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Ordinary Aristocrats: The Discursive Construction of Philanthropists as Ethical Leaders

Helena Liu · Christopher Baker

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Abstract Philanthropic giving among leaders is often assumed to be an expression of ethical leadership in both academic and media discourses; however, this assumption can overlook the ways in which philanthropy produces and is underpinned by inequality. In order to extend current understandings of ethical leadership, this study employs a critical discourse analytic approach to examine how the link between philanthropy and ethical forms of leadership is verbally and visually constructed in the media. Based on the analysis, the article demonstrates how the construction of Australian philanthropists as ethical leaders is achieved through their representation via three paradoxical identities: Aristocratic Battlers; Caring Controllers; and Publicity-Shy Celebrities. These discourses are mediated by Australian cultural norms and serve to conceal yet ultimately reinforce social and economic inequality. The article proposes that a critical discursive approach to understanding leadership ethics can help to explore the hidden or adverse effects of ostensibly ethical practices.

Keywords Ethics · Discourse · Leadership · Media · Philanthropy · Spirituality · Wisdom

Introduction

News stories of the philanthropic activities of high-profile leaders have risen to prominence in recent years. International print media have featured cases such as Bill Gates and Warren Buffett's *Giving Pledge*, which has enlisted over 120 billionaires internationally to commit to giving at least half of their wealth to charity since it was announced in 2010 (Goldberg 2014). Australia's own Andrew Forrest joined the *Giving Pledge*, then launched the *Global Freedom Network* in the following year with the aim to end modern slavery (Baker and Liu 2014). Such a trend among leaders appears to counterbalance the equally publicised ethical failures that have dominated business reporting in recent years, including phone-hacking at *News International* and Libor-fixing across the British banks. In the vast majority of the media reports of philanthropy, philanthropists are heralded for their exemplary moral characters.

Complementing popular discourses of philanthropy is a growing body of leadership research that has turned its attention to ethical forms of leadership. This body of research includes literatures around ethical leadership, spiritual leadership, and leadership wisdom, each articulating an explicit ethical component to the practice of leadership and bearing the belief that philanthropy is a vital pursuit of ethical leaders (Bono et al. 2010; Eisenbeiss 2012; Kanungo and Mendonca 1996). Acts of charitable giving on the part of leaders are said to demonstrate their altruism (Kanungo and Mendonca 1996), their commitment to bettering society (Reave 2005; Yang 2011) and their devotion to a higher purpose beyond the interests of themselves or the organisation (Fry and Cohen 2009; Fry 2003).

It is thus a widely held assumption that philanthropic giving is ethical, beneficial and desirable (Kirkhaug 2010). In contrast, we employ a social constructionist approach (Auvinen et al. 2013; Fairhurst and Grant 2010; Humphreys and Brown 2002) to investigate the extent to which the

H. Liu (✉) · C. Baker
Swinburne University of Technology, Mail H23, John St, Hawthorn, VIC 3122, Australia
e-mail: helenaliu@swin.edu.au

C. Baker
e-mail: chbaker@swin.edu.au

relationship between philanthropy and ethical forms of leadership is not simply given, but more complex. Our article stems from the standpoint that ethical forms of leadership are socially constructed and the popular association between philanthropy and ethics warrants closer examination around how it is discursively achieved. Specifically, understandings of philanthropy and ethical forms of leadership are recognised to be shaped by context, where wider sociocultural norms and discourses invariably mediate on what it means to be an 'ethical leader' and 'philanthropist'.

The aim of this article is to investigate how philanthropy comes to be constructed as an expression of leadership ethics through the media. In particular, we are interested in how verbal and visual discourses in print media construct philanthropists in ways that naturalise their association with ethics, spirituality, or wisdom. In order to achieve our aim in this article, we seek to answer the following research questions:

> (1) How are ethical forms of leadership constructed in relation to philanthropists in the media? (2) What visual and verbal devices are utilised in the media representations of philanthropists? (3) How does context inform the media representations of philanthropists?

In order to answer these questions, we conducted an empirical qualitative study with a focus on the media representations of 18 prominent philanthropists in Australia across 16 major national and state/territory news publications. We chose to analyse media texts because we recognise the role of the media as an important arena for the construction of meaning around leadership, philanthropy and ethics (Breit 2010; Chen and Meindl 1991; Fairclough 1995; Takala et al. 2013). By adopting a constructionist approach to the topic, our article makes a contribution to the literatures on ethical forms of leadership by denaturalising and delineating the discursive devices through which philanthropy is constructed in the media as the demonstration of leadership ethics.

This article begins with a review of the leadership and philanthropy literatures and reveals that while philanthropy tends to be uncritically associated with ethical leadership, the wider field of philanthropic studies impels a more critical analysis of how philanthropy often functions to reinforce existing power structures. We follow this with an overview of the research context before our methodology, sample of leaders and methods of data analysis are described. We then present our findings. The final section elaborates on the implications of the findings and offers recommendations for further research.

Ethical Leadership and Philanthropy

Theories of ethical leadership emerged from the late 1990s within the paradigm of post-heroic leadership studies (Parry and Bryman 2006). These theories bore an increased concern with narcissistic and unethical leaders and sought to respond to contemporary perceptions of organisational life as moving towards collaborative, distributed leadership (Parry and Bryman 2006). The paradigm marked the rise of theories with a central focus on the ethical aspects of leadership including ethical leadership, spiritual leadership and leadership wisdom. Common to these three constructs is a view that philanthropy is important to ethical leadership (Bono et al. 2010; Eisenbeiss 2012; Kanungo and Mendonca 1996).

In this context, philanthropy is conceived as the private giving of money or other assets for public purposes (Salamon 1992). This definition excludes corporate philanthropy, which refers to the growing practice of corporations establishing their own foundations and making gifts to charitable organisations (Campbell et al. 2002; Gautier and Pache 2013). Corporate philanthropy often emerges as a part of the corporate social responsibility strategy with the view to fulfil stakeholder expectations and gain competitive advantage (Porter and Kramer 2002; Wang and Qian 2011). Although corporate philanthropy has been linked to managerial values (Choi and Wang 2007), it relates more to organisational strategy rather than the individual-level focus of the ethical leadership literature and is thus beyond the scope of this study.

Ethical leadership as developed by Brown, Treviño and colleagues focuses on empirical examinations of how leaders operate in everyday practice and how others perceive them as ethical (Brown and Mitchell 2010; Brown et al. 2005; Brown and Treviño 2006; Treviño et al. 1998, 2000, 2003). Their research has found that in order to be perceived as ethical, leaders need to demonstrate they are both a strong moral person and a strong moral manager (Treviño et al. 2003, 2000). As a moral person, a leader has to be seen as honest, trustworthy, and concerned for others (Brown and Mitchell 2010). As a moral manager, a leader needs to set and communicate moral standards and enforce them through reward and punishment (Brown and Mitchell 2010).

Philanthropy plays a significant role in the leader's enactment as a moral person. A leader's commitment to charitable giving is believed to demonstrate his or her altruism; a tendency towards helping others without the expectation of personal rewards (Eisenbeiss 2012; Kanungo and Mendonca 1996). Others argue that philanthropic activities reveal values of benevolence and integrity, where leaders possess an intrinsic concern for others and

consistently hold themselves to moral principles (Bono et al. 2010).

