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## Special Issue: Integrating Liberal Learning, Humanities, and Management Education: Putting the Carnegie Report Into Practice


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# Using Photographs to Integrate Liberal Arts Learning in Business Education

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## Abstract

The inclusion of photographic approaches in the business classroom can incorporate missing elements of liberal education into business education, which were highlighted in a recent Carnegie study of undergraduate business education. Building on photographic methods in social science research, we identify three categories of photographic approaches that can enhance undergraduate liberal arts modes of thinking: (a) archival or researcher-created images translated into in-class activities, (b) photo-elicitation course projects in which students envision future careers and step into the shoes of another, and (c) photovoice courses built around semester-long projects to generate student self-reflection. These in-class, grassroots efforts allow professors to provide undergraduate business students the opportunities to learn through multiple framing and reflective exploration of meaning.

## Keywords

Carnegie model, photographic approaches, business education

The camera is an instrument that teaches people how to see without a camera.

—Dorothea Lange

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The recent Carnegie report on undergraduate business education calls for closer connections between liberal arts modes of thinking and business education (Colby, Ehrlich, Sullivan, & Dolle, 2011). The report delineates three liberal arts modes of thinking—analytical thinking, multiple framing, and reflective exploration of meaning—and states that the existing business curriculum addresses analytical thinking quite effectively, but the overreliance on one mode of thinking has privileged objectivity and market forces over other liberal arts modes of thinking such as multiple framing and reflective exploration of meaning (Colby et al., 2011). Most of the report's recommendations center on strategic initiatives at the curriculum- and institutional-level of educational organizations. Given that the suggested large-scale changes will face inevitable "strong headwinds" in academe (Snell, 2013, p. 315), the way forward should benefit from both top-down and bottom-up, grassroots efforts (Colby & Sullivan, 2011) that use pedagogical innovations to incorporate modes of thinking from liberal arts in the business classroom.

In this article, we describe how the inclusion of photographic approaches in the business classroom can incorporate the two missing modes of liberal arts education into business education: multiple framing (i.e., developing an appreciation for different perspectives for viewing the world) and reflective exploration of meaning (i.e., developing a sense of self, contribution to the world, and hopes for one's future). Although the Carnegie report noted many innovative programs in business schools based on writing and verbal expression, none centered on visual elements, which mirrors the lack of attention photographs have received in research and education. In fact, pedagogy using photographs has not received the same attention enjoyed by other classroom visual tools such as film (Billsberry, 2013; Buchanan & Huczynski, 2004; Bumpus, 2005; Champoux, 2000, 2006), drawings (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009; Ward & Shortt, 2013), and art (Baker & Baker, 2012). This article focuses on photographs as a focal teaching tool because of their primacy as an investigation approach in social science research, specifically in sociology, anthropology, and recent organizational studies. These contemporary social science research approaches use photographs to elicit multiple frames (i.e., multiple viewing of archival photographs; photo-elicitation interviewing) and reflective exploration of meaning (i.e., photovoice). We maintain that these research approaches can inform photographic pedagogy in the management classroom and, thus, move incrementally and within the classroom toward a broader inclusion of liberal arts modes of thinking.

## **Carnegie Model of Education**

The Carnegie report advocates for a well-rounded higher education model (Colby et al., 2011) that includes liberal arts education to prepare business

students for their future careers. With regard to this integration, the most recent report warns against what it notes as an increasing exclusion of liberal arts education in business schools, to the detriment of business students. To combat this weakness, the Carnegie report suggests using business examples to provide practical applications for the modes of thinking developed by liberal arts education. This reciprocal integration benefits business students by helping improve three modes of thinking specifically that offer far-reaching benefits for future businesspeople and globally responsible leaders (Muff, 2013; Muff et al., 2013).

The first mode of thinking improved by reciprocal integration of liberal arts into business schools is analytical thinking, which the Carnegie report identifies as the cornerstone of higher education and further research specifies as one of the top three most important objectives of higher education (Ledley & Holt, 2012). Referred to in other disciplines as higher-order thinking, analytical thinking describes a student's ability to apply abstract concepts in practical contexts, which is an easily recognizable mode taught in business education (Colby et al., 2011). In contrast, the other modes of thinking—multiple framing and reflective exploration of meaning—are relatively unfamiliar to most business students. Multiple framing, termed dialectical thinking in liberal arts education, refers to a student's ability to identify and reconcile contradictory information (Colby et al., 2011). Given the social contexts of modern organizations, this mode is particularly important for business students to develop. Finally, the reflective exploration of meaning mode of thinking encompasses students' self-reflective abilities while learning. This mode taps into how students learn to make meaning and develop values and commitment (Colby et al., 2011), which is critical for their identity formation (Kaplan & Flum, 2012). Despite the importance of each of these modes of thought, particularly with regard to issues of business ethics (Nesteruk, 2012), only analytical thinking is commonly taught in business schools, an incongruity that the Carnegie report advocates fixing through reciprocal integration of liberal arts modes of thinking.

In this article, we build from the Carnegie report to suggest that photographic methodologies, nascent to organizational research but more common in other disciplines, offer the depth of insight in classrooms that they have been lauded for offering to research. We suggest that using these methodologies has the potential to develop students' modes of thinking, with a specific focus on their contribution to students' multiple framing and reflective exploration of meaning. In the next sections, we describe these methodologies and some of their previous applications in research, how they can be and have been translated for classroom use, and the potential benefits each offers to students.

