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## From the Editor

Dail Fields  
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This issue of the *International Journal of Leadership Studies* begins our third year of publication. The journal's continued success is in no small part due to our recently expanded editorial board, whose help has been key in providing critical and useful reviews of submitted articles. I want to express special thanks to Chuck Manz for his insightful help as consulting editor.

This issue contains some of the most interesting work we have seen from international authors from North America and Europe. It includes quantitative studies, theoretical perspectives, and case studies. The leadership contexts range from the boardroom to the basketball court. As always, we include some thought provoking work on the concept of leadership. Thanks to all of our contributing authors as we strive to continue to present a professional and interesting research journal in an online format free of charge to readers.

Authors should take note that the IJLS is now cataloged by Cabell's *Directory of Publishing Opportunities in Management*. We are interested in receiving new work, so bring it on!

## **How Networks Impact the Search for a Mentor: An Examination of NCAA Basketball Coaches and Their Protégés**

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In this paper, we analyze the relationship between an individual's upward career mobility and the size of his or her mentors' networks. We introduce the concept of a protégé network and propose that this concept may be important to career self-managers as they evaluate potential professional relationships with leaders and mentors. The mentors of 318 recently active Division I basketball head coaches were analyzed to determine whether the upward career mobility of these coaches was influenced by the protégé networks of their former mentors. The results of this study indicate that the protégé network sizes of the first and longest mentors are related to an individual's upward career mobility. However, it is the aggregate protégé network size of all mentors that has the strongest relationship with career advancement.

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Throughout the last several decades, the constitution of *career* has changed for employees of traditional organizations. The global economy has forced organizations to be more flexible with flatter hierarchies (e.g., Baugh & Fagenson-Eland, 2005; Hall, 1996; King, 2004). Also, this has come to mean that the psychological contracts between employers and employees no longer include guarantees of long-term employment. Now, most individuals will work for more than one organization and cannot rely on a clearly mapped road to career success (Cappelli, 1999; Dobrow & Higgins, 2005; Hall). These changes can make planning a career in today's labor market a complex and often daunting process. As a result, many individuals are becoming career self-managers (Guthrie, Coate, & Schwoerer, 1998; King), proactively engaging in professional and personal growth activities (Dobrow & Higgins, 2005; Hall) such as finding their own mentors, networking, seeking out new opportunities, and self-marketing (Baugh & Fagenson-Eland). In this paper, we explore what we feel is one of the largest factors that a career self-

manager must consider: how should a career self-manager evaluate a potential leader and mentor?

Leaders (in this paper, we have used the term *leader* to refer to a direct report's supervisor or manager such as a head coach for an assistant coach) play a large part in the success and satisfaction of employees in their roles (O'Driscoll & Beehr, 1994). They are the interface between employees and organizations, thereby helping to shape the cultures and climates experienced by employees (Kozlowski & Doherty, 1989). In many instances, leaders also take on the additional role of being mentors, formally or informally, to their employees (Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000). As mentors, leaders are capable of providing their protégés with access to valuable social capital through their own established professional networks.

Despite the fact that leaders often play important roles in shaping employees' current and future career success, there is relatively little information available to job seekers who wish to measure the mentoring abilities of future supervisors. This paper addresses the importance of assessing the mentoring potential of future leaders as well as suggests one such method of evaluation. Leaders who have engaged in mentoring behavior in the past will likely have former protégés who have subsequently advanced vertically in their careers, achieving traditional career success. We propose that this group of protégés represents an important resource that those leaders can offer potential protégés. Therefore, we introduce the concept of a protégé network, defined as the compilation of a single mentor's protégés who have subsequently experienced upward career mobility. We propose that these networks are meaningful indicators of the mentoring capabilities of leaders and can provide career self-managers with important information that will assist them in making career decisions. Specifically, the existence of a successful protégé network may be an indicator of the value that a leader places on developing the careers of their employees as well as their ability to foster upward mobility. This, in turn, should allow their protégés to gain significant leadership influence. By mentoring people throughout their careers, leaders build unique professional networks over time which can potentially provide greater social capital to all of those located in those networks.

We begin this paper with a review of the mentoring and social network literature to illustrate how the protégé networks of mentors may benefit their protégés. After this theoretical discussion, we develop three exploratory hypotheses that will allow us to test the specific relationships between the mentor's networks and the career mobility of their protégés. Specifically, we utilized data collected from men's collegiate basketball which enabled us to assess which head coaches' (leaders') networks have the strongest relationships with the career mobility of their assistant coaches (protégés). As with employees in other fields, assistant coaches must be effective self-managers in their careers. In the world of collegiate basketball, for example, it would be easy for assistant coaches to set their sights on working for the best-known coaches or the current hot teams. However, we have contended that these choices, in the long run, may not be the most effective strategy for aspiring *future* head coaches (protégés) to develop their own leadership potential. Therefore, an understanding of the relationship between a head coach's protégé network and protégé career mobility may provide important information for making sound career decisions. We conclude the paper with a discussion of the results of the analysis, potential limitations, and the practical implications of our findings.

### **Mentoring Relationships and Social Network Theory**

The importance of mentor–protégé relationships, for individuals and organizations, has been long recognized by both practitioners and organization scholars (e.g., de Janasz & Sullivan, 2004; Kram, 1985) and may be of particular importance given today's career self-management reality (de Janasz & Sullivan). Empirical research has shown that the relationships protégés form with more experienced colleagues give them access to tools that can improve their career satisfaction as well as their career success (Higgins, 2000; Kram; Whiting & de Janasz, 2004). Identifying and evaluating potential mentors are important tasks. While much of the mentoring literature has offered great insight into the importance of mentoring, it often has stopped short of offering practical information regarding how to identify or evaluate a possible mentor (e.g. Baugh & Fagenson-Eland, 2005; Dobrow & Higgins, 2005; de Janasz & Sullivan).

This paper begins to fill that gap by discussing how protégé networks can be used to evaluate the mentoring potential of a leader. Specifically, we have focused on one important dimension of mentoring—sponsorship, the providing of access to connections and networks (de Janasz & Sullivan, 2004). Often, Kanter (1977) has been credited with developing the concept of sponsors. As she described this relationship, sponsors are those who enable their protégés to bypass traditional hierarchies by giving them “inside information” (p. 182) or advice on how to “short-circuit cumbersome procedures” (p. 182). Protégés associated with certain well respected or powerful sponsors may also benefit from a certain amount of “reflected power” (Kanter, p. 182). Sponsorship also has been defined as the giving of public support (Kram, 1985) and the providing of exposure and access to important professional networks (Wayne, Liden, Kraimer, & Graf, 1999). These networks can serve as a critical resource to protégés.

A fundamental hypothesis of most network theories is that the structure of the group (the pattern of who is connected to whom) is as important as the individual characteristics of each of the individuals in the network (Borgatti & Foster, 2003). Within the study of networks, attention has been focused on the affect of social capital (social resources) within the network. The social capital of an individual has been defined as the wealth, status, power, and social ties of those persons who are directly or indirectly linked to that individual (Lin, Ensel, & Vaughn, 1981). People with access to better social resources may obtain better outcomes (Lin, 1982). That is, the organizational positions that individuals hold, and the leader/mentors that they have relations with, can have a large impact on individuals' networks and personal reputations. To some degree, individuals inherit networks by virtue of their formal organizational positions. These inherited networks have the potential to directly and indirectly affect careers (Podolny & Baron, 1997). Research has found that networks shape job mobility (Podolny & Baron), personal contacts are the most frequent method used for finding a job (De Graff & Flap, 1988), and the social resources an individual job seeker evokes have a significant relationship with the status of the job attained (Lin et al.). Direct (strong) and indirect (weak) ties or linkages provide access to people who can provide support as well as the resources these people can mobilize through their own network ties (Adler & Kwon, 2002; Burt, 1992). Individuals who are included in the networks of higher status individuals (such as a mentor or leader) have access to broad ranges of indirect ties that may be useful for future career mobility. According to Granovetter (1973), the value of these indirect ties is in the access they provide to new sources of information as they can bridge groups and increase a network's reach. Accordingly, the more indirect ties people have in their networks, the more valuable those networks are as sources of information (Burt; Podolny & Baron) and as channels through which influences and information may reach individuals (Lin et

al.). Given these benefits of indirect ties, we propose that the ability for individuals to tap into the extended networks via their leaders' protégé networks should help their careers.

With the benefits of access to broad, indirect networks, it is vital for professionals to evaluate potential leaders for their sponsorship potential. Leaders are often very accessible potential sponsors, and prior research has suggested that for those employees who have mentors, direct leaders often play that important role (Ragins et al., 2000). The protégé networks of supervisors are meaningful indicators of their access to important networks and their experience sponsoring past protégés. Mentors with large networks of former protégés who have subsequently advanced in their careers may be considered effective sponsors of those protégés. Further, these mentors typically have ongoing access to their networks of successful former protégés and can make these networks available to their current protégés.

In the following section, we present three exploratory hypotheses that evaluate the impact of mentors' protégé network size on the upward career mobility of professionals. Most individuals have more than one mentor throughout a career (Higgins, 2000; de Janasz & Sullivan, 2004; Kram, 1985). In this paper, we focus on first mentors and longest mentors and, finally, on the total network size for all mentors.

### *Hypotheses*

The first experiences individuals have in new work spheres are likely to have lasting effects on their actions and attitudes. Early experiences in new work situations are often highly stressful, and individuals frequently try to reduce their stress by conforming to the norms and standards they perceive. Many maintain this conformity with early perceptions throughout their careers (Berlew & Hall, 1966). Other literature has shown that early career experiences can dramatically affect later career progress (Rosenbaum, 1979; Sheridan, Slocum, Buda, & Thompson, 1990). As such, the first mentor may provide an important early career experience. While many individuals have more than one mentor over the course of their careers (Higgins, 2000; de Janasz & Sullivan, 2004; Kram, 1985) and each of these mentors may create a lasting impact on a protégé's career, scholars have noted that the first mentor is often particularly important. This first experience can have a significant impact on an individual before that individual experiences broader networks of mentors (Higgins, 2000). As early career experiences, including first mentors, have been shown to have important influences on subsequent career outcomes, we hypothesized that the protégé network size of a protégé's first mentor is positively related to his or her upward career mobility.

H<sub>1</sub>: The protégé network size of a protégé's first mentor is positively related to his or her upward career mobility.

Individuals who work under one mentor for a long period of time are more likely to be affected by that mentor than one they worked with for a relatively short period of time. A longer mentor-protégé relationship allows for trust and mutual understanding to develop (Waters, 2004), and it also allows for more time to connect with those within the protégé network of the mentor. Ibarra (1993) found that longer mentor-protégé relationships are stronger and that the stronger the relationships between mentors and protégés, the greater the likelihood that protégés will develop ties to mentors' network contacts. Therefore, there will be a greater likelihood that the protégés will benefit from direct access to those networks. Accordingly, we would expect to

see a positive relationship between the protégé network size of the mentor for whom the protégé has worked the longest and the upward career mobility for the protégé.

H<sub>2</sub>: The protégé network size of a protégé's longest mentor is positively related to his or her upward career mobility.

As stated previously, many individuals have multiple mentors. Given the dynamic nature of our new economy, people change organizations often and cannot rely on one dyadic relationship for all of their mentoring needs (Higgins, 2000; de Janasz & Sullivan, 2004). Gathering information is also more complex, and understanding the complexity of one's position in multiple spheres of influence necessitates an increasing reliance on large networks of other people. Most individuals find themselves involved in more interdependent relationships than ever before (Hall, 1996). Research has found that an individual's upward mobility can be enhanced by having a large, sparse network of indirect ties which can provide information and resources (Burt, 1992; Lin et al., 1981; Podolny & Baron, 1997). Because so many people must depend on multiple mentors in order to achieve career success and each of these mentors is likely to provide at least some access to their protégé network, we hypothesized that the total protégé network size of all of a protégé's mentors will have a positive relationship to the upward career mobility of the protégé.

H<sub>3</sub>: The total protégé network size of all of a protégé's mentors is positively related to his or her upward career mobility.

### Methodology

Data from NCAA Division I men's collegiate basketball were evaluated to test our hypotheses. While the relationships discussed in this paper could be studied in a number of industries, college basketball was selected for initial hypotheses testing for two reasons. First, NCAA men's basketball teams are labor intensive. A team's success relies almost entirely upon the performance of its coaches and players. Although differences in nonhuman resources do exist across schools (i.e., physical facilities), substantial regulation by the NCAA is generally successful in its attempts to equalize those resources. Additionally, collegiate athletics represent an environment where promotions are typically obtained through migration to different institutional employers. Accordingly, career mobility is dependent on cross-organization relationships, making networks crucial.

### *Sample*

Head coaches of 326 NCAA Division I basketball programs during the 2004-2005 season were identified, and their biographical information was gathered from a number of sources. After the data collection process was complete, any coaches with incomplete data were eliminated from the sample. This included situations in which biographies could not be located or information from the data sources did not provide enough background facts about a coach to gather the information needed for our analysis. As a result, a final sample of 318 coaches was established.

### *Data Collection*

This study utilized archival data on Division I basketball programs. Data were collected from university athletic web sites, leveraging historical information about the institutions' basketball programs and biographies of the current coaches. Data regarding coaching results, tenure, and prior histories were retrieved from the website of the NCAA. A third source of data was the media guides of Division I basketball programs for each of the schools. Finally, data were gathered from the Sports Information Directors at the universities as needed. These individuals were contacted to fill in any gaps after the first three data collection steps.

Next, our data analysis process documented the historical protégé networks for all Division I head coaches. The biographies of all Division I head coaches were used to identify all assistant coaching positions that the head coaches had previously held. This allowed us to build a map that would trace the work history of each Division I coach back to previous mentors. These data were combined with additional biographical data to develop the protégé networks for each Division I head coach. As a result, we were able to determine both the protégé network size developed by each Division I head coach (e.g., all Division I head coaches who had previously worked under them) as well as the employment history of each of the 318 coaches in our sample.

### *Variables Studied*

In order to examine the research questions set forth, a number of independent variables were identified related to the protégé network size for each head coach in the sample. We defined a mentor's protégé network as all historical Division I head coaches who had previously worked for the mentor as an assistant coach at the Division I level. We evaluated network size for the first mentor, the longest mentor, and all mentors combined as independent variables. Each of these variables is a continuous variable.

Three additional independent variables were identified that might impact a coach's opportunities for promotion. These variables relate to prior playing and coaching experience. Each of these variables may account for some of the variance in promotions or promotion rate (Nordhaug, 1993; Sagas & Cunningham, 2005) and are therefore included as control variables.

*High school coaching experience.* Many collegiate head coaches gain head coaching experience early in their career in the high school ranks. Experience as a high school coach may contribute to greater recognition in their field as it reflects diversity in coaching experience. It may also create visibility when other collegiate coaches are recruiting high school players. Their promotional opportunities may be enhanced later, as their high school experience may have helped them to develop broader professional networks. This variable was dummy-coded as a 1 for high school head coaching experience or a 0 if the coach had no high school head coaching experience.

*Prior non-Division I head coaching experience.* Similarly, a new Division I assistant coach with previous experience as a collegiate head coach at a lower level may receive greater recognition and have access to broader professional networks. This variable was dummy-coded as a 1 for collegiate head coaching experience below Division I and a 0 if the coach had no collegiate head coaching experience.



*Alma mater level.* An aspiring head coach's visibility and networking opportunities may be affected by the NCAA division level of their alma mater's basketball program. This independent variable assesses whether undergraduate experience as a player or an assistant coach influences their later promotion opportunities. This variable was dummy-coded as a 1 for a Division I collegiate basketball program or a 0 for a program below the Division I level.

The absolute numbers of promotions as well as the promotion rate of head coaches at the Division I level were evaluated as dependent variables in order to study our hypotheses. The rationale for evaluating both the number and the rate of promotions is that the network size variables may contribute to unique and differing outcomes. For example, the size of the first mentor's network may have an effect on how quickly the aspiring protégé obtains the necessary visibility to ascend to a head coaching position. In essence, the first mentor may kick start a protégés career. On the other hand, as we discussed earlier, a longer mentor–protégé relationship may foster the development of a stronger bond and greater trust which may enhance the protégés access to and visibility within the mentor's network. As such, these types of relationships may dictate not only *whether* a coach gets promoted but how *quickly* he ascends to a head coaching position. An understanding of these relationships, therefore, may enable a young coach to understand the impacts and influences of their chosen mentors at various stages of their career evolution.

*Dependent variable: promotions.* The dependent variable promotions was evaluated in terms of upward career moves in men's collegiate basketball coaching. The approach used by Sagas and Cunningham (2005) and Seibert, Kraimer, and Liden (2001) was adopted here, and promotions were defined as "any increases in level and/or significant increases in job responsibilities or job scope" (Siebert et al., p. 227). Conference strength, which indicates the prestige of a collegiate basketball program, was used as a proxy for comparing job movement between schools within the Division I level of college basketball. Data were obtained from Power Rankings (Greenwell, 2005) and incorporated all the variables included in the rating percentage index (RPI) algorithm as well as additional variables.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, a promotion was counted if it occurred in the following job transitions:

1. A Division I (DI) collegiate head coach moving to a new DI head coach position in a stronger conference, specifically from a DI nonpower conference to a power conference (i.e., ACC, Big East, Big 10, Big 12, Pac 10, SEC);
2. A non-DI collegiate head coach moving to a DI head coach position;
3. A non-DI collegiate assistant coach moving to a DI assistant or head coach position; and
4. A DI collegiate assistant coach moving to a new DI assistant coach position in a stronger conference (i.e., from a DI nonpower conference to a power conference).

*Dependent variable: promotion rate.* The dependent variable promotion rate was evaluated in terms of how quickly the numbers of promotions were obtained at the Division I

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<sup>1</sup> The RPI is a system used by the NCAA to evaluate teams for seeding and selection into the NCAA tournament. The formula for this ranking system has been published by the NCAA. The Power Ratings developed by Greenwell leverages the RPI system but has also incorporated variables that the NCAA does not take into account in its RPI algorithm: game score, game date, and game location.

level. Therefore, this variable was calculated as the number of promotions obtained divided by the total number of years a coach worked to receive those promotions.

### *Data Analysis*

The descriptive statistics for both dependent variables and all the independent variables are provided in Table 1. Correlations and regression analyses were used to examine the relationships between the variables. The correlations displayed pair wise relationships between dependent variables, promotions and promotion rate, and each of the independent variables related to network size: network size of the first mentor, network size of the mentor of longest duration, and total network size of all mentors. Regression analyses were performed to assess how much variance in the dependent variables could be explained by the independent variables. Alma mater level, high school coaching experience, and collegiate head coaching experience below Division I were included as control variables alongside the network size independent variables (first mentor, longest mentor, and total mentor networks).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	<i>N</i>	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
First mentor network size	318	0	22	3.82	4.31
Longest mentor network size	318	0	22	3.80	4.22
Total mentor network size	318	0	42	9.06	8.02
Alma mater level	318	0	1	0.59	0.49
High school head coaching	318	0	1	0.32	0.47
Non-DI collegiate head coaching	318	0	1	0.30	0.46
DI promotions	318	1	5	1.67	0.79
DI promotion rate	318	0	20	6.07	3.83

### **Results**

Results of the correlation analysis show that the three network size variables were all highly correlated with each other (see Table 2). Accordingly, collinearity diagnostics were performed in a regression analysis which included all independent variables regressed against each dependent variable to assess if there were impacts of collinearity on the model. According to Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black (1995), the impact of collinearity can be tested by calculating the tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) values. The tolerance value is 1 minus the proportion of the variable's variance explained by the other predictors. Accordingly, tolerance values approaching 0.0 indicate high collinearity between variables, and values approaching 1.0 indicate low collinearity between variables. On the other hand, small VIF values are indicative of low intercorrelation among variables. In the collinearity diagnostics exhibited in Tables 3 and 4, the tolerance values are all very close to 1.0 for the control variables, indicating very low levels collinearity. However, they are not as high for the three network size independent variables. The tolerance/VIF values indicate inconsequential collinearity if no VIF value exceeds 10.0, and the tolerance values show that in no case does collinearity explain more than 10% of any predictor variable's variance (Hair et al.). As shown in Tables 3 and 4, no VIF value even closely approached the important threshold of 10.0; however, according to the

tolerance values, collinearity appears to explain more than 10% for all three network size variables. Therefore, it appears that there are levels of collinearity between the three network size variables that are not inconsequential.

