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How Might Aesthetic Knowing Relate to Leadership?
A Review of the Literature

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Abstract

Aesthetic knowing may be valuable to educational leadership practice because it links feeling and intuition to procedural information to inform decision-making. Within the large and diverse field of aesthetics, some models apply aesthetic knowing to leadership practice. Scholarly interest in this area emerged in the late 1980's, and various conceptualizations of aesthetic leadership abound in the literature. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to review and clarify the relationship between aesthetic knowing and leadership skills. In effort to answer the question, "How do scholars relate aesthetic ways of knowing to leadership?" 23 literature sources from 1986-2010 were reviewed. As a result, four categories of aesthetic leadership qualities emerged: emotional awareness and empathy; sensory and somatic attentiveness; interest in organizational beauty; and the promotion of moral purpose.

Introduction

Aesthetic education has roots in K-12 education (Greene, 2001; Smith, 2008, 2005), but what models explore aesthetic knowing in leadership? This article reviews and explores the relationship between aesthetic knowing and leadership skills with implications for leadership preparation. Aesthetic knowing may be valuable to leadership practice as it might link feeling and intuition to procedural information to inform decision-making. Scholarly interest in the relationship of aesthetics to leadership theory emerged in the late 1980's, but various conceptualizations of aesthetic leadership appear in the literature. Drawing on selected literature sources between 1986-2010, this review seeks to address ways in which scholars relate aesthetic ways of knowing to leadership practices. Four emergent categories of aesthetics related to leadership are discussed, thus extending dialogue about aesthetics to adult learning and leadership preparation by articulating the interrelated aspects of cognition, emotion and the body.

Conceptualizing the Review:
The Relationship between Aesthetics and Leadership

In order to conceptualize the review, I first build an argument for examining the relationship between aesthetics and recent developments in educational leadership theory and practice. Indeed, some scholars have explored the relationship of aesthetics to leadership theory and preparation (e.g. Samier & Bates, 2006). However, to date, there have been no comprehensive reviews of these scholarly works. Without a synthesis of this topic, it is challenging for researchers in the fields of aesthetic education and leadership theory to effectively debate and research the topic of aesthetic leadership. Disparate conceptualizations provide us with a general sense of the topic, yet a gap persists for conceptualizing how to study aesthetic knowing for leadership preparation purposes. In the following section, a brief review of aesthetics introduces basic concepts of aesthetic knowing and provides a rationale for considering the incorporation of aesthetic knowing into leadership preparation.

Aesthetic Knowing

Aesthetic philosophers Plato, Kant and Baumgarten's theories of aesthetic knowing explore the metaphysical nature of human concerns, values and experiences heightened through the process of making and appreciating art (Hofstadter & Kuhns, 1964). Educational scholars subsequently adopted aesthetics as a guiding teaching and curricular philosophy. In this passage, I briefly review essential definitions of aesthetic knowing. Because the general field of aesthetics spans a diverse range of academic disciplines and interdisciplinary theories, I

focus on a few scholars who appear to have a considerable impact in educational scholarship. By no means is this a comprehensive review of contemporary aesthetic scholarship.

In the chapter *Defining Aesthetic Education,* Greene (2001) emphasized humanistic and holistic aspects of development that not only use the arts, but also seek to integrate what is learned from the arts into education. When the learner engages with a work of art (e.g. a dance, a painting, a poem) senses and emotions are conceptualized as important features of 'noticing.' Interestingly, she distinguished aesthetic education as taking the learner beyond the limits of material exploration–a hallmark of traditional art education–to engage in the meanings of the artwork in social and cultural terms. Similar to Greene, educational philosopher Smith (2008, p. 4) stressed the role of positive emotions in aesthetics, recounting Beardsley's five-part explanation of feelings: object directedness, felt freedom, detached affect, a sense of active discovery and wholeness. Elsewhere, Smith (2005) elaborated on the integration of art into school curriculum as well as more generally using the senses and perception. Aesthetic sensibility has even been highlighted in the area of teacher training as:

> a high level of consciousness about what one sees…a fine attention to detail and form: the perception of relations (tensions and harmonies); the perception of nuance (colors and meaning) and the perception of change (shifts and subtle motions). (McCrary Sullivan, 2000, p. 221-222 in Rodgers, 2002)