## Photographic Approaches in Research and Pedagogy

Sociologists and anthropologists incorporated photographs in their research processes early on, with more recent interest from organizational and management scholars (Meyer, Höllerer, Janscary, & van Leeuwen, 2013; Ray & Smith, 2012).<sup>1</sup> Soon after the invention of the camera, researchers used photographs to chronicle their field experiences of social issues (Blackmar, 1897; Bushnell, 1902) and exotic cultures (Bateson & Mead, 1942). In these early efforts, photographs were assumed to convey one meaning: the researcher's interpretation of the image.<sup>2</sup> Organizational and management researchers have primarily continued this objective use of photographs in research (Ray & Smith, 2012).

This objective use of photographs, however, fell out of favor in sociology and anthropology research during the late 1960s and early 1970s. At this time, visual sociologists and anthropologists used photographs to connect more deeply with field participants to hear their voices and perspectives. Visual sociology recognizes that "all images . . . are socially and technically constructed" (Harper, 1994, p. 406). In particular, Becker (1974) argued for the use of photographs to allow the research subjects' voices to be heard and incorporated into findings. In response, sociology studies began to include reflexive photography, in which "the subject shares in the definition of meaning; thus, the definitions 'reflect back' from the subject" (Harper, 1998, pp. 64-65). Anthropologist Collier's (1957) efforts to include photographs were followed by sociologist Becker's (1974) call for a more interpretive approach to photographs in sociology, whereby photographers do not *take* photographs but rather observers *make* sense of an image (Harper, 2005). More recently, critical social science researchers highlight a collaborative role for research participants and the emancipatory potential of this methodological approach (Wang & Burris, 1994; Warren, 2005). A few organizational and management researchers have included photographic methods beyond their objective use, to delve into meaning of archival images (Dougherty & Kunda, 1990; Preston, Wright, & Young, 1996; Preston & Young, 2000), to obtain deeper insights during interviews with organizational members (Venkatraman & Nelson, 2008), or to allow organizational member voices to be heard (Marpeau, 2012).

We divide these photographic methods into three categories. First, photographic methods that have used archival or researcher-created images in their research are translated into exercises in the business classroom. Second, photo-elicitation research using participant photographs is connected to a class project in which students step into the shoes of others, enhancing multiple frames

learning and possibly student reflective exploration of meaning. Third, a significant course project can be built around photovoice research with concrete engagement with the world (i.e., practical reasoning) and heightened student self-awareness. In Table 1, we summarize these classroom uses of photography.

### ***Research Applications of Archival and Researcher-Created Images***

The body of research that uses archival or researcher-created images is vast and runs the gamut from formalist methods of content analysis and deconstructing images in advertising, annual reports, or corporate portraits to collaborative interviewing subjects using archival and/or researcher-created images. These studies highlight the multiple meanings that can be made of an image and show that meaning is subjective and individually constructed rather than objective and concrete.

Many organizational researchers have conducted formal analyses of archival images (Dougherty & Kunda, 1990; Guthy & Jackson, 2005; Preston et al., 1996; Preston & Young, 2000). Additionally, a rich literature on deconstructing advertising makes explicit what is hidden or implicit in an image (Penn, 2000) by drawing out an image's hidden meanings and cultural implications (Goffman, 1979; Williamson, 1987). This approach has also been used to deconstruct annual report images for meaning beyond their first-order viewing (e.g., Preston et al., 1996) as well as to differentiate theories of consumers (Dougherty & Kunda, 1990). For instance, Preston and Young (2000) argued that corporations construct global identity in their annual reports through managing the contrast of images of heterogeneity (indigenous cultural aspects) and homogeneity (construction of a single global culture). Looking behind the photograph to extract meaning and to make sense beyond the first-order reading of an image is central to the research using archival images.

A parallel stream of research focuses on the richness of the meanings made of photographs created by researchers. Collier, one of the first researchers to use photographs during interviews in a process that he labeled photo-elicitation, argued that during "interviewing with photographs . . . the potential range of data enlarges beyond that contained in the photographs themselves" (Collier & Collier, 1986, p. 99). Over a series of interviews in his study of the mental health in the Maritimes of Canada, Collier noted that the use of photographs "offered a gratifying sense of self-expression" and "allowed [participants] to tell their stories spontaneously," which "deepened the interviews and elicited subject understanding of the lived experience" (Collier & Collier, 1986, p. 106). Collier warned that his photographs did

