

Watson, W., L. Michaelsen, and W. Sharp. (1991). Member competence, group interaction, and group decision making: a longitudinal study. *Journal of applied psychology*, 76(6): 803-809.

Weick, K. & K. Roberts (1993). Collective mind in organisations: Heedful interrelating on flight decks. *Administrative science quarterly*, 38: 357-381.

APPENDIX: PERFORMANCE RESULTS

The students had a choice of individual or collective only for the second midterm; the first midterm and the final were examined individually only. For analysis I divided the class into individual and collective sub-populations, based on students' self-selection in the second midterm. Statistics are given in the table below for the three evaluation data points; each midterm was worth 60 points, and the final 80 points, for a possible total of 200 points for the course.

The hypothesis that the more knowledgeable students would be more likely to take the individual midterm and the less knowledgeable students would be more likely to take the collective midterm was supported. A t-test of the means of the two sub-populations in the first midterm was significant at the .05 level.

The hypothesis that a synergistic effect would lift the performance of the collective sub-population from the first midterm to the second midterm was strongly supported. A t-test of the means of the collective sub-population's scores on the first and second midterm was significant beyond the .001 level.

Interestingly the individual group, which significantly outperformed the collective group in the first midterm and the final exam, fell well below their expected average in the second midterm. This was an unexpected result and is discussed in the body of the paper. A t-test of the means of the individual sub-population's scores on the first and second midterm was significant at the .05 level. Also interesting was the finding that, because of the shift in performance of the two sub-populations in the second midterm, there was no statistical difference in the total, end-of-course scores for the two groups. This is also discussed in the text.

Mean Grades for Individual vs Collective Sub-populations, All Evaluation Data Points

	<u>first midterm</u>		<u>second midterm</u>		<u>final exam</u>		<u>total</u>	
	mean (/60)	%	mean (/60)	%	mean (/80)	%	mean (/200)	%
individual (n=10)	47.0	78.3	42.0	70.0	63.1	78.9	152.1	76.1
collective (n=52)	37.5	62.5	55.0	91.7	55.4	69.2	147.9	74.0
total (n=62)	39.1	65.1	52.9	88.2	56.6	70.8	148.6	74.3