Table 2: Correlation Results

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Alma mater level	-							
2. High school head coach	-.21**	-						
3. Non-DI head coach	-.16**	.02	-					
4. First mentor network	.08	-.10	-.03	-				
5. Longest mentor network	.04	-.05	-.10	.70**	-			
6. Total mentor network	.08	-.12*	-.13*	.52**	.57*	-		
7. Promotions	.01	-.03	-.09	.12*	.19**	.45**	-	
8. Promotion rate	.07	-.15**	-.33**	.12*	.13*	.23**	-.15**	-

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

Table 3: Regression Model Summary Including All Independent Variables on Promotions

Variable	<i>B</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i> statistic	Collinearity: Tolerance	Collinearity: VIF
(Constant)	1.33		13.94		
Total mentor network size	.05	.54**	8.62	.63	1.58
Longest mentor network size	-.00	-.02	-.25	.44	2.25
First mentor network size	-.03	-.15*	-2.04	.48	2.09
Alma mater level	-.04	-.02	-.47	.93	1.08
High school head coach	.03	.02	-.33	.94	1.06
Collegiate non-DI head coach	-.05	-.03	-.52	.95	1.05

Note.  $R = .48$ .  $R^2 = .23$  ( $p < .01$ );  $F$  statistic = 15.14.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

Table 4: Regression Model Summary Including All Independent Variables on Promotion Rate

Variable	<i>B</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i> statistic	Collinearity: Tolerance	Collinearity: VIF
(Constant)	6.51		13.54		
Total mentor network size	.08	.18**	2.67	.63	1.58
Longest mentor network size	-.03	-.04	-.44	.44	2.25
First mentor network size	.03	.04	.49	.48	2.09
Alma mater level	-.16	-.02	-.38	.93	1.08
High school head coach	1.00	-.12*	-2.28	.94	1.06
Collegiate non-DI head coach	-2.58	-.31**	-5.81	.95	1.05

Note.  $R = .40$ .  $R^2 = .16$  ( $p < .01$ );  $F$  statistic = 9.82.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

Since this study was intended to be exploratory in nature as an initial attempt to examine relatively new considerations related to mentor–protégé networks and given potential multicollinearity challenges in the data set relative to the primary independent variables, the three network size variables were evaluated independently in three separate regression analyses. Since this study was intended as an early effort to explore preliminary network size relationships, analyzing each network variable on its own merit with the dependent variables was deemed appropriate. The regression analyses, conducted for both promotions and promotion rate, also included the three control variables: level of alma mater, high school coaching experience, and collegiate head coaching experience below the Division I level. As noted earlier, each network size independent variable was evaluated separately, thereby producing three separate regression equations for promotions and three separate equations for promotion rate.

Promotions exhibited an adjusted  $R^2$  of .009 ( $F = 1.75, p = .14$ ) when evaluated with network size of the first mentor, .029 ( $F = 3.34, p = .01$ ) when evaluated with network size of the longest mentor, and .20 ( $F = 20.54, p = .00$ ) when evaluated with total network size (see Tables 5 - 7). Network size of the longest mentor ( $\beta = .18, t = 3.25, p = .00$ ) and total network size ( $\beta = 0.45, t = 8.87, p = .00$ ) were significant positive predictors of promotions individually, with total network size displaying the greatest explanatory power.

Table 5: Regression Model Summary – First Mentor

Variable	<i>B</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i> statistic
(Constant)	1.67		16.95
First mentor network size	0.02	0.12*	2.06
Alma mater level	-0.03	-0.02	-0.35
High school head coach	-0.03	-0.02	-0.32
Collegiate non-DI head coach	-0.15	-0.09	-1.55

Note.  $R = .15$ .  $R^2 = .02$ ;  $F$  statistic = 1.75.

\* $p < .05$ .

Table 6: Regression Model Summary – Longest Mentor

Variable	<i>B</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i> statistic
(Constant)	1.61		16.27
Longest mentor network size	0.03	0.18**	3.25
Alma mater level	-0.03	-0.02	-0.29
High school head coach	-0.04	-0.02	-0.36
Collegiate non-DI head coach	-0.13	-0.07	-1.28

Note.  $R = .20$ .  $R^2 = .04$  ( $p < .05$ );  $F$  statistic = 3.34.

\*\* $p < .01$ .

Table 7: Regression Model Summary – Total Mentors

Variable	<i>B</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i> statistic
(Constant)	1.30		13.62
Total mentor network size	0.05	0.45**	8.87
Alma mater level	-0.05	-0.03	-0.57
High school head coach	0.04	0.02	0.41
Collegiate non-DI head coach	-0.06	-0.03	-0.64

Note.  $R = .46$ .  $R^2 = .21$  ( $p < .01$ );  $F$  statistic = 20.54.

\*\* $p < .01$ .

The overall regression equation results were somewhat different when promotion rate was evaluated as the dependent variable. Promotion rate (see Tables 8 - 10) produced an adjusted  $R^2$  of .128 ( $F = 12.67$ ,  $p = .00$ ) when evaluated with network size of the first mentor, .126 ( $F = 12.42$ ,  $p = .00$ ) when evaluated with network size of the longest mentor, and .148 ( $F = 14.74$ ,  $p = .00$ ) when evaluated with total network size. Each of the regression equations exhibited significant results, though total network size exhibited the greatest significant explanatory power in predicting promotion rate. Moreover, while total network size was significant as a predictor variable ( $\beta = .17$ ,  $t = 3.31$ ,  $p = .00$ ), the network sizes of both the longest mentor ( $\beta = .09$ ,  $t = 1.68$ ,  $p = .09$ ) and the first mentor ( $\beta = .102$ ,  $t = 1.92$ ,  $p = .06$ ) were not significant as individual predictor variables of promotion rate at the conventional .05 level.

Table 8: Regression Model Summary – First Mentor

Variable	<i>B</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i> statistic
(Constant)	7.00		15.71
First mentor network size	0.09	0.10	1.92
Alma mater level	-0.14	-0.02	-0.34
High school head coach	-1.10	-0.13*	-2.49
Collegiate non-DI head coach	-2.72	-0.33**	-6.16

Note.  $R = .37$ .  $R^2 = .14$  ( $p < .01$ );  $F$  statistic = 12.67.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

Table 9: Regression Model Summary – Longest Mentor

Variable	<i>B</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i> statistic
(Constant)	7.01		15.48
Longest mentor network size	0.08	0.09	1.68
Alma mater level	-0.11	-0.01	-0.26
High school head coach	-1.14	-0.14**	-2.59
Collegiate non-DI head coach	-2.67	-0.32**	-6.00

Note.  $R = .37$ .  $R^2 = .14$  ( $p < .01$ );  $F$  statistic = 12.42.

\*\* $p < .01$ .

Table 10: Regression Model Summary – Total Mentors

Variable	<i>B</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i> statistic
(Constant)	6.51		13.72
Total mentor network size	0.08	0.17**	3.31
Alma mater level	-0.15	-0.02	-0.35
High school head coach	-1.02	-0.12*	-2.33
Collegiate non-DI head coach	-2.56	-0.31**	-5.80

Note.  $R = .40$ .  $R^2 = .16$  ( $p < .01$ );  $F$  statistic = 14.74.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

## Discussion

The importance of career self-management is increasing as the labor market becomes more complex. Careers today are shaped more by individuals than by corporations (Forret & Dougherty, 2001; Sennett, 1998). Those attempting to build meaningful careers with lasting value will find it helpful to be proactive in making contacts and building networks. These networks can provide them with access to the developmental experiences and resources necessary to build successful careers. In this paper, we introduced a perspective on networking that has not been previously explored, that of the protégé networks to which individuals have access through their mentors. These networks can provide protégés with access to important social resources such as the wealth, status, power, and social ties of the successful former protégés of their mentor (Lin et al., 1981). This study empirically analyzed the relationship between the protégé network size of individuals' mentors and the number of promotions and promotion rate in their careers.

As this paper is the first we are aware of to introduce the concept of a protégé network, we chose to take an exploratory approach in our data analysis. Protégé network size was evaluated in three separate regression equations: for individuals' first career mentors, for the mentors they worked for the longest period of time, and in aggregate for all their mentors combined. Additionally, some key prior professional experiences were identified as potential factors affecting promotional opportunities and were included as control variables. These experiences took into account the competitive level of the individuals' alma maters, whether they coached basketball at the high school level, and whether they coached at the college level below Division I. Correlation and regression analyses were conducted to understand relationships between both dependent variables and each network size independent variable. The results provide empirical insights concerning our overall research question as well as support for the general thrust of our hypotheses regarding the relationship between protégé networks and upward career mobility. In fact, protégé networks exhibited a significant relationship with both promotions and promotion rate.

More specifically, the regression results provide evidence that the predictive power of each network size variable varies in its relationship with the dependent variables. After controlling for alma mater level and prior coaching experiences at both the high school and non-Division I collegiate levels, the total network size for all mentors displayed the strongest predictive ability for both promotions and promotion rate. This supports the third hypothesis that the total protégé network size for all an individual's mentors is positively related to his or her career mobility. The protégé network size of the mentors that individuals worked for the longest

was also a strong predictor of career mobility related to the number of promotions, supporting hypothesis 2. However, this association was weaker in relation to promotion rate. In contrast, while there was a strong correlation between network size of the first mentor and the dependent variables, the predictive ability of the protégé network size of an individual's first mentor was not significant in relation to either promotions or promotion rate. Therefore, hypothesis 1 was not supported.

Previous research has found that the more contacts an individual has established at higher organizational levels, the more promotions and salary increases he or she gain from career sponsorship (Seibert et al., 2001). These contacts can be accessed through leaders' networks. The significant results related to total protégé network size are consistent with Podolny and Baron's (1997) findings that an individual's mobility can be enhanced by having a large, sparse network of indirect ties. It is also consistent with Granovetter (1973) who originally established that indirect ties allow people to reach beyond their small, well defined social circles in order to make connections with parts of social structures not directly accessible. The significant relationships of total protégé networks with both dependent variables also show support for Lin et al.'s (1981) view that social resources have an important association with the status of the job attained and De Graff and Flap's (1988) findings that personal contacts are the most frequent method used for finding a job.

The regression analyses, however, indicate somewhat less predictive strength for the network size of an individual's first mentor as well as the mentor an individual worked for the longest. The high correlations of these variables with upward career mobility may exhibit directional support for Rosenbaum (1979) and Sheridan et al.'s (1990) perspectives that early career experiences can dramatically affect later career progress and Ibarra's (1993) hypothesis that longer durations of the mentor-protégé relationship lead to a greater potential for an individual to benefit from access to the mentor's network. However, these variables' lower predictive power may suggest that the primary benefits that a first mentor and/or longest mentor offer are more intrinsic, providing rewards such as experiential and psychosocial development, rather than extrinsic, such as adding to promotion opportunities.

We surmised from the empirical results that a greater breadth of professional networks provides more extensive visibility to a rising protégé. While the experience working for first mentors may developmentally impact protégés, the breadth of a single mentor's protégé network size may provide more limited visibility than the aggregated protégé network size of several mentors. The same likely holds true for mentors that individuals have worked for the longest. Therefore, the results of this study imply that aggregate protégé network size has greater influence on career mobility than the network of a single mentor. We postulate that the first mentor and longest mentor may provide unique and valuable contributions to the professional development and experience of an individual, thereby improving their candidacy for promotional opportunities. However, it is the aggregate network size of all mentors, with broadly enhanced visibility, that actually creates legitimate promotional opportunities. Hence, while increased visibility and access to large protégé networks opens more promotional doors, experiences with individual mentors (i.e., first and longest) prepare the individual to succeed when opportunity knocks.

As with most studies, this research has some limitations. First, our data were specific to men's collegiate basketball. As such, there are limits on the generalizability of our results to other sports, different levels of sports, or to other nonsport organizational settings. However, while the college basketball setting may entail unique features, prior research using sports

organizations as their primary focus of study has provided valuable data useful to corporate practices (e.g., Bloom, 1999; Goff, 2005; Harder, 1992). In the case of college basketball, many aspects of the culture of the organization are not so different than what is found in many other organizations. Collegiate basketball is, in essence, a service organization. One typical goal of teams is to build brand loyalty (a committed fan base) and win market share (win basketball games to bring in money through sponsorships, ticket sales, etc.), especially at the Division I level. It is also a culture that relies heavily on its network for sharing resources and talent, not unlike the role that networks play within and across many corporate, political, religious, or social organizations. Future research should test the effects of protégé network size on the career mobility of protégés in other settings both within and outside of sports.

Second, we have made some assumptions about the values and behaviors of the individuals included in our study. For example, we defined upward career mobility based on the number and rate of promotions. We also only evaluated vertical movement, promotions that advanced an individual's career as measured by increasing job responsibility and prestige in college basketball. We recognize that success in a career has many dimensions; vertical mobility is only one of them. However, promotions often indicate upward progression in an organization or career and are outward signs of success (Hall, 1996). Those attempting to plan upwardly-mobile careers often need to understand how to reach leadership positions where they can make the greatest impact. While we have chosen promotions as the measure for career mobility in our study, it is not intended to be construed by the reader as the only (or even most important) measure of an individual's entire career success.

Future research could also benefit from qualitative examinations of the nature of the interactions between the assistant and head coach. For example, future research might explore the demonstrated behaviors of those leaders whose protégés were later promoted and analyze whether there are specific mentoring or networking activities that can be associated with the ability to better leverage protégé networks. One recent study (Eddleston, Bladridge, & Veiga, 2004) found that career impatience was related to career success. Is it possible that what sets individuals apart who successfully leverage their mentor's network may be the possession of this personal characteristic or other distinct characteristics that increase the likelihood of promotion? More research is needed to better understand the nature of career promotion as related to network size.

We also acknowledge that not all leaders assume the role of mentor to their employees. While those head coaches who created a large network of successful protégés are likely to have engaged in both developmental and sponsorship activities, it is unknown how formalized these relationships actually were. Therefore, future research should explore whether there is additional value in explicitly designating mentor-protégé relationships or if the benefits of protégé networks are present regardless of the depth and formality of mentoring relationships.

Our findings have clear practical implications for individuals seeking to achieve leadership positions as well as for leaders who value development. For many individuals, there are few things as important as their career. Furthermore, given that a typical person will work for an average of eight employers in many different jobs (Inkson & Arthur, 2001), career mobility is a fact of organizational life today. Many individuals cannot rely on organizational support as they develop effective strategies for creating satisfying careers (King, 2004; Sennett, 1998). Leaders play important roles in shaping the future possibilities of their protégés. This study has highlighted a specific way in which leaders can be instrumental by demonstrating the positive relationship that exists between mentors' protégé networks and the upward career mobility of



their protégés. In addition to being related to promotions and promotion rate, protégé network size may provide insight into the value that a leader places on career development and on helping protégés succeed. Yet, there has been little discussion by scholars or practitioners on the importance of assessing leaders' protégé networks. Individuals seeking new jobs would be well advised to inquire about the protégé networks of potential future mentors to help them gauge leaders' experience with and willingness to develop their protégés.

Mentoring can provide significant value to leaders as well. Protégés can provide technical and psychological support that can help leaders improve their job performance and demonstrate their ability to develop talent within the organization (Ragins & Scandura, 1999). As noted, research has shown that leaders' networks will impact the effectiveness of their organizations (Mehra, Dixon, Brass, & Robertson, 2006). Not only do the networks appear to provide leaders access to resources that facilitate group performance, but they also seem to help secure favorable reputations for leaders in the eyes of their subordinates, peers, and supervisors. Mentoring can also provide benefits such as enhanced self-esteem and self-confirmation (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997). Scholars have posited that helping to educate and develop those who follow in our footsteps can help satisfy our inner desires to lead meaningful lives (McAdams, Hart, & Maruna, 1998).

Given the strength of the relationship between network size and career mobility, it seems apparent that protégé network size deserves additional attention in future research. Career mobility was positively associated with the protégé network sizes of the first mentor; the longest mentor; and, most significantly, the total network size of all mentors. This research is the first to analyze the impact that mentors' protégé networks can have on current and future protégés. While this study was preliminary and much work in this area remains to be done, the results provide initial support for a new area of scholarly research as well as useful insights for career self-leaders.

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## **Understanding the Leadership Role of the Board Chairperson Through a Team Production Approach**

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Current corporate governance recommendations—rooted in an investor-based shareholder supremacy model—often narrowly discuss the issue of board leadership as whether or not there is a separation of the CEO and chairperson positions. In this article, we employ a team production approach to better understand the leadership role of the board chairperson. We argue that effective board performance is driven by the extent to which corporate directors bring relevant knowledge into the boardroom. An important prerequisite, however, is that the knowledge must be actively used. In line with this argument, we contend that the competencies and behaviors of the board chairperson are critical in order to unleash a board's value-creating potential.

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**T**he work of corporate leaders and board members is becoming highly regulated in many parts of the western world. Bankruptcies, corporate scandals, and skyrocketing CEO compensations have led to an increasing number of corporate governance recommendations of how to create effective boards of directors that can execute responsible and value adding corporate leadership. Most recommendations are concerned with what Finkelstein and Mooney (2003) called the *usual suspects*, meaning changes in board size, the number of outsiders on the board, the removal of the CEO from the chairperson position, and the shareholding of the board members. These recommendations are rooted in an investor-based shareholder supremacy model of corporate governance where shareholders are seen as the rightful principals who have the full claim of the residual. The stakes, goals, and power of other corporate actors are seen as constraints. The prescribed changes to protect shareholder interests have been to increase the independence and

integrity of corporate board members and their ability to monitor managerial and firm performance.

The strong emphasis on the usual suspects in corporate governance recommendations has made scholars in leadership and organization behavior somewhat uneasy. Decades of research on boards and governance have consistently shown that changes in the composition and leadership structure of boards do not yield any strong results, either in improving board effectiveness or firm performance (Bhagat & Black, 2000; Dalton, Daily, Ellstrand, & Johnson, 1998; Westphal, 2002). As a result, an increasing number of scholars have started to question the underlying theories and models that dominate the field (Daily, Dalton, & Cannella, 2003; Forbes & Milliken, 1999; Huse, 1998). The most intense critique has come from management scholars, with the argument that the dominating theories and models in corporate governance treat the actual work of the board of directors as an isolated black box. This means that the board's ability to work together as a team has been largely neglected, despite that this is a critical dimension for understanding effective board performance (Huse, 2005). Scholars have also pointed out that boards are particularly vulnerable to interaction difficulties and process losses which risk preventing them from achieving their full value-creative potential. For example, boards are relatively large groups of people who only meet episodically, something which can considerably limit the development of interpersonal relationships and reduce mutual knowledge and skill sharing in the boardroom (Finkelstein & Mooney, 2003; Forbes & Milliken). Among other things, these circumstances call for the need of effective team leadership in order to turn a group of independent board members into an interacting and collective team (Yukl, 1989). However, in contemporary studies of boards and governance, there has been almost no attention to issues such as the social dynamics of board interaction or the leadership skills of the board chairperson (Cascio, 2004). Consequently, the role and relative importance of leadership in the boardroom is a poorly understood phenomenon despite its relevance for both theory and practice.

Based on this discussion, the focus of this article is to examine the leadership role of the board chairperson. We challenge the dominant shareholder supremacy model that argues for independent board structures as the main criteria for effective boards. Instead, inspired by a team production perspective (i.e., Kaufman & Englander, 2005), we argue that effective board performance first and foremost is driven by the extent to which board members bring relevant knowledge into the boardroom. An important prerequisite, however, is also that the knowledge must be actively used and put into action. In line with this argument, we contend that the competencies and behaviors of the board chairperson are critical in order to bring out and unleash the board's value-creating potential (Leblanc, 2005).

In the first section, we briefly outline two competing perspectives for understanding the leadership role of the board chairperson. First, we describe the dominating shareholder supremacy model with its focus on board independence, formal structural recommendations, and separation of CEO and board chairperson roles. Then, we present the team production perspective with its focus on stakeholder commitment and the active use of team members' knowledge. In the second section, we apply concepts from team production and team leadership literature to the context of boards of directors. We identify various leadership roles of the board chairperson, and we argue that the role as a team leader and coach is the most central in order to create a potent team of directors. We continue with identifying characteristics of a constructive boardroom culture, followed by a section on how the board chairperson can lead its team of board members in this direction. It is also emphasized that the board supports organizational value creation by involvement in shaping the firm's mission and strategies. In the third section,

we present the results of an empirical study where hypotheses about board leadership, team production, and board strategic involvement were tested. Finally, we have discussion and concluding sections where implications for theory and practice are presented.