**Table 1.** Photographic Approaches in Business Education.

	Photographic approach		
	Archival or professor-created images	Photo-Elicitation	Photovoice
<b>Description of approach</b>	Photographs are procured from previous resources (archival) or from the professor's own store (professor-created) and provided to participants to enrich interviews	Participants take photographs and describe them during semistructured interviews in order to more fully capture their lived experiences	Participants take photographs and describe them during in-depth interviews that are then combined and presented to a larger audience in order to induce social change
<b>Research applications</b>	<i>Archival:</i> Deconstructing images in annual reports (Dougherty & Kunda, 1990; Preston & Young, 2000) and advertisements (Penn, 2000)	Explorations of: Physical work spaces and worker reactions (Felstead, Jewson, & Walters, 2004; Shortt & Warren, 2012; Warren 2002) and consumer/retailer interactions (Venkatraman & Nelson, 2008)	Examination of issues including: AIDS (Mitchell, 2011); race (Ruby, 1991); and diversity (Chio & Fandt, 2007)
<b>Pedagogical applications</b>	<i>Professor-created:</i> Generating richer interview data (Collier & Collier, 1986) and participant understanding (Buchanan, 2001) <i>Classroom activities:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display archival photographs (i.e., taken by former students of their company's culture) during class time</li> <li>• Display researcher/professor-created photographs of organizational culture with minimal description</li> </ul>	<i>Course projects:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student groups interview stakeholder groups about pictures the stakeholders took of their experience of a university event</li> <li>• Students use participant-created photographs to explore real-life experiences in their desired future careers</li> </ul>	<i>Semester-long course focus:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students engage with underrepresented groups or issues on campus to produce a public exhibition of photos and interview quotes</li> <li>• Students design and narrate pecha kucha presentations on their lived experiences at the university</li> </ul>

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

Photographic approach	
Archival or professor-created images	Photo-Elicitation
<p>Contribution to Carnegie Model</p> <p><i>Multiple frames:</i> Classroom discussion illustrates the many ways people can view an image and demonstrates that there is no one, right way to view an image</p>	<p><i>Multiple frames:</i> Stakeholder photo-elicitation allows exploration of many stakeholders' perspectives</p> <p><i>Reflective exploration:</i> Career-related photo-elicitation permits students to form meanings about their future careers</p>
	<p>Photo-voice</p> <p><i>Multiple frames:</i> Photovoice grants marginalized participants the opportunity to share their experiences and show students a different perspective of their university</p> <p><i>Reflective exploration:</i> Pecha kucha presentations provide students with a chance to examine how their experiences influenced their values</p>



evoke emotional reactions and noted that “the more provocative and intense the photograph, the richer the potential projective response” (Collier & Collier, 1986, p. 107). Photographs have also been used in research to offer participants an opportunity to learn. For instance, Buchanan (2001) took photographs of patient movement through a hospital which he then converted into a slide show that was presented to various groups of hospital employees. These interactions allowed people from different organizational units to see complexities of the process from other vantage points and allowed for “deeper understanding of the details of the process” (Buchanan, 2001, p. 156).

The above-mentioned studies identify research processes whereby a research team makes sense of photographs, potentially through collaboration with research subjects. The premises underlying this research are that observers can view photographs in more than one way and that photographs hold multiple meanings. These research approaches with researcher-made or archival photographs can also benefit the business classroom by introducing the idea of holding multiple frames.

### *Pedagogical Applications of Archival and Professor-Created Images*

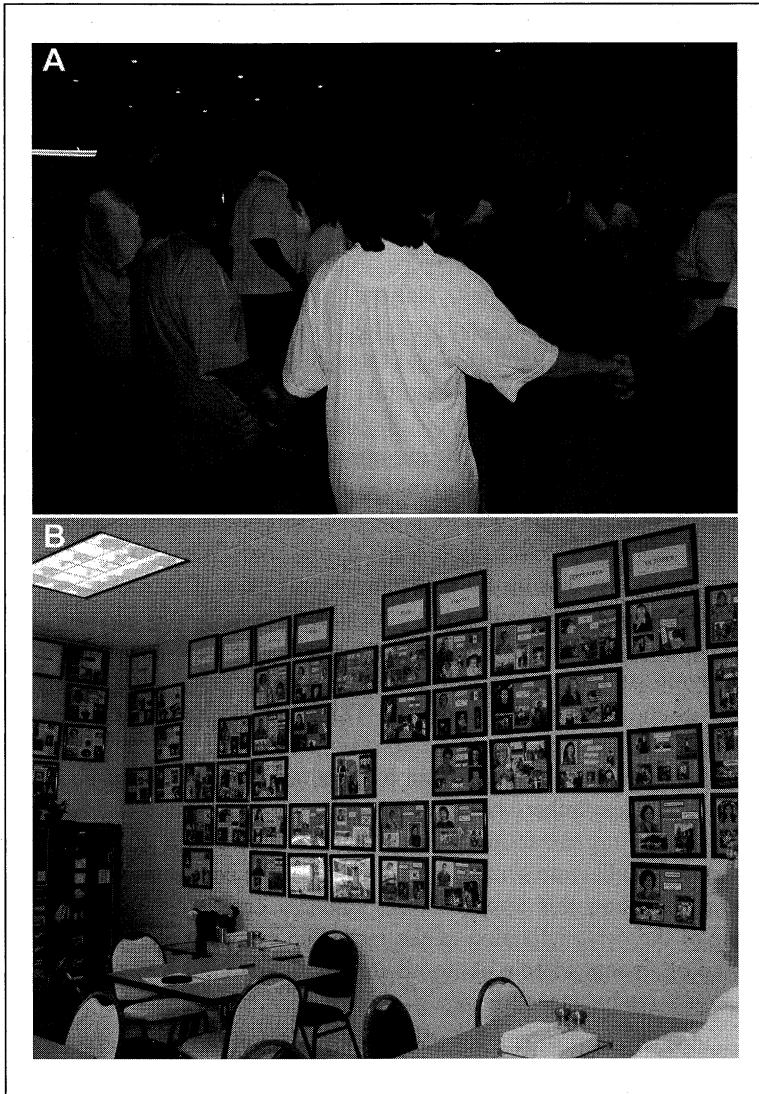
Archival and professor-created images can be used in classroom activities to create discussion that allows students to experience divergent viewing of the same image. The multiple framing of an image moves students away from thinking that only one, right way exists to extract meaning or frame a situation. We share activities we have undertaken using professor-created and archival images and provide additional ideas of their use beyond our classroom experiments.