At the same time, a leader needs to set and enforce moral standards as a moral manager. Brown and Treviño (2006) applied social learning theory to posit that individuals pay attention to and emulate the attitudes, values, and behaviours of attractive and credible role models. It is thus not enough that leaders privately engage in philanthropy according to ethical leadership theory, but they need to model philanthropic and other ethical behaviours to others to be regarded as ethical (Brown and Mitchell 2010; Brown and Treviño 2006; Treviño et al. 2003). Perceptions of ethical leadership are claimed to be crucial to maintain the long-term reputation of the organisation while restoring confidence in business leadership in an era of corporate crises (Treviño et al. 2003, 2000).

Spiritual leadership considers spirituality to be a fundamental need for both leaders and followers (Fry and Cohen 2009). A spiritual approach to leadership entails creating a vision that offers leaders and followers a sense of calling, and promoting a culture grounded in values of altruistic love where leaders and followers experience membership and mutual respect (Fry 2003). Like ethical leadership, charitable giving is argued to be an important way through which leaders convey spiritual ideals of honesty, integrity, and trustworthiness (Fry et al. 2005; Kriger and Seng 2005; Reave 2005).

Leadership wisdom, the most nascent of the three leadership theories, proposes wisdom as a fundamental principle on which ethical leadership should be founded (Yang 2011). Wisdom theory argues that leadership ought to be exercised for the common good and a better future (McKenna et al. 2009). Leadership wisdom is seen in the practical application of intelligence, creativity, knowledge, or experience for social good (Yang 2011). According to wisdom theory, philanthropy is a key way through which leaders strive to fulfil their social responsibilities beyond the realms of their own organisation (Yang 2011). Wise leaders are said to choose to operate from a perspective of abundance rather than scarcity, which influences more charitable behaviour (Jones 2005). By meeting their philanthropic obligations, wise leaders demonstrate their commitment to not only the financial health of their organisation, but also the betterment of society (Yang 2011).

The existing literature by and large assumes the relationship between philanthropy and ethical forms of leadership to be given. Only a small handful of scholars question the taken-for-granted relationship between leaders' charitable giving and moral character. For instance, Brown and Treviño (2006) point out that high-profile leaders at Enron, Worldcom, Tyco, and Adelphia engaged in philanthropy and developed reputations as civic-minded individuals before they were exposed for their crimes. They suggest the distance between the public and senior executive leaders, especially as mediated through the media, is prone to impression management (Brown and Treviño 2006). Impression management is a process of image building, whereby leaders are said to employ stylistic and rhetoric techniques to bolster their images as competent, ethical and trustworthy (Gardner and Avolio 1998; Goffman 1959). Spangler et al. (2012) suggest that narcissistic leaders are particularly likely to publicly make extravagant philanthropic gestures such as donations to Ivy League universities or carrying their names through the eponymous branding of buildings, scholarships and funds. This seemingly modern phenomenon mirrors the actions of wealthy industrialists of late nineteenth century American industrialists; the so-called 'Robber Barons' such as John D. Rockefeller, Cornelius Vanderbilt, and Andrew Carnegie, who turned to philanthropy at least in part to salvage their own reputations (Josephson 2010).

Meanwhile, the uncritical association between leadership philanthropy and ethics continues to dominate accounts of leadership philanthropy. For example, Chen (2010, p. 33) maintains that philanthropic giving on the part of disgraced executives, including distribution of nearly $10 million by Enron's Kenneth Lay or donations totalling $100 million by WorldCom's Bernard Ebbers, attests to those CEOs' good characters.

Philanthropy and Inequality

Studies on philanthropic giving in the wider philanthropy literature have offered a more critical analysis of how philanthropy can serve to reinforce social and economic inequality (Connell 2002; Livingstone 2013; Morvaridi 2012; Ostrower 1995; Thorup 2013). Following Bourdieu's (2001) work on class and Gramsci's (1971) work on philanthropic hegemony, critical approaches argue that philanthropy is an instrument of the elite class to maintain their status and control (N. Livingstone 2013; Morvaridi 2012). This perspective highlights how philanthropists' economic capital and symbolic capital mutually reproduce one another (Morvaridi 2012). In other words, philanthropy is the conversion of wealth into recognition, prestige and reputation, which subsequently allows the philanthropist to obtain greater wealth (Morvaridi 2012). Symbolic capital also affords the philanthropist greater power and influence in their relationship with the recipient (Morvaridi 2012; Ostrander 2007).

Indeed, it was over 25 years ago when Ostrander (1989) noted that philanthropy does not adequately address the issue of poverty. She argues that philanthropic discourses constructing people in poverty as dichotomised between the

'dependency model' of government programs and the 'independency model' of private philanthropy have acted to justify donor control over the recipients (Ostrander 1989). Concern over donor control is echoed by Odendahl (1989) who points out that by virtue of their wealth, major philanthropists wield disproportionate power within non-profit organisations. Philanthropists tend to assume the decision-making authority about where and how to direct their philanthropic efforts without consulting with their target beneficiaries about how best to address their needs (Odendahl 1989; Ostrander 1989).

Despite these critiques, high-wealth philanthropy and donor control continue to rise (N. Livingstone 2013; Ostrander 2007). Ostrower (1995) found in the 1990s that wealth alone was insufficient to enter the upper echelons of the New York elite, where philanthropy was a critical requirement. More recently, Thorup (2013) observes how billionaire philanthropy has become one of these dominant trends, where high-profile business leaders not only provide significant bequests to charities, but must become personally and actively engaged in charitable acts during their lifetime. On one hand, underpinning this expression of philanthropy is a belief in the inadequacy of state-based interventions and responsibilities, whereby giving directly from the wealthy individual to the recipients is thought to generate "more benefit for beneficiaries" by bypassing government bureaucracies (Morvaridi 2012, p. 1195; Thorup 2013). On the other hand, this trend reflects a growing confidence in the 'over-competent individual'—a leader who has proven his or her financial competence and is now assumed to also be capable of providing 'solutions' to social problems (Thorup 2013).

As it can be seen, the growth of philanthropy among high-profile leaders is grounded in both assumptions of the effectiveness of philanthropy and the capability of the individual philanthropist in solving social problems (Morvaridi 2012; Thorup 2013). This heroic conceptualisation of philanthropy and philanthropists explains the dominant tendency in the leadership literature to associate philanthropy on the part of leaders with their moral character (Bono et al. 2010; Eisenbeiss 2012; Kanungo and Mendonca 1996). However, as critical studies show, philanthropic practice can serve to reinforce economic and social inequality (Livingstone 2013; Odendahl 1989; Ostrander 1989). Although aspects of this inequality have been noted in donor control (Ostrander 2007), how it is concealed and naturalised remains underexplored. We suggest that a powerful way through which the inequality produced by and underpinning philanthropy is naturalised is via the social construction of philanthropy as an act of ethical leadership, and seek to demonstrate in this article the discursive devices through which this is achieved.

Philanthropy in Australia

Compared to the United States and United Kingdom, Australia has had little by way of an entrenched philanthropic tradition (Liffman 2004). In a postcolonial landscape, Australia's civic culture has been observed to be characterised by high expectations of its government and an ambivalence towards excessive private wealth (Liffman 2007). Despite this, changes to taxation law in the early 2000s sought to encourage charitable giving in Australia and as at 2006, Australia ranked fourth in the world in charitable giving, amounting to 0.69 % of GDP (Clegg and Pharoah 2006, p. 13). Although it lagged far behind the 1.67 % in the United States (Clegg and Pharoah 2006, p. 13), giving in Australia overall has continued to increase steadily in the last decade (Hill and Doyle 2011).