### **Understanding the Leadership Role of the Board Chairperson**

#### *The Shareholder Supremacy Model for Understanding Board Leadership*

The most influential perspective in research on boards and governance is the shareholder supremacy model. In this model, the firm is conceptualized as a nexus of contracts where the central issue is to construct formal rules and incentives (i.e., implicit and explicit contracts) to align the behavior of managers with the desires of shareholders (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). The corporate board members are elected agents in the service of shareholders. Close monitoring and frequent follow-ups by the board are regarded as necessary in order to see that management is conforming to the interests of the shareholders (Fama & Jensen, 1983). Therefore, it becomes important that corporate board members are independent and judgment free from the notion of self-interest in order to effectively monitor company operations.

In the shareholder supremacy model, the issue of board leadership is generally reduced to a question of whether to separate the roles of CEO and board chairperson or not (Rhoades, Rechner, & Sundaramurthy, 2001). The argument behind the need for a separation of the CEO and board chairperson roles is that the board of directors is expected to monitor the actions of top management and evaluate their performance. Underlying this debate is the issue of formal structural power. When the CEO also serves as the board chairperson, the monitoring function is seriously compromised as he or she would monitor and evaluate his or her own performance. In contrast, supporters of CEO duality have argued that the pros for combining the CEO and chairperson roles outweigh the cons as it can create a unity of command that reduces uncertainty and role conflicts in the organization at the same time as it provides a strong focus on company goals and objectives (Davis, Schoorman, & Donaldson, 1997).

However, in any case, findings from empirical research on the performance implications of separating the roles of CEO and board chairperson have been very weak and results seem to depend very much on the context of the study (Daily & Dalton, 1997; Rhoades et al., 2001). From a team leadership perspective, it appears that the current debate centers too much on formal structural recommendations at the expense of what really matters for task effectiveness: the competence, integrity, and constructive involvement of board members working together as a team. Consequently, there has been little focus on the human side of corporate governance (Huse, 2007).

#### *The Team Production Approach for Understanding Board Leadership*

An alternative perspective that has been presented in research on boards and governance is the team production approach (Blair & Stout, 1999; Kaufman & Englander, 2005). In this perspective, firms are conceptualized as a nexus of team-specific assets, invested by shareholders, managers, employees, and others who hope to profit from team production. Team production is production in which several types of resources (information, talents, skills, and visions) are used and where the product is not the sum of separable outputs of each cooperating resource (Alchian & Demsetz, 1972). In a boardroom setting, this means that the productivity of

any board member is greater as a result of the interaction with other board members. As no corporate board member is likely to possess the full complement of information and knowledge necessary to achieve desired goals, working as a team may permit greater productivity than could be achieved by individual board member effort. Thus, team members complement one another rather than serve as substitutes for each other.

The team production approach emphasizes that boards should represent stakeholders that add value, assume unique risk, and possess strategic information relevant for firm operations (Kaufman & Englander, 2005). The joint input of expert knowledge from these constituencies in the strategic decision-making process is key in creating competitive advantage. This team production perspective consequently stands in stark contrast to the shareholder supremacy model where boards primarily are seen as representatives for shareholder interests. The general argument based on the shareholder supremacy model is that there is a need for independent board members, while a team production approach suggests that independent directors may risk damaging the long-term creation of value (Kaufman & Englander). Being truly independent may reduce the contribution of the board of directors to a minimum since it would imply an almost complete distance and detachment from any relations with the firm. The costs of too much independence—in terms of reduced involvement and lack of firm-specific knowledge and understanding that comes from reduced involvement—may seriously compromise the board's value-creating potential (Huse, Gabrielsson, & Minichilli, 2007).

Taken together, in the team production approach, corporate boards are seen as knowledgeable and cooperative teams with the purpose of leading the corporation and coordinating corporate activities. However, if the board of directors should work as an effective team, then the board chairperson must take an active role as a leader in the boardroom (Cascio, 2004). This is a question that goes far beyond the issue whether or not there is a separation of the CEO and chairperson positions. The team production approach consequently highlights the need for skilled and competent board chairperson leadership.

### *Board Chairperson Leadership*

Board chairperson leadership has some specific features that should be highlighted. We will present the leadership role of the board chairperson as compared to the CEO. While the CEO leads employees in everyday company settings, the board chairperson is generally only leader for the board members at the board meetings. The team has few face-to-face meetings and often severe time constraints to work on multifaceted and complex tasks. As pointed out by Forbes and Milliken (1999), these specific situations make boards particularly vulnerable to interaction difficulties and put special demands on how to lead the team in order to carry on its work in an efficient and effective manner. Consequently, the quality of chairperson leadership in the boardroom could be predicted to have a major impact on the effectiveness with which board members perform their duties.

The board of directors is the highest decision-making body in the organization. But, the board chairperson is not at the top of any decision hierarchy as is the CEO. The CEO is mainly responsible for implementation of decisions but also makes some decisions. The board chairperson is responsible for decisions and generally not involved in implementation. A board chairperson can settle things with his or her double vote and can also have some additional tasks compared to the rest of the board members. But, regardless of these possibilities, the board chairperson is part of a team with equal colleagues. Board tasks are not performed only by the



chairperson but are shared by the entire group. This means that the board chairperson, in many ways, has a greater challenge than the CEO in making things happen. The board chairperson has no instruction authority over the other board members like the CEO has over his subordinates, and the chairperson must never forget that the persons on the board are peers. The board chairperson assumes additional responsibilities, not greater authority. This means that responsibility for group effectiveness is not on the chairperson's shoulders and that the control over decisions is not held only by the chairperson but is left to the group. The chairperson must motivate the other directors to work together to make collective contributions. The chairperson should thus perceive the group not as a set of individuals but as an interacting and collective team.

The differences between CEO and board chairperson leadership is summarized in Table 1. In sum, the leadership provided by the board chairperson resembles many of the characteristics of team leadership as described by Yukl (1989).

Table 1: Comparison of CEO and Board Chairperson Leadership

CEO	Board chairperson
Accountable to the board of directors	Accountable to shareholders and a broader set of stakeholders together with the other board members
Responsible for implementing decisions made by the board	The highest level of decision making in the firm together with the other board members
Placed at the top of a hierarchy (formally and socially)	Leads a team of equal peers (formally and socially)
Leads subordinates on a continuous basis, generally with frequent contact with subordinates	Leads board meetings that generally take place with infrequent intervals
Has instruction authority over subordinates	Does not have instruction authority over the other board members
Generally a full-time leader	Generally a part-time leader of the board

### *Different Roles for a Board Chairperson*

Despite compelling evidence that the leadership and capabilities of the chairperson affect the work of the board of directors (e.g., Cadbury, 2002; Leblanc, 2005), the various roles that chairpersons perform are still a poorly understood phenomenon. We argue for various leadership roles of a board chairperson including that of moderator, figurehead, supporter, decision maker, strategist, and coach.

The most traditional role is the moderator. This role means that the board chairperson prepares the agenda before the meeting and then helps discussions stay productive and within the guidelines during the meeting. The role of figurehead refers to the legitimizing and that of

representing the company to external groups and actors (e.g., in contact with journalists and by using his or her network of contacts in a positive and favorable manner for the firm). A third possible role for the chairperson is as a supporter for the CEO. In this role, the chairperson may function as kind of a mentor. The chairperson gives personal advice and contributes with his or her knowledge and expertise. But, if leadership is about creating value and results through other people, none of these three roles requires any leadership skills. They are all tasks that the chairperson can handle alone.

The next two roles are the decision maker and the strategist. Both roles require that the board chairperson interacts with the other board members. But, decision making and strategies can be pursued based on personal interests and agendas, and a charismatic board chairperson can dominate board meetings without any attention to the will and skill of the other board members. However, there is an untapped potential in the last board chairperson role—the role as coach. As a coach, the board chairperson works to derive value creation through the achievement of others. He or she supports the effectiveness of the board as a whole and brings out the potential that is in the board as a team. As Leblanc (2005) pointed out, it is doubtful that a strong, engaged board will have a weak chairperson or that an ineffective board will have a strong and competent leader as the board chairperson. This will contribute positively to achieving performance and transparency in the boardroom.

#### *Board Leadership and a Constructive Boardroom Team Production Culture*

It is important to have a contingency perspective when discussing boards and governance (Huse, 2005). This also relates to board leadership. A company in crisis will demand something different from the board chairperson compared to a company experiencing high growth. A big multinational corporation will require something different compared to a small company operating on the domestic market. There are also different demands depending on the industry in which the company operates. However, irrespective of these differences, there are some general things a board chairperson can and should do in order to create a constructive team production culture that contribute to value creation. A constructive boardroom team production culture can be characterized by cohesiveness, creativity, openness and generosity, criticality, and involvement and preparations (Forbes & Milliken, 1999; Huse, Minichilli, & Schøning, 2005; Stiles & Taylor, 2002). The attributes of the team production culture can be described as follows.

*Cohesiveness.* The board chairperson should contribute to a cohesive culture among the board members. Cohesiveness reflects the ability of the board to continue working together (Forbes & Milliken, 1999). It refers to the degree to which board members are attracted to each other and are motivated to stay on the board. How board members interact will be affected by commonality in attitudes, values, and norms. Board members feel more comfortable working with and are more likely to trust and cooperate with those with whom they can identify. Board members who are attracted to each other will appreciate coming together for board meetings and give very high priority to being a part of the board. Cohesiveness also includes having a good atmosphere at board meetings (Huse, Minichilli, & Schøning, 2005). The board members often experience a higher level of satisfaction than in situations where there is little or no cohesiveness.

*Creativity.* The board chairperson should stimulate creative processes in the boardroom. Creativity may mean that the board as a team is coming up with creative proposals as well as

creative solutions to various problems (Huse, Minichilli, & Schøning, 2005). Individual board members can present issues or solutions that may not be so creative but can contribute to the understanding, reflections, and imaginations of the others, thus triggering creativity.

*Openness and generosity.* The board chairperson should work for creating a culture where all board members are open and generous towards each other. Trust and confidence are built on openness as well as on the willingness of all board members to say what they think even if it may mean being a bit critical of colleagues and their proposals (Stiles & Taylor, 2002). They should be allowed to ask questions to each other and about the firm. Board members, in an open and generous milieu, are willing to give advice based on private knowledge, ideas, and points of view and also accept and recognize that they may be wrong in their considerations. Such an open and challenging interchange among board members is a good indication of board effectiveness.

*Criticality.* The board chairperson should encourage a critical and questioning attitude in the boardroom. This means that the board members will be encouraged to find their own information and carefully scrutinize the information being provided by the CEO (Huse, Minichilli, & Schøning, 2005). It also means that the board will make decisions independent of the CEO. In this respect, criticality can be seen as partly related to the control and monitoring concepts used in the board literature, where board members have the integrity to be independent and ask challenging and discerning questions.

*Preparedness and commitment.* Finally, the board chairperson should contribute to establish effort norms (i.e., standards and structures about preparations, participation, and commitment) (Forbes & Milliken, 1999). He or she should encourage board members to make independent preparations and investigations prior to the meetings (Huse, Minichilli, & Schøning, 2005). To ask relevant questions, proper preparations have to be made; without proper preparations, there is a risk that valuable time will be spent on discussions about irrelevant figures rather than important facts. Team production also requires participation and commitment. Board members must participate in the meetings and be committed during discussions and debates. Without proactive commitment, the board will not reach its full potential.

### *How to Create a Constructive Team Production Culture in the Boardroom*

Every board chairperson faces the challenge of how to create and maintain a constructive team production culture in the boardroom. What can a board chairperson do to stimulate these processes? Based on previous literature and research (e.g., Bloch, 2005; Cascio, 2004; Furr & Furr, 2005; Huse, 2007; MacAvoy & Millstein, 2003), at least some board leadership attributes and skills stand out as especially important and critical.

Clearly, a board chairperson must lead discussions in the boardroom and have the ability to formulate proposals for decisions and summing up conclusions. Board chairpersons have the primary responsibility of informing the other board members, and they must help board members focus on issues that are important and on the risks facing the corporation (MacAvoy & Millstein, 2003). However, setting the agenda is not only a matter of distributing papers on time; setting the agenda also includes setting the style and tone of board discussions to promote effective decision making and constructive debate (Huse, 2007). As a team leader, the board chairperson should be able to build consensus among board members. This means that the board needs a leader whose

primary task is to help the entire board in designing and carrying out decisions. By doing this, the board chairperson can turn the independent board members into an interacting and collective team.

Leading meetings are not enough. To create a team production culture, the board chairperson must also have the ability to motivate and use the competence from each board member, and they need an open and trustworthy leadership style. Chairs consciously or unconsciously have various leadership styles (Huse, 2007). The leadership style of the chair affects board processes and outcomes because the board is a social system that contains a mix of personalities and relationships (Cascio, 2004; Furr & Furr, 2005). It is the task of the chairperson to meld the board into a cohesive group. To achieve this, chairpersons must demonstrate leadership which infuses enthusiasm into other board members both individually and collegially. This means that the board chairperson must inspire the other board members to be active and productive team members.

In addition, it is also important that the chairperson have the ability to communicate and work with the CEO, and the chairperson should take an active part in setting the board agenda and managing the information flow to the board (MacAvoy & Millstein, 2003). He or she should also continually work to develop the working structures and processes of the board and be well prepared for the board meetings (Huse, 2007). This includes thinking through each meeting beforehand and anticipating alternative input and reactions from the various board members.

To conclude, in this section, we have argued for the role of board chairperson leadership in creating a constructive team production culture. Our review of previous literature and research suggests that some team leadership attributes of the board chairperson seem to be critical to enhancing the team production culture among the board members. From this discussion, we can formulate the following hypothesis:

- H<sub>1</sub>: Positive team leadership attributes of the board chairperson are positively related to a constructive team production culture in the boardroom.

### *Board Effectiveness and Strategic Involvement*

A constructive team production culture in the boardroom can strengthen the roles and contribution of each team member and enhance the boards' ability to be involved in shaping the firm's mission and strategies (Kaufmann & Englander, 2005). A better understanding of the roles and contribution of each team member can moreover facilitate active involvement and commitment by all the members of the board (Demb & Neubauer, 1992). Thus, a constructive team production culture may support the effectiveness of the board as a whole and bring out the potential that is in the board as a team.

Board effectiveness is about how actual board task performance meets board task expectations (Huse, 2005). Various coalitions of stakeholders, in this respect, may have different and conflicting expectations on board tasks (Huse & Rindova, 2001). From a team production perspective, the consequence and responsibility for corporate board members will be a need to actively work together and use their knowledge and skills collectively to create value for the company as a whole and not only for certain coalitions of stakeholders (Blair & Stout, 2001; Rindova, 1999). Effective boards add value and contribute to the direction and performance of the firm by their involvement in strategic decision making (Forbes & Milliken, 1999; Judge & Zeithaml, 1992; Rindova). Experienced directors bring important and specialized know-how and

expertise into strategic decision making, something which is required for engaging in serious deliberations with management as well as evaluating multiple decision options (Kaufmann & Englander, 2005). When the directors work together as a team, the board enhances its collective efforts and decision-making abilities. In effect, the result of this effective team production is that proprietary know-how can be created and sustained over time. The team production perspective suggests that boards' involvement in strategic decision making is critical in order to assist the firm to create value and sustain competitive advantage. In line with these arguments, we will use the board's strategy involvement as an indication of board effectiveness.

Involvement in initiating and formulating strategic decisions means shaping the context, content, and conduct of strategies and not only ratifying monitoring strategic decisions (McNulty & Pettigrew, 1999). Among other things, this enables the protection of stakeholder interests through problem identification and problem definitions in the early stages of the strategic decision-making process (Rindova, 1999).

To conclude, in this section, we have argued for boards' involvement in strategic decision making. Board involvement in strategic decision making, however, requires active engagement by the members of the board. Our discussion suggests that a constructive team production culture within the board can be expected to have a positive influence on the board's involvement in the strategic decision-making process. From this discussion, we can formulate the following hypothesis.

- H<sub>2</sub>: A constructive team production culture in the boardroom is positively related to the board's involvement in the strategic decision-making process.

### **Empirical Study**

In this section, we present the results of an empirical study in which our hypotheses about board leadership and team production were tested.

#### *Information about the Sample*

To test the hypotheses developed in this article, we designed the empirical study as a questionnaire survey. The measures were derived from a careful review of previous theoretical and empirical work on boards of directors, and several large scale pretests were conducted. In order to explore the leadership role and behavior of the board chairperson, we used responses from board members not holding the positions of CEOs or chairpersons. Questionnaires were sent to board members in firms where we had data from another survey about board task performance from 973 CEOs. The data collection took place in Norway with firms registered in Norway. The survey had responses from firms of different sizes, large as well as small. The surveys were conducted in 2005 - 2006. We received responses from 698 ordinary board members from approximately 320 different firms. An understanding of actual board behavior depends on the perception of each individual actor. Each board member response was treated as a case representing his or her individual view of reality.

An examination of responding cases compared to the initial sample shows that the responding cases included more responses from larger firms than very small firms. The boards from which we have responses are more active than the boards from which we do not have responses. Small firms in Norway have fewer board members generally speaking; for many

small firms, the boards are only formal bodies (Huse, 1990). In these firms, our survey questions were not seen as appropriate.

### *Measures*

This section presents the variables used in the study. The items underlying each variable have been developed based on prior theoretical and empirical work by Huse (1993, 1994, 1998, 2005) and Gabrielsson and Winlund (2000). Board strategic involvement was measured as the mean of four items on a seven-point Likert-type scale ( $\alpha = .81$ ). This measure was based on responses from CEOs and gauged boards' involvement in each of the four stages in the strategy: initiation, ratification, implementation, and control. Board team production culture was developed in two steps. First, five variables were each constructed as the mean of three items on a seven-point Likert-type scale, corresponding to the five dimensions of boardroom team production culture presented in the literature review: cohesiveness ( $\alpha = .83$ ), creativity ( $\alpha = .77$ ), openness and generosity ( $\alpha = .84$ ), criticality ( $\alpha = .81$ ), and preparedness and involvement ( $\alpha = .80$ ). These five dimensions were then put into a combined measure of board team production culture ( $\alpha = .80$ ). We used this two-step approach in order to balance the weight of the different characteristics. This measure was based on responses from board members. Board chairperson leadership was measured by the mean of seven items on a seven-point Likert-type scale ( $\alpha = .74$ ). This measure was based on responses from board members.

In addition to the main variables, we also included four control variables in the research model. The first control variable was the total number of employees as reported in the last annual report. This variable was included as larger firms can be expected to have higher board involvement in strategy (Fiegener, 2005). Due to a skewed distribution, the firm size variable was transformed using a logarithmic transformation. The second control variable was a measure of the technology level of the company. This variable was included as board members in high tech firms were expected to more actively contribute with their firm-specific knowledge to encompass the technological intricacies of the firm's products, production, and technology (Forbes & Milliken, 1999; Kotz, 1998). We did not categorize the technology level of the company according to ISIC codes; this categorization can be misleading (Grinstein & Goldman, 2006). Instead, we used a coding made from CEOs indicating if the company was involved in high-technology production (1) or not (0). The third and fourth control variables were count variables about the number of corporate board members serving on the board. Previous research has pointed out that the number of corporate board members is associated with board effectiveness and board performance in a nonlinear way (i.e., Forbes & Milliken). The slope is initially positive as the number of board members increases but becomes negative as the number becomes excessive. To control for this, we constructed two binary variables based on the total number of directors on the board. One dichotomous variable thus indicates small boards (up to 4 corporate board members). Another variable indicates large boards (8 or more corporate board members).