*Archival Images.* We experimented with the use of archival images in an undergraduate management class by showing an archival image of a rugby scrum that an MBA student had turned in several years before to represent the culture of his employer. Many students interpreted this photograph as epitomizing tough competition and employees who are not afraid to engage competitors in a culture that values strength, teamwork, and working hard; however, other students noted that they might find a culture epitomized by this image oppressive given that only young White males were shown. They questioned whether the competition might reflect how employees engage with each other, and they wondered if aspects of collaboration internally or externally might be downplayed. This in-class activity using archival images across business classes

connects with multiple frames learning; students view the image from several vantage points instead of just consuming the message in corporate images. The ensuing discussion presented alternative perspectives and allowed other students to hear how the culture or image can be perceived differently. The objective of this session was to show that organizations consist of many realities and that people make sense of organizational life from extracted cues (i.e., images).

*Professor-Created Images.* During a discussion of organizational culture in an undergraduate business class, we shared photographs from a field study in which one author was involved. The professor<sup>3</sup> described an 80-member organization as one in which there was extremely low turnover among workers (i.e., sewing operators), a successful track record of growth (around 50% a year), and almost flawless execution of same day order-to-shipment (i.e., 98% of same day orders shipped). Then, students were shown several photographs taken from the field study such as, dancing workers and managers at 3 p.m. each day, and the wall of frames in which each employee crafted their self-presentation (Figure 1). The professor presented these images and explained only the facts of the photograph without providing any assessment about the organization's culture. Then the professor posed the question, "Would you want to be a manager and work in this type of organization?" Immediately, some students were enthusiastic with comments such as "what a great way to treat people," "what a great idea to have a frame for each employee," and "how fortunate they are to have such low turnover." Slowly, other students raised their hands reflecting a different read of the photographs with comments such as: "it seems oppressive to me," "do the people really want to dance?" "Isn't this just old fashioned paternalism that has fallen out of fashion?"

The discussion that ensued allowed students to explore and develop their multiple framing mode of thinking. Because no student had knowledge of the organization beyond the photos, and because multiple students shared different viewpoints, all the students were able to see how different meanings could be made of the same image. The discussion culminated in the take-away point that there is not one right way to view an image, nor one right way to experience an organization. Although the organization might appear intrusive to some students and inviting to others, neither reaction is right or wrong. Rather, the exercise shows students that they "in fact have a viewpoint . . . [and] that theirs is only one among many possible perspectives," a central point about multiple framing techniques (Colby et al., 2011, p. 64).



**Figure 1.** Professor photograph from field study: (A) Daily dancing; (B) Wall in lunchroom containing employee frames.

Note. The organization where these photographs were taken granted permission to reproduce them. Faces are blurred to protect the anonymity of the organizational members.

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### *Research Applications of Photo-Elicitation Interviews of Subject Photos*

A recent trend in photography in social science research is to give the camera to research subjects to capture his/her lived experience. Studies of workers in their physical work spaces have used this approach to help participants unlock richer meaning through their photographs and to help researchers reach deeper understanding of employee interactions with their work spaces (Felstead et al., 2004; Shortt & Warren, 2012; Warren, 2002). International researchers Venkatraman and Nelson (2008) used a photo-elicitation approach, in which research subjects take photographs and then engage in interviews with the researcher about those photographs, to study how consumers create personally meaningful interactions with retailers. They instructed study participants to take photographs that illustrated their experience in a Starbucks in China. During interviews with the study participants, the authors presented the photographs one at a time to study participants in the order in which the subjects took the photos. The researchers asked questions such as "Describe this photograph to me" and "What do you see here" so as to minimize biasing the participants' answers. The interviews were recorded and led to substantial theoretical and methodological contribution by providing insight into business and organizational processes.

By giving subjects cameras, researchers reduce power distance between themselves and their research subjects. This method gives the research subject control and, through interviewing, allows researchers to clearly hear their voices. This does require significant preparation and time in the field; some organizational researchers have used focus groups (Petersen & Østergaard, 2004) whereby organizational members work together to discuss and sort photographs to alleviate some of the interview time commitment. In most of the research using this approach, respondents engage in the assignment because of the personalization of the task. The same benefits can extend to student participants when a photo-elicitation approach is used to design creative projects in business courses.

### *Pedagogical Applications of Photo-Elicitation*

Applying photo-elicitation approaches to business education encourages students to reach out beyond the classroom, which is best suited for a course project. Although this photographic approach could be structured as a project in many ways, we highlight two in particular. These approaches connect photo-elicitation in the business classroom so that students are able to recognize different frameworks (i.e., multiple framing) and reflect on and present

personal meaning from the assignment (i.e., reflective exploration of meaning). Both projects require business students to step into someone else's shoes and, by doing so, reflect on their own values and outlook.