In summary, aesthetic knowing can be characterized along two axes. First, immediate qualities of engaging in an artistic experience include physiological (senses–touch, feel, hear, smell, etc.–related to perception and attention) and cognitive (feelings and understandings) responses to works of art. Beyond the immediate associations of artistic engagement, a second layer of associations with that engagement emerges: Repeated introductions to artistic novelty are believed to cause the producer of the artwork or the viewer to wrestle with that novelty. In turn, the act of considering new ideas may lead to open-mindedness and attitudes that are accepting towards diversity of thought and cultural expression (Smith, 2008). These two axes of aesthetic knowing imply that engaging in aesthetic learning may impact the quality of how we function and interact in more general terms in schools and organizations. The longstanding tradition of studying and infusing aesthetics into everyday life and educational processes substantiates the argument that leadership training might benefit from aesthetic knowing, too.

Need to Consider the Role of the Arts in Leadership Preparation

As leadership theory diversifies, the use of art and literature has been suggested by prominent educational leadership scholars Crow and Grogan (2005) for their emotive capabilities, moral explorations and potential for yielding psychological insight into the self. "By tapping into

any of the arts," they explain, "we understand a subject like leadership more fully because our emotions are engaged" (p. 363).

While educational leadership and organizational management scholars have highlighted the need to improve leadership preparation (Millstein & Kruger, 1997; Murphy, 2006; Pounder, Reitzug & Young, 2002) by focusing on the *quality* and *type* of learning experiences (McCauley, cited in London & Maurer, 2001, p. 222; Weick, 2007), scholars have yet to fully examine how to incorporate aesthetics into leadership (Kelehear, 2008) and lessons learned through art into leadership thought and practice (Crow & Grogan, 2005). Most of the current demands on the field arise from improving leadership accountability of student academic performance but also efforts to make university-based learning experience more relevant to professional experience. Therefore, expanding leadership preparation methods emphasize applied and experiential aspects of praxis as well as a focus on self-understanding as a way to improve leadership performance. Narrowing the university-workplace gap means focusing on helping leaders make sense out of their current practices, airing their assumptions about their abilities and organizational problems, and then revising their leadership approaches with actionable plans that target these problems.

Take, for example, Duke's (1986) aesthetic leadership model, which builds an analogy between the artistic process and the leadership process: Much like an artist, it is contended that a leader's behavior shapes the "effects of experience." However, less is known about actual characteristics of leadership behavior itself. Therefore, additional analysis of literature sources might reveal more fine-grained insight into the actual psychological aspects of aesthetic knowing. More recently, educational leadership professors have related aesthetics to teaching, and many professors and school leaders are interested in accentuating emotive and social aspects of leadership praxis to think more holistically about pressing school problems and derive appropriate solutions (Kelehear, 2008).

Literature Review

This article presents a narrative synthesis of articles on the topic of aesthetic leadership in the order they were most frequently discussed by authors. A search was conducted using the descriptors "aesthetic," "organizational aesthetics," or "art" in combination with the terms "leadership," "administration," "management," or "organization" in arts, education, psychology, and social science databases including ERIC, PsycInfo, Business Premier, Academic Search Premier, JSTOR and Arts and Humanities Index, as well as in a university library book catalog. Articles that focused solely on aesthetics or solely on leadership were not used-they had to combine the two concepts. The database and catalog search yielded 21 articles (19 conceptual and 2 empirical) and two books from 1986-2010 (listed in the

Reference section), written mostly by management/leadership scholars. The review did not include book reviews, unpublished materials or conference papers. In order to make thorough and consistent connections between the concepts of "aesthetics" and "leadership" in a text, I read and highlighted key definitions of 'aesthetic qualities,' and clustered them together to form emergent categories.

Four Aesthetic Leadership Qualities

My analysis of how scholars related aesthetic ways of knowing to leadership produced four categories of aesthetic leadership qualities. Scholarly interest in aesthetics ranged from considering the very nature of dispositions and characteristics of educational and business leaders to how organizational life is experienced and perceived.

Emotional Awareness and Empathy

Authors' discussion of aesthetics in the context of leadership practice most commonly referred to the ability to use emotional awareness and empathy to positively engage and identify with others in a leadership role. Emotions were conceived as central to laying a foundation of empathy in order to understand another person's viewpoint (Smith, 1996). The alleged advantage of emotional awareness is that a leader should develop an understanding of her own feelings and capitalize on positive emotional connections in his or her communications to the entire organization. '*Authentic* feeling' was also described as being subjugated to false acting and behaving in organizations (Witz, Warhurst & Nickson (2003).

