

The Fielding Scholar Practitioner: Voices from 45 years of Fielding Graduate University (Fielding Monograph Series) Paperback – May 20, 2019

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This is a collection of essays, memoirs and research articles that capture the unique role of Fielding Graduate University as one of the nation's oldest graduate institutions for mid-career learners. Long before there was an Internet, Fielding pioneered the concept of a distributed university—a place where adult learners could leverage their professional and academic experience to aspire to doctoral and other graduate degrees, without having to leave their home or place of work. This monograph illustrates adult transformational learning, from alumni describing how evolving into “scholar-practitioners” inspired their life's work to faculty members recounting how Fielding took shape amid a culture of scholarship and social justice. You'll also find discussions about:

- the transformative power of adult education
- creation of new scholarly disciplines
- role of mentoring in learningtogether,.

These tales provide a sampling of the rich, complex tapestry that is Fielding.

My Research Agenda

A contribution that I wrote was published as Chapter 2 in this Fielding monograph in May 2019.

I offer this essay as a narrative of my research agenda.

Cliff Hurst

ON BECOMING AN AXIOLOGICAL HERMENEUT

Clifford G. Hurst
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When introducing myself to college classes or to workshop participants I often describe myself as an *axiological hermeneut*. This gets a mixed reaction of laughter, blank stares, and raised eyebrows. That is what my Fielding experience has done to me. I've become an axiological hermeneut.

Those of you who have studied with Katrina Rogers know that a simplistic definition of hermeneutics is that it is the art of interpretation. A hermeneut is one who studies the discipline of hermeneutics. A hermeneut will argue that what matters is not so much what process philosophers call the "situation" or what phenomenologists call "lived-experiences" that count for meaning as it is the person's interpretation of those experiences or situations. Axiology refers to the study of human values. Formal axiology is a particular theory of the evaluative thought structures underlying people's values. I am a student and scholar of a particular value theory known as formal axiology. Hence, being an axiological hermeneut means that I seek to understand how people make meaning of their lives through the lens of the structure of their values.

A Career Change

My Fielding experience allowed me to make a late-in-life career change. I now find meaning in my work and, I hope that, in ways small or large, I am making a difference for good in the world. I am an associate professor of management in the Bill and Vieve Gore School of Business at Westminster College in Salt Lake City. Westminster is a small, private, not-for-profit liberal arts college. I teach entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship at the MBA and undergraduate levels.

I entered Fielding's HOD doctoral program in September of 2006 at the age of 53, having spent the previous 18 years running my own OD consulting practice. My goal at that time was to become a more theoretically grounded consultant. I was using in my consulting practice an assessment tool known as the Hartman Value Profile (HVP). It is based on a value theory known as formal axiology, which had first been articulated by the philosopher Robert S. Hartman (1967, 2006). It was a powerful tool, but I knew very little of the psychological and philosophical underpinnings of it. I wanted to know more. A large impulse behind my desire to earn a doctorate was to become more knowledgeable about formal axiology. This showed me the power of Fielding's adult learning model. Few of my faculty were familiar with Hartman's work; none were experts in it, but that did not stop them from guiding me in my study of it. I

remain especially grateful for the encouragement in this pursuit that I received from Miguel Guilarte, whom I eventually asked to chair my dissertation committee.

By the time I was mid-way through my studies at Fielding, I had become captivated by a vision of a career as an academic. I set my sights on becoming a professor as soon as I earned my PhD. I began my academic job search shortly after my pilot study was concluded and was hired by Westminster in the same month that my dissertation was approved. That was in March of 2012. I began teaching at Westminster in August of that year and am now in my seventh year as a full-time professor. Looking back on my time as a doctoral student, the road to my current profession seems straighter in hindsight than it ever did during my five-and-a-half years at Fielding.

Of course, an earned doctorate was a prerequisite for becoming a professor, but the encouragement to publish that I received from my faculty during my years as a doctoral student, and the modeling of what it means to be a teacher of adults aided greatly in the launch of my new career.

Westminster prides itself on being a teaching college, as opposed to a research university. I am proud of the time I spend in the classroom and proud of the influence that, I believe, I am having upon my students. At the same time, our business school expects of our faculty a certain standard of scholarly output, primarily in the form of publications in peer-reviewed academic journals. Fielding prepared me well for both roles.

The Beginning

Having applied to Fielding without a master's degree, I was required to demonstrate evidence of scholarly writing. Dottie Agger-Gupta advised me to take one of my previously published trade journal articles and revise it as if I were submitting it to an academic journal. I did and was accepted into the NSO that began in September of 2006. Having spent so much time writing this paper as part of my application, I began to wonder what else I could do with it. After attending writing workshops with Judy Stevens-Long at two national sessions and inviting her to rake my manuscript over the coals a few times, I decided to submit it for publication. It was accepted after minor revisions (Hurst, 2008). This gave me an idea.... What if I could use the in-depth portions of some of my KA's as proving grounds for subsequent publication? Here again, Miguel encouraged me to do this. He guided me through my KA in Human Development, the in-depth portion of which became a manuscript that was eventually published in the *Journal of Formal Axiology: Theory and Practice* (Hurst, 2009). It was a comparison and contrast of the Hartman Value Profile and the more widely known Rokeach Value Survey. What I learned in that study continues to inform my research in value theory today.