*Step Into the Shoes of Another.* In a management course that one author teaches, each student takes an issue about which they are fervent and, in a paper, argues the other side of the issue after investigating it further. As a photo-elicitation project, this "step into the shoes of another" assignment allows students the ability to see other perspectives on the same event as to offer a chance for self-reflection. This project has particular value in illustrating stakeholder concerns in organizations when students study a university event or activity through the lens of many of the stakeholders involved to capture their lived experience. By selecting the same event for everyone in the class, such as a football or basketball game or other university event in which there is strong student enthusiasm, students have the opportunity to see the event from a variety of perspectives. Each of the students or student groups asks one stakeholder related to the event to take 20 photos of his or her day, followed by an interview about the photographs. This permits participation from a wide variety of stakeholders, such as people involved in planning the event, selling during the event, participating in the event, or observing the event, as well as those people who clean up or report after the event. During interviews on the day of or shortly after the event, students ask the participants about their photographs. The students keep the photographs and use them to craft a reflection paper and presentation. The take-away would be the ability to see another person's perspective on a salient institutional event and provide the opportunity for student reflection on this event.

*Envisioning a Future Career.* Another project requires a student to identify a type of desired position after graduation. The student or two-person group explains the project to a worker who engaged in this work, asks them to take photographs about a typical day in their life, and ensures that the photos would not be shared with the class, only the student.

The assignment is structured around creation of 15 to 30 photographs related to the broad question of "What's it like to work here?" with specific probing questions, such as "How do you usually start your day?" "If you had to divide your day into five main buckets of activities, take a photograph that depicts those five buckets." "What is the best part of your day?" "What part of the day do you not look forward to?" "If you could change one thing about your job, it would be . . ." The subject is then given a set time limit, probably a week, to compile his/her photos.

After the subject has completed his/her photograph assignment, the student or group then interviews the subject about the photographs they took, asking specifically about what the photographs mean, perhaps using skills from the in-class activity discussed in the previous section. The student or group also takes detailed notes during the interview and analyzes the comments in relation to the photographs. Students then reflect on what was surprisingly negative and/or positive about this envisioned future of their career. The assignment culminates in a reflection paper and presentation that share the personal learning gleaned from this project.

These photo-elicitation projects enable business students to hear narratives of other peoples' photographs and extract meaning for their own lives. This parallels the Carnegie report's (Colby et al., 2011) description of reflective exploration: "It is by imagining the stance of others that reflection on narrative stirs new insights along with greater awareness of one's own stance, something that, until that time, may have remained wholly unconscious" (p. 66). By featuring new voices and allowing different perspectives, these photo-elicitation projects hold the promise of integrating liberal arts modes of thinking into business courses.

### *Research Applications of Photovoice*

Social science researchers have used participatory photographic research, in which research subjects take photographs and engage in dialogue with the researchers about their images, in ways similar to the above projects. Termed *photovoice*, this method allows those who usually do not have a strong voice in decision making to affect policy makers (Wang & Burris, 1994, 1997). Photovoice projects are closely aligned with the critical postmodern approach to identify power among stakeholders, to connect stakeholders in a community or organization, and to offer participants the chance to affect change (Wang & Burris, 1994). In this approach, photovoice is a tool for social change because it "gives people the opportunity to record, reflect and critique personal and community issues in a creative way" (Mitchell & de Lange, 2011, p. 184). Additionally, photovoice has the "potential to be a valuable tool to empower marginalized groups to articulate and 'voice' their opinions to researchers and policymakers" (Lapenta, 2011, p. 208).

This research methodology gives power to participants by allowing them to take the photographs and discuss them in a group and provides a mechanism to affect change through public exhibition. This approach has been used to tackle many issues (see Harper, 2012, for summary) including the effects of AIDS (Mitchell, 2011) and the changing racial make-up of a neighborhood (van der Does, Edelaar, Gooskens, Liefjing, & van Mierlo, 1992). In this

approach, photographs can lead to change by making powerful parties aware of the voices and viewpoints captured in photographs taken by more marginalized members of organizations and communities.

In an unpublished action research project, operations researcher Marpeau (2012) worked with several large French corporations to study worker safety and team empowerment on the shop floor. His approach provides workers with cameras and clear directions about photograph production, such as "Show me what safety looks like in this organization." After the photographs are taken, Marpeau interviews workers about their photographs, from which several themes emerge. These themes are shared with management through a company-wide exposition in which photos are displayed with interview excerpts underneath. The outcome from this action research is deeper top management understanding of safety and worker views, which leads to change initiatives aimed at increasing alignment on workplace safety issues.

### *Pedagogical Applications of Photovoice*

Photovoice projects can be closely connected with the liberal arts mode of reflective exploration. The application of these photographic approaches to the classroom

can aid management educators in their continuing efforts to develop more engaged and dialectical forms of practice capable of helping students not only take on multiple frames of reference but to also become active participants in their own learning and development. (Chio & Fandt, 2007, p. 485)

Students take on the role of crafting and presenting an external issue (e.g., working poor on campus, sustainability) or a personal reflection on their lived experience on campus (e.g., a minority on campus) or in life (e.g., parental expectations; privilege; managing loss). The use of a photovoice approach should comprise a large component of a business course. Chio and Fandt (2007) identified a semester-long photovoice project as central to their diversity course, but they suggested the use of photovoice projects in international management and negotiation and conflict management courses. Below, we detail two approaches: a photovoice project and a pecha kucha presentation of a lived experience.