### *Analysis and Results*

Our variables and data allowed us to test the hypotheses by multiple linear regression analyses. A description of the variables used in the analysis (correlations, means, and standard deviations) is displayed in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Matrix, Means, and Standard Deviations

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
1. Strategic involvement	5.2	1.5	-						
2. Team production culture	5.0	.85	.13**	-					
3. Firm size (LN)	4.6	1.8	.16**	.01	-				
4. High tech firm	.37	.48	.17**	.09*	.29**	-			
5. Small board (1-3)	.09	.29	-.08*	.01	-.26**	-.08*	-		
6. Large board (8+)	.25	.44	.15**	.03	.47**	.19**	-.19**	-	
8. Chairperson leadership	5.0	.85	.13**	.53**	.07	.04	-.05	.06	-

As can be seen in Table 2, all correlation coefficients are less than  $r = .70$  which, according to Nunnally (1978), is the standard threshold used to determine high correlation. Moreover, explanatory variables in both regression analyses had variance inflation factors (VIFs) between 1.0 and 1.4. Hence, we have no reason to suspect that there are any problems of multicollinearity in our dataset.

To be able to identify the separate effects of the control variables and the independent variables, we included our variables in different steps. First, we entered the control variables (step 1). This step is presented as equation I. Then, we included the three variables (step 2). This step is presented as equation II. The results of the final multiple regression analyses for both dependent variables are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Regression Analyses

Variable	Team production culture		Board strategic involvement	
	$\beta$	<i>F</i>	$\beta$	<i>F</i>
Step 1				
Firm size (LN)	-.02		.10*	
High tech firm	.10*		.14**	
Small board	.03		.05	
Large board	.04	1.68	-.02	7.38**
Step 2				
Firm size (LN)	-.04		.10*	
High tech firm	.09		.13**	
Small board	.01		.04	
Large board	.06		-.02	
Chairperson leadership	.54**	49.12**	-	
Team production culture	-		.13**	7.95**

Note.  $R^2 = .01$  for step 1 (team production culture);  $R^2 = .05$  for step 1 (board strategic involvement);  $R^2 = .30$  for step 2 (team production culture);  $R^2 = .06$  for step 2 (board strategic involvement).

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

As can be seen in Table 3, the final regression analysis for our first dependent variable shows that none of the control variables is significantly associated with a constructive team production culture. The final regression analysis for our second dependent variable shows that firm size and high tech firms are positively associated with board strategic involvement. The positive association between firm size and board strategic involvement corroborate arguments in previous research that board strategic participation is not common practice in the smaller firms (Fiegener, 2005). In addition, the positive association between high tech firms and board strategic involvement suggest that firms in high tech environments have more active involvement from board members (Forbes & Milliken, 1999). The results suggest that future research into board strategic involvement should at least include measures of firm size and firm involvement in high tech as contingency variables.

It is shown in Table 3 that our hypotheses are supported. As predicted in hypothesis 1, there is a positive and significant relation between board chairperson leadership and the team production culture in the boardroom ( $p < .01$ ). Moreover, as predicted in hypothesis 2, the team production culture in the boardroom is positively related to board involvement in the strategic decision-making process ( $p < .01$ ). Overall, the results give ample support for the leadership role of the board chairperson in creating an effective team of directors.

### Discussion of Results

In this article, we have explored the leadership role of the board chairperson in a team production approach. We have identified various leadership roles of the board chairperson and argued that the role of a coach is important in order to create a productive team of directors. We have also identified characteristics of a constructive team production culture in the boardroom; and, based on literature and research, we have suggested how the board chairperson can lead its team of board members in this direction.

Our approach and study is novel. Few studies have explored boards from a team production and leadership perspective. However, our empirical results clearly support the hypothesis that positive team leadership attributes of the board chairperson are positively related to a constructive team production culture in the boardroom. We have also argued for board involvement in strategic decision making as a criterion for board effectiveness. Board strategy involvement can enhance the firm's value-creating capabilities (Rindova, 1999) and improve firm performance (Judge & Zeithaml, 1992). In line with our second hypothesis, the empirical results suggest that a constructive team production culture is positively related to the board's involvement in the strategic decision-making process. The findings, consequently, imply that team production and team leadership in the boardroom may be critical features for the creation of effective boards of directors.

### *Implications for Theories of Boards and Governance*

The aim and focus of this article should be seen in light of recent developments in corporate governance research. Traditionally, research on boards and governance has been rooted in an investor-based shareholder supremacy model, emphasizing formal structures and paying limited attention to processes and relationships inside the boardroom (Gabrielsson & Huse, 2004). There is now a development in the field with scholars rapidly moving away from abstract input-output models and, instead, showing an increasing interest into the role of



leadership and behavioral dynamics in the boardroom (Huse, 2005). Two complementary streams of research seem to have influenced this development. The first stream of research has explored, mostly by semiinductive research designs, actual board behavior and has opened the black box of the boardroom in order to understand conditions for effective governance (e.g., Gabrielsson & Huse, 2004). The attention has been particularly directed towards the interactions and activities of board members and how they gain trust in each other through experience and shared social connections (Huse, 1998; Westphal, 1999). The other stream of research has argued, from a much more strict theoretical point of view, that business organizations should be conceptualized as a nexus of team-specific assets invested by shareholders, managers, employees, and others who hope to profit from team production (Blair & Stout, 1999). In this team production perspective, effective corporate boards ensure that board members have the requisite know-how to replicate and consolidate the corporation's wealth-producing team (Kaufman & Englander, 2005).

Interestingly, results from both these streams of research point towards the need to see effective boards as cooperative teams comprised of diverse members reflecting the core capabilities of the firm. Both research streams also point towards the critical importance of effective leadership in the boardroom where a skilled and competent leader can ensure that the characteristics of an effective team are present. Building on these two streams of research, this study incorporates behavioral studies of boards and governance (Huse, 2005) with a team production approach (Blair & Stout, 1999). The result is a novel approach for understanding the role of the board chairperson in creating an effective team of directors. Based on these contributions, we believe that our study is an important step in research that seeks to better understand the role of team production and team leadership in corporate governance.

### *Practical Implications*

The arguments in this article may have some implications for understanding board chairperson leadership. The findings suggest that it is not enough to be moderator, figurehead, mentor, decision maker, and strategist. If the board of directors should work as an effective team, then the board chairperson must take an active role as coach and team leader in the boardroom. The empirical results emphasize critical leadership attributes (e.g., the ability to motivate and use the competence from each board member, having an open and trustful leadership style, working very well together with the CEO, and working continually with developing the working structures and processes in the board). Together, these leadership attributes are helpful for creating an effective team of directors.

The importance of the identified team leadership attributes warrants explicit articulation that board and board chairperson effectiveness goes hand in hand. The chairperson should support the other board members and bring out the potential that is in the board as a team. He or she must have an open leadership style that allows for robust levels of discussion with contributions from all board members. The board chairperson should put effort into creating a common purpose, commitment, a set of rules, plus roles and responsibilities for the team of directors. All board members are there to contribute to the direction and performance of the company. It is the task of the board chairperson to see that this also becomes a reality.

### *Limitations*

Some limitations of the present study should be mentioned. First, in our study, we have used a simplified model. We have used overall summarizing variables about board leadership, constructive board team production culture, and board task performance. More detailed and specific relationships are expected to be found when using more specific variables (e.g., those being used in the construction of our overall summarizing variables) (see also Huse, 2007; Huse, Minichilli, & Schøning, 2005). Second, we present a study of the leadership role of the board chairperson based on a sample of board members in firms registered in Norway. Conditions for board membership in Norway may be different compared to other national settings. In short, Norway is a small open economy which makes Norwegian business people highly exposed to international discussions and trends in corporate governance. Additional studies in different contexts should be done to test the robustness of our results. Third, despite that we have multiple respondents for some boards, we did not examine the consistency or agreement among the multiple respondents where they occur. The level of agreement about leadership and the perception of a team production culture among board members is an interesting issue to examine further. Fourth, the board chairperson leadership variable used in this study is still highly exploratory. However, this also calls for future research to work on refining and developing the scale. At best, this may lead to a standardized measure of board chairperson leadership which exhibits acceptable reliability and validity across contexts in the future.

### **Conclusions**

Taken together, dominant theories of board and governance have not explicitly acknowledged the leadership role of the board chairperson. Most studies have emphasized the board's formal leadership structure at the expense of guidelines for how to improve the competence, integrity, and constructive involvement of directors working as a team. Most of the time, the critical issue of board chairperson leadership has been reduced to questions about whether the CEO should be removed from the chairperson position or not. On the other hand, the few studies that have been conducted on the actual content and process of board leadership have been largely descriptive and without strong conceptual foundations. Although we fully recognize the contribution of previous studies, we think the arguments and empirical findings in this study contribute to an emerging behavioral perspective on boards and governance (Huse, 2005) based on theoretical assumptions from the team production approach (Blair & Stout, 1999; Kaufman & Englander, 2004). Hopefully, future research will use these insights to add to our knowledge of how team production and team leadership in the boardroom may contribute to organizational value creation.

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## Appendix

## Measures\*

*Board Strategic Involvement*

(Questions answered by the CEOs): Please rate to the extent you agree with the following statements (1-7):

The board has the last year with great authority been involved in the following tasks:

- making proposals on long-term strategies and main goals.
- making decisions about long-term strategies and main goals.
- implementing decisions about long-term strategies and main goals.
- monitoring and following up decisions about long-term strategies and main goals.

*Board Team Production Culture*

(Questions answered by board members): Please rate to the extent you agree with the following statements (1-7):

*Cohesiveness*

Our board members value very highly to be together at board meetings.

Our board members have a very good internal atmosphere at board meetings.

Our board members prioritize very highly to be part of this board.

*Creativity*

All our board members are actively involved in discussions at the board meetings.

Our board members present many creative and innovative proposals during the board meetings.

Our board finds many creative and innovative solutions.

*Openness and generosity*

Our board members accept and include the risk that they can be wrong in their suggestions.

Our board members willingly give advice based on personal knowledge, ideas, and points of view.

Our board members openly and freely convey their own personal preferences and values.

*Criticality*

Our board members are very active in finding their own information in addition to reports from management.

Our board members are asking critical questions to proposals initiated by the management team.

Our board members are asking critical questions to information presented by the management team.

*Preparedness and involvement*

Our board members prioritize enough time to their board mission in the company.

Our board members are always available when board work is required.  
Our board members are always well prepared for the meetings.

*Board Leadership*

(Questions answered by board members): Please rate to the extent you agree with the following statements (1-7):

Our board chairperson

- is very skilful in formulating proposals for decisions and summing up conclusions.
- is very skilful in leading discussions in the boardroom.
- is very skilful in motivating and using the competence from each director.
- has an open and trustful leadership style.
- works very well together with the CEO.
- works continually with developing the working structures and processes in the board
- is always well prepared for the board meetings.

\*Translated from Norwegian

## **Shared Leadership: A Postheroic Perspective on Leadership as a Collective Construction**

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Within the field of leadership practices, there is an emergent movement towards viewing leadership in terms of collaboration between two or more persons. At the same time, traditional literature on leadership and organization theory has been dominated almost exclusively by the perspective that leadership is something that is exercised by a single person—the idea of unitary command (Pearce & Manz, 2005). This has been challenged by the theoretical perspective of postheroic leadership, of which one practical consequence is to view leadership activities as collective rather than individual. In this paper, we argue that by shifting perspective from viewing leadership as a single-person activity to viewing it as collective construction processes, we will see new patterns in how leadership is exercised in practice. Thematic data from four qualitative case studies of organizations are presented. A discussion towards future research agendas where the articulation and questioning of the foundations of leadership practices and leadership research are central to the development of postheroic leadership ideals concludes the paper.

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Within the field of leadership practices, there is an emergent movement towards viewing leadership in terms of collaboration between two or more persons. Increasingly, the public debate recognizes states, corporations, and organizations as led by several persons rather than by a single charismatic person, a “Great Man” (Reicher, Haslam, & Hopkins, 2005, p. 550). What seems to be the claimed reason for this is that organizational leadership is a complex and exhausting job that demands too much of single individuals and that shared leadership is a way to broaden the competence and personality bases of management and relieve each other from time to time. It is a search for leadership perspectives that enable people in modern society to actually work with leadership without sacrificing everything else in life, perspectives that may also enhance the legitimacy of leadership in a society that raises serious moral doubts concerning the content and consequences of modern management practices.

Leadership has always been discussed both in terms of (a) what leaders do or should do to lead and (b) what makes others follow them. Therefore, new leadership ideals must include



more reflecting issues where leaders themselves find it possible to go on with their current way of living despite vast responsibilities and where leaders and followers share a view of leadership practices as legitimate both in terms of effectiveness and morality. In our own earlier studies, we have seen examples of both dual and collective leadership in several enterprises, and we have also seen how individuals may go beyond taken-for-granted identity bases in society (such as the single hero entrepreneur) through articulation and reflection (Lindgren & Packendorff, 2003).

At the same time, traditional literature on leadership and organization theory has been dominated almost exclusively by the perspective that leadership is something that is exercised by a single person—the idea of unitary command (Pearce & Manz, 2005). Later developments in these fields have emphasized cultural values, visions, and leadership as interactions between leaders and led (Bryman, 1996; Küpers, 2007; Meindl, 1995; Smircich & Morgan, 1982). What still has been rarely challenged is the notion of leaders as one single person or the notion of leadership as something that is exercised by a single person, notions that also shape leader's identities in society. The idea of unitary command, thus, is still strongly contributing to the ongoing construction of leadership in society and the ongoing construction of leaders' and followers' selves. Leaders as well as followers (terms that in themselves represent dualistic and dichotomous identity constructions) incorporate such taken-for-granted assumptions and make them a part of themselves and their ongoing interaction with others. For example, Hatch, Kostera, and Kozminski (2006) have studied interviews with influential CEOs published in *Harvard Business Review*, a journal with a significant impact on managerial culture. Analyzing what kind of stories are told by the leaders, they found out that the large majority were epic stories, stories where a heroic individual succeeds in achieving a desirable goal despite all the obstacles along the way. Therefore, both in the literature and in organizational practice, it seems to be impossible to speak of leadership without speaking of leaders. The question of whether leadership functions really need to be performed by leaders seems to be unexplored. Accepting the need for leadership has meant accepting the need for one leader, directly implying a differentiation between leaders and followers on a power dimension (Vanderslice, 1988). As Gronn (2002) pointed out, the main difficulty with the taken-for-granted dichotomies leader–follower and leadership–followership in organization theory is that “they *prescribe*, rather than *describe*, a division of labor” (p. 428). Using dichotomies helps us to make sense of the world, but problems arise if this means excessively simplifying complex relations and interdependent processes to simple binary opposition (Collinson, 2005). One has almost automatically assumed unitary command as a natural perspective on leadership, in the same way entrepreneurship research has assumed the notion of single individuals as the natural perspective on entrepreneurship.

Several of the most acknowledged studies on leadership have explicitly had this perspective, such as Carlson (1951) and Mintzberg (1973) who both followed single CEOs in order to understand what leaders do and what leadership is all about. The same perspective can also be found in formal and informal regulations and practices in society in the notion that only a single person can be held accountable for a defined economic area of responsibility—a notion with far-reaching consequences for those seen as leaders and what is seen as leadership in the modern corporate world. Such a notion is also supported, at least in Sweden, by the legislation concerning different business areas. Even if, in most of the cases, these rules do not represent an absolute ban on two persons sharing, for example, a managerial position, it appears clear that one single person is preferred. Clearly identifiable responsibilities, more uniform practices, and a simple command structure are some of the arguments used in favor of the single-person managerial position (Öman, 2005).

Insofar contemporary leadership research can be seen as an important influence in the ongoing construction of leadership ideals and practices in society, the question of what basic perspectives guide this research should be more than only a theoretical interest.

In this paper, we will start out by discussing the theoretical roots of the unitary command perspective. Following that, we will argue that all leadership can be seen as processes of interaction between several individuals. By shifting perspective from leadership as a single-person activity to collective construction processes, we will see new patterns in how decisions are made, how issues are raised and handled, how crises are responded to, and so forth.

We will then present qualitative data from four case studies of organizations which, on the surface, are organized by unitary command but where the everyday construction of leadership and leader identity is a collective one. The leadership in these organizations is seen as ongoing construction processes where leaders, expectations on leaders, idea generation, decision making, and arenas for leadership are continuously negotiated and reformulated over time (cf. Smircich & Morgan, 1982). In the four organizations (two independent schools, a private theater company, and a nonprofit music industry), we find different processes of construction of leaders and leadership. A discussion towards future research agendas where the articulation and questioning of the moral and ideological foundations of leadership practices and leadership research are central to the development of postheroic leadership ideals concludes the paper.

### **Beyond the Unitary Command Perspective**

#### *Historical Overview of Leadership Theory*

Looking for the origins of the scientific study of leadership, we can see that modern leadership theory started to emerge during the decades of the Industrial Revolution when leadership was first given attention by economists (Pearce & Manz, 2005). At that time, the concept of leadership was centered on command and control. With the beginning of the new century, the principles of scientific management (Taylor, 1911) became dominant in the management and leadership field. The idea of distinguishing between managerial and worker responsibilities implied that the command-and-control idea was reinforced with management giving orders and providing instructions and workers following them.

Reviewing leadership theory, Bryman (1996) broke down its history into four main approaches that have been dominating at different times: the trait approach, the style approach, the contingency approach, and the new leadership approach. The main focus of leadership research has thus shifted during the years, partly due to inconsistency in research results within each approach and the consequent need to find better models.

Early researchers focused on finding those personal characteristics and qualities that differentiate leaders from nonleaders—the trait approach. Such an approach was prevalent until the late 1940s and regained importance in the 1980s in a revisited form. The focus was then put on the follower's expectations of the ideal leader's traits—implicit leadership theories (Lord, De Vader, & Allinger, 1986). People were recognized as leaders depending on how well they fit the follower's conceptualization of an ideal leader.

The style approach, prominent until the late 1960s, moved the focus to leaders' behavior, for example, by defining two components of leadership behavior, one characterized by concern with people and the other characterized by the clear specification of what followers are expected to do (Bryman, 1996). Not even this approach to the study of leadership died with the advent of

the next approach—the contingency approach. On the contrary, studies searching for the best style or traits were still performed at the same time as these ideas played an important role in the education of future leaders (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

The contingency approach, popular until the early 1980s, abandoned the idea of a best way of being a leader and recognized the importance of the context by focusing on the relationship between situational variables and leader effectiveness. Finally, in the more recent new leadership approach, the leader is seen as the manager of meaning, the one who defines organizational reality by means of articulating a vision for the organization (Bryman, 1996; Smircich & Morgan, 1982). Transformational leadership, charismatic leadership, and visionary leadership are some of the terms used to describe this new leadership ideal.

### *The Institutionalization of the Unitary Command Perspective*

Leadership has been conceptualized as a matter of influence exercised by a leader on a group towards a specific goal (Bryman, 1996). Such a one-way process has been enlarged to a more diffuse activity with leadership being defined as management of meaning (Smircich & Morgan, 1982). Even though both influence and meaning management can be seen as interactive processes enabling organizing, the focus has remained mostly on single individuals.

In fact, at the beginning of modern leadership theory, the emphasis was on a vertical leadership, in other words, leadership as command and control. The contribution of Fayol and Weber in Europe can be considered important for strengthening the image of an individual leader granted top-down authority based on command and control (Pearce & Conger, 2003).

General management theory then expanded from its base in scientific management through inclusion of psychological and sociological theory and through new understandings of the environment in which managerial activities were performed; leadership theory expanded as well. As in the trait approach, early explanations of leadership effectiveness were based on the notion that leaders possess certain psychological traits and personal characteristics that distinguish them from ordinary people. These theories are all individualistic in the sense that they focus on the individual leader, thereby supporting the general taken-for-granted assumption that leadership is a single-person task.

As described, later developments came to emphasize effective leadership as a question of leadership behavior in relation to specific situations. Moving the focus from individual characteristics to what leaders actually did in different contexts and situations, new insights were gained that pointed at the importance of choosing the right leader for the situation at hand. Thereby, researchers could also distinguish between different leadership styles in terms of effectiveness. Nevertheless, such approaches often are focused on formal leaders still, excluding the study of informal processes going on in organizations.

During recent decades, there has been an increasing interest in viewing leadership as a social process where leaders emerge from groups over time as they come to personify what it means to be a member of that group at that point of time. As is often the case in management theory, this development is both based on theoretical advancements and on changed values and practices in organizations. Thus, a processual view of leadership is not only a consequence of a search for new and better conceptual and methodological tools for the understanding of leadership but also of the new knowledge-intensive economy where neither people nor information can or should be controlled in the way they used to be. But, even in this new brave world of visionary, idea-based, or charismatic leadership, the notion of individual leaders still

seems to persist. The leader is now not only the one who leads and give orders but also a symbol and source of inspiration. As Mintzberg (1999) put it, “We seem to be moving beyond leaders who merely lead; today heroes save. Soon heroes will only save; then gods will redeem” (p. 4). As a consequence, most research has been concerned with senior leaders rather than with the study of the organizing processes going on in the whole organization.