In recent years, Australia has seen a spate of high-profile philanthropic giving on the part of business leaders, bringing the prominence of philanthropy to the fore of public discourse. In just the last two years before the study was undertaken, our national media has been dominated by news stories starting with a $20 million donation from John Grill to the University of Sydney in October 2012 (Ferguson 2012, p. 8), followed by $50 million to the Australian National University (ANU) from Graham Tuckwell in February 2013 (Heathcote 2013), which was exceeded still in October 2013 with $65 million to five universities in Western Australia from Andrew Forrest (Hewett 2013b). This series of record-breaking donations combined with other smaller gifts since 2012 totalled more than $220 million, leading to heralds of "a new era of philanthropy in Australia" (D'Angelo Fisher 2013) and suggestions the nation was seeing "real leadership in philanthropy" (Hewett 2013a).

In line with the leadership literature, media reports of philanthropists by and large presume and thereby function to reinforce public perceptions that charitable giving by wealthy leadership figures reflects exemplary moral characters. In the media, dramatic images usually take the place of critical analyses of the leaders' more complex motives or the social impact of their actions. With headlines such as "Forrests' gesture should inspire others to follow" (2013, p. 26), "Social agenda helped by iron ore wealth" (Smith 2013, p. 63), "Every gift makes a difference" (Perkin 2009, p. 21), and "No glamour but all heart" (Browne 2013, p. 2), media representations overwhelmingly reproduced the notion that philanthropy is simultaneously ethical, beneficial and desirable.

Methodology and Data

Discourse Analysis

Our study follows the methodological tradition of discourse analysis; a qualitative, interpretative and constructionist approach that has grown out of the linguistic turn in social science (Alvesson and Kärreman 2000a; Hardy et al. 2004). Discursive approaches to leadership have become increasingly popular as it offers a contextually grounded approach to examine how leadership unfolds via co-created processes between social agents (Fairhurst and Uhl-Bien 2012). Unlike traditional research on leadership, including much of the ethical leadership literature, which takes an individualistic and psychologistic approach (Knights and O'Leary 2006) and accordingly adopts quantitative survey methods discursive approaches to leadership allow the researcher to study how ethical forms of leadership are co-constructed between social agents (Fairhurst and Grant 2010; Fairhurst and Uhl-Bien 2012; Liu 2010; Takala et al. 2013).

Although the term 'discourse' has been subject to interdisciplinary debate, discourse analytic approaches are broadly concerned with the study of 'talk and text' and how this language in use constitutes social reality (Grant et al. 2004; Hardy et al. 2004; Phillips and Hardy 2002; van Dijk 1997). For the purposes of this article, we follow the definition of discourse as a form of social practice that reflects and shapes how we come to understand the world (Fairclough 1992; Jaworski and Coupland 1999). Our focus is on the various discursive devices used to construct philanthropists as ethical leaders in the Australian media. As the recent spate of high-profile philanthropic giving in Australia has shown, dramatic, economically significant phenomena attract intense media attention (Siltaoja and Vehkaperä 2010). Within these events, the media becomes the central arena in which constructions of ethical leadership and philanthropy are produced, disseminated and consumed.

As such, we focus on media discourse, which recognises the important role played by the media in contemporary life as a primary source of understanding of the world. The media is understood as a key site on which the 'shared meanings' which constitute our culture are circulated (Talbot 2007). The 'factual' genre of news strengthens its role in the exercise of power in society (Bell and Garrett 1998). The capacity for the media to privilege certain information, omit other information and construe and constrain meaning through the representation of certain interpretations as 'true' makes the media a powerful medium for the dissemination of leadership images (Fairclough 1989). What is said and equally what is not said can serve to cultivate perceptions of the nature of social reality (Breit 2010; Chen and Meindl 1991; Liu 2010), including the value of 'philanthropy' and what constitutes 'ethical leadership'.

In recognising the issues of power in the production and dissemination of media discourse on high-profile and high-wealth leaders, we position ourselves within the critical tradition of critical discourse analysis (CDA), which focuses on how language-in-use as a social practice gives rise to issues of power (Wodak and Meyer 2009). With CDA's emphasis on the use of language as a social practice, discourse is seen as inextricably linked to context. Discourses are perceived as closely related to predecessor discourses so that they are only intelligible when understood in relation to their wider context (Titscher et al. 2000). CDA allows us to focus on understanding how inequality is mediated by dominant discourses of ethical leadership and philanthropy, and the power relationships that sustain those discourses (Siltaoja and Vehkaperä 2010; Wodak and Meyer 2009). Accordingly, what it means to be an 'ethical leader' is understood as negotiated between social agents through spoken and written language and shaped by the historical and sociocultural contexts (Alvesson and Kärreman 2000b; Fairhurst and Grant 2010; Phillips and Hardy 2002). As such, this approach allows a focus on how language-in-use as a social practice (re)produces and transforms different conceptions of ethical leadership.

In the last 60 years, the media has seen a persistent shift towards 'designing', as opposed to 'writing' texts (Kress et al. 1997). In media reporting of leaders, visual portraits often equally contribute to meaning making as verbal text (Iedema 2007; van Dijk 1997; van Leeuwen 2005). Discursive studies of leadership that have embraced visuals include Guthey and Jackson (2005), who show how CEO portraits represent significant sites for the construction of corporate identity; and Sinclair (2012), who shows how embodied performances of leadership are enacted through portraits. As such, we not only focus on the verbal representations of philanthropists in our analysis, but also take into consideration analysis of how visual representations contribute to the construction of them as ethical leaders.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data for this study were collected from Australian print media and comprise articles on 18 philanthropists, published across 16 major national and state/territory publications. We began data collection via the *Factiva* database with the three philanthropists who had recently dominated the media through their significant contributions to Australian universities: Andrew Forrest; Graham Tuckwell; and John Grill. An initial media search revealed a number of articles in which multiple philanthropists were featured

to showcase the breadth of philanthropic activity in Australia (e.g., Jameson 2010). The philanthropists featured in those articles were added to our sample, and data searching continued in this way until all the Australian philanthropists with significant media coverage to our knowledge were captured in our sample. As some of the philanthropists in the sample only engaged in philanthropy recently (e.g., John Grill, John Kinghorn, and Graham Tuckwell) and others passed away in recent years (e.g., Elisabeth Murdoch [1909–2012], and Richard Pratt [1934–2009]), collected articles were confined to those published in the preceding 6 years (2007–2013) to ensure the historical context of the data is consistent and comparable, while capturing as much media coverage about the philanthropic activities of the philanthropists in our sample as possible.

The database search of all 18 philanthropists found altogether 2,927 results dated within the six-year period. Of these 2,927 results, we selected articles that pertained specifically to their philanthropic activity and obtained 408 articles for analysis. Verbal texts are derived from various sections of the newspapers as well as newspaper inserted magazines and include different types of journalistic writing such as news stories, editorials, and feature stories. Most of the articles were written by the newspaper's own journalists. Our data also includes opinion pieces written by the philanthropists themselves, which highlight the 'hyperagency' (Schervish 2007) of these high-net-worth individuals in shaping public discourse.

In addition to the verbal texts, accompanying visual portraits of the leaders were also collected. This involved cross-referencing all the articles collected via *Factiva* with their respective publications' websites where photographs accompanying the text could be downloaded. In many cases, multiple portraits were included in a single article. 333 visuals were collected on the philanthropists. The 18 philanthropists who comprise the sample of this study and their foundations (where they have one) are detailed in Table 1.