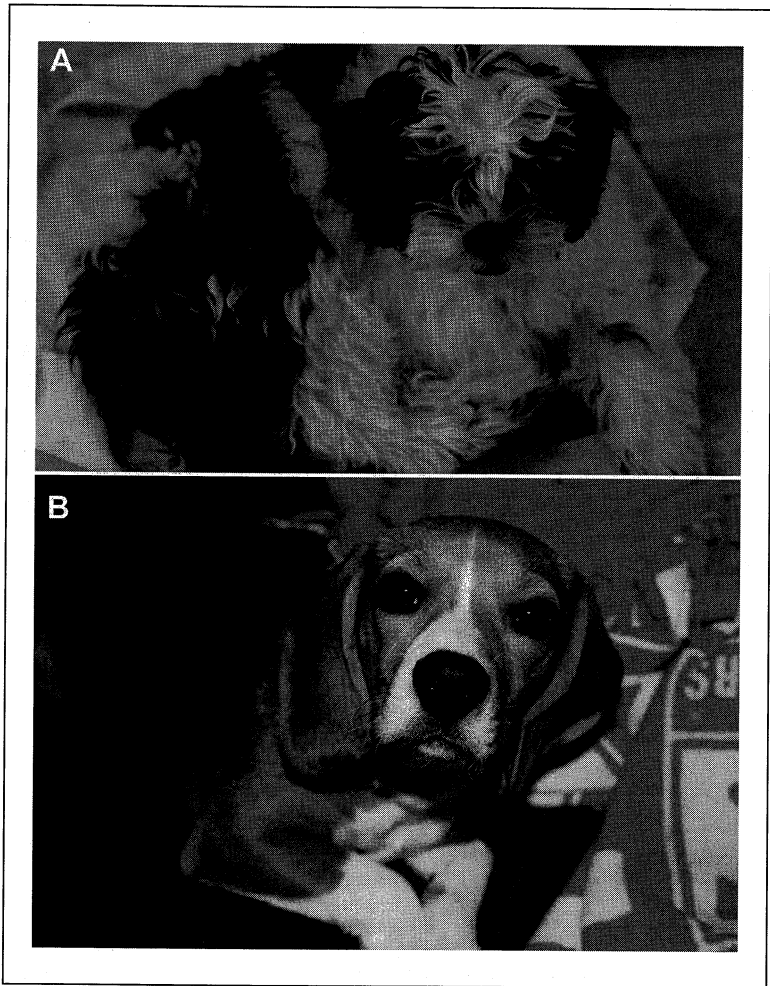
*Photovoice Projects.* A photovoice assignment can provide a way for students to allow voices to be heard and to potentially enact change. The safety action research project (Marpeau, 2012) or the process identified by Chio and Fandt (2007) transitions easily into a classroom activity designed to generate a

course project culminating in a public exposition that aims to enact change in the university. In this project, students choose university-relevant topics about which they value and are passionate, such as the plight of working poor at the university, or sustainability efforts or diversity initiatives on campus, then work closely with people involved in their topic area. The subjects either take photographs and/or the student walks with the subjects who point out photographs that the student should take (further administrative details about how to execute photovoice in an undergraduate classroom are provided by Chio & Fandt, 2007). The photographs and selected quotes from the ensuing interviews are presented in a public exhibition attended by university administrators and other class members. This type of assignment holds the potential to profoundly affect a student's college experience to develop a "heightened 'consciousness of self' in the learning process" (Chio & Fandt, 2007, p. 489), which is so fundamental in the reflective exploration of meaning.

*Pecha Kucha Presentation.* The second author of this article has applied this technique in her classes by using pecha kucha presentations for freshmen to share their lived experience of making sense of entering a large public university. A pecha kucha is a narrated slide show of photographs in which the presenter has 20 seconds per slide across a maximum of 20 slides; this format allows for quick but standardized transmission of information. Students in this course photographically document their experiences at a large state university. The class culminates in a session in which students share their pecha kucha projects with each other; the combined 3-year project culminates in an exhibition of multiple images and quotes from three classes of students to university administrators who want to affect change related to student retention. From three years of pecha kuchas, several themes of interest to university administrators have begun to emerge, such as how much focus was placed on looking back at high school or home (see Figure 2 for examples of these photographs), the importance of strong personal connections forged in the dorm as opposed to family or university support (see Figure 3 for example of dorm support), and making early commitments to institutional activities (see Figure 4 for examples of these photographs).