Building on the notion that emotional connections bridge a leader with other organizational members, organizational management scholars Brady and Hart (2006, p. 125) presented a more complex aspect of emotions with the concept of "aesthetic burden"–"conflicts of obtaining personal goals with universal caring in organizations." When a leader is empathetic, he or she is more likely to remain open to understanding multiple, competing views. However, he or she may encounter a sort of logjam in decision-making in terms of how to produce sound ethical judgments. Brady and Hart thus acknowledge that this type of conflict is an inherent part of leadership and administration and should not be avoided in leadership theory and practice.

Affect was highlighted in the context of working in the service of historically marginalized groups of people (English, 2008). This puts a twist on the model of charismatic leadership, which emphasizes the social psychology of influencing others through manipulation or by overwhelming the feelings of organizational members (Ladkin, 2006); scholarly orientations included inspiration, passion, engagement (Duke, 1986), and excitement or pleasure in one's work (Weggeman, Lammers & Akkermans, 2007). The expression and recognition of feelings

as a legitimate source of knowledge (Taylor, 2002), even when feelings may be "vague" or difficult to express (Stein, 2003; Taylor, 2002), is an important aspect of studying aesthetics in organizational life. This work employs a postmodern, critical organizational theory perspective that focuses, in part, on the dynamics of power between people in organizations.

The leader's responsibility to promote connections between students, teachers and staff on an "emotional level"–not just focusing on student performance–was emphasized (Hurley, 2002). Emotions were conceived as part of leadership students' core foundation to help them become aware of their own personal balance as they handle various stressors (Cowan, 2007). The orientation towards caring, relational leadership has been associated with female leaders' style in the past, but the current emphasis on compassion and empathy indicates that these aspects will continue to play an important role in leadership development regardless of gender. The aesthetic leadership quality of emotional awareness and empathy reflects the longstanding service orientation of school principals and administrators, who aim to improve the quality of life in their local communities, and mirrors the trend of researching the role of emotional management and emotional intelligence in positive psychology.

Sensory and Somatic Attentiveness

The category of sensory and somatic attentiveness involves meaning and experience related to one's body. This implies a complex range of things in the context of leadership and organizational life, e.g. the implications of a person's senses, physical appearance or even how a leader or organizational member physically comports him- or herself. The concept of physicality is sometimes difficult to separate from the concept of emotions. Scholars provided a number of ways to consider how emotions and the body are ignored in organizations as well as how a leader might use her body to demonstrate or reveal power. For example, the "embodied way in which they [leaders] attempt to motivate, direct, or transform" (Ladkin, 2008, p. 31) organizational members stressed the idea that leaders' bodies are expressive features of their behavior. A leader's physical presence is not divorced from how and what they communicate to other organizational members. Elsewhere, Ladkin (2006) referred to the significance of a leader's senses as signals or signposts used for interpreting his or her environment, especially in regard to social interactions.

A leader's senses and perceptive faculties guide his or her "gut feelings" about a particular choice or decision (Weggeman, Lammers & Akkermans, 2007). "Gut feelings" is a colloquial term suggesting the interrelationship between feeling and physicality and refers to intuitive acts of decision-making with regard to moral judgments or difficult decisions made in turbulent organizational environments. 'Sensation' is rooted in both cognition and emotion, but was not described much beyond the concept of 'perception' (Welsh, 1996; White, 1996) Like the category of emotional awareness and empathy, "embodied knowledge" was

conceptualized in many literature sources as preceding all other types of knowledge (Hansen, Ropo, & Sauer, 2007; Ladkin, 2008; Palus & Horth, 1996, 1998). "Multi-sensory awareness" in the forms of sight, touch, sound, smell and taste were recognized as vital aspects to shaping organizational life (Griffiths & Mack, 2007, p. 268). "Felt" and "embodied" experience was downplayed in research on organizational members' experience of leadership in order to focus on intellectual knowledge, particularly in the form of writing as a way to express ideas (Taylor, 2002; Witz, Warhurst & Nickson, 2003).