Pearce and Conger (2003) listed some quite recent theoretical contributions that have in some way paved the way for a new model of leadership, what they have called shared leadership. Some of the contributions are team–member exchange theory, leader–member exchange theory, self-leadership, followership, and empowerment. These contributions give the possibility to enlarge the study of leadership and involve more people in it. But, even when the focus is moved from formal leaders to their coworkers and the latter ones are recognized as important actors for the emergence of leadership (e.g., when implicit leadership theories are considered), there is still little research on the leadership processes or collective acts of leadership that are not performed by formal leaders alone. Such research would focus not only on individuals’ perception of leadership but also on the process itself. Leadership processes could be defined as processes in which emergent coordination and change are constructed (Uhl-Bien, 2006). There is a need also for more research on how these processes are made sense of through social interactions, not only in the followers’ minds, and on how they contribute to the construction or reconstruction of the leadership ideal and the organizational context.

If leadership theory seems to take the unitary command perspective for granted, the same can be said where general organization theory is concerned. Despite the search for new, postbureaucratic organizational forms that acknowledge both the pace of change in the marketplace and the new values held by the young generations, still, managerial posts are treated as single-person assignments. People must know who is in charge and who to hold accountable.

To sum up, the unitary command perspective lives on in good health, although it has never been scientifically proved that it is always the most effective form. Individual leaders are still used to personify companies and countries, and most new management books treat leadership as something that is exercised by single individuals. In the same vein, the theoretical language of the field seems to incorporate the new environment for leadership activities through reusing old concepts rather than inventing new ones, thereby affirming the notion of heroic, individualist leadership. One prominent example of this is the recent stream of literature on charismatic leadership (Conger, 1999) where an old Weberian concept for exceptional, radiant leaders has been used to portray today’s relational, democratic, and trustful leadership styles. At the same time, in the practical world, we can see a development where leaders in all sectors are met with skepticism and contempt, and where young talents pursue other career forms than the managerial ladder.

### *Sharing Leadership in Practice: Why and How?*

Looking back at Western history, the fact that leadership is shared is not something new. Rome had two consuls in ancient times and, during a period, also a triumvirate (Lambert-Olsson, 2004; Sally, 2002). The main reason for these collective institutions was to avoid concentrating power in only one person’s hands. In the same way, in some countries (e.g., the United States), the legislative, executive, and judiciary powers are divided and assigned to different institutions. However, this is not necessarily the main reason for sharing leadership in an organization. The main arguments presented by both researchers and practitioners are summarized in Table 1.

Before discussing them, it is interesting to reflect on the fact that an idea (that of sharing leadership) that most of us almost spontaneously tend to reject has indeed already been applied in different historical contexts.

From an individual perspective, concepts like heroic leadership are used to discuss the romantic conception of leaders as heroes who positively transform organizations and individuals (Pearce & Manz, 2005) and the consequent inhumane workload for the modern manager. Sharing leadership can fulfill the need to enable him or her to live a balanced life (Döös, Hanson, Backström, Wilhelmson, & Hemborg, 2005). From a coworker perspective, modern decentralized ways of organizing—through high-performing teams rather than through bureaucratic command structures—is one of the arguments used (Lambert, 2002; Pearce, 2004; Walker, 2001).

From an organizational perspective, referring to established theories on group composition and role complementarity, it is also usual to describe managerial tasks as requiring several different individual roles or functions at one and the same time (Denis, Lamothe, & Langley, 2001; Miles & Watkins, 2007; Yang & Shao, 1996). For example, two different personalities or competence areas completing each other are common for those forms of leadership that are not formally regulated but that are shared in practice. It can be the case of tight collaboration between a CEO and the chairman of the board or the CEO and the COO or of a coach and his collaborator in a football team, as with the Swedish couple Sven-Göran Eriksson and Tord Grip. Likewise, the cultural and media sectors are full of dual leadership models (de Voogt, 2005; Lambert-Olsson, 2004). The format of having an emotional leader and a task leader has been an arrangement used in famous international corporations such as Microsoft, HP, Boeing, and Intel (O'Toole, Galbraith, & Lawler, 2003). Shared leadership also has been described as a better alternative than a single leader when an increasingly complex world requires top management competence profiles broader than what can be expected to be found in one single person or when companies are dealing with very complex technologies that make the communication between technical and nontechnical persons difficult (O'Toole et al.; Pearce, 2004; Waldersee & Ealgeson, 2002). If two coleaders would work together for a period of time, they could develop a common language and understanding (Sally, 2002). Teamwork in projects and discourses of team members' empowerment seem also to set the premises for sharing leadership within groups. Some research (quantitative) has been done on particular types of teams, as product development or change management teams and the degree of shared leadership has been claimed to be related to team effectiveness (Pearce & Sims, 2002).

From a societal perspective, one of the arguments is that shared leadership can help prevent immoral actions since the coleaders can control each other and discuss the appropriateness of their actions (Lambert-Olsson, 2004).

Table 1: Summary of Arguments in the Literature in Favor of Shared Leadership Practices

Perspective	Arguments found in the literature	References
Individual perspective (shared leadership as a way of enhancing the lives of those who work in managerial positions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solo leadership consumes people, and there is a risk for high level of stress and anxiety.</li> <li>• Enhanced balance of work requirements and personal responsibilities/private life.</li> <li>• Better sense of security and stability in decision making and implementation.</li> <li>• Enhanced possibility to learn having the coleader as an example and as a feedback giver.</li> <li>• More enjoyable work.</li> </ul>	Döös, Hanson, et al. (2005); Fletcher (2004); Holmberg & Söderlind (2004); Sally (2002); Wilhelmson (2006)
Coworker perspective (shared leadership as a way of enhancing the correspondence between employee expectations and actual organizational practices)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people are used to working in teams with some degree of shared leadership. When they rise to higher organizational levels, they are more likely to want to continue sharing leadership and resist traditional solo command.</li> <li>• Expectation for coleadership created by the experience of living in modern (at least Western) family models where both parents participate in decision making, reinforced by experiences of working in teams.</li> <li>• Young employees expect more democratic leadership in modern organizations.</li> </ul>	Bradford & Cohen (1998); Lambert (2002); Pearce (2004); Sally (2002); Walker (2001)
Organizational perspective (shared leadership as a way of enhancing leadership effectiveness)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single-person leadership cannot reflect and handle the environmental complexity facing most organizations. Several different competences, skills, and roles are required.</li> <li>• Communication between professions can be enhanced through mutual leadership.</li> <li>• Shared leadership means that more parts of the organization and different interests can be represented at the same time at a managerial level. One consequence can be facilitation of change processes.</li> <li>• Both stability and change can be represented by a dual leadership, thereby facilitating organizational change.</li> <li>• Lower risk for suboptimal solutions if the leadership of an organization is truly shared by the management team.</li> <li>• Less vulnerability in the case of leader absence or resignation.</li> <li>• Coleaders can have a larger span of control together and more time for their coworkers and for reflecting on the strategy and the basic values for their unit.</li> <li>• Organizations can avoid losing young interesting leader candidates because of stress associated with leader posts.</li> <li>• Organizations can benefit from the cognitive and behavioral capabilities of a larger number of individuals.</li> </ul>	Bradford & Cohen (1998); de Voogt (2005); Denis et al. (2001); Holmberg & Söderlind (2004); Miles & Watkins (2007); O'Toole et al. (2003); Pearce (2004); Pearce & Conger (2003); Pearce & Sims (2002); Sally (2002); Waldersee & Ealgeson (2002); Wilhelmson (2006); Yang & Shao (1996)
Societal perspective (shared leadership as a way of maintaining and increasing the legitimacy of leadership and management)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When power is too concentrated, it may result in immoral and/or illegal actions taken by individual leaders struck by hubris.</li> <li>• Shared leadership increases the possibility of including minorities into managerial positions, thereby increasing the legitimacy of leadership.</li> </ul>	Lambert-Olsson (2004)

When this literature refers to actual empirical experiences, it is usually in the form of successful instances of shared leadership (usually from top management settings) and practical advice on how the coworking leaders shall distribute tasks, roles, and information amongst each other, as well as which premises are necessary in order to make things work (e.g., O'Toole et al., 2003; Wilhelmson, 2006). Researchers have searched for which elements may contribute to the occurrence of shared leadership (Wood, 2005). Some authors have maintained the continued need for traditional vertical unitary command in many situations; shared leadership is primarily suitable for tasks characterized by reciprocal interaction, creativity, and complexity (i.e., advanced teamwork situations) (Pearce & Manz, 2005).

Despite the presented promising premises, there are not many organizations explicitly implementing forms of shared leadership today (e.g., O'Toole et al., 2003). On the other hand, there is evidence that this form of leadership is informally already in use in companies. This is, for example, the indication provided by recent surveys made in Sweden among managers that showed that most of them were positive to introducing shared leadership and that approximately 40% of them already shared leadership in some way (Döös, Hanson, et al., 2005; Holmberg & Söderlind, 2004). Despite the large interest, the number of formal coleaders is still very limited, and the new model has not had the big impact researchers expected it to have. One possible reason could be that the understanding of leadership as an individual trait and activity is well rooted in our culture. We speak of Mohandas Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. as great leaders, but we tend to forget the team of people on which they relied (O'Toole et al.). Large corporations are personified by their formal leaders; the focus is on them. Moreover, people in Western cultures seem to need to identify one single individual to be responsible for the performance of a group. We are instinctively reluctant to accept that two persons can share this responsibility, in the same way as we can be skeptical of the capability of two or more persons to make quick and clear decisions together when necessary. Even those practitioners who have shared a leadership position seem to point out that not all situations are appropriate for sharing leadership. For example, leading an army or coaching a football team are tasks for a single person, according to Lambert-Olsson (2004). On the other hand, there are also coleaders witnessing to the decision-making benefits from shared leadership. Having the coleaders seriously and deeply discuss visions for their group, basic understandings of their role, and the approach to their activity, decisions can be made quicker and are better grounded (Döös, Wilhelmson, & Hemborg, 2003; Holmberg & Söderlind, 2004). Leaders' confidence in the decision made is also increased. In summary, positive experiences of sharing leadership are not missing, but explicit forms of shared leadership are not widespread in organizations.

### *Postheroic Perspectives as a Foundation for Shared Leadership*

During recent years, there has been an emerging debate on what has been called postheroic leadership. Table 2 summarizes the main points of discussion.

Table 2: Main Aspects of the Heroic Leadership Conception vs. Postheroic Leadership

Traditional heroic leadership	Postheroic leadership	Supporters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One single accountable leader</li> <li>• Focus on visible positional heroes</li> <li>• Subordinates are seen as inferiors, interchangeable drones</li> <li>• All wisdom is concentrated in the leader</li> <li>• Leader needs to keep up his or her appearance</li> <li>• Vulnerability for the organization if the leader leaves</li> <li>• Individualism, control, assertiveness, and skills of advocacy and domination are important for leadership</li> <li>• Dominant logic of effectiveness: how to produce things</li> <li>• Doing masculinity</li> <li>• Focus on individuals</li> <li>• Static roles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation of coworkers to leadership is recognized</li> <li>• Coworkers take responsibility and gain knowledge</li> <li>• Leaders encourage innovation and participation</li> <li>• Consensus in decision making</li> <li>• Leader becomes dispensable</li> <li>• Empathy, vulnerability, and skills of inquiry and collaboration become important for leadership</li> <li>• Dominant logic of effectiveness: how to grow people</li> <li>• Doing femininity</li> <li>• Focus on actions and interactions</li> <li>• Dynamic collective construction processes</li> </ul>	<p>Collinson (2005); Eicher (2006); Fletcher (2004); Huey (1994); Knights &amp; Willmott (1992); Pearce &amp; Manz (2005); Vanderslice (1988)</p>

According to Eicher (2006), the old heroic ideal is a lone leader who feels that his or her leadership is based on superior knowledge and information (omnipotence), fears failure more than anything (rightness), keeps up appearances at any cost including blaming others (face saving), and views subordinates as inferior creatures in constant need for assistance and rescue (codependency). Pearce and Manz (2005) described the romantic conception of leaders as heroes in similar terms: heroes “who single-handedly save followers—who are largely viewed as interchangeable drones—from their own incompetence” (p. 130). But, leaders are not only heroes. Assuming that leaders alone are responsible for solving complex organizational problems means that the leader-as-villain image is quite common, even more after cases of corporate corruption as the Enron case in the US (Collinson, 2005). Leaders have been depicted as heroes in the mass media as well, even though some researchers have started to question the real impact of such leaders on organizations (Czarniawska, 2005). Writing about major corporations such as Apple or American Express, which have been identified with their leaders, Mintzberg (1999) used these words:

Then consider this proposition: maybe really good management is boring. Maybe the press is the problem, alongside the so-called gurus, since they are the ones who personalize success and deify leaders (before they defile them). After all, corporations are large and complicated; it takes a lot of effort to find out what has really been going on. It is so much easier to assume that the great one did it all. Makes for better stories too. (p. 1)

Against this, Eicher (2006) posed the postheroic ideal, where the leader wants other to take responsibility and gain knowledge (empowerment), encourages innovation and participation



even in ambiguous situations (risk taking), seeks input and aims for consensus in decision making (participation), and wants others to grow and learn even at the expense of himself becoming dispensable (development). Postheroic leadership has thus become a concept used to describe a new conceptualization of leadership that refuses the top-down focus on the leader typical of most leadership literature and discourse (e.g., Fletcher, 2004; Huey, 1994). To us, the heroic ideal creates both unhappy and stressed leaders and also problems of legitimating leaders and leadership in the eyes of employees and citizens, while the postheroic ideal represents both individual situations and societal norms that enable people, organizations, and societies to live on and develop.

Fletcher (2004) examined also the power and gender implications of this new understanding of leadership. In fact, even if leadership has been traditionally presented as a gender-neutral concept, researchers have questioned this assumption and analyzed how leadership is a gendered construction in masculine terms (e.g., Alvesson & Billing, 1999; Collinson & Hearn, 1996; Kerfoot & Knights, 1993; Wahl, Holgersson, Höök, & Linghag, 2001). For example, in the charismatic leader, we can see the image of a patriarchal hero (Calas, 1993). What we think is of interest is not to promote a feminine leadership as a counterpoint to the conventional masculine leadership (Billing & Alvesson, 2000) but to study how the processes that construct gender in organizations and the leadership processes are related (Alvesson & Billing). Doing leadership, doing gender, and also doing power are thus analyzed as interrelated processes (Fletcher). Not being aware of these relations means a risk for not understanding completely the challenges inherent in the postheroic concept and failing in introducing shared leadership models in organizations. Shared leadership means recognizing that formal leaders are supported by a collaborative subtext throughout the organization; leading and following become “two sides of the same set of relational skills that everyone in an organization needs in order to work in a context of interdependence” (Fletcher, p. 648). In this way, the new model of shared leadership has been described by traits that have been traditionally seen as feminine or socially ascribed to women: “empathy, vulnerability, and skills of inquiry and collaboration” (Fletcher, p. 650). Such traits have been traditionally associated to powerlessness. On the contrary, traditional leadership ideals have been characterized by masculine traits: “individualism, control, assertiveness, and skills of advocacy and domination” (Fletcher, p. 650). Masculinity and femininity are not used in a biological sense here, they are social constructions that influence our identities and that are continuously reconstructed/deconstructed. Fletcher also spoke of the “logic of effectiveness” (p. 350) that underlies heroic vs. postheroic leadership. Heroic leadership relies on a masculine logic of effectiveness on how to produce things in working life, while postheroic leadership relies on feminine logic of effectiveness on how to grow people in domestic life. The two spheres are socially constructed as dichotomies, associated to men respectively to women, and evaluated in different ways, a skilled and complex activity the former, a question of innate nature the latter.

Here we could find one possible explanation to why postheroic leadership is mostly invisible in companies. When leaders tell about their leadership, they still use the classical hero individual-focused narrative. Moreover, when they narrate about themselves, they are also constructing their own identity, and the gender identity is a part of it. Traditionally, as explained, such narrations have been characterized by masculine terms. But, since practices related to postheroic leadership are unconsciously associated with femininity and powerlessness, this new concept of leadership violates the traditional gender and power assumptions about leadership. This means that if an organization adopts a shared leadership model based on postheroic

leadership conceptions, such a change is not only an organizational issue; it will also affect the gender identity construction and the power conceptions of the individuals in the organization.

In such a new context, a different conception of the self could also help. Instead of the classical notion of the self as an independent entity, the self-in-relation notion could be more appropriate (Fletcher & Käufer, 2003). Traditionally, growth has been seen as a process of separation from others and of achieving autonomy. Instead, growth could be seen as a process of connection. Interdependence becomes the basis for the notion of the self as a relational entity.

### *Collective Construction of Leadership: From Emerging Practice to Research Perspective*

Our analysis of the existing literature on new models and ideals of leadership is that it can be roughly divided in two related streams: (a) one that focuses on the practicalities of why and how managerial duties and positions should be assigned to more than one person, shared leadership, and (b) one that assumes a basic perspective on all leadership as being collective construction processes with several people involved, postheroic leadership. Although these two traditions do not exclude each other, they imply quite different research agendas.

In the first tradition, we find several reasons why and how managerial tasks should be divided between several individuals. One problem in this perspective is that it views shared leadership as an exception to more typical leadership, an exception to be practiced in special situations. Shared leadership is also defined by the number of involved individuals rather than the individuals' experiences regarding if the exercised leadership was actually shared or not (i.e., a focus on formal organizational arrangements rather than on practical everyday organizing). The alternative, as we see it, is to apply a basic perspective on leadership as something that individuals construct together in social interaction (Gronn, 2002; Küper, 2007; Smircich & Morgan, 1982). Gronn discussed this in terms of level of analysis, that the level of analysis should be the exercised leadership rather than the single individual leader. Similarly, Vanderslice (1988) explicitly challenged us to separate the concept of leadership from that of leaders. Collinson (2005) suggested that a dialectical perspective going beyond the dualistic understanding of, for example, the leader–follower couple should help to better explain the complex and shifting dynamics of leadership, by acknowledging interdependences and asymmetries between leaders and followers. Meindl (1995) and Reicher et al. (2005) claimed that traditional leadership models contribute to the institutionalization of a dualism of identity between leaders and followers in society—a dualism that may be challenged through studies of leadership identity construction. Fletcher (2004) took this line of reasoning one step further in her discussion of postheroic leadership in terms of collective, interactive learning processes. She did think that such a theoretic development will run into difficulties, difficulties that may better be understood from a gender perspective. She claimed that the traditional image of leadership is strongly masculinized and that the femininization that is inherent in the postheroic perspective will challenge several deeply rooted notions of leadership. Among these, Fletcher found the taken-for-granted individualization of society (reinforcing unitary command as the only viable solution), to which we can add the contemporary idea that problems of gender inequality are finally being solved (implying that any basic redefinition of leadership would be unnecessary since we have already found the most suitable forms) (cf. Vecchio, 2002). A social constructionist research agenda where leadership, leader identities, and masculinization/femininization are constantly constructed and reconstructed (cf. Lindgren &

Packendorff, 2006) should be central in order to advance both leadership theory and leadership practices in the direction of postheroic leadership.

### **Empirical Study: Collective Constructions of Leadership**

The empirical study reported here was made with a narrative approach through individuals' stories about processes of leadership. During the last decade, the narrative approach has been taken far beyond its origins within the field of literary analysis (Boje, 2001; Czarniawska, 1997; Lindgren & Wåhlin, 2001). Human beings have been exposed to numerous different, sometimes contradictory and competing, discourses. Thus, the narrative on the personal work life episodes can fill a sense-making function for both individuals and their social contexts. Recent developments in the use of narrative methods have stressed the importance of making a distinction between narratives and stories and taking into consideration what happens before a narrative (Boje). A story can be seen as an account of incidents or events, and a narrative comes after. "Story is an 'ante' state of affairs existing previously to narrative; it is in advance of narrative. Used as an adverb, 'ante' combined with narrative means earlier than narrative" (Boje, p. 1).