The analysis of the media comprised two stages. In the first stage, the collected articles were coded for ethical forms of leadership among the philanthropists via an iterative process driven by both theory and data. In this stage, a broad reading of the media texts confirmed that the data indeed reflected the theory's a priori specification of philanthropy as a behaviour of ethical leadership (Eisenhardt 1989). Media articles by and large associated philanthropic giving on the part of the business and community leaders as evidence for their altruism, benevolence, and concern for others and society. A closer reading of the data enabled us to code the media texts for the discursive devices utilised in the construction of philanthropists as ethical leaders including common and salient themes and narratives. In line with discourse theory, we attempted to understand how media discourse related to the wider sociocultural context (Fairclough 1995; Phillips and Hardy 2002). In particular, Australian cultural norms were revealed to play a significant role in the construction of ethical forms of leadership among the philanthropists. Consistent with discourse analysis, we highlight the contextually embedded nature of knowledge, but do not seek to argue for essentialist cultural attributes of 'Australian leadership' (Ailon-Souday and Kunda 2003; Jepson 2009; Kwek 2003; Narayan 2000).

Table 1 Sample of philanthropic leaders

Leader	Foundation (where applicable)
Betty Amsden	
Neil Balnaves	The Balnaves Foundation
Allan English	The English Family Foundation
Andrew Forrest	The Minderoo Foundation
John Grill	
John Kinghorn	The Kinghorn Foundation
Frank Lowy	Lowy Medical Research Foundation
Nelson Meers	The Nelson Meers Foundation
Harold Mitchell	Harold Mitchell Foundation
Elisabeth Murdoch	
Sarah Murdoch	
Rupert Myer	The Myer Foundation & Sidney Myer Fund
Daniel Petre	Petre Foundation
Greg Poche	
Richard Pratt	The Pratt Foundation
Jill Reichstein	Reichstein Foundation
Carol Schwartz	Trawalla Foundation
Graham Tuckwell	The Graham and Louise Tuckwell Foundation

The second stage of analysis focussed on the use of visual portraits in the media representation of philanthropists. Gardner and Avolio's (1998) dramaturgical framework was appropriated for the analysis of leaders' portraits, which were treated as still captures from a performance that depict activities of staging, direction, casting, and 'costume'. The dramaturgical framework allowed finer examinations into how a leader's placement (whether the leader is situated in the foreground or background), gaze (upward, downward, left, right, straight ahead), pose (walking, reclining, speaking, laughing, etc.), dress, and the portrait's casting (depicted with others or alone), and scene (office, community, etc.), are utilised to enhance the philanthropist's portrayal as an ethical leader.

Discourses of Philanthropy as Ethical Leadership

The analysis of media texts shows that the construction of philanthropists as ethical leaders is discursively achieved through their representation via three seemingly

paradoxical identities: Aristocratic Battlers; Caring Controllers; and Publicity-Shy Celebrities. In other words, the ethical portrayals of the philanthropists emerge through their representation as cultured and refined yet identifiable with the 'average' working class; influential and interventionist yet entirely concerned with the social good; and illustrious and renowned yet humbly evading the limelight.

For the most part, representations of individual philanthropists in the sample traversed across two or all three of the paradoxical identities. Jill Reichstein, chairwoman of the Reichstein Foundation established by her father, is one example of a philanthropist whose is represented via all three of the identities. Reichstein is portrayed as the "heiress" (Lindsay and Butler 2008, p. 3) to her industrialist father's fortune ("Our heroes philanthropic," 2013) whose opulent lifestyle and residences were showcased in the media when Reichstein and her "sculptor husband" (Lindsay and Butler 2008, p. 3) sold their Melbourne beach house with "sweeping ocean views" (Nancarrow 2007) and "the most amazing sunsets" (Adams 2007) in 2007. However, while Reichstein is described as being "aware she was privileged", media reports claim "she never took that for granted" (Trenoweth 2008, p. 26). She is also quoted as downplaying her family's ambitions, characterising the beach house she sold for $4.6 million as simply a "cute little cottage" when her family purchased it in the 1940s (Adams 2007). In this sense, Reichstein is represented as of an elite pedigree, yet identifiably belonging to a hardworking family who earned their wealth over multiple generations: an Aristocratic Battler. Additionally, narratives of how Reichstein was "fortified by protesting against the Vietnam War and by her involvement with other social causes, [who] had to fight hard 40 years ago to gain control of the charitable foundation established by her late father" (Stensholt 2013, p. 48) and is now "gradually replacing its retiring male board with progressive men and women who shared her vision for change, not charity" (Morris 2010, p. 19) depicts her as a driven interventionalist who ultimately pursues change towards the higher, social purpose of gender equality: a Caring Controller. Simultaneously, Reichstein's prominence in the public eye as a "change agent provocateur" (Stensholt 2013, p. 48) is counterbalanced by the characterisation of her approach as "quiet philanthropy" (Trenoweth 2008, p. 26), suggesting that she would rather humbly evade the media's spotlight: a Publicity-Shy Celebrity.

While Reichstein provides an illustration of the presence of all three paradoxical identities in her media representations, certain philanthropists embody each representation more saliently than others. This section will proceed to demonstrate how each representation is accomplished via a range of visual and verbal discursive techniques, drawing on the most significant examples to illustrate the broader data set.

Aristocratic Battlers

Integral to many of the philanthropists' portrayals in the media as ethical leaders is the construction of their identities as upper-class yet identifiable with the 'battling' working classes. Consistent with Australian cultural norms around egalitarianism, depictions of the philanthropists' lavish lifestyles were frequently punctuated with references to their ordinary, hardworking backgrounds or tendencies. Notably, the construction of the philanthropists' upper-class identities drew on spiritual discourses to equate their cultural nobility and prestige (Bourdieu 1984, 2001) with a sense of higher purpose and 'calling'.

The media representation of upper-class identity focussed on the aesthetic consumption of the philanthropists' exclusive lifestyle (Bourdieu 1984; Garner 2007; Gunn 2005; Skeggs 2004), including travel ("he flits constantly overseas and interstate in his private jet fulfilling board duties", Boland 2011) and beautiful homes ("for 82 years, one of Murdoch's main recreations has been applying her eye for colour, space and form to her garden at Cruden Farm on the Mornington Peninsula, the home her husband bought her as a wedding present", Livingstone 2011, p. 22).

The primary expression of this exclusive upper-class lifestyle, however, was through the appreciation, consumption, and philanthropic support of the arts; particularly classical European forms such as opera, ballet, chamber music as well as contemporary visual arts. For example, Carol Schwartz, who co-founded property business Qualitas and the Trawalla Foundation with her husband, recalls:

> "I was brought up in a household where we were surrounded by the most wonderful art you could be exposed to. We grew up surrounded by discussions about what the art forms were expressing, we were exposed to theatre and music and the performing arts. You'd have to be a pretty amazing individual for an artistic sensibility not to evolve when your role models exposed you to the arts in those ways" (Perkin 2007, p. 1).

The forms of privileged consumption in an upper-class lifestyle are constructed as more than the acquisition of material possessions (a private jet, country home, or theatre tickets), but the development of a unique way of seeing and engaging with the world that Schwartz calls 'sensibility' and Bourdieu (1984) refers to as 'taste'. This (re)framing of material possessions as personal qualities among the philanthropists is one process through which their economic capital is converted into the symbolic capital of cultural

nobility and prestige (Bourdieu 1984, 2001; Morvaridi 2012). According to Bourdieu (1984), the prestige of 'taste' is reflected in one's ability to comprehend culture beyond the superficial sensory elements towards a cognitive decoding of the stylistic properties of the work (e.g., a period, a school, or an artist). As such, individuals demonstrate their cultural competence via the mastery of an implicit aesthetic code (Bourdieu 1984). For Schwartz, this code was constructed as having been tacitly acquired through her early exposure to the arts, which enhances the exclusivity of her mastery (Bourdieu 1984).