In contrast to Taylor's (2002) description of felt experience, Strati (1992) discussed the way that a leader manages his or her own physicality in terms of visibility and privacy within the physical setting of an organization by allowing or, conversely, not allowing subordinates to access his or her meetings. Similarly, Duke (1986) drew on sociologist Erving Goffman's concept of public versus private frames, or how a person chooses to present him- or herself: A leader's physicality may be significant in that his or her actions form a sort of performance which followers observe and about which they make judgments. In this way, physicality is described as a theatrical metaphor for leadership.

Interest in Organizational Beauty

Scholars applied the Romantic concept of 'beauty'– an ideal, pleasing or harmonious essence of form–to the context of the modern organization. In terms of common, tacit interpretations of 'aesthetics,' beauty is probably the concept most synonymous with aesthetics as it evokes a highly subjective adoration of an object or experience. In the leadership context, 'organizational beauty' was described in two ways: a) a sense of coherence (Ladkin, 2008) and harmony (White, 1996), and b) a great sense of pleasure in one's work. In this way, beauty is related to how a person feels about one's work. On one hand, pure pleasure could be associated with indulgence, or 'hedonism' (White, 1996) and narcissism, so the concept of beautiful work appears to hinge upon a balance between self-indulgence and service to others. Beauty and positive emotion are related in the way that the idea of doing good (morality) contributes to feeling good (affect).

Strati (1992), a pioneer in the field of organizational aesthetics, analyzed beauty as an important dimension, act or object of work. On the surface, 'beauty' reminds us of the way things look, like the selection of art works, furniture, and architecture that are placed in buildings, schools and offices as pieces of decoration. But, a deeper examination of physical objects and design choices can reveal political and cultural choices about the values of an organization that "bridg[e] the gap between life outside and inside the organization" (Strati, 1992, p. 574). In this sense, beautiful work is about the leader's role in promoting affinity between an organization and its community, not just the design of workspaces. Organizational beauty was also associated with the qualities of the sublime (Ladkin, 2006; Welsh, 1996) and

the attributes of organizational life as "sacred" or filled with "charm" (Griffiths & Mack, 2007).

White (1996) applied Kant's (1791) conception of beauty as necessary, universal, disinterested and purposive to extend organizational theory. Thus, implications for 'organizational beauty' are threefold: a person derives innate enjoyment in their own work aside from monetary compensation and other purposes; the organization is perceived as a 'whole;' and there is a common, pervasive organizational value. Nissley, Taylor and Butler (2002) analyzed 'felt meaning' in songs created by the Maytag corporation, a symbol of the darker side of organizational coherence-cultural hegemony. Merritt and DeGraff (1996) discussed how to achieve White's (1996) conception of organizational beauty. As part of a matrix of aesthetic awareness development in leadership education, 'beauty' and 'realism' are part of a leader's promotion of group process in several areas: implications of organizational initiatives; learning dynamics; influence; rituals, stories and symbols; objectives; facilitation of a diverse value perspectives; communication on divergent perspectives of desired states and decision making processes (p. 82).

Promotion of Moral Purpose

In this review, instilling moral purpose rounds out the categories of emotional awareness/empathy, sensory and somatic attentiveness and appreciation of organizational beauty. As implied in the previous discussion about organizational beauty, instilling moral purpose is necessary for bringing people together around a common cause and appealing to the human desire to be noble or good. Scholars discussed moral values like justness, reason and truth in contrast with injustice, corruption and oppression (English, 2008; Maxcy, 2006; Samier & Bates, 2006). Drawing on Brown's (1977, p. 45 in English, 2008) conception of "the aesthetic dimension of sociological knowledge," English advocated for a "cognitive aesthetics" lens that is sensitive to particular contexts, values, emotions and moral function. He drew attention to the role immorality plays in cases of leadership that have failed to serve humanity and are considered to be evil or wrong, versus moral cases of leadership based on social justice. To English, "leadership as an embedded moral enterprise located and intimately connected to one's sense of personal and historical identity within a specific culture" (p. 58). Overall, because leadership development literature and courses emphasize establishing a vision and organizational purpose derived from one's own moral compass, it was surprising that scholars did not discuss this aspect more.