This implied that individuals were asked for the spontaneous story of their life including both work and life in general within the current organization. These interviews were recurring in the sense that we revisited the organizations several times, and they lasted for about 1 - 2 hours with each person. At the end of every interview, we spent some time clarifying details and critical incidents in their stories. Out from our theoretical preconceptions, we had identified some themes to be covered by their stories: their view of how organizational leadership has developed, by who and how leadership was exercised, how leadership activities involved several people, how leaders in the organization lived their life both at and outside work, and how their leadership was regarded both inside and outside the organization. After transcribing the recorded material, we extracted different narratives linked to the ongoing production and reproduction of leadership in project-based work by means of thematic analysis. Boje (2001) described thematic analysis out from deductive and inductive approaches; in this case, it has been a combination of these two approaches where a number of general theoretical themes have formed a framework for the inductive extractment of specific narratives. Inspired by Martin's (2001) method, we have emphasized narratives concerning the production and reproduction of leaders and leadership. We took a special interest in contradictions, competing discourses, and critical incidents in the interviews (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 1999; Lindgren & Wåhlin, 2001). The empirical material is organized along different narrative themes that were extracted given this interest.

The empirical material of this paper was taken from four different organizations that were studied as examples of new leadership practices in emerging industries in Sweden. Two of them are independent schools (schools financed by municipalities but run by private organizations or individuals), one is a private theater, and one is a rock festival that has grown into a small music industry corporation. The cases, all made anonymous for this presentation, are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of the Empirical Case Organizations

Organization	The Svensson School (TSS)	Louis High School (LHS)	Rocktown Forest Festival (RFF)	The Here and Now Theatre (HNT)
Operations	Independent school in medium-sized town for children 12-15 years old.	Group of four schools in a large city of which three are high schools.	Rock festival, restaurants, education, production, marketing, venture capital.	Private theater company specializing in improvised theater. Plays, company gigs, course programs.
History	Founded 1994 as a company. Coowned by founders until 2003. Now owned by a private person.	Founded 1993. Operates as a private trust, no individual owners.	Founded 1981 as an open music club. Today, the club owns several companies (The First Act Group).	Founded 1989 as a theater club. Restarted in 2002 as a company after bankruptcy.
No. of employees	60	100	50	7 (+ 30 freelancers)
Managerial structure	Two married founders of which one is the headmaster.	Two founders who work with strategic development.	Collaborative structure with boards, management groups, networks. Informal core of founders.	Five owners of which one is theater manager. Groups and committees.
Study focus	Leadership work by founders.	Leadership work by founders.	Leadership work in all managerial positions and tasks.	Leadership work in all managerial positions and tasks.
People interviewed and cited here	Roger (founder, CEO, owner) Angela (founder, headmaster, owner)	Camilla (founder) Nancy (founder)	Vladimir (founder, group chairman) Caroline (subsidiary CEO) Pete (founder, group CEO) Owen (subsidiary CEO)	Nathan (owner, theater manager) John (owner, director, actor) Patrick (owner, director, actor) Naomi (owner, actor) Ursula (actor)

*Note.* The names of the involved organizations and interviewed individuals are all fictitious.

### Empirical Themes

All four organizations are rather new, still more or less in the hands of their founders. The relationship between foundership, ownership, and the actual managerial structure is not straightforward, however. In each of the organizations, special conditions have implied special solutions. What is common for them all is that leadership is practiced as a shared task and constructed collectively in the sense that many people inside and outside take active part in discussing, formulating, and reformulating what leadership means locally. We have extracted different themes from the stories concerning important dimensions of leadership constructions. However, we also want to emphasize the ongoing social construction of leadership as a continuous process over time, manifesting itself in different discursive themes. We will now discuss them more in detail with reference to all four organizations. The themes that emerged from this thematic analysis are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary of Empirical Themes From the Four Case Organizations

Theme	Theme summary
Leadership as a task in need for professionalization	Lacking professional leadership. Professionalization requires rationality, impersonality, and action orientation.
Leadership may gain legitimacy through representativity and extension	By having more organizational subgroups and different people represented in leadership activities, the internal legitimacy of leadership is enhanced.
Individualism vs. collectivism as a problem in leadership	Problem of handling expectations on leaders to be single outstanding individuals while most of the decisions are handled collectively.
Role complementarity important in leadership work	Different individuals have different strengths. When sharing leadership, it is important to develop role structures that make use of strengths without losing role flexibility.
Heroes expected	The environment still expects single, heroic leaders. That expectation must be met without losing internal collectivity.
Patterns of cooperation	Sharing leadership requires a sense of what the others think. Cooperation must not be stifled by an exaggerated focus on consensus and informality.
Leadership as network construction	Internal relational views of leadership are also extended to the view of the environment. It is important that all have other social arenas outside the organization.
Managerial work as consuming	Managerial work tends to create a high workload that is not always relieved by sharing leadership tasks.

### *Leadership as a Task in Need for Professionalization*

One general theme from the interviews in the four organizations was that leadership and management must be handled professionally. The idea of professionalism was described in several ways. One way was to claim that friendship and personal relationships may imply less rational decisions and that some people are treated better than they deserve, giving an image of leadership as making tough and unpopular decisions.

We are a bunch of old friends. We were always together in the beginning. If there was a party, we were there together, and other friends came along. But, I think it was an initial strength that we were a quite small gang that were behind a lot of things. Today, it is not really the same thing; people have families and want to get away from work sometimes. This has meant difficulties in handling budget overruns or layoffs. We have not been professional in such occasions since we are all old friends. This is a sensitive thing; we must be professional but it shall also be fun to work here. (Vladimir, RFF)

Everyone who worked here was a member of the board, and board work was not seen as a difficult thing. After the bankruptcy, we realized that it is indeed a difficult thing to be a member of the board. We were very naïve. I think that the idealistic heritage made us blind to the fact that we made decisions on large sums of money and could lose our own jobs if these decisions went wrong. (John, HNT)

Professionalism is also something that is derived from educations and other sources of occupational legitimacy. For example, a professional school manager is not the same thing as a professional pedagogical leader.

I am interested in pedagogy, but I do realize that I am not professional. I have stepped in from time to time when there was an urgent need, and I like it. But, I don't feel knowledgeable. The most fun was physics, and, if I had started in a teacher role, maybe I could have become a good teacher. Now, my respect for the job grows for each time I step in. I have appreciated the hands-on character of school work. Intellectually, the financial job was very stimulating, where different parties could sit and work on a deal. But, that is not emotionally rewarding as this one is. You look at the children, and this warms you inside. But, in my relation to Angela, it is our education, roles, and knowledge that limit what each of us does. (Roger, TSS)

To be professional was also described as being skilled in creating action out of decisions. In that sense, leadership that does not result in changes and development is not sufficient.

We had 1 week when the whole gang worked together last summer, and we really got united about the future. On the other hand, you get very often stuck in the old expression, "Last night, I had hundreds of good ideas; and, this morning, I did like I always do." It can really be like that here. We have lots of good ideas, but the everyday activities take a lot of energy. You think of so many things, but . . . It's about planning and structuring, and now it feels like we are getting better than ever at it. (Nathan, HNT)

### *Leadership May Gain Legitimacy Through Representativity and Extension of Management*

In one of the organizations, Rocktown Forest, there have been periods when the leaders of the organizations have been seen as far from legitimate. The organization has a history of clashes between cultural and commercial norms, which has affected the ongoing construction of leadership. Those acting as leaders must inevitably handle these clashes.

There is a history here governing what you can do and not, a conflict between cultural and commercial values. The festival culture is still around, and some people have had rough times when trying to deviate from that. There have been a lot of discussions about the festival brand, and we are not through that at all after 10 years. I think that it is important to stick to the original foundations for what we do. Rocktown Forest is the cultural part, and the First Act companies are the commercial part. (Caroline, RFF)

Often, the solution to a lack of legitimacy is to extend the managerial group in order to make more subgroups represented.

I became a member of the First Act board although I was newly employed and also a woman. Pete got more and more to do outside, and he was our face outwards. The First Act Group is his baby, and he wanted someone he trusted there. I became the one everyone came to. I did that in parallel while my job was to work with public relations. After my maternal leave, I started to work full-time, and then I became CEO of First Act. The old gang can't be involved in everything; it was really a pretty clear signal to the whole organization when Pete wanted me to take First Act. (Caroline, RFF)

Extending the managerial group is not easy as some people expect a certain individual to represent the organization at all occasions. One way of handling this is to consciously construct a multiface organization to outsiders.

My strategy is not to be seen locally. I might be on the cover page of *Entrepreneur Magazine* and looked upon as the great businessman and all that. But, at home, I'm not seen at all. Instead, it is always the one that has been responsible or actually did the job that is to be seen. It's important that you always try to put the others in the light, and I've tried to do that for 5 or 6 years now. (Pete, RFF)

Similar reasoning can be found in the theater case, even though it is mixed in that they also want some kind of leadership at least in the field of administration. In the two schools, leadership legitimacy rests mainly upon the teacher profession as formal competence base.

### *Individualism vs. Collectivism as a Problem in Leadership*

In the general understanding of leadership, the notion of individuals and collectives is problematic. As previously noted, leaders have been expected to be individuals and individualists (e.g., Fletcher, 2004). But, at the same time, many decisions and actions are collective by nature. For example, leadership is usually constructed in terms of loneliness and power distance which affect how people behave in relation to each other.

I don't drink coffee in the teachers' room. I take it with me to the office, mostly because I realize that if I sit down maybe I will kill the conversation. We have a trustful atmosphere in the staff room, but I feel like one of the managers. It is impossible to be a manager. Things you say are interpreted on the basis that you are a manager. This is, of course, worse for Angela. But, this has led us to avoid participating in certain situations in order not to dictate the meetings; just being there creates problems. (Roger, TSS)

The problems of individualism in leadership are also linked to different forms of material benefits and advantages such as high salaries and large offices. In that sense, the local construction of what leadership means also affects the organizational norms on what is desirable and unwanted behavior and attitudes.

We were 30 shareholders when we formed the first company in the First Act Group, but we have all sold our shares back to Rocktown Forest. We earn decent salaries, but nobody has become rich. We run big business and have vast responsibilities, but I usually do not think about it; if I did, I might have a hard time sleeping in the night. Some people in this town have earned a lot of money, like those owning the festival grounds, coffee shops, restaurants, and so forth. But, we are not among them. It is a good thing that we haven't owned this ourselves, even though that could have made some difficult decisions easier to implement. On the other hand, the spirit in this building might not have been the same. In the end, this whole organization is about daring to test ideas. (Pete, RFF)

### *Role Complementarity as Important in Leadership Work*

Among the interviewees, the construction of leadership has generally centered around reasoning on that different people with different personalities may complement each other in the ongoing management of the organization. Some may even take psychometric tests in order to understand their interaction better.

We were helped by a personnel consultant that mapped out the personality type for potential personnel when we started the school, even our types. Angela and I were very different. But, this helped us. Angela is economical; I am an economist. (Roger, TSS)

Often, the actors have been well aware of what their respective strengths are and how they should interact in order to perform at their best.

I have a theory on why we have been since 1997 on this journey that speeded up our operations outside the festival. Donald comes first. He is the one that finds everything. He really finds everything in a project. He comes to me and Pete, "We can do this, and we can do this, send in this application for EU-financing," etc. And, suddenly there is a click in Pete's head. And so, he says that "I want this; we shall do this." And so, he jumps onto the barricades and gets the people to follow him; he gets them going. I come in at the third stage. I know you have to filter the talk; if Pete says that it gives 35 million then it gives maybe 5 million, etc. It was the rule of the game in order to convince people about impossible projects. I take over his grand projects and make them happen. The last link in the chain that made it possible for us to take things to the national level was Sean who worked at Major Records in Stockholm. He is born in the next town and wanted to move home. And, during the same period, they established a regional government here. They became responsible for entrepreneurship and business development, and we suggested that they should employ Sean as a regional business developer. Our national music industry center here is the result of a collaboration between Sean and Pete. (Owen, RFF)



We now have different roles. You always know exactly who to ask about different things. John is extremely good at inventing funny concepts and funny names to put diverse ideas together. If you need that, you go to him; he is very smart. Nathan is our face outwards, good at networking. He became friends with all customers and course participants; he is our safety net. I am important because I try to communicate and delegate responsibilities, and I also work a lot to make us better improvisators. I want to put forward emotions and artistry, and I often become an important speaking partner to Patrick who always presents new ideas on everything. (Naomi, HNT)

This view of different actors playing different roles in managerial processes can also be found in the other cases. Usually, the actors have reflected upon this and have established practical ways of using this in the best way possible.

A cooperation often begins with a common idea and then you have a meeting and then each one does what's needed to meet again. When I draw our organization, I draw a circle for myself that overlaps Roger's circle. Overlapping issues are recruitment, wages; we work together on the budget even if Roger prepares it, both of us participate in management team meetings, marketing meetings together. Then, we have distinct own areas. I have the contact with parents. Roger has the contact with banks, etc. When banks invite us to dinner, I go, however. At the board meeting, I am the secretary and also present issues within my areas. (Angela, TSS)

Our organization is a little special in that our principals are pedagogical leaders, and we take care of everything else regarding premises, administration; and, we are discussion partners for the principal. The principal takes care of everything that has to do with the personnel, nothing that has to do with rebuilding premises and similar matters. You can think of a newspaper with a CEO and a chief editor; then, we are the CEO, and the principal is the chief editor. We work with marketing, strategy, and lobbying; it's our tasks. (Nancy, LHS)

What is also evident is that the construction of complementary managerial roles is something that develops over time. Initially, people are not aware of their roles and often try to do everything together.

We were more together at the beginning. And, now, we have more clearly separated tasks. We inform each other, but we don't need to consult each other on everything. I think this is mostly positive since it gives us some tranquility; we feel more confident in our roles. When needed, we are there for each other; but we do not sit on each other's laps. It felt a little like that at the beginning, the sea in storm, the others against us, from time to time. We are not needed in the same way now either, and they don't confuse our roles anymore, which makes it easier. Still people do anyway believe that I also know what they said to Roger because it was like that at the beginning. We did also commute to a distant town, so we had a few hours during trips that we used to exchange information. It is just a little funny sometimes now when we find out that we don't know. (Angela, TSS)

The role construction processes are not always harmonic. However, some actors may feel stuck in a certain role while others find it hard to assume new roles while maintaining the already existing ones.

I'm a big critic and always ask who is going to pay for all this and who is going to make it happen. It's a pity that I always assume that role. But, I can live with that. In the end, it's always better not to let the visionaries run ahead all the time. I also have visions myself. But, mostly, I keep things together. (Vladimir, RFF)

I think that I work about the same amount of hours as before the bankruptcy. But, I think that it is even more funny and rewarding now if I have done a good performance at a company gig, and we get new orders. I also feel that I have made some money for the theater and for our survival. It was like that before as well, but it is different now when we own the theater ourselves. That is important; it is a kind of [our] identity, a mixed identity. Sometimes you think that you became an entrepreneur when you actually wanted to be an actor. And then, we are also employers. It is important to think about yourself in all these terms. (John, HNT)

### *Heroes Expected: Individuals as Uniting Symbols*

While the actors in their daily managerial work lead their organizations together by means of role complementarity, they still adhere to the outside expectations of their leadership to be embodied into single persons. Furthermore, sometimes, there are also internal reasons to put forward charismatic and heroic persons as symbols and change agents.

Pete had decided to do what other rock music clubs had not been able to do, to create spinoffs from the festival. The person that decides to do such a thing must be able to handle the reactions from the rest of the organization. When he declared that we were going to do other things using the festival brand, a gigantic conflict broke out. If it had not been Pete, he had been thrown out at once. They wrote angry letters to each other and called me to meetings where they told me that I destroyed the festival brand and so on. (Owen, RFF)

I went myself in a school where everyone knew who the person that started and ran the school was, and her ideas lived in the school. It's easy for the students to understand the idea with the school when persons are visible because people personify ideas. (Camilla, LHS)

And then, we decided that to be successful, we needed one face outwards. And then, I should become that face. So, we decided that I should symbolize Rocktown Forest. (Pete, RFF)

### *Patterns of Cooperation*

Practical leadership in the studied organizations implies close cooperation and an ability to sense what the other coleaders may think of different matters.

I remember when a consultant that was going to work on our website came with the first proposal where there was a picture with young people and cell phones. Nancy was not there then. The pictures were so much spaced out. I had an image in my mind—a tree and the sky in order to symbolize knowledge. The consultant thought that we were so modern with IT and everything. But, we didn't understand each other at all. Then, Nancy came, and I showed her the pictures without saying anything. "Oh no," Nancy said, "I had imagined some oaks." We had the same opinion without having talked to each other about it; and, still, we are different. Nancy is good at numbers, and she likes that. I have studied business administration; it is true, but I don't like it. I love to write while Nancy doesn't. So, it works so well. (Camilla, LHS)

But then, one develops one's roles. Now, after 9 years, we know which roles we have. (Nancy, LHS)

We do write a lot now. But, before we write, so we always review what we should write, and Nancy has a lot of comments; and then, we look at that together, the same with numbers. When Nancy is away, I feel very lost. To be single manager, as many men are, is really tough. (Camilla, LHS)

But, I don't think that 9 years and two schools and one company have worn us out. Of course, we have worked a lot, but just because we are two persons, there is some relief. We strive a lot to have fun and to laugh all the time, because this results in that you have more energy. If you are alone, everything becomes heavier and more serious and that makes it more difficult to get things moving. We are very aware that it is said that women are more cautious, so we try to push and incite ourselves. If we had been men, we had been bigger as an organization. (Nancy, LHS)

No matter how close and integrated the actors are, societal structures such as gender differences still find their way into the practical everyday situations.

I am the only woman here among the owners. And, sometimes, I regret that there are not more women. I feel that. We all communicate in a masculine fashion, and it is not easy to be too much of a feminist in our meetings. It works all right, but there is a macho attitude among us that becomes a part of our culture. I speak openly about this because I want all people to be attracted to this theater, not just tough guys. If one of the guys is in a bad mood, everyone tips around on their toes; people yell at each other and so forth. (Naomi, HNT)

What is also problematic is the tendency that actors may get stuck in modes of working and that the shared leadership practices cause stagnation since all changes depend on consensus.

I have followed this theater for a decade, and it has both developed and stagnated at the same time. We have the same discussions year after year: how to behave outwards, how to guarantee a certain quality, how open are we to be to others, what is secret and what is not, are we too tough on each other and so forth. We are dealing with some delicate

people here, and it is very important who communicates things, how information spreads—eternal dilemmas. We tend to discuss new issues all the time; first, we decide on principles. But, suddenly, a new issue appears that make us abandon the principle. So, I try to decide on my own instead. (Ursula, HNT)

Another aspect of shared leadership practices that might become problematic in some situations is the relative informality and lack of clarity that follows when organizational roles are not clearly assigned.

What fascinates me is that you need each other. So, I could go to someone and they came to me when they wanted to learn. Different people but the entrepreneurial spirit is the same in all of us. We meet at breakfast in different constellations. People come up with things; that's why it is good to exchange ideas with people. It is not necessary to have Pete sitting at a table in order to have ideas coming up. It is different people that take ideas that came up with them. There are informal ways to get people on one's side, Pete and the other founders, if it has to go quickly. It was even more in this way before because then we were not so many people. (Caroline, RFF)

### *Leadership as Network Construction*

Among all interviewees, network building is a central aspect of leadership. Networking is both an internal activity by which an increasing number of employees are attracted to participate in leadership and an external activity where relations to different actors are seen as essential to organizational survival and success. In the social construction of leadership, many individuals have a larger common network than a single person, and their intention is often to increase the total number of relations by exchanging contacts.

Since a couple of years, we try to see what kind of networks people have. And, we try to reinforce the networks of those who have some gaps. Networks are really important, and the larger the network, the better it is. It becomes much easier to do business. Eighty percent of all the businesses are based on personal relationships. The day after tomorrow, there will be a meeting on public procurement at the municipality, and we don't give a damn about public procurement. But, at that meeting, there are 10 companies that we want to work with, so we are there anyway in order to support them in the discussions with the municipality; we are in the same gang. And, next time we meet those companies, so we have something in common, a belonging. It is about building trust at the end. It is also one of the rules we have; you can't get something without giving something. And if it is about new contacts, so you almost always have to start by giving. (Pete, RFF)

The opposite thing (i.e., a lack of broad networks) is usually seen as a problem.