Moreover, quotes from the philanthropists construct the arts as essential to life and society: Elisabeth Murdoch proclaims that "the arts are the lifeblood of our lives" (Perkin 2009, p. 21); Harold Mitchell asserts that "the arts is life, we cannot live without art…It goes to the health of society: mental health and wellbeing are about more than basic healthcare. The arts provide community, expression, joy, a whole range of things" (Boland 2011); and Schwartz proffers that "the arts are supported by individuals who see the world of artists as being very important to the way a society operates…It's often the artist who interprets what is going on in society, and who has the foresight and innovation to comment on those things, and who puts them out there for the general community to view and comment upon" (Perkin 2009, p. 21).

This romantic depiction of the philanthropists' elite consumption of the arts is suffused with discourses of spiritual leadership, which function to reinforce their construction as ethical leaders. Spiritual leadership is said to be observed in the behaviours of leaders, such as their engagement in reflective practice like meditation or contemplation that develop positive relationships with others, the self, and a higher power (Reave 2005). In characterising arts in metaphysical terms such as "life" and "lifeblood" in their personal reflections on the role of arts in society, the philanthropists cast their support of the arts as a spiritual endeavour—a 'calling'. Fry (2003, p. 703) proposes calling as one of the essential elements of spiritual leadership that demonstrates "the experience of transcendence or how one makes a difference through service to others and, in doing so, derives meaning and purpose in life". The philanthropists frame their support of the arts in spiritual terms and in doing so, raise the cultural competence linked to their elite class status to an expression of spiritual leadership.

The local vernacular of the 'Aussie battler' refers to an Australian cultural ideal of the 'average' working class individual who humbly maintains a modest existence with honest work (Whitman 2013). The portrayal of philanthropists as 'battlers' serves to highlight their identifiability with 'average' Australians and legitimise their role as champions of the disadvantaged (Whitman 2013; Winter 2011). The simultaneous construction of wealthy philanthropists as 'battlers' was predominantly achieved via 'rags to riches' narratives to highlight the philanthropists' humbler beginnings.

The 'rags to riches' narrative is seen in the case of Harold Mitchell, former founder and CEO of media buying company Mitchell Communication Group. The media relays Mitchell's childhood as the son of a saw miller in the country town of Trafalgar, where his "dysfunctional, poor beginnings…with an alcoholic then absent mother and a knockabout bushman father" (Johnston 2009) is described as the "classic rags to riches story" (Boland 2011) that resulted in his dramatic success ending up on "the [Business Review Weekly] BRW rich list and head of Australia's largest media-buying agency" (Johnston 2009). Similarly, Frank Lowy, founding CEO of retail company Westfield and the Lowy Medical Research Foundation, is well-known for his background as a Jewish refugee: "born in Czechoslovakia, he was a penniless Jewish refugee who had miraculously survived the horrors of Nazi-occupied Hungary and then gone fighting for the establishment of Israel" (Hewett 2010, p. 25) where "his childhood experiences during World War II taught him that sharing was an essential ingredient of life" (Childhood ordeal was a lesson in sharing 2007, p. 5).

Lack of tertiary education is often used as a shorthand for humbler beginnings as seen with Greg Poche, who is said to have "[left] school when he was '14 years and 10 months'" when "his electrician father wanted him to follow in the family footsteps" before he "took an £8-a-week desk job with the NSW railways before resigning to become a builder's labourer" (Meacham 2008, p. 31). His characterisation as one who was "not born into money and is no stranger to life's challenges" (Our heroes philanthropic 2013) is cited to underscore both his identifiability with disadvantaged groups and his humility.

'Rags to riches' narratives extend across multiple generations so that even philanthropists born into the middle-to-upper classes claimed this life story. For example, Andrew Forrest, former founding CEO of mining company Fortescue Metals Group, utilises the collective pronouns "we" and "us" to share ownership of his ancestors' experiences:

> "When we rolled out here on a horse in 1868, when my great-uncle and great-grandfather first came here, little would they have ever dreamed that this could have been achieved, that we would open up four mines in 5 years…We are the typical Australian dream. There's no massive balance sheet here, there's only heart and sweat and tough endeavour that got us here" (Garvey 2013, p. 17).

Similarly, Schwartz is simultaneously presented as having "a classic rags to riches story over three generations", and as being "born into one of Melbourne's most powerful business networks": "the Besens...one of the nation's richest families, best known for founding the Sussan retail fashion chain and for their philanthropic pursuits" (Kitney 2012). For Schwartz, identification as a 'battler' is persuaded through claims of '(witnessing) hard work' and 'not feeling different' from her peers as she proclaims in the same article:

> "I never grew up feeling a wealthy person, because I never had anything different from what my friends had. My parents always worked really hard. My mother was always working for some philanthropic pursuit. My father was always working in business really hard. So I don't think we ever took anything for granted" (Kitney 2012).

Visual depictions of the philanthropists captured their paradoxical construction as Aristocratic Battlers via the juxtaposition of the refined presentation of philanthropists in settings that allude to the lower socio-economic classes. Figure 1 offers an example with a portrait of Mitchell that alludes to his humble background, while signalling to the power he now commands. Mitchell is dressed in a full business suit, juxtaposed against a vibrant graffiti wall, and gazing sternly and intensely at the camera straight ahead. The fabric of his perfectly tailored suit and tie is luminescent under the lights, as is his glittering gold lapel pin, underscoring his wealth and exclusive taste (Bourdieu 1984). His penetrating gaze, confident posture, and rich costume establish him as a man with the proven capability to overcome his circumstances and conquer his environment, and who is at ease with the power and status he has claimed. The symbol of the urban working class is only appropriated here decoratively to enhance the socioeconomic hierarchy Mitchell has surmounted.

Caring Controllers

Despite arguments in the literature that donor control over recipients reinforces the unequal power of philanthropists (Livingstone 2013; Odendahl 1989; Ostrander 1989, 2007), media representations of the philanthropists drew on discourses of wisdom to suggest that increased donor control is a welcome demonstration of their care. This construction of philanthropic identity as both controller and carer is further supported by wider heroic discourses of leadership (Fletcher 2004; Jepson 2009; Parry and Bryman 2006) that naturalise the perception of philanthropic leaders as overcompetent individuals, assumed to be capable of solving social problems by virtue of their wealth (Thorup 2013).

Richard Pratt, former CEO of Visy Packaging Company and founder of the Pratt Foundation, was well-known for his controlling approach in business. Pratt took over his father's paper, packaging, and recycling company, Visy Industries, in 1969 where it had 200 employees and an annual turnover of $5 million (Richard Pratt: From refugee to corporate royalty 2009). Before Pratt passed away from prostate cancer in 2009, Visy employed more than 5,600

Fig. 1 Harold Mitchell in The Sydney Morning Herald, 12 July 2013 (Mitchell 2013)

people and generated over $2.3 billion in annual revenue (Richard Pratt: From refugee to corporate royalty 2009).

Recalling his chairmanship of the Victorian Arts Centre in the mid-1990 s, Pratt is described as being "so hands-on that he ruffled many feathers" because he "was used to controlling his own business and he did not see the arts as being immune from the rules of good business management. He was proactive and aggressively interventionist" (Stewart 2007). Although the article goes on to cite a former friend's accusation that "much of his philanthropy comes with strings attached", where "Pratt is driven by ruthless self-interest in all aspects of his life, including his philanthropy" (Stewart 2007), Pratt's response to the allegation is described as "upfront": "'Of course there is self-interest, it is public relations,' he says. He admits he has at times wondered whether his philanthropy was a 'way of buying respect', but says that in the end 'you don't buy respect, you get respect by giving respect'" (Stewart 2007).