A second study guided by Miguel also resulted in an article in the same journal; this was my treatise on "The Non-Mathematical Logic of a Science of Values" (Hurst, 2011). I consider this article to be my most significant contribution to the refinement of the theory of formal axiology, so far. A more recent

paper entitled, “The Intentions of Axiological Interpreters” (Hurst, 2014), reveals my indebtedness to Katrina Rogers and what she taught me about philosophical hermeneutics during an advanced doctoral seminar on that subject.

For their encouragement of my nascent publication efforts, I remain grateful to Miguel, Judy, and Katrina, and also to Keith Melville, who demonstrated through his teaching and his own writing that it is possible to write in a way that is both scholarly and readable.

As soon as I began applying to become a professor, I learned how important it is to hiring committees for a candidate to have been published in peer reviewed journals. Without these three papers published as a doctoral student I doubt that I would have been hired to a permanent teaching position at a 4-year college or university. The subject of my dissertation aided in my job search, as well. And it allowed me to project a future research stream that is slowly coming to fruition.

Most Recent Publication

Since my appointment as a professor, I have published several additional articles and reviews in the *Journal of Formal Axiology*. Eager to expand my writings about formal axiology and the HVP into the field of entrepreneurship, I was delighted when my article entitled, “An Axiological Measure of Entrepreneurial Cognition” was accepted by the *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior and Research* (Hurst, 2018). This latest paper is a direct outgrowth of a stream of research I had begun with my dissertation.

What’s Next?

Having spent much of the past ten years studying the deep-seated evaluative thought patterns of entrepreneurs, I am now turning my attention towards a study of how undergraduate college students think. I seek to answer the question: “Do we, as educators, impart any lasting, meaningful, and positive impact upon students’ developing cognitive patterns?” Given that Fielding prides itself on providing to its students a transformative education, I would also like to partner with Fielding to extend this study to doctoral students and attempt to measure how their deep-seated cognitive patterns over the course of their graduate studies.

Shortly after graduating from Fielding, I was invited to serve on the board of the Robert S. Hartman Institute of Formal and Applied Axiology (RSHI), a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization. I currently serve as the Vice President of Research and as Editor of the *Journal of Formal Axiology: Theory and Practice*.

During the summer of 2018 I received from Westminster College a Gore Summer Research Grant that allowed me to take two undergraduate students to the University of Tennessee where, for 10 days, we dug into the Hartman Archives at the Special Collections Library there. Hartman had been a visiting

professor of philosophy at Tennessee when he died, unexpectedly and too young, at the age of 63. Although Hartman was a prolific writer, only one book of his was ever published in English in his lifetime. Throughout his career, he had kept copious records of his lecture notes, essays, speeches, and numerous drafts of various journal and book manuscripts. More than 100,000 pages of unpublished papers, mostly in the form of carbon copies of typed pages, are stored in those Archives. Since Hartman's death in 1973, the Institute has published two of his book-length manuscripts, but much of what Hartman wrote remains unread and unpublished. I am currently drafting a proposal to the Board of the Institute that we undertake to systematically transcribe, edit, and publish a much larger selection of Hartman's work. The world today needs Hartman's ideas.

Hartman's Body of Work

The more I study Hartman's body of work, the more admiration I have for the depth and breadth of his thought. Hartman did much more than just develop a value theory. He also, in 1947, founded the Council of Profit Sharing Industries (Hustwit, n.d.), which has today morphed into the Plan Sponsor Council of America. Hartman's basic premise is that employees—people who do the work of organizations—ought to benefit from the contributions they make in the same way as do the people who provide the capital to employ them. Since that time, this notion has generated more than \$6 trillion in individual wealth, mostly in the form of 401ks and 403bs (Towarnicky, 2018, private correspondence). During our time at the Archives, we discovered a manuscript written circa 1958 entitled: "The Partnership Between Capital and Labor", which lays out Hartman's belief in this new form of capitalism based on partnership. I intend to transcribe, edit, and publish the introductory portions of that manuscript soon.

Hartman was a founding member of an organization of concerned scientists against nuclear proliferation and wrote extensively about the threat of nuclear annihilation and how, through developing a science of value, we may be able to avoid a nuclear war. It is for this work that he was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1973. His warnings from that era are even more important to us who are living today.

Hartman also was an early member of the Humanistic Psychology Association, founded by his close friend Abraham Maslow, and other notables as: Virginia Satir, Carl Rogers, Gordon Allport, and Rollo May (AAHP.org). During our archival research, we uncovered some extraordinary writing by Hartman about humanistic psychology and its relation to philosophy.

Summary

In summation, I applied to Fielding, in part, to begin to understand more fully the theory of formal axiology. I've learned a great deal about it since then, and I continue to learn. Today I am leading the

effort to bring more of Hartman's work to the light of day. I serve as Editor of the only peer-reviewed journal dedicated to the refinement, expansion, and application of that theory. I did not enroll at Fielding intending to become a professor, but now that I am one, I realize that my Fielding journey led me to my true calling. I am increasingly being able to bring formal axiology into my classrooms, in hopes of stimulating a new generation of value theorists who can—through this knowledge—make this world a better place. The world could use a new generation of axiological hermeneuts.

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