Definition of Aesthetic Leadership

In an effort to describe how scholars relate aesthetic ways of knowing to leadership, this review idenitifed four aesthetic leadership qualities. Aesthetic leadership can be defined as leaders who demonstrate '**emotional awareness**,' *evoking feeling to empathize and positively engage with others*; '**sensory and somatic attentiveness**,' *using senses and intuition to make decisions*; '**interest in organizational beauty**,' *fostering a harmonious sense of coherence within an organization;* and the '**promotion of moral purpose**,' *emphasizing justness, reason, truth in contrast to injustice and corruption.* These four aspects are reflected, in varying degrees, in classic aesthetic philosophical works, and indicate ways they can be used in the practice of leading schools and organizations. This review clarifies my initial thesis that aesthetic knowing may be valuable to leadership practice because it links feeling and intuition to procedural information to inform decision-making: In addition to these aspects, this review suggests that promotion of moral purpose and appreciation of organizational beauty are also important.
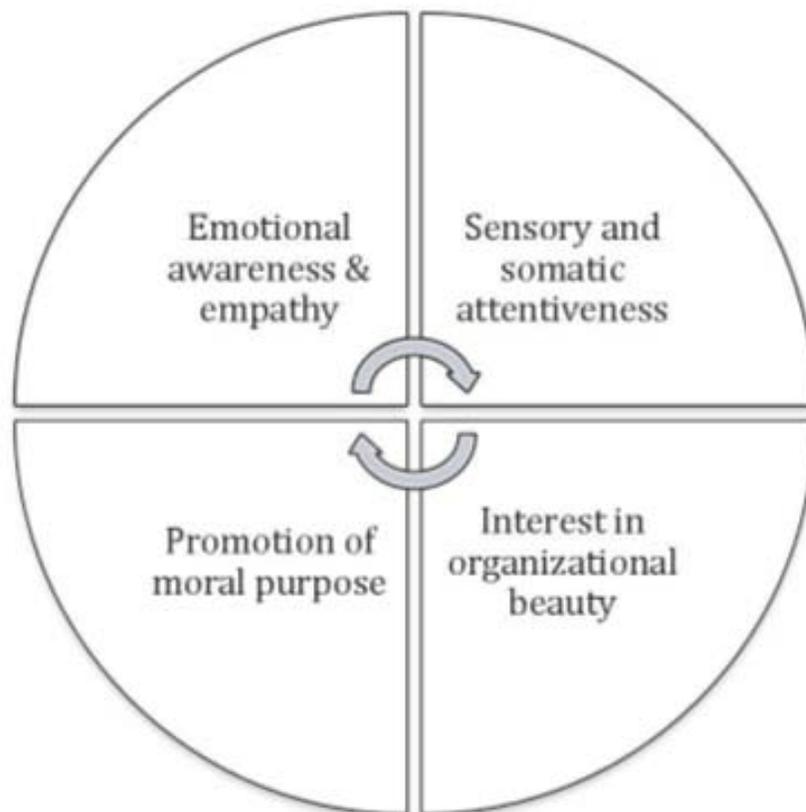

Figure 1. Aesthetic leadership qualities.

Limitations of the Review

Challenges to categorizing aesthetic leadership qualities include the fact that scholars do not always use the term "aesthetics" to mean the same thing, nor do they agree there is a universal definition of aesthetics. Because aesthetic leadership is not a concrete field per se, there are several epistemological views, or 'camps,' that shape how scholars address aesthetic leadership qualities: organizational aesthetics, which represents a postmodern, critical organizational theory perspective; educational leadership development/education literature, which emphasizes the practical nature of leadership; and aesthetic education, which primarily examines aesthetics as artistic knowledge and skills.

Implications of Aesthetic Leadership Qualities for Educational Leadership

Taken together, the four aesthetic leadership qualities can be considered as a conceptual framework that departs from traditional scientific management models which associate replicable, efficient ways of managing a school and use quantifiable approaches to school reform and improvement (Dantley, 2005). The aesthetic leadership framework suggests an alternative approach to this model because it emphasizes the process of developing humanistic and expressive qualities. This framework can be used to advise educational leadership students, shape higher education pedagogy, curriculum and research. To promote further inquiry in the area of aesthetic leadership that stems from this literature review, I present two propositions.

Proposition #1: Emotional awareness/empathy and moral purpose will continue to be salient 21st century leadership themes.