Media representations like this frame "aggressively interventionist" donor control as not only a demonstration of "good business management" and "proactivity" but also authenticity. Pratt's blunt admission of self-interest is cast as an example of his forthright honesty, yet the conclusion of his moment of reflection is that the respect he has attained as a successful business leader and prominent philanthropist is the result of "giving respect". As a consequence, the portrayal of a controlling philanthropist is communicated via the construction of a leader who also exhibits the ethical leadership attributes of authenticity (Gardner et al. 2011), competence (Brown and Mitchell 2010; Treviño et al. 2003, 2000), honesty (Fry et al. 2005; Kriger and Seng 2005), reflection (Reave 2005), and respect towards others (Fry 2003).

In addition to competence, other depictions of donor control are represented via discourses of intelligence to further suggest the philanthropist's influence is ethical, beneficial, and welcome. Graham Tuckwell is the founder of ETF Securities and the Tuckwell Foundation, who in February 2013 made a record $50 million donation to his *alma mater*, ANU, one of the highest ranked universities in Australia (Johnson 2013). Like Pratt, media reports of Tuckwell's donation are replete with references to his business success: "Entrepreneur and philanthropist Graham Tuckwell...invented exchange trade commodities when he launched Gold Bullion Securities in 2003" (Young 2013, p. 18); "Tuckwell...studied at ANU before pioneering a way for commodities to be listed on the stockmarket" (Marszalek 2013, p. 11); "Tuckwell...rocketed into last year's BRW Rich List with a personal wealth reported to be $775 million...made the bulk of his money founding an exchange-traded fund empire" (Macdonald 2013b, p. A001); "he credits his education...most transforming, the Australian National University—with arming him intellectually and socially for life as a global tycoon...His particular brand of business was to pioneer electronically traded funds and exchange-traded commodities—a complex way of buying and selling securities for commodities such as gold through the stock exchange. Hardly Telstra shares for mum and dad investors" (Macdonald 2013a).

Tuckwell's narrative of achieving business success as a result of "inventing" and "pioneering" commodities trading emphasises exceptional intellect, as developed through his "world-class education" (Macdonald 2013b, p. A001), as a core attribute of his leadership. The emphasis on the complexity of his invention, comparing it to the popular blue-chip "Telstra shares for mum and dad investors" serves to stress the exclusivity and superiority of Tuckwell's competencies and further augments his symbolic capital (Morvaridi 2012). While reports of his business success reflect what Jones (2005, p. 364) calls "operational intelligence" that is most likely to be evidenced through economic rationality, Tuckwell's philanthropic venture injects "*real* intelligence" into his media portrayal and thus suggests the presence of wisdom. Media discourses echo the assumption in leadership wisdom theory that Tuckwell's business acumen will seamlessly apply to his social venture (Thorup 2013; Yang 2011).

Where Pratt's interventionalism is described as a hands-on management approach, Tuckwell's control over the university venture is symbolic as well as managerial. After the record donation was announced, ANU revealed that the $50 million will be used to establish 25 "*Tuckwell* Scholarships" valued at $20,000 per annum for up to five years (Students could get $100,000 in new award 2013, p. A003, emphasis added). Under headlines such as "Scholars have done Tuck-well", media reports anticipating the inaugural cohort of "Tuckwell scholars" explicate that they were selected for demonstrating the "Tuckwell values of integrity, humility and generosity, demonstrate academic and social achievement, a commitment to Australia and a desire to 'give back' to the nation" (Yates 2013).

Again, the conversion of economic to symbolic capital can be seen here where the Tuckwell name comes to brand not only the scholarship itself, but the idealised characteristics now intimately associated with the intelligent, reputable, and prestigious Tuckwell. Media reports suggest that Tuckwell sits on the selection panel (Macdonald 2013b, p. A001) and "pledges to make the trip back each winter in order to help vet each new intake of 25 Year 12 students who display the requisite personality traits, and to share his business acumen with the 125 Tuckwell Scholars who shall call ANU home" (Macdonald 2013a). Media representations having established his intellect and business success now treats Tuckwell's wisdom in identifying exemplary students as given. Through the use of verbs such as "pledge",

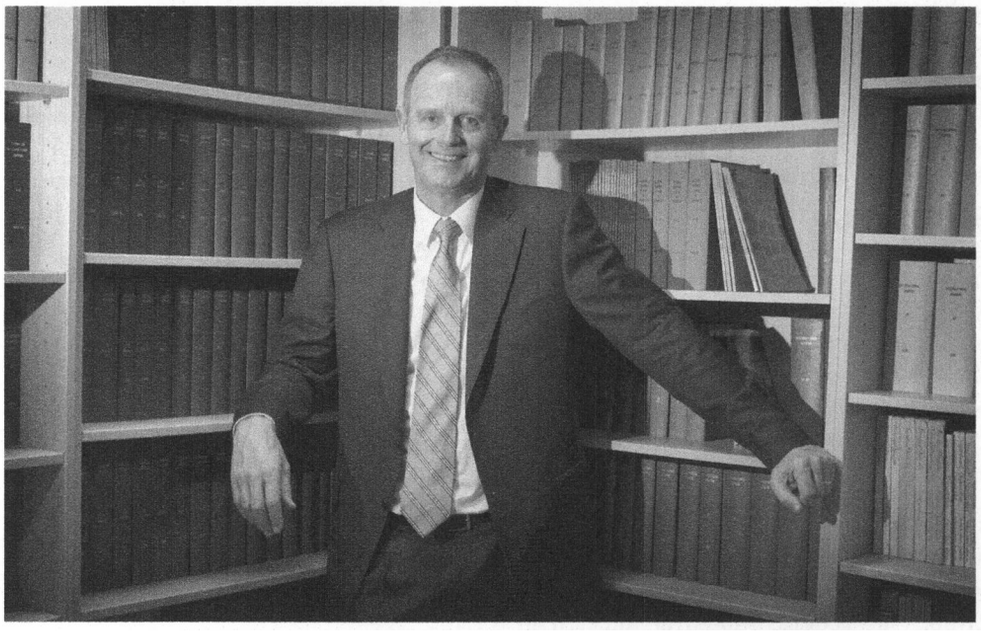

Fig. 2 Graham Tuckwell in The Australian, 13 March 2013 (Hare and Lane 2013)

"help", and "share", the construction of Tuckwell's mentorship underscores his personal dedication to others (Eisenbeiss 2012; Kanungo and Mendonca 1996) and commitment as a role model for not only "academic and social achievement", but ethical attributes of integrity, humility, generosity, and a desire to 'give back' (Brown and Mitchell 2010; Brown and Treviño 2006; Treviño et al. 2003).

The visual representation of the balance between control and care most frequently draws on classic props to enhance their wisdom, such as sitting the philanthropists in a stately armchair on top of a rug. A similar device is seen in the use of books in the background, as demonstrated in Fig. 2 of Graham Tuckwell. The use of the intense spotlight on Tuckwell, flanked by the bookshelves lined with heavy volumes, visually accentuates the intelligence and knowledge that he is constructed to hold. Although Tuckwell is also photographed in a full business suit, it evidently lacks the richness of Mitchell's costume in Fig. 1. Rather, Tuckwell's ensemble suggests him to be more of a business leader and professional than an 'aristocrat'. The emphasis hence is on the knowledge and wisdom that he summons to his philanthropic endeavours.

