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978-1-107-08518-3 - Intellectual Shamans: Management Academics Making a Difference

Sandra Waddock

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Intellectual Shamans

In traditional cultures, the shaman is the healer, the connector, and the spiritual leader or sensemaker. Today, in the management academy, some individuals use their intellectual gifts to perform a similar role – mediating between various disciplines, ideas, and theories, as well as making sense of ideas, insights, and research for others. This book, based on the work and lives of twenty-eight very well known management academics, describes what it means – and what it takes – to be an intellectual shaman. It is a fascinating insight into the career paths and the sometimes maverick behavior that has allowed these individuals to achieve success. Based on extensive interviews, *Intellectual Shamans* provides both a roadmap to junior scholars and a critique of the current system of academic career progression.

SANDRA WADDOCK is the Galligan Chair of Strategy, Carroll School Scholar of Corporate Responsibility, and Professor of Management at Boston College's Carroll School of Management. She has published ten books and more than 100 papers on topics related to corporate responsibility, multi-sector collaboration, and management education. Her recent publications include *Building the Responsible Enterprise*, with Andreas Rasche (2012), and *SEE Change*, with Malcolm McIntosh (2011).

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For all shamans.

For all the people who inspired me to use their stories.

*For all the intellectual and other shamans in our world whose
stories could not be included.*

For anyone who would leave this world a better place.

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Preface

For what it is worth, I struggled to write this book for several years. Unlike much of my writing, which tends to come easily and without fear, I have been afraid of this work – and that fear has posed multiple obstacles. The fear comes in the form of questions. Can I or anything I write be worthy of the twenty-eight individuals who shared their life stories and insights with me? I am so grateful to all of them, yet incredibly awed by their accomplishments and status in the world of management scholarship. How could anything I write possibly be worthy? The first fear, then, is that of failing to live up to the standards that any one of the people whose stories constitute the content of this book would have set for themselves and their own work.

Then there is the fear of success, coupled with the fear of failure. What if this book succeeds in capturing the thesis that I wanted to capture, that of how the work of intellectual shamans matters to the world – and that more of us, many more of us, need to follow in their paths? ...Followed by the fear of failure. And then what if no one listens? What, as is likely, if nothing changes? Alternatively, what if this work generates the very controversy that I hope it does? Do I have the courage to live with that?

Fears aside, I extend grateful thanks to the twenty-eight individuals who were willing – indeed, in some cases eager – to share their stories and go ‘public’ with them, despite my somewhat odd intuition that they were shamans – or shaman-like – in their approach to their intellectual and other work. I am also thankful for their bodies of work – for the motivation, hope, and inspiration they provide in a troubled world. Most of you are voyagers on much the same path that I tread, and I am indebted to each and every one of you for your commitments and your work, and for the examples you set.

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X PREFACE

No book is written in isolation, and support comes from many corners. Thanks are due to many, at Boston College, in the Academy of Management, and through other connections around the world, especially collaborators on other projects, including ‘difference-makers’ Malcolm McIntosh, Brad Googins, Steve Waddell, and Steve Lydenberg, along with Andreas Rasche (an up-and-coming intellectual shaman at the Copenhagen Business School), Charlie Bodwell of the International Labour Organization, Judy Clair at Boston College, and many others too numerous to name. You all serve as inspirations. Other sources of inspiration are long-term friends, including Priscilla Osborne, Pennie Sibley, Tish Schilling Miller, Margaret Skinner, and Laurie Pant, not to mention my music buddies, Harriet Hart, Peg Espinola, Ellen Schmidt, Jerry Wasserman (now deceased), Ed Loechler, Steve Rapson, Cindy Primett, Dorothea Juno-Johnston, and all the Summer Acoustic Music Week (SAMW) and open-mike crowds. My ‘Way of Power’ group, led by John Myerson, and including Barbara Ferri, Linda Thomas, and Matia Rania Angelou, played no small role in pushing me to find the courage to finally write the book.

Thanks are also due to Paula Parish, at Cambridge University Press, and anonymous reviewers for taking a risk on this ‘edgy’ book. I can only hope that its impact proves worth your support.

Finally, there are two who deserve special mention and thanks. My son Benjamin Wiegner, for his many gifts, including wry humor, intelligence, conversation, and love. And my friend, partner, and lover, Alan Rubin, for being who he is, for friendship, intelligence, and humor, for all the music – and for simply being there!