I work a lot. I have no children. When I do not work here, I work with other projects. I write; I read; I travel; I see people. Many of my friends are from the theater world and from this town; and, as an outsider, I am stuck with them. I think it is a drawback for me that I have no other social arenas. No natural relations. (Patrick, SIT)

*Managerial Work as Consuming the Individual*

A last theme in the narratives on leadership is that managerial work often tends to become the central thing in life.

I work 50 - 55 hours a week, sometimes weekends too. I can't let go of it; I burn for it. And, I am always lagging behind. The atmosphere and all the activity here is most exciting, but it consumes me. You can never focus on anything. As soon as you are into a discussion on important stuff, someone calls or knocks at the door. (Nathan, SIT)

Although shared leadership practices may relieve individuals from heavy workloads, given that the increased managerial resources available are not fully used to raise the ambitions, they can also lead to an increasing amount of work discussions outside regular work hours.

Patrick and I are best friends. We spent the weekend together in Italy. We do not talk work much. But, somehow, work and private gets mixed. Suddenly, you realize that you sit at a restaurant in the evening with a glass of wine and discuss work. (John, HNT)

Angela and I follow a bad pattern as regards our relation during the day. We decide that we should meet, but everything else comes in between, and we pass each other all the time. It often feels a little presumptuous to prioritize my wife when we are at work. So, we talk a lot in the car about how it did go and so on. Of course, we talk job, but not that much anyway. (Roger, TSS)

**Leadership as Collective Constructions**

In the empirical themes noted, we have emphasized that leadership is something that is negotiated, reflected upon, and constructed during daily interactions between people. By focusing on stories of leadership activities rather than on stories of individual leaders, we have tried to put forward the processes of leadership and how they develop over time. In the following section, we briefly discuss the empirical themes and how they can be related to the unitary command perspective and possible future research.

*Empirical Themes: Towards Collective Constructions of Leadership?*

The unitary command perspective is both confirmed and reconstructed in the studied organizations. It is confirmed in the sense that unitary command norms of single-person leadership are maintained as necessary and natural features of the managerial structures, but it is also deconstructed as all four organizations strive to find leadership procedures that involve many people and make use of the diverse competences that exist.

One example of this is the discussions on individuality and collectivity where all organizations in the study noted trying to find ways to make collectivity work without moving back into individuality. That was a problem in HNT but especially in RFF where there was a huge and remaining conflict between individuals who wanted to put themselves in front, resulting in the "we-culture" of that organization being further strengthened and institutionalized.

When conflicts make values visible, there is a need for reflection upon them that may make the values even stronger than before.

It is also important to notice that people construct roles together and find patterns of interaction over time. In the beginning, the interaction is more flexible and the interacting individuals sometimes do the same thing. But, after some time, they find their roles in a more stable interaction pattern. In TSS, there was some overlapping in the beginning even if they had decided that Angela was the pedagogical expert and Roger was the economist. In the other cases, such as HNT and RFF, there have been many shifts in work roles between persons involved, implying that any established interaction pattern may change as soon as individuals leave or join the organization or when there are changes in the organization or its environment.

Sharing leadership seems to imply an ongoing interactive search for such stable arrangements, both at the organizational and individual level. We can see this in different dimensions. In HNT, they want to have a functional organization because of the problems the collective free form generated. Now, they have their roles and also have found a way to work together. In LHS, they did most things together in the beginning; but, after a while, they recognized that they were more pleased with doing separate things in the venture. They have also a strict organizational separation between themselves and the administration/pedagogical management of the school. In RFF, the continuous developments and changes have implied that they still seek for structures in a way but have managed to go through different crises by means of solidarity and hard work.

The power of individual heroes in society is also visible when they talk about how to put one single person in front. A single person is a visible symbol who may personify what the organization stands for, and a single person is also what the environment expects. Even if they do not organize themselves in that way, they still find it necessary to conform to expectations. While concluding that the postheroic perspective provides important insights that can be applied to the analysis of our case organizations, insights emphasizing and focusing on the generation of new patterns and ideals in leadership, it also reminds us of the prevalent traditional norms by which organizations are still expected to live.

### *Postheroic Leadership: Consequences for Practice and Theory*

Postheroic leadership, both in practical and theoretical terms, is a matter of viewing leadership as collectively constructed. Practically, the notion of collective constructions would imply that leadership is created by many people in interaction and that not all responsibilities need to be placed on one single person. The consequences of holding such a perspective on leadership can be most important to many organizations. It implies that different roles—not only the outgoing, driving personalities—are seen as important to leadership and that the notion of role complementarities may become even more important in the composition of managerial teams. Moreover, single individuals may be relieved of unrealistic and harmful workloads, and the intellectual and moral qualities of important decisions may increase. In addition, the notion of collectively constructed leadership also results in new views on how the daily operations of the company can be organized. If employees are recognized as responsible and accountable coleaders rather than as untrustworthy subordinates, they should be entrusted to make decisions not only on operative matters but also on governance matters. The principle of inverted delegation (i.e., that tasks are delegated upwards rather than downwards) is one possible outcome of this, and it also may become natural that the composition and role structure in a management

team is a matter for the team to handle. This is not to say that hierarchies should not exist; rather, hierarchies should be seen as systems of relations that are open for construction and reconstruction by all of their members. This, of course, builds on the assumption that the members are responsible people who view their organization as a common interest that must be maintained into the future. By this, modern leadership practices might become both less harmful to individuals and more legitimate in the eyes of its beholders.

Theoretically, viewing leadership as collectively constructed implies several things that should be of importance to future research. Moving focus from leaders to leadership activities (Gronn, 2002) is one such important stance. Thereby, it may be possible to follow the construction processes where power, organizational roles, and definitions of reality are negotiated in social interaction (cf. Smircich & Morgan, 1982), viewing these processes as leadership even though they may not result in clear decisions, unitary action strategies, and so forth. In that way, moving focus from leaders to leadership activities is also a way to move focus from leadership outcomes to the processes of leadership (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Instead of only judging leadership activities afterwards from its perceived results, such a research agenda should also focus on what is actually done to produce these results; ends do not always justify all possible means. Leadership activities are not only interesting as processes of social constructions, they are also interesting in the sense that they are important manifestations of hidden and/or taken-for-granted ideological and moral norms in society. Like several other fields within general management research, the leadership field maintains a mainstream perspective where the object of study is essentially a positive thing with desirable outcomes. If these desirable outcomes are indeed delivered, the processes preceding them are rarely questioned. When critical researchers and/or voices in society demand ethical perspectives or humanistic perspectives or indulge in criticism of psychopathic leaders, greed, and other modern phenomena (Jackall, 1988), they actually advocate a leadership research where not only the processes and outcomes of leadership should be studied but also the hidden ideological and moral meanings on which modern leadership practices and theories are based. Postheroic leadership is to us one such way towards leadership theorizing where the articulation and questioning of moral foundations is central to theory development.

In this paper, we have focused our discussion on the theoretical issue of postheroic leadership, analyzed from the empirical phenomenon of attempts at shared leadership practices. Our empirical cases show the ambiguities and problems inherent in this development, even for organizations that strive to organize leadership collectively. While questioning the forms and consequences of unitary command and also actively promoting the perspective that leadership is something they create together, they are still not able to discard all traditions in the field. Not least because they operate in a society that expects single, powerful, hard-working, masculine leaders who deliver decisions and strategies and who can control their organizations and be held accountable for everything that happens there.

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## **Authentic Leadership: A Self, Leader, and Spiritual Identity Perspective**

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In this paper, I introduce a model of authentic leadership that rests on a single explanatory concept—identity—which specifies three interrelated identity systems: the self-identity system, the leader-identity system, and the spiritual-identity system, which, in turn, are comprised of multiple subidentities that include cognitive, affective, and conative elements. I offer a construct definition of authentic leadership that is explicated in a theoretical model which draws from humanistic psychology, existential philosophy, and social identity as well as self-categorization theory, leader prototypicality, and spiritual leadership theory. The fundamental premise of this paper is that spirituality and spiritual identity are at the core of authentic leadership. While much work remains to be done in terms of sharpening construct definitions of authentic leadership and operationalizing it, in the opinion of this author, authentic leadership is an important and provocative concept that holds promise for multiparadigmatic and multimethodological theoretical and empirical research.

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*The authentic self is the soul made visible.*

- Sarah Ban Breathnach

**F**or more than two decades, transactional/transformational leadership (hereafter referred to as TA/TF leadership) has been the poster child of the “new paradigm” theories (Beyer, 1999, p. 308) and has occupied center stage. Transformational leaders exhibit charismatic behaviors, arouse inspirational motivation, provide intellectual stimulation, and treat followers with individualized consideration (Bass & Avolio, 1994). They transform their followers’ needs, values, and preferences; nurture aspirations toward reaching their full potential; and generate higher levels of performance compared to their transactional counterparts (Seltzer & Bass, 1990). Moreover, transforming leadership taps into deep levels of meaning as it changes both leaders and followers; it occurs when one or more persons engage with each other in such a way that leader and follower raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality (Burns, 1978).

Some scholars have argued that prior to the emergence of TA/TF leadership theory as the dominant paradigm, there were increasing misgivings about the scholarly study of leadership. Many questioned its viability as a legitimate area of study, pointing out that scholars have expended a vast amount of money and effort on understanding leadership with little payoff. Hunt (1999) posited that the disillusionment with leadership's value added potential provided a strong impetus for the paradigm shift ushered in by TA/TF or "new" leadership theories that surfaced in the mid 1980s. Thus, when TA/TF leadership theory arrived on a barren landscape permeated by doom and gloom, it was widely heralded as a new paradigm. Conger and Hunt (1999) attributed the proliferation of empirical and conceptual work on TA/TF leadership to the fact that the theory attracted new scholars who gave research a boost by providing a fulcrum for the field through improved measurement and analytic techniques, greater use of meta-analyses, increased methodological pluralism, and greater attention to context.

However, the TA/TF paradigm and the Multiple Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ, Bass, 1985) as the primary operational measure, despite continuous refinements and revisions to respond to criticisms that have been raised over the years (e.g., Antonakis, Avolio, & Sivasubramaniam, 2003), continue to be challenged on theoretical and psychometric grounds. Several scholars (e.g., Tejada, Scandura, & Pillai, 2001; Tourish & Pinnington, 2002; Yukl, 2002) have asserted that TA/TF theory does not represent a paradigmatic departure from earlier two-factor theories such as initiating structure versus consideration, autocratic versus democratic, task versus people oriented leadership, or leadership versus management. Conger (2004) added that over the last decade, researchers have produced principally normative models of leadership such as transformational, charismatic, and emotional intelligence based models that assume a unitary approach to leadership across levels and situations. Finally, qualitative, feminist, postmodern, critical, and ecological and other theoretical and methodological challenges have called into question some of the fundamental assumptions of TA/TF theory. As Kuhn (1970) noted, data empirically derived from the reigning paradigm are bound temporally and spatially (i.e., TA/TF theory is largely Anglocentric) and are subject to decay as new theories and methodologies challenge the validity and utility of the prevailing paradigm.

Partly in response to these criticisms and partly because of a zeitgeist that is sensitive to a paradigm shift that seems to permeate the field of leadership studies, a wave of new perspectives has emerged including spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003), complex leadership (Knowles, 2001, 2002; Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001; Regine & Lewin, 2000), contextual leadership (Osborn, Hunt, & Jauch, 2002), paradoxical leadership (Kark, Shamir, Chen, 2003; Klenke, 2003), servant leadership (e.g., Greenleaf, 1977), stewardship (e.g., Block, 1993), connective leadership (e.g., Lipman-Blumen, 1996), self-sacrificial leadership (e.g. Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999), shared leadership (e.g., Pearce & Conger, 2003), and authentic leadership (Avolio, Gardner, Walumba, Luthans, & May, 2004; Gardner & Avolio, 2005; Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumba, 2005). Many of these approaches are in the early stages of development and/or lack a strong theoretical infrastructure as well as reliable and valid measures of the foundational constructs.

Although there are important differences in terminology and foci that characterize these divergent perspectives, they converge on the acknowledgement that leadership effectiveness depends less on individual, heroic action and more on collaborative processes; distributed, supported, and sustained by a network of individuals, leaders, and followers engaged in collective achievement, teamwork, and shared accountability. These models conceptualize leadership as a shared, relational process distributed across different organizational levels and dependent on social interactions and networks of influence. Fletcher (2004) argued that it is this

focus on fluidity, mutuality, and the two-directional nature of leadership that serves as the connective tissue that provides the common denominator for the perspectives that have recently evolved.

Among the emergent perspectives mentioned, authentic leadership (Avolio et al., 2004; Gardner & Avolio, 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; May, Chan, Hodges, & Avolio, 2003; Mitchie & Gooty, 2005) is gaining increased attention in the scholarly and practitioner communities. The inaugural 2004 Gallup Leadership Summit held in Omaha, Nebraska; a 2005 special issue of *The Leadership Quarterly*; along with the publications of books and articles on the topic of authentic leadership have provided the impetus for the development of models of authentic leadership and followership and other authentic leadership initiatives such as the development of testable propositions and measures that are building blocks of an emergent theory. Moreover, in an era of corporate malfeasance and scandals and preoccupation with maximizing shareholder value at the expense of other organizational objectives such as employee well-being and low levels of trust in senior leadership, the word *authenticity* has intuitive appeal for scholars and practitioners alike.

The concept of authenticity has been treated extensively in various disciplines including humanistic psychology (Maslow, 1971; Rogers, 1959), developmental psychology (Erickson, 1995), and existential philosophy (Heidegger, 1963/2002; Sartre, 1994). It has been addressed in religious studies and history. Terry (1993) asserted that

authenticity is ubiquitous, calling us to be true to ourselves and true to the world, real in ourselves and real in the world, When authenticity is acknowledged, we admit our foibles, mistakes and protected secrets, the parts of ourselves and society that are fearful and hide in the shadows of existence. (p. 139)

The purpose of this paper is to extend existing conceptualizations and contribute to the emergent formulations of authentic leadership by offering an identity-based model that explores the role of self-identity, leader identity, and spiritual identity in authentic leadership. As such, this work builds on research by Gardner et al. (2005), social identity and self-categorization theory (e.g., Abrams & Hogg, 1990), leader prototypicality (B. van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005), and spiritual leadership theory (Fry, 2003, 2005). However, it also represents a significant departure from other models in that it intentionally establishes motivational and spiritual bases of authentic leadership.

In this paper, then, I advance a model of authentic leadership that embraces an identity perspective with three specific foci. Moreover, the model posits that each of the three identity systems has one (or more) substratum that contributes to the overall system. Each identity system, in turn, assumes underlying cognitive, affective, and conative components which were explicated in an earlier model of authentic leadership (Klenke, 2005). After reviewing several contemporary conceptualizations of authentic leadership, I lay the foundations for a theoretical framework that not only moves the self to the center but more specifically focuses on the role of the self in authentic leadership through three identity lenses: (a) self-identity, (b) leader identity, and (c) spiritual identity.

### **Authentic Leadership**

“Wanted – Authentic leaders” was a call issued by George (2003), former CEO of a major U.S. corporation, in the aftermath of the corporate scandals and the mania for meeting Wall Street’s numbers. According to George, we need authentic leaders, people of highest

integrity, committed to building enduring organizations. We need leaders who have a deep sense of purpose and are true to their core values. George suggested that corporate boards choose authentic leaders for character, not for charisma but for their values and ability to motivate employees to create genuine value for customers. He argued that public trust will not be restored until we have authentic leaders in both corporations and on Wall Street. These sentiments have been reflected in the academic literature (e.g., Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Cooper, Scandura, & Schriesheim, 2005; Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005).

What then is authentic leadership? Most definitions of authentic leadership start with the underlying root construct of authenticity. The construct of authenticity; captured by the injunctions of ancient Greek philosophers to *know thyself*, refers to accepting, being oneself, and remaining true to one's self. Kernis (2003) described,

Behaving authentically means acting in accord with one's values, preferences, and needs as opposed to acting merely to please others or to attain rewards or avoid punishments through acting 'falsely.' . . . Authenticity is not reflected in a compulsion to be one's true self, but rather in the free expression of core feelings, motives and inclinations. (p. 14)

Instead, authenticity is "the unobstructed operation of one's true self or core self in one's daily enterprise" (p. 1). Knowing oneself and being one self, then, are essential qualities of authentic leadership (May et al., 2003).

Avolio et al. (2004) defined authentic leaders as those individuals who are deeply aware of how they think and behave and are perceived by others as being aware of their own and others' values/moral perspective, knowledge, and strength; aware of the context in which they operate; and who are confident, hopeful, optimistic, resilient, and high on moral character. Although authentic leadership shows some overlap with other contemporary perspectives such as transformational, charismatic, servant, and spiritual leadership; the construct is gaining legitimacy in its own right as researchers are beginning to differentiate authentic leadership from related constructs by grounding it in theory and seeking support in empirical research. Transformational leaders, for example, like authentic leaders, have been described as being optimistic, hopeful, developmentally oriented and of high moral character (Bass, 1998). Likewise, transformational leadership traces out a complex moral spectrum along which most leaders combine authentic and inauthentic behaviors which led to the distinction between (a) authentic transformational leaders who "as moral agents, expand the domain of effective freedom, the horizon of conscience" (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999, p. 211) and whose "actions aim toward noble ends, legitimate means, and fair consequences" (Bass & Steidlmeier, p. 211) and (b) pseudo or inauthentic transformational leaders who fall prey to self-aggrandizement. Bass and Steidlmeier warned of the dark side of charismatic/pseudotransformational leaders who purport to be authentic but instead use their positions to feed their "narcissism, authoritarianism, Machiavellianism, flawed vision, need for power. . ." (p. 182). However, as Avolio and Gardner (2005) pointed out, authentic leaders, unlike transformational leaders, may or may not be actively or proactively focused on developing followers into leaders, even though they have a positive impact on them via role modeling. Similarly, Bass and Steidlmeier noted that like authentic leadership, both servant and spiritual leadership include either explicit or implicit recognition of leader self-awareness and the focus on integrity, trust, courage, and hope. However, in servant and spiritual leadership, these constructs have remained largely atheoretical and have not been supported by empirical research.

Authentic leadership, then, can incorporate transformational, charismatic, servant, spiritual, or other forms of positive leadership. However, authentic leaders are not necessarily

transformational or charismatic; instead, they influence follower awareness from a values/moral perspective and energize followers by creating meaning and positively constructing reality for themselves and followers (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Although further work is needed to validate the construct of authentic leadership, Avolio et al. (2004) argued that the main distinguishing element that differentiates authentic leadership from related forms of leadership is that it is at the very core of what constitutes profoundly positive leadership in whatever form it exists. Avolio et al. (2004) argued that in authentic leadership; the focus on transparency, positivity, and high ethical standards is critical. Moreover, authentic leaders are expected to evoke followers' self-concept, recognizing that they share similar values with the leader. Nevertheless, since the authentic leadership construct is new, establishing discriminant validity that reduces some of the construct redundancy that currently exists is an important issue for future research.

### *Modeling the Authentic Leadership Construct*

As a result of the growing interest in this new construct, several models of authentic leadership have recently appeared in the literature. Avolio et al. (2004) presented the first formal statement of authentic leadership by proposing a theoretical model that draws from positive organizational behavior, trust, recent work on leadership and emotions, and identity theories to describe the processes by which authentic leaders exert their influence on follower attitudes such as job satisfaction and commitment and behaviors such as job performance. Follower outcomes included in the model are performance; extra effort; and withdrawal behaviors such as turnover, absenteeism, and tardiness. This model draws on theories of identification (e.g., Pratt, 1998), emotions (e.g., Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Dasborough & Ashkanasy, 2000), social identity and self-categorization (e.g., Ashforth & Mael, 1989; A. Hogg & Terry, 2000), transformational/charismatic leadership (e.g., Bass & Avolio, 1994), and positive psychology and positive organizational behavior (e.g., Cameron, Dutton, & Quinn, 2003).