Publicity-Shy Celebrities

Finally, while lengthy profiles of the philanthropists were frequently featured in the media, this was necessarily combined with articles that stressed the humble and private nature of the philanthropists. The construction of philanthropists as reluctant celebrities resonates with a cultural characteristic more commonly cited in Australia and New Zealand called the 'tall poppy syndrome', which ordains that those who 'stand out' for high ability and success should be 'cut down to size' (Peeters 2004; Sarros et al. 1999; Shields and Harvey 2010). The tall poppy syndrome refers to an alleged cultural aversion to self-aggrandisement and helps explain how while the philanthropists in our study are featured prominently in the media for their charitable activities; media articles expound their self-effacing and publicity-shy behaviours in their construction as ethical leaders.

Greg Poche sold his transport company, Star Track Express, to Australian airline Qantas and the government-owned postal service Australia Post for $750 million in 2003 (Rochfort 2010, p. 2). In 2005, Poche directed $40 million towards a Sydney-based melanoma research centre, the Melanoma Institute of Australia, which comprises a treatment facility named The Poche Centre (Steffens 2011, p. 8). Under headlines such as "The retiring philanthropist" (Meacham 2008, p. 31), Poche is commonly described as "famously shy and wary of any publicity" (Williams 2011, p. 15) who has "never been one for self-publicity" and "would still prefer anonymity" (Meacham 2008, p. 31). Media profiles of Poche relay lengthy narratives from the point of view of the journalists to demonstrate his intense aversion to publicity. Williams (2011, p. 15) describes the scene where she meets Poche for an interview at the Melanoma Institute of Australia:

> "Hanging in the foyer of the Melanoma Institute of Australia is a photograph of businessman Greg

> Poche, looking relaxed and happy. But today, he glances over at it and looks far from either. It wasn't his idea to have the picture put up there—or anywhere, really—but he was persuaded against his better judgment.
> Underneath is the reason why. The inscription describes Poche as having given 'the greatest gift by an Australian to a single cause in our nation's history'—a cool $40 million donation to pay for the setting up of the skin cancer centre that's quickly become a world leader in its field.
> 'But it shouldn't be about me,' he mutters. 'The heroes are the modest geniuses of the institute itself, the dedicated people working so hard to beat this disease and save lives.'"

Poche's reluctance for public recognition is underscored through his ambivalence about being interviewed by the media as evidenced by the apathetic verbs ("glances over", "mutters") describing his actions. Moreover, the article downplays Poche's agency, constructing him as being compelled into the media spotlight ("wasn't his idea", "persuaded against his better judgement"); a theme repeated throughout Poche's media representation: "Poche…has reluctantly blown his cover, persuaded, not altogether convincingly, that the best way to attract other donors to the embryonic project is to talk publicly about the rationale behind his generosity" (Meacham 2008, p. 31) and "Mr Poche is a private person and his initial gifts were made anonymously. However, he was convinced by his friend [Reg] Richardson that going public would lead to more giving" (Dodd 2013, p. 3).

The construction of a private and publicity-shy character is also seen in media articles about Tuckwell, who is described as "an intensely private man" (Marszalek 2013, p. 11) and "a notoriously private character who will not discuss his wealth or family life in public" (Macdonald 2013a). Rupert Myer, heir to the Myer retail fortune, board member of the family endowed Myer Foundation, and Chair of the Australia Council for the Arts, is equally cast as private. As in Poche's case, the media recounts a narrative of how "when *The Australian's* Aaron Francis comes to take his picture, Myer says he would prefer not to have the family portraits—paintings of Myers command the walls of the office reception area—in the frame. He is known as a collector of contemporary art but this, too, is an area he would rather keep quiet" (Westwood 2012, p. 17).

Visual representations of the Publicity-Shy Celebrity are achieved predominantly via the reversal of techniques used to portray Aristocratic Battlers. As Fig. 3 of Poche shows, the philanthropist is now dressed more informally, but still respectfully, in a striped shirt unbuttoned at the top to convey a more relaxed, down-to-earth demeanour. His kindly smile and the hand under his chin suggest a modest character, unconcerned with commanding public attention and fame. The long sleeves cover the wristwatch on his left arm and leave no sign of affluence on Poche's body. In contrast, the background reveals an opulent home with pristine marble floors, ornate vases, a fireplace, white

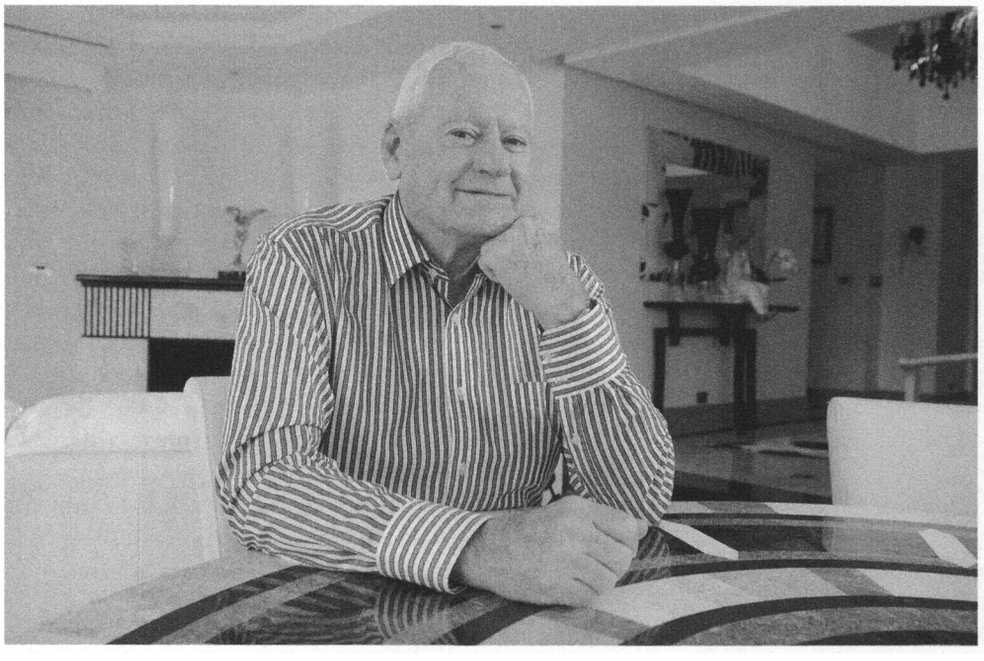

Fig. 3 Greg Poche in The Australian, 30 December 2011 (Williams 2011, p. 15)

leather lounge, and black chandelier. It appears a small child is seated playfully on the table beneath the hanging mirror, but whose face has been blurred out post-production. As such, this portrait of Poche presents him as a down-to-earth family man spending a relaxing day with his family, seemingly unaffected by and disinterested in the lavish surrounds of his wealth and success.

As articles about Poche suggest, our findings show a growing trend in recent years towards philanthropists citing a deliberate decision to step into the public eye about their charitable activities within leadership discourses of inspiring others to follow in their example. Philanthropists like Forrest is said to have "used to donate in private, but wanted to encourage others, whether wealthy or not, to start giving" and quoted to add, "if you are not prepared to stand by it, it almost looks like you are not proud of it...it is about the example it sets in the community. So we decided to give publicly and encourage philanthropy" ("Generous Twiggy's burden of billions," 2013). Neil Balnaves, founder of television production company Southern Star and the Balnaves Foundation, is valorised as "[belonging] to new breed of Australian philanthropists" and said to believe "that we're so far behind the rest of the OECD countries, particularly the UK and the US, per capita [in terms of philanthropic giving], that we've got to raise the profile and put the example out there" (Keenan 2010, p. 12).