One might wonder if all four aesthetic leadership qualities are salient for leadership practice in the 21st century. Like other scholars (Ladkin, 2006; Welsh, 1996), it is possible to argue that they cannot be separated. But, of the four aesthetic leadership qualities, I would contend that emotional awareness/management and moral purpose offer the most significant and useful areas to apply to educational leadership preparation and research. They represent a lens to examine deeply the social-psychological aspects of leadership practice. First, the subject of emotions in educational leadership practice is a legitimate–albeit complex–yet understudied topic. Educators experience emotional bonds with students and draw upon this bond as a key part of their calling to teach and to lead, yet research in this area lags behind practice. Emotions inform how we think, act and lead in schools (McDowelle & Buckner, 2002). Further, emotional intelligence is a significant topic in business leadership research (Goleman, Boyzatkis & McKee, 2001) and psychology (Mayer, Caruso & Salovey, 2004), but research on this topic in the educational leadership field is in its fledgling stages of development.

Contemporary approaches to educational leadership preparation in the twenty first century will continue to stress the role of emotions and moral purpose in self-understanding and meaning-making (Crow & Grogan, 2005; Dantley, 2005). This means that we must examine more closely the psychological aspects of how leaders manage emotions in themselves regarding creatively solving school problems in the context of high stakes accountability; acknowledging and managing emotions in others to empathize with student, teacher and parental concerns; and appealing to students', teachers' and parents' innate interests and desires to care about, and thus participate in, shaping the quality of the schooling experience. Just as emotional components of learning have been studied as a facet of student engagement and teacher competence (e.g. Jennings & Greenberg, 2009), so should emotional awareness and empathy be a facet of understanding and developing leaders. A leadership challenge to managing emotions was reflected in the "aesthetic burden" concept (Brady & Hart, 2006, p. 125) as "conflicts of obtaining personal goals with universal caring in organizations." In other words, a leader needs to weigh the needs of the individual versus the community. The implication of paying attention to emotions for educational leadership and teacher education faculty is to consider ways we model or fail to model the characteristics of empathy and compassion in our teaching and research work with students; asking students to recount and analyze interpersonal conflicts they experience in schools; and asking students to reflect on ways they evoke positive emotions with students, staff and parents around instructional leadership goals.

In addition to emotional awareness and management, instilling a sense of moral purpose emerged as an aesthetic leadership quality. Despite the fact that morality was the least frequently discussed aesthetic leadership attribute in the literature review, it is arguably more important than sensory and somatic attentiveness and promoting a sense of organizational beauty. Efforts to promote equity and question the status quo in schools are a constant moral challenge of educational leaders, especially in urban school systems. English (2008, p. 58) conceptualized "leadership as an embedded moral enterprise located and intimately connected to one's sense of personal and historical identity within a specific culture." This includes addressing "otherness" and "undemocratic practices" (Dantley, 2005, p. 39). The implication of incorporating morality into leadership thought and practice means that educational leadership and teacher education faculty should reflect on the degree to which we address sociological perspectives on educational policy and practice in our teaching and research work with students. This means teaching about various cultural histories and ways of knowing and being. And this also means that we cannot assume that the field of educational leadership is value neutral with little room to scrutinize or be critical of mainstream educational policies and practices associated with reform.

Proposition #2: Deliberative use of the arts may help to promote aesthetic leadership qualities.

Aesthetic leadership qualities raise challenging questions for how the arts can be used in educational leadership preparation courses. After all, aesthetic philosophers like Plato, Baumgarten and Kant pursued an understanding of the metaphysical nature of human concerns, values and experiences heightened through the very process of making and appreciating art (Hofstadter & Kuhns, 1964). So, what does this mean for a leader to learn through the arts? We may wonder how aesthetic leadership qualities like emotional awareness and empathy and moral purpose can be enlarged through making art, and relate to outcomes deemed valuable by university preparation programs.

Table 1.

Suggestions for Fostering Aesthetic Leadership Qualities through the Arts

Aesthetic leadership quality	**Learning objective**	**Art activities**	**Leadership skill**
Emotional awareness and empathy	To evoke feeling to empathize and positively engage with others.	Expressive, interactive activities: Role-playing in improvisational theatre. Watching dramatic theatre performances.	Creative problem solving. Mentoring, supervising others. Empathy for students and families.
Sensory and somatic attentiveness	To practice intuition of "gut" feelings to make decisions.	Visually oriented activities: Watching scenarios, films, plays, etc. multiple times to deepen an understanding of current/novel social situations	Conducting in-depth informal and formal observations, e.g., classroom visits and staff evaluations.
Interest in organizational beauty	To promote enjoyment in the workplace and beauty in one's physical surroundings	Creating multimedia productions, poetry and music that reflect school spirit and student interests.	Fostering school spirit and pride; deterring vandalism.
Promotion of moral purpose	To serve one's community through improving schooling for underserved student populations.	Large scale wall murals that reflect cultural groups.	Supporting student learning, cultural diversity, fostering relationships with families and communities.