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT

1998 WORKING PAPERS

- 1/98 Alison Dean, "Issues and Challenges in Training HRM Practitioners by Distance Education" (January, pp.16).
- 2/98 Simon Moss, "Exposing Biased Samples: Derivation of the Sample-Subdivision Method" (January, pp.10).
- 3/98 Ian Roos, "Technical Regulation and Work Autonomy: Human Resource Management in a Specific Pathogen Free Animal Unit" (January, pp.15).
- 4/98 Loong Wong, "The State, Economic Growth and Environment in Malaysia" (January, pp.21).
- 5/98 Tim Haslett, "The Senge Archetypes: From Causal Loops to Computer Simulation" (January, pp.22).
- 6/98 Loong Wong, "Management Theory Meets the 'Other'" (January, pp.15).
- 7/98 Tim Haslett, "Implications of Systems Thinking for Research and Practice in Management" (January, pp.19).
- 8/98 Jan Schapper, "'We had no Choice. It was Inevitable.' Some Thoughts on Parallel Processes Between Researcher and Researched in Response to Organizational Change" (January, pp.17).
- 9/98 Tim Haslett, "The Dynamics of Garbage Collection: A Case Study of Privatization" (January, pp.17).
- 10/98 Tim Haslett, Simon Moss, Charles Osborne and Paul Ramm, "The Application of Local Rules in Self Ordering Systems" (January, pp.17).
- 11/98 Ramanie Samarantunge, "Decentralisation and Development: Partners in the 21st Century?" (January, pp.15).
- 12/98 Tim Haslett, "Teaching Systems Thinking and Theory: Management Education at Monash University" (January, pp.11).
- 13/98 Tim Haslett, "Building the Learning Organization - The Practical Steps" (January, pp.10).
- 14/98 Mary Anderson and Daniel Moore "Classroom Globalization, "An Investigation of Teaching Methods to address the phenomemon of Students from Multiple National Cultures in business School Classrooms" (January, pp.7).
- 15/98 Judy H. Gray & Iain L. Densten, "Analysis of Latent and Manifest Variables in a Study of Small Business Strategy" (January, pp.13).
- 16/98 Kathryn M. Antioch, Chris Selby-Smith and Chris Brook, "Pathways to Cost Effective Prevention, Detection and Treatment of Prostrate Cancer in Australia: Achieving Goals for Australia's Health to 2000 and beyond" (January, pp.31).
- 17/98 Chris Selby-Smith, "The Impact of Vocational Education and Training Research on Policy, Practice and Performance in Australia" (January, pp.17).
- 18/98 Mile Terziovski, Amrik Sohal and Simon Moss "Longitudunal Analysis of Quality Management Practices in Australian Organisations (January, pp.14).
- 19/98 Linda Brennan and Lynne Bennington, "Concepts in Conflict: Studies and Customers" (January, pp.15).
- 20/98 Dianne Waddell, "The Role Responsibilities Quality Managers" (January, pp.10).
- 21/98 Dianne Waddell, "Resistance to Change: A Company's Experience" (January, pp.13).
- 22/98 Iain L. Densten and Judy H. Gray, "Is Management-by-Exception a Single Factor? (January, pp.13).
- 23/98 Mile Terziovski, "Best Predictors of High Performance Quality Organisations: Evidence from Australia and New Zealand" (March, pp.16).
- 24/98 Ronald W. Edwards and Peter J. Buckley, "Choice Ownership Mode and Entry Strategy: The Case of Australian Investors in the UK" (January, pp.18).
- 25/98 Tim Haslett and Charles Osborne, "Local Decision Rules: Complexity or Chaos?" (January, pp.14).
- 26/98 Ian Roos and T. Makela, "Employee Reactions to Controlled work Environments: The Dispensing of Anti-Cancer Drugs in Hospital Pharmacies" (January, pp.29).
- 27/98 Tim Haslett, Kosmas X. Smyrnios and Charles Osborne, "A Cusp Catastrophe Analysis of Anxiety Levels" (January, pp.18).
- 28/98 Megan Seen and Anne Rouse, "Quality Certification: Lessons from Three Software Development Organisations" (March, pp.13).
- 29/98 E. Anne Bardoel and Tim Haslett, "The Use of Systems Thinking and Archetypes in Teaching Organisational Behavior" (March, pp.10).
- 30/98 Megan Seen and Anne Rouse, "The Effect of Quality Certification on the Software Development Process" (March, pp.13).
- 31/98 Michael Morrison and Mile Terziovski, "The Relationship Between Quality Management Practices and Learning Outcomes: In the Australian Retail Hardware Sector" (March, pp.15).
- 32/98 Marjorie Jerrard, "Dinosaurs are not Dead - The Success of the AMIEU (QLD) in Coping with Industrial Relations Change and AWAS" (March, pp.20).
- 33/98 Lynne Bennington and James Cummane, "Customer Satisfaction, Loyalty and Public Services" (March, pp.19).

1998 WORKING PAPERS

- 34/98 Alison Dean, "Managing Quality Initiatives in Services: JIT Delivers but BPR Fails" (March, pp.11).
- 35/98 Marjorie Jerrard, "A Suprising Struggle? The AMIEU(Qld) and the Fight for Equal Wages in the Meat Processing and Export Industry in the 1950s and 1960s" (March, pp.15).
- 36/98 Julie Wolfram Cox, Helen De Cieri and Marilyn Fenwick, "The Mapping of Strategic International Human Resource Management: Theory Development or Intellectual Imperialism?" (April, pp.23).
- 37/98 Max Coulthard and Timothy James Grogan, "The Impact of a Firm's Strategic Orientation on Environmental Scanning Practices in Two Australian Export Industries" (April, pp.13).
- 38/98 John W. Selsky, "'Even we are Sheeps': Cultural Displacement in Management Education" (April, pp.13)
- 39/98 Rowena Barrett, "Industrial Relations and Management Style in Small Firms" (April, pp.18).
- 40/98 Loong Wong, "Why *Jerry Maguire* succeeds but not *William Lomax*: Management, Cultures and Postmodernism" (April, pp.12)