

Leading Minds Research Project

# Discourse and Influence in Ancient Philosophy and Contemporary Leadership Ethics

Workshop, 18-20th September, 2014. University of Leeds

Speakers:

Dr. Sophie Aubert-Baillet (Université Stendhal Grenoble 3)  
Prof. Joanne Ciulla (University of Richmond / Jepson School of Leadership Studies)  
Prof. Jackie Ford (Leeds University Business School) – *has had to pull out.*  
Prof. M.M. McCabe (King's College London)  
Dr. Ian McCready-Flora (Columbia University)  
Dr. Doris Schedlitzki (University of the West of England)  
Prof. Dominic Scott (University of Virginia / University of Kent)  
Dr. Rapahel Woolf (King's College London)

In attendance - Leadership Practitioners & IDEA Visiting Professors:

Mick Yates  
Amanda Mellor

## PROGRAMME

Thursday 18th September

2.00-2.20pm	Welcome Dr. Jamie Dow
2.20-3.50pm	Opening Keynote Address (Chair: Jamie Dow) Professor Joanne Ciulla <i>Listening to the Ancients While Looking at the Present: The Enduring Ideas About Leaders and Ethics</i>
3.50-4.20pm	Tea / Coffee

4.20-5.40pm	Prof. M.M. McCabe <i>Conversation, Dissent and the Hemlock</i>	(Chair: Chris Megone)
5.45-6.30pm	First Round Table	(Chair: Chris Megone)
6.30pm	Drinks (IDEA Centre, Seminar Room 2 - upstairs)	
7.30pm	Buffet Dinner (IDEA Centre, Seminar Room 2)	

#### Friday 19th September

10.00-11.15	Prof. Dominic Scott <i>Plato Versus Aristotle on Philosophical Method: Lessons for (University) Leaders</i>	(Chair: MM McCabe)
11.15-11.45	Tea / Coffee	
11.45-1.00pm	Dr. Doris Schedlitzki <i>The Holy Grail of Leadership: Changing Narratives in the Workplace</i>	(Chair: MM McCabe)
1.00-2.30pm	Lunch	
2.30-3.45pm	Dr. Ian McCready-Flora <i>The Convincing Animal: Speech and Reason in Aristotle</i>	(Chair: Carl Fox)
3.45-4.15pm	Tea / Coffee	
4.15-5.00	Second Roundtable	(Chair: Carl Fox)
5.00-6.15pm	Dr. Raphael Woolf <i>Cicero on Rhetoric and Dialectic</i>	(Chair: Carl Fox)
6.45pm	Drinks (University House)	
7.30pm	Dinner (University House)	

#### Saturday 20th September

9.30-10.45am	Dr Sophie Aubert-Baillet <i>Open Hand, Closed Fist: The Continuum between Stoic Dialectic and Rhetoric</i>	(Chair: Malcolm Heath)
10.45-11.15am	Tea / Coffee	

11.15-12.15	Final Review & Roundtable	(Chair: Chris Megone)
12.15-2.00pm	Lunch (over buffet lunch)	
2pm onwards	Depart	

### Context

Contemporary leaders and leadership scholars increasingly recognise (e.g. Ciulla 1998, 2004, 2005, 2013) the importance of ethical understanding and ethical methods to the practice of leadership today. Leaders are faced with decisions about how to try to bring about change in the organisations and communities they lead – where different approaches can prioritise radically different types of activities (communicating vision, leading by example, mentoring and coaching, advertising and the use of media, listening and seeking consensus, and so on). These concerns go beyond the familiar evaluation of these methods empirically for their (causal) effectiveness in generating various kinds of outcomes. They concern the desirability of the different outcomes generated by these various methods; and they concern the propriety of the methods themselves. These concerns and questions mirror the critical scrutiny raised historically within western philosophy (esp. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, Cicero) about the value and propriety of rhetorical and dialectical methods of influencing others. There is a philosophical literature on these thinkers and these issues, but (1) it is often limited by being insufficiently *applied* to the practices of persuasive dialogue and speechmaking to which it relates, and (2) it is rarely brought to bear on contemporary leadership and the ethical and epistemological issues around persuasive influence today. The workshop represents a major step forward in both of these areas.

This workshop aims to apply these significant resources in the ancient philosophical tradition to these contemporary questions. This will bring advances in our understanding of both the ancient philosophy and of the applied issues themselves. It also aims to model and map out a programme of further (esp. ancient) philosophical and inter-disciplinary work on rhetoric, dialectic, leadership ethics and the propriety of persuasive influence.

### The Workshop

The workshop will thus bring together eminent philosophers (esp. ancient), leadership scholars and leadership practitioners in what is believed to be the first interaction of its kind. It promises (1) significant advances in the philosophical (esp. ethical and epistemic) evaluation of leadership methods. This will come through bringing the resources of a philosophical tradition – particularly ethical and epistemological discussions of rhetorical and dialectical method in ancient philosophy – to bear on how today’s leaders exert persuasive influence. It will also (2) challenge the ancient

philosophical scholarship by subjecting its arguments and recommendations about the exercise of persuasive influence to scrutiny by those closely versed in the actual practice of persuasive influence over others' behaviour.

The workshop will itself represent a major step forward in this area. It is planned as the first of a series of events, to constitute a larger research project, "Leading Minds", and as setting the agenda for what follows. Thus the impact and effectiveness of the workshop will be carried forward in the subsequent project stages.

#### Workshop Objectives (draft)

1. To pilot the pursuit of research questions about the ethical and epistemic propriety of different kinds of uses of discourse (esp. dialogue-based, and using 'rhetoric') through the two disciplines of Ancient Philosophy and modern Leadership Studies. The workshop aims at giving academics in each of these disciplines some visibility of scholarly work on related topics in the other, and promoting interaction between them.
2. To bring both the above approaches into dialogue with senior leadership practitioners.
3. To identify fruitful research areas for the Leading Minds research project, and use these to develop a programme of research workshops 2014-17 for which funding will be sought.
4. To identify key participants suitable to contribute to this research, (i) in Ancient Philosophy; (ii) in Management / Leadership Studies; (iii) in other relevant disciplines (e.g. social psychology); (iv) among leadership practitioners. This is partly about identifying those whose work *within* their own discipline can contribute to this research programme, as well as those capable of working and interacting across disciplinary boundaries.
5. To begin the development of a local-and-international network of academics and practitioners interested in working on discourse and influence, and the ways in which themes from Ancient Philosophy can be brought into illuminating dialogue with themes in Management / Leadership ethics today.