One particular challenge is how to use art activities in meaningful, rigorous ways that go beyond 'edutainment,' or superficial learning. Table 1 presents ways to conceptualize aesthetic leadership qualities in relation to course learning objectives, activities and desired leadership outcomes. Arts activities for leaders need to be highly relevant to leadership issues and process-, not product-, oriented. For example, leaders reported enhanced emotional awareness through making "touchstone" sculptures, led by leadership trainer Cheryl De Ciantis (1995, p. 12):

> "My personal plan was to stop being such a lawyer. It [the touchstone] was great. It helped me be more *emotional* and more open, less analytical."

> "The touchstone will be the most useful for me because it involves *emotions* as well as thought and will be a lasting, practical reminder of how to move forward and a check on where I am going"

A focus on expressive, interactive activities such as role-playing in improvisational theatre can help leadership students hone their creative problem solving abilities (Katz-Buonincontro, 2006, 2008). Theatrical activities are valid tools for sharpening collaboration and creative problem solving, but rely on looping the activity with a leader's organizational goals or else they loose meaning. The 'felt freedom' and 'wholeness' implicated by Smith (2008) applies to the idea of solving emotional problems through improvisational theatre role-playing, for example. Sensory and somatic attentiveness in the context of improvisational role-plays comes from ways leaders move and act, not just talk and write, an example of embodied cognition.

Visually oriented arts activities include watching scenarios, films, and plays multiple times to deepen a leadership student's perceptual understandings of situations, an approach stressed in Kelehear's (2008) arts-based instructional leadership practices, and art education professor Graeme Sullivan's (2005) visual arts research practices. For example, Palus' and Horth's (1996, 2002) visual-verbal journaling exercises are designed to give students opportunities to reflect on their leadership experience and produce new understandings of their current and future practice. Honing the instructional leadership practice of conducting careful, in-depth informal and formal observations during classroom visits and staff evaluations (McEwan, 2003) might benefit from the visual acuity and perception practiced in visual-verbal journaling.

Interest in organizational beauty means helping others enjoy their workplace especially in regard to the design of inclusive, physical surroundings. Meaningful projects might include the actual architectural design of a school or building to facilitate enjoyment in the learning

process. For example, a Native American school that I worked at in St. Paul, MN, built a round shaped room for holding Pow-Wows and student assemblies. Small-scaled art projects might include making videos, music, poetry, photographs of one's school to foster a sense of school pride and spirit, and to deter vandalism. Lastly, exploring moral purpose in educational leadership would mean reinvigorating a sense of serving one's community through arts activities e.g. large murals, collages, or sculptures that involve and represent the collective identity of local school communities. This type of focus would highlight the leader's moral purpose through attention to the diversity of families represented in schools.

Conclusion

In closing, it is hoped that this review contributes to scholarship in the field of aesthetics by infusing traditional conceptions with contemporary views of educational practice. Leadership preparation can benefit from consideration of emotional awareness and empathy, sensory and somatic attentiveness, interest in organizational beauty and promotion of moral purpose. The meaning of aesthetic leadership qualities as applied to educational practice offers ample space for future inquiry and research. As we navigate school reform in the 21st century, it is imperative to stress the emotional and moral bonds between educational leaders, teachers, students and communities. These qualities will most likely strengthen current practices aimed at improving academic achievement, not dampen or derail these efforts. Many teachers and students strive for organizational beauty–coherence and harmony–in what can feel like a disconnected, or fragmented learning climate where the individual is valued mostly for what he or she produces as opposed to feeling a sense of belongingness, purpose and enjoyment. The four aspects of aesthetic leadership suggests that we reclaim a focus on humanistic experiences of schooling, and present a challenge for us to highlight leaders' social and emotional competence as a way to compliment more traditional, managerial approaches to school improvement.

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