The difference between the photovoice and pecha kucha is that the pecha kucha is designed to directly address the student's lived experience in a structured and public presentation to other students. The process related to the freshman course research translates to undergraduate management and business classes. For instance, in a capstone strategy course, students might be required to present on their experiences (e.g., leadership, stresses) at the university and how their personal educational and career strategies have changed during their time in the business school. During strictly timed presentations





**Figure 2.** Student photographs from pecha kucha projects: Images from home: (A) Pet at home; (B) Pet on bed at home.

*Note.* Students retain copyright of these photographs, but each student granted permission for use in this article. We are unable to identify students given confidentiality constraints in the institutional review board approval.

in which slides automatically advance after the presentation begins, students provide brief narration of their images. A classroom discussion about the key themes and connections to other students' presentations, as well as the presenter's personal reflections, follows each presentation. At the end of the

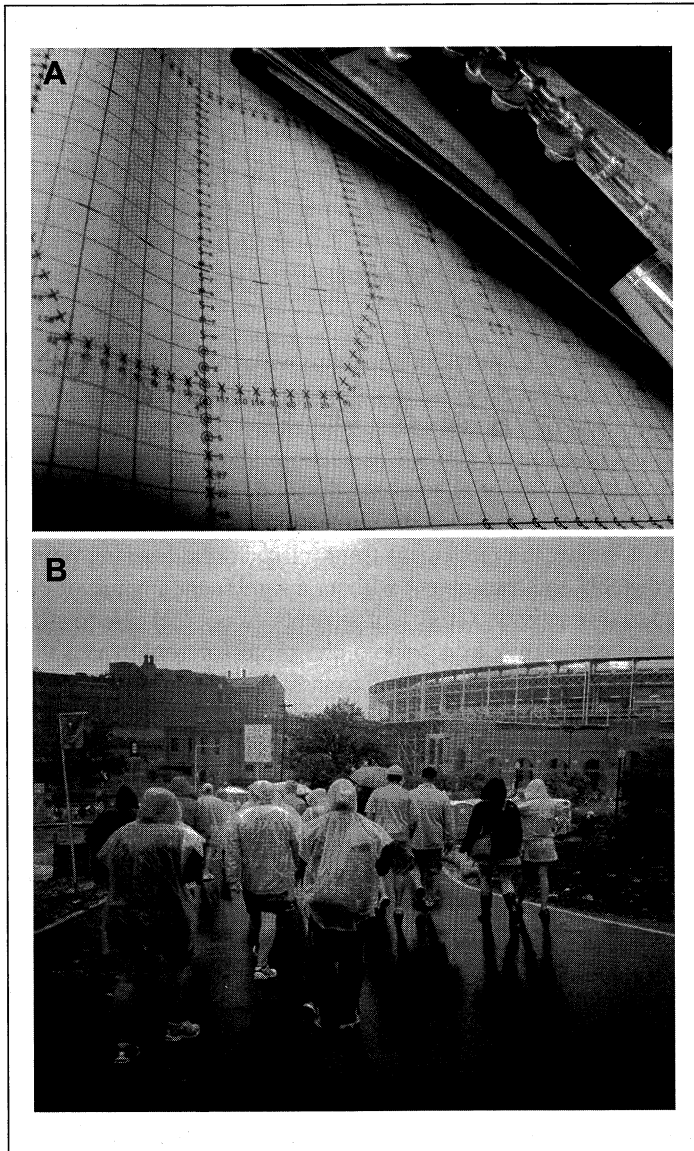


**Figure 3.** Student photograph from pecha kucha: Support in dorm.

*Note.* Student retains copyright on this photograph, but she granted permission for use in this article. We are unable to identify student photographer given confidentiality constraints in institutional review board approval.

pecha kucha presentations, the professor provides closing comments. This project can provide student self-reflection and insights into the definition of self that is so connected to the idea of reflective liberal learning.

Photovoice approaches provide many opportunities for students to develop alternate modes of thinking. By arranging entire courses around the development of photovoice projects, students have the opportunity to engage with the process and participants more fully than they might in classroom activities or even course projects. The time commitment required of students by courses that focus on a photovoice approach permits students to find participants who offer multiple frames as well as encourages students to take ownership of granting those marginalized participants voices that can affect change outside the classroom. Final papers and projects create reflective exploration of the learning from each course as well. Given the engagement generated by such in-depth projects, photovoice approaches offer professors clear ways to integrate liberal arts modes of thinking into their business classes.



**Figure 4.** Student photographs from pecha kucha: Campus involvement: (A) Marching band: Marching grid for football game and instrument; (B) Involvement in campus activities: Attendance at football game in rain.

*Note.* Students retain copyright on these photographs, but they granted permission for use in this article. We are unable to identify student photographers given confidentiality constraints in the institutional review board approval.

## **Discussion**

We have provided several ideas to link photographic pedagogy to the classroom with the main benefit being grassroots efforts to incorporate Carnegie liberal arts modes of thinking into undergraduate business education. Each of the three photographic approaches has special considerations that we discuss below.

### *Considerations of Pedagogical Applications of Archival and Professor-Created Images*

The use of archival and professor images provides one of the most straightforward applications of seeing multiple frames or ways of viewing an organization. This pedagogy allows professors of many subjects and class sizes to consider incorporation of a small exercise to allow different viewpoints to emerge from discussion of an image. As well, this is an opportunity for some qualitative professors to share their photographs and field research in the classroom. Usually, the movement from image to the learning point can be fairly predictable and transparent without a significant amount of class time developed to this activity. A risk is if students do not feel safe to speak up to counter early comments; as a backup, the professor could share the photographs with the students and ask them to show the photographs to nonbusiness majors for their reactions. (Professors should also be aware of copyright issues using stock images.) As well, if low participation might be anticipated (e.g., large class), the professor might hand out index cards and ask the students to write down their responses, which are reviewed at the beginning of the next class session. As pointed out in the Carnegie report, a risk of using too many of these activities is that the students might become cynical by constantly looking for hidden meaning and deconstructing intent. Including other liberal arts modes of thinking can help to counter the potential of cynicism.