The emergence of this notion that public giving is an influential and significant act of "leadership" in the media (Acott 2013, p. 1; Hewett 2013a; Quinn 2007) suggests the link constructed between philanthropy and ethical leadership (Bono et al. 2010; Eisenbeiss 2012; Kanungo and Mendonca 1996) may be strengthening in the Australian context. Moreover, it resonates with Treviño et al.'s (2003, 2000) idea that ethical leadership requires more than private acts of morality, but the public role modelling of ethical behaviours to others. The celebration of high-profile philanthropists and their construction as exemplary leaders more forcefully bolster the symbolic capital of their recognition and prestige (Morvaridi 2012), further contribute to their depiction as over-competent individuals (Thorup 2013), and ultimately justify their growing control over the targets of their funds (N. Livingstone 2013; Ostrander 2007).

Summary and Conclusions

Summary of Findings

The aim of this study was to investigate how philanthropy comes to be constructed as an expression of leadership ethics through the media. Overall, we found through our analysis that media representations overwhelmingly assumed all philanthropic activity on the part of leaders to be ethical. The assumptions underlying media reports resonated with the leadership literature, which by and large treats the practice of philanthropy among ethical, spiritual, and wise leaders to be given (Bono et al. 2010; Fry et al. 2005; Kanungo and Mendonca 1996; Yang 2011).

In answering our first research question, we found that ethical forms of leadership including ethical leadership, spiritual leadership, and leadership wisdom are constructed among the philanthropists via three seeming paradoxical identities: Aristocratic Battlers; Caring Controllers; and Publicity-Shy Celebrities. In other words, portrayals of the philanthropists as ethical are achieved through their representation as cultured and refined yet identifiable with the 'average' working class; influential and interventionalist yet entirely concerned with the social good; and illustrious and renowned yet humbly evading the limelight. The construction of these three paradoxical identities emerges from both verbal and visual discourses. Paradox theory holds that paradox is constructed "when oppositional tendencies are brought into recognisable proximity through reflection or interaction" (Ford and Backoff 1988, p. 89). In leadership research, paradox has been explored in the context of conflicting and contradictory demands of leaders' roles, particularly when they are caught between the symbolic fantasies of leadership and the mundane administrative requirements of managerial practice (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2003; Denison et al. 1995). In this study, paradox offers a useful lens for understanding and problematising how contradictions between philanthropy as both a solution to and an expression of social inequality are brought off in media discourse.

In answering our second research question, narratives of cultural competence combined with discourses of spirituality, and 'rags to riches' life stories facilitated the coherent depictions of philanthropists as both aristocrat and battler. This set of identities was predominantly conveyed visually through portraits that juxtaposed richly-dressed and commanding philanthropists against settings that represented the lower socio-economic classes to highlight their triumph over their humble beginnings.

Discourses of business acumen and intelligence served to reframe donor control as beneficial, welcome, and a sign of the wise leader's care and concern for social good. Visual devices drew on familiar props such as leather armchairs, rugs, books, and dim lighting to accentuate the philanthropists' portrayals as intelligent and wise.

Narratives recounted by journalists of the reluctance of philanthropists to speak with them accomplish the depiction of philanthropists as both celebrities yet humbly publicity-shy. Visual depictions of Publicity-Shy Celebrities reversed the techniques utilised with Aristocratic

Battlers by staging informally dressed, relaxed, down-to-earth philanthropists in a lavish and opulent setting (often their homes). However, our findings suggest the emergence of a new discourse in the Australian media that associates deliberately public acts of charity with 'leadership'. As such, we may potentially see this particular set of paradoxical identities disappear in future constructions of philanthropists as ethical. The prominent and powerful use of visuals to convey these philanthropic identities supports the importance of visual modes of language to the social construction of leadership identity (Guthey and Jackson 2005; Sinclair 2012).

In media constructions, the association between philanthropic giving and ethical behaviour on the part of leaders is rarely directly articulated in terms of reporting around the impact of their 'aid', and even less so accompanied by perspectives from their target beneficiaries. The media texts suggest that the socially constructed link between philanthropy and ethics is nevertheless regularly and consistently implied. This implicit association is grounded in wider glorified discourses of leadership that strengthen our confidence in the 'over-competent individual' and sustain the naturalisation of philanthropists as ethical, spiritual, and wise leaders who are capable of providing 'solutions' to social problems by virtue of their wealth (Thorup 2013).

Our analysis of media texts also highlights the importance of context to the construction of philanthropists as ethical leaders; answering our third research question. Australian cultural norms around egalitarianism and the 'tall poppy syndrome' compel the social construction of philanthropists via three seeming paradoxical identities. These identities essentially frame the philanthropists as identifying with the working classes, wisely tending to the social good, while humble and down-to-earth in the face of their extreme wealth and privilege. The paradoxical identities reflect tensions in Australian culture where our cherished ideals of egalitarianism, the 'fair go' (referring to the notion of universal equal opportunities for success), and taking individuals as they come were historically touted alongside practices of social exclusion and marginalisation (Jayasuriya et al. 2003). In the colonial era for instance, the paradox between egalitarian values and inequality could be observed in the ways Chinese immigration were popularly resisted because it was seen to threaten 'Australian' principles of "equality, fraternity and glorious liberty" (Walker 2003, p. 20). Others have observed that contemporary egalitarian ideals are expressed less in terms of a radical commitment to social equality and more in terms of a broad notion that nobody should be entitled to special status due to their wealth (Peeters 2004). Our findings suggest that discourses of self-sacrifice is one way by which seeming 'tall poppies' could appear to selflessly cut themselves down before they are left open for potential criticism by the media or the public.

In line with the tradition of discourse analysis, our article seeks to develop contextually grounded knowledge, but not to suggest that the three philanthropic identities are essentialised features of Australian culture (Ailon-Souday and Kunda 2003; Jepson 2009; Kwek 2003; Narayan 2000). Although the identities are context specific, we suggest that the analysis allows some form of wider analytical transferability (Lincoln and Guba 1985; Tracy 2010). We believe paradox grounded in dominant discourses of ethical leadership is a transferrable aspect of how media constructions can serve to conceal inequality.

Research Limitations and Further Research

The findings presented in this article ought to be viewed in light of the limitations of the study. By focussing on media texts, we could not investigate the agency of the philanthropists to gauge if and how these wealthy and powerful individuals influenced their own representation as ethical leaders in the media and nurtured the media tendency to romanticise their role and contribution. Nor could we investigate the agency of other social actors potentially involved in the construction of media texts such as newspaper editors, advisors to the philanthropists being covered, and the beneficiaries of the donations being lauded. In-depth interviews and photo elicitation methods could be conducted in the future to better understand how individual portrayals of philanthropists are negotiated between them and the media, and the influence, if any, of beneficiaries who may stand to gain both prestige and wider public awareness from media coverage of the gift/s they receive.

The focus on an Australian data set also limits the inferences that can be drawn about contextual influences. Future research could explore the construction of philanthropists in countries such as the US with a much more entrenched and prominent philanthropic tradition as well as emerging economies where social understandings about philanthropy may still be in their infancy. In particular, it may be insightful to explore the construction of philanthropists in contexts where philanthropy may be for historical and cultural reasons regarded with ambivalence or scepticism. Different contexts may reveal additional or contrasting discourses of philanthropic identity that will extend this study.

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