### *Considerations of Pedagogical Applications of Photo-Elicitation*

The photo-elicitation course projects—stepping into shoes of another and envisioning a future career—require students to reach out beyond the classroom to engage others in their semester project. Certainly, this type of project might fit in a variety of business courses such as an introduction to business or management, human resources management, leadership, or organizational behavior. If the class is small, students could present their projects; if larger in size or not having the time in semester for presentation, then student essays or photograph essays could be nature of the final deliverable.

Some risks of this project are students obtaining access to people who are working full-time to undertake this endeavor and for those who agree to follow through and take the photograph assignment seriously. As well, the professor would have to develop clear boundaries for the project such as clarification of ethical concerns in taking photographs (see Ray & Smith, 2012 for further discussion of the ethical issues implied by these methods protection of confidentiality of their subjects, and how to interview subjects about their photographs. The professor would have to spend substantial time to explain the project, develop materials related to the project (e.g., introduction letters), be involved in consultation with students and possibly subjects, and provide meaningful feedback to students on their projects. An additional course cost for students would possibly be to provide a cheap digital camera and memory card to the participant; however, digital cameras can run less than \$30, significantly less than a college textbook. If a hard copy of their report is required, students would bear the reproductions costs.

For the envisioning the future career, a possible alternative is to have a student shadow a person in an organization or as part of an internship and have the person tell the student what pictures to take and describe why this approach has been used effectively in organizational research (Ray & Smith, 2012; Ruby, 1991; van der Does et al., 1992). One caveat that the professor must provide is that this particular photo-elicitation project is conducted with only one person in a future position and may not be representative of other people in that position, which provides an opportunity for discussion of multiple frames. Additionally, students benefit from the chance to reflect on their learning from close connections to the lived experience of a person in a future position.

### *Considerations of Pedagogical Applications of Photovoice*

For these projects, we envision much of the course would be devoted to this project. This type of project could work in many advanced undergraduate business courses, where application and ownership of learning by the student is more important than memorizing facts. As well, this type of project might underlie the design of an integrative business–social science course such as noted in the Carnegie report (Colby et al., 2011).

A primary concern is that a professor would need to create safety among class members far before the students begin to craft their presentations. This need for safety requires the class to be fairly small, perhaps composed of no more than 50 members. As well, once the professor has some experience with this pedagogy, some powerful examples from the previous year's presentations might be shown with permission from the previous year's students. This

might help to "set the bar high" for the students and to show how powerful and personally beneficial the project could be.

Because this approach holds the potential to have students self-reflect on their personal values and assumptions, some students may find it emotionally overwhelming. During the course of the project, the professor should be ready to tackle these types of conversations with students. As well, the professor might be prepared for possible backlash from university administration who might not want students tackling touchy issues (e.g., the working poor) on campus. Some of the classroom activities may create financial and time-based costs for students or professors even though cell phones or borrowed cameras from the university could be used to craft the student presentation. Despite these shortcomings, photovoice and pecha kucha course projects hold the potential to be one of the most powerful experiences during an undergraduate business student's education, experiences that the student can use in practice after leaving the business school.

Each approach has potential benefits, risks, and concerns in implementation. Yet we believe the efforts and costs will be worth the risks. Once these experiments at the grassroots, business-classroom level garner some success, we believe they can become part of an institutional-level conversation on integrating liberal arts modes of thinking into undergraduate business education.

## **Conclusion**

Photography in the management classroom has received little attention in management learning despite the benefits offered but holds the promise of connecting to dimensions of liberal arts modes of thinking. In this article, we provide several ways for professors to consider incorporating photography in classroom activities, projects, and discussions to enhance multiple framing and reflective exploration of meaning. This list is not intended to be exhaustive or absolute; rather, the assignments and projects described in this article offer a starting point for professors interested in using photography to integrate liberal arts modes of thinking in their business classes. As well, we recognize that many of the activities explored in this article are novel and might require several attempts by a faculty member before the process becomes well managed with predictable outcomes; thus, experimentation with photographic approaches should include an eye toward assessing their impact on student learning.

We provide a potential grassroots approach to integrate aspects of liberal arts modes of thinking into management and business classrooms. Large-scale institutional change can be daunting and long lasting without producing

the anticipated results. In contrast, smaller-scale pedagogical innovations such as introducing photographic approaches into business courses can provide a way forward for professors excited by the Carnegie report and willing to rethink how they deliver undergraduate business education.

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### Notes

1. Several rich histories provide full accounts of the use of photography across multiple research disciplines (e.g., Banks, 2007; Harper, 1994, 1998; Parker, 2009; Pink, 2006; Prosser, 1998; Stasz, 1979).
2. Translated to the business classroom, this is akin to a professor adding a photograph to a PowerPoint slide deck to portray his/her objective reality related to a topic. As Harper (2012) stated, "It is quite easy to add a visual component to most lectures . . . slapping some eye candy from Flickr into a PowerPoint presentation that repeats obvious themes from lecture notes" (p. 27). This approach to the use of photographs in the classroom is more akin to enhancing analytical thinking.
3. At the risk of being exclusive (Meixner, Kruck, & Madden, 2010), we use the term *professor* throughout this article to refer to all instructors, teachers, and professors so as to indicate the dual role of researcher and instructor that is focal in this article.

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