Gardner et al. (2005) proposed a self-based model of the processes undergirding authentic leadership and followership. The model posits that a key factor contributing to the development of authentic leadership is the self-awareness of the leader which includes his or her values, emotions, identity, and goals. The second theoretical cornerstone of this model is self-regulation including internalized regulation, balanced processing of information referring to the unbiased collection and interpretation of self-related information, authentic behavior, and relational transparency which means that the leader displays high levels of openness, self-disclosure, and trust in close relationships. This model postulates that the leader's personal history (family influences, early challenges, educational and work experiences) and key trigger events (including crises as well as positive trigger events such as a promotion or stretch assignment) serve as antecedents for authentic leadership. As positive role models, authentic leaders demonstrate integrity and a commitment to core ethical values and contribute to a positive organizational climate. Positive outcomes for authentic leader-follower relationships, according to Gardner et al., include heightened levels of follower trust in the leader; workplace well-being; and veritable, sustainable performance.

Ilies et al. (2005) advanced a model of authentic leader and follower development that focuses on the elements of authenticity and the processes whereby authentic leadership contributes to the eudaemonic well-being of leaders and followers. Ilies et al. argued that authenticity as an introspective yet relational concept has substantial implications for leadership processes influencing not only leaders' own well-being but also impacting their followers' well-



being and self-concept. More specifically, Ilies et al. differentiated between hedonic and eudaemonic well-being. The hedonic approach to well-being is based on the motivational principles of seeking pleasure and avoiding pain while the eudaemonic approach is based on “living in a manner that actively expresses excellence of character or virtue” (Haybron, 2001, p. 210). Eudaemonic well-being is reflected in self-realization, personal growth and expressiveness, human flourishing, and the fulfillment of one’s true nature (Waterman, 1993). Ilies et al. pointed out that eudaemonia, described as personal expressiveness which one experiences during intense involvement, is closely related to peak experiences of interest, motivation, and joy or what Csikzentmihalyi (2003) referred to as *flow*.

Applied to authentic leadership, Ilies et al. (2005) suggested that eudaemonic well-being occurs when leaders and followers are true to their selves and fully engaged in realizing their true potential. The Ilies et al. model illustrates the connections between authentic leadership and the leader’s eudaemonic well-being and proposes some mechanisms through which authentic leadership influences followers’ eudaemonic well-being. However, the model does not specify the actual relationships among authentic leadership components and specific outcomes such as self-awareness and expressiveness.

Finally, Klenke (2004, 2005) proposed a model of authentic leadership that integrates contextual, cognitive, affective, conative, and spiritual elements. Like the models discussed previously, this model also treats the self as a critical aspect of authentic leadership. However, in addition to including self-esteem and self-efficacy (Ilies et al., 2005) and self-awareness and self-regulation (i.e., motivation) (Gardner & Avolio, 2005), Klenke’s (2004, 2005) model explicitly incorporates a spiritual component as a determinant of authentic leadership. Whereas Avolio et al. (2004) suggested that authentic leadership may incorporate spiritual and ethical leadership, I hypothesize that spirituality (defined as self-transcendence, self-sacrifice, and a sense of meaning and purpose) actually serves as a precursor of authentic leadership. The proposition that authentic leaders are spiritually more mature than their less authentic counterparts and that a leader’s spirituality contributes over time to greater authenticity is an important question subject to empirical testing.

In addition, more so than other approaches, this model explicitly incorporates organizational context in the form of authentic leadership cultures as potential outcomes of authentic leadership. As asserted elsewhere (Klenke, 1996), leadership is shaped by context; leadership is context dependent and context sensitive with leaders serving as tenants and stewards of context. In all form of leadership, contextual factors set the boundaries within which leaders and followers interact and determine the demands and constraints placed on them as they contextualize their actions, behaviors, attitudes, emotions, and spiritual choice (Klenke, 2005). The integrated model of authentic leadership (Klenke, 2004) is depicted in Figure 1. The context for authentic leadership is the complex organization characterized by uncertainty, turbulence, high velocity, and ambiguity. Additional contextual elements relevant to authentic leadership are organizational cultures characterized by caring, nurturing of the human spirit at the workplace, and providing opportunities for all members of the organization to develop their full potential.

There are notable differences as well as convergent viewpoints found in the approaches to authentic leadership. For example, as has been suggested, the defining characteristic of authentic leadership is that authentic leaders are anchored in their strong sense of self. However, although the self is included as a construct in the four models discussed, it occupies a position ranging from center to periphery. In the Gardner et al. (2005) self-based model of authentic leader and follower development; the self, manifested by two constructs (self-awareness and

self-regulation), is at the core of authentic leadership development and is directly linked to follower outcomes. In the Ilies et al. (2005) conceptualization of authentic leadership, aspects of the self (i.e., self-realization/development, self-esteem, and self-efficacy) are components of the leader's eudaemonic well-being. Self-awareness is presented as one facet of authentic leadership. Furthermore, the model postulates that characteristics of the self pertaining to the leader's eudaemonic well-being affect followers' eudaemonic well-being which is conceptualized as consisting of the same components of self (i.e., self-development, self-efficacy/self-esteem).

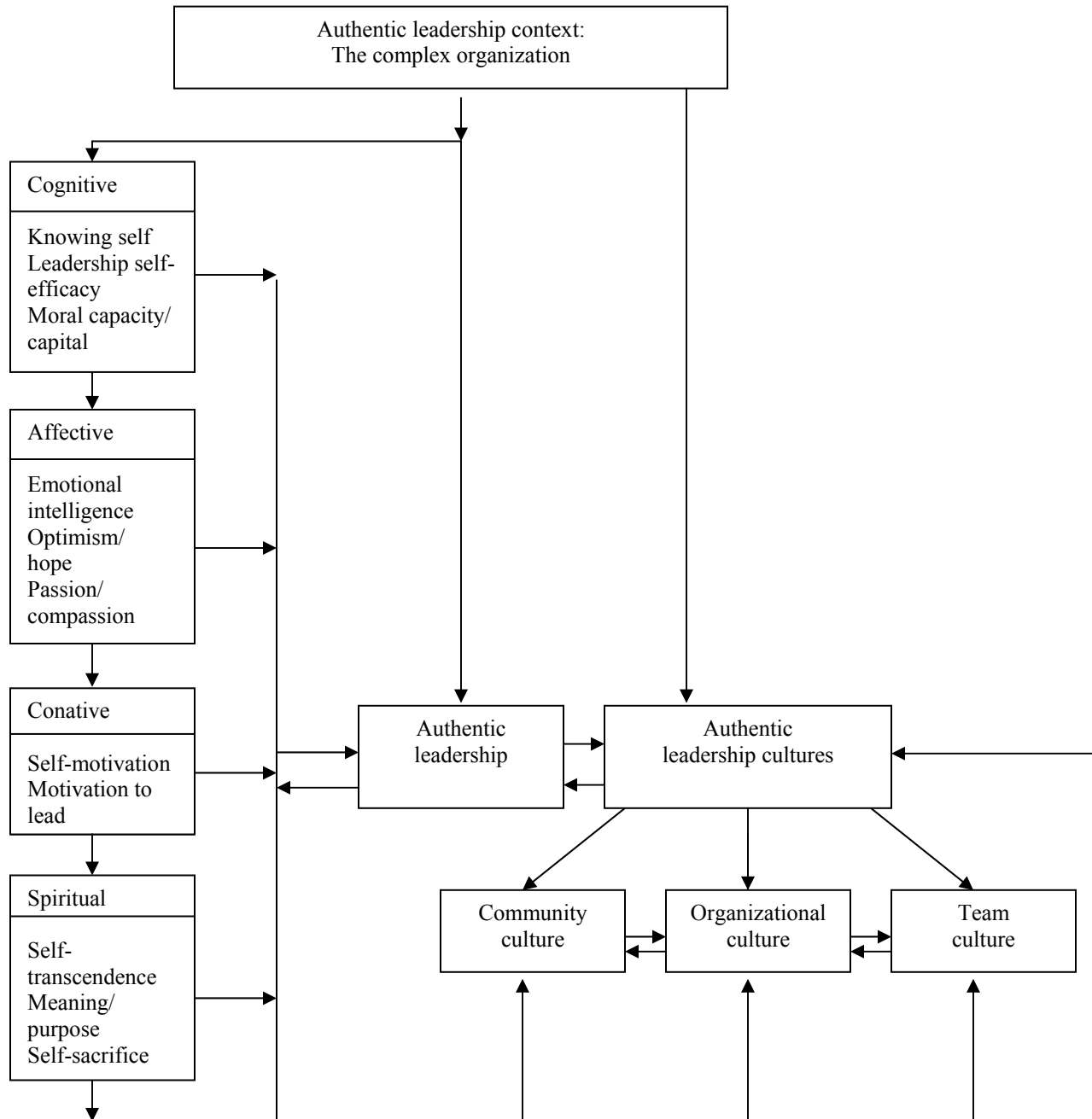


Figure 1. Cognitive, affective, conative, and spiritual antecedents of authentic leadership.

In the remaining two models, the self is operationalized as a facet of personal identification (Avolio et al., 2004) or is treated as a cognitive (self-knowledge), conative (self-motivation, motivation to lead), or spiritual (self-transcendence, self-sacrifice) antecedent of authentic leadership (Klenke, 2005). The role of the self and its various facets that have been incorporated into the theories of authentic leadership discussed here are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: The Self in Selected Models of Authentic Leadership

Facets of self	Gardner et al. (2005)	Avolio et al. (2004)	Ilies et al. (2005)	Klenke (2004)
Self-awareness	■			
Self-knowledge				
Self-regulation	■			
Self-esteem			■	
Self-efficacy			■	■
Self-motivation				■
Self-identity (personal identification)		■		
Self-development			■	
Self-transcendence				■
Self-sacrifice				■

### **Toward an Identity Systems Oriented Model of Authentic Leadership**

In this section, I offer a construct definition of authentic leadership and delineate the three identity systems that are proposed to play a critical role in authentic leadership. Figure 2 outlines the overall components of the proposed model and serves as a guide in the discussion that follows. In addition, each of these identity systems contains a number of substrata explicated in the sections that follow. For example, Table 1 lists a number of substrata of the self-identity system.

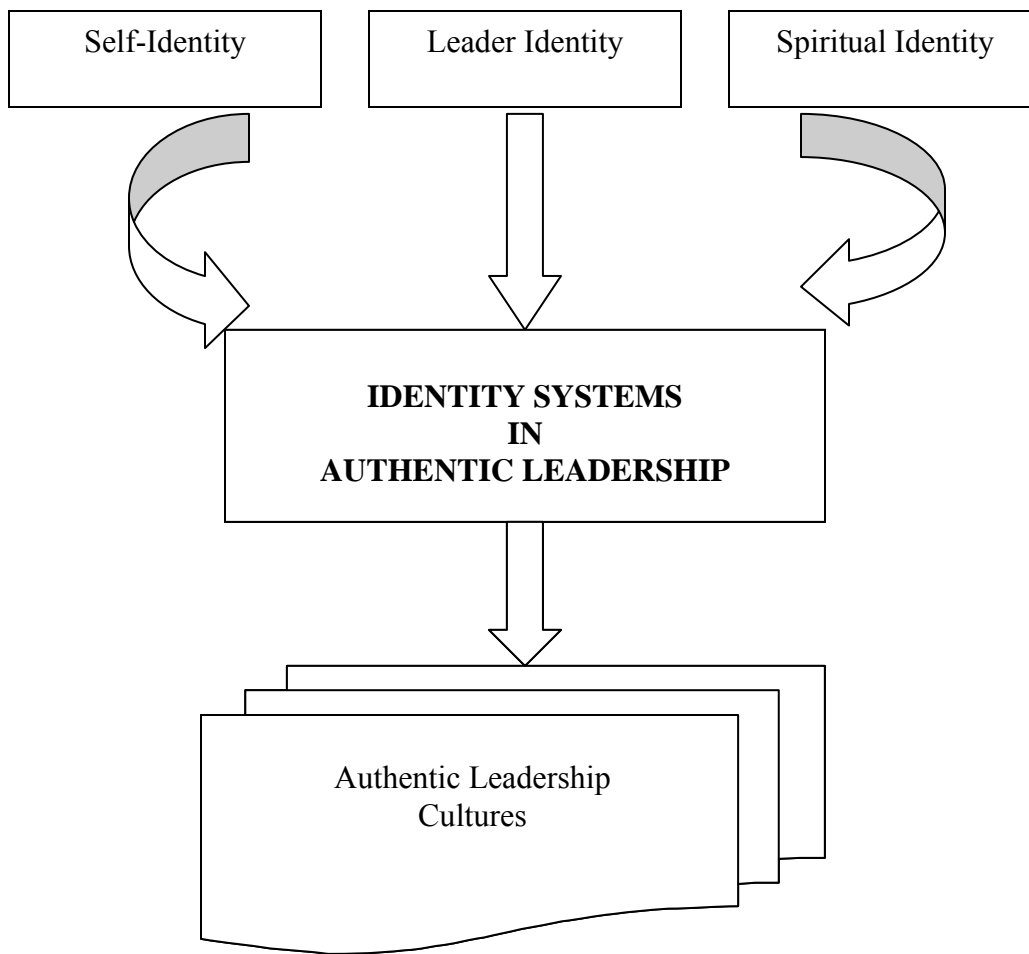


Figure 2. Identity systems in authentic leadership theory.

### The Self-Identity System

Avolio and Gardner (2005) posited that one of the key distinguishing characteristics of authentic leaders is that they are anchored by their own deep sense of self. The self or self-concept can be viewed as the knowledge a person has about him or her self. The self, as a knowledge structure, helps people organize and give meaning to their behavior (Kihlstrom, Beer, & Klein, 2003). Moreover, it is presupposed here that the self is context dependent and variable. Thus, a number of authors (e.g., Markus & Wurf, 1987; Showers & Zeigler Hill, 2003) have asserted that a person's overall self is typically represented as a set of categories, each of which represents a distinct self or identity. For the purposes of this discussion, the terms self and self-concept are used synonymously. Self and identity, as used in the psychological literature, are reflexive concepts, meaning that they refer to the person's image or view of himself or herself (D. Hall, 2004). For the sake of parsimony, like other authors (e.g., D. van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003a), I use the terms self, self-concept, identity, and personal identification (Avolio et al., 2004) interchangeably and employ the term self-identity when referring to these constructs. Moreover, I presuppose that self-identity subsumes a number of substrata or subidentities of

which self-concept is one. In other words, self-identity is multidimensional. While it is beyond the scope of this paper, subidentities relevant to the development of authentic leadership may include self-esteem, self-knowledge, self-efficacy, self-confidence, and self-consistency. For example, one aspect of the self that has received little attention is self-consistency or self-concordance. Buono and Judge (2003) reported that self-concordance mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and leadership effectiveness in a survey of nine organizations and a laboratory experiment. Obviously, we need to learn more about the role of self-consistency in authentic leadership and what specific aspects of authentic leadership moderated by self-consistency affect leadership effectiveness.

Schlenker (1985) defined identity as “a theory (schema) of an individual that describes, interrelates, and explains his or her relevant features, characteristics, and experiences” (p. 68). Self-identification is the process of “fixing and expressing one’s own identity, privately through reflection about oneself and publicly through self-disclosures, self-presentations, and other activities that serve to project one’s identity to audiences” (Schlenker, p. 66). Similarly, Baumeister (1986) defined a person’s identity as a way of seeing self, a personal construction or interpretation of the self. In addition, Markus and Nurius (1986) posited that we have an array of possible selves such as an ideal self (how we would like to be), an ought self (how we think we should be), and the actual self. These possible selves are future-oriented schemata of what we think we could potentially become.

Consequently, many writers have agreed with Kegan (1982) who asserted that identity is a multifaceted and complex construct which relates to the way an individual perceives himself or herself in relation to others. Individual identity images that are particularly valued by leaders in general (Gardner & Avolio, 1998) and authentic leaders in particular include being perceived as trustworthy, credible, and morally worthy. By definition, authentic leaders are perceived as being more true to themselves and display high levels of moral integrity (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). However, as Sparrowe (2005) pointed out, claiming that a particular form of leadership is intrinsically ethical or moral is difficult to falsify empirically but also extremely difficult to argue logically.

### *Self-Awareness*

A related concept is self-awareness, a construct that appears in most conceptualizations of authentic leadership assuming that authenticity and authentic leadership require heightened levels of self-awareness. Avolio and Gardner (2005) identified four elements of self-awareness that they believe are specifically relevant to the development of authentic leadership: values, cognitions regarding identity, emotions, and motives/goals (Gardner et al., 2005). Though a person may not be fully conscious of all the components of his or her identity, self-awareness refers to the extent to which people are aware of various aspects of their identities and the extent to which their self-perceptions are internally integrated and congruent with the ways others perceive them. Thus, the identity is a description of what the sense of self is; whereas self-awareness contains an evaluative component, referring to quality and accuracy (i.e., agreement with others) of those self-perceptions. Self-awareness, then, is a measure of the person’s ability to be truly conscious of the components of the self and to observe it accurately and objectively. According to Silvia and Duval (2001), self-awareness occurs when individuals are cognizant of their own existence and what constitutes that existence within the context within which they operate over time.

The issue of awareness of the self is made explicit in the theory of identity development proposed by Kegan (1982). In Kegan's model, growth of identity involves the person's ability to see the self with some objectivity, take different perspectives of one's self and observe it as from a distance. This is in contrast to the less developed state, where the self is more embedded (i.e., the subject), where the person is the self and is not able to observe and reflect on it. In Kegan's view, development occurs not so much in an age driven manner as from the person's encountering new situations that contain increasingly greater complexity. From Kegan's perspective, the self evolves in a process of increasing maturation and ability to comprehend the complexities of the environment. As a person increases his or her capacity to deal with this complexity, identity grows in its capacity to take in complexity and to integrate it in a way that permits committed action. Influenced by Piaget, the Kegan model proposes a series of identity levels, as the person moves from being very dependent and self-focused to being both autonomous and interdependent and able to comprehend a very complex system of relationships in which he or she operates.

Other theorists (e.g., D. Hall, 2004) have argued that the key to understanding the growth of self-awareness are key experiences (McCall, 1998), critical events that may alter a person's identity or trigger personal exploration which later lead to changes in self-awareness. From development and career literature, for example, we know that there are certain predictable changes in identity that occur as the individual makes certain status or role changes. Levinson (1986, 1997), for example, sees the life course as a series of periods called stages which build the structure of the self separated by structure-changing periods (transitions).

Key events that have been discussed in the context of authentic leadership development have been described as trigger experiences (Gardner et al., 2005). Events that may trigger the development of self-identity or changes in self-identity; redefine the role and salience of specific subidentities; and promote the development of authentic leadership may be sensational or subtle, positive or negative, and located in the personal history of the leader or prompted contemporaneously. Whatever their specific form and timing, trigger events serve as positive forces in developing leader self-awareness and stimulate positive growth and development (Avolio, 2005; Gardner et al., 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003).

Both negative and positive moments and events can trigger a deep change in an individual's self-identity, bringing into clearer focus alternative possible selves that eventually may replace the individual's actual self (Lord & Brown, 2004). Although trigger events have been traditionally viewed as negative experiences involving crises and negative stressors (e.g., loss of a loved one, health or financial problems), positive events (promotions, significant relationships, mentoring) can likewise trigger leadership development. Both positive and negative events shape the leader's development to the extent that they are reflected upon and interpreted in terms of the self (Gardner et al., 2005). For example, the power of adversity or what Bennis and Thomas (2002a, 2002b) referred to as the leader's crucible in leadership development has been widely established, both anecdotally and in case studies. Yet, crucibles do not need to be horrendous ordeals since leaders have been able to create meaning out of the crucible experiences and have found them a source of strength. Bennis and Thomas (2002a) defined a crucible of leadership as "a transformative experience through which an individual comes to a new or altered sense of identity" (p. 6). Similarly, a leader's response to a calling can be traumatic or it may lead to an experience of the transcendent and, in doing so, provides meaning and purpose in life (Fry, 2003).

The remaining constructs in the self-identity systems (self-knowledge, self-efficacy, self-congruence, and self-liking) have been sufficiently discussed in the literature and, for the sake of parsimony, will not be reviewed here.

### *Self-Identity Versus Social Identity*

Finally, it is important to differentiate between self-identity and social identity. Banaji and Prentice (1994) posited that personal identities involve self-categorization based upon one's unique characteristics, including traits and attributes, which specify how one differs from others. In contrast, social identities are based on the extent to which one sees oneself as being a member of certain social groups, as well as one's assessment of the emotional and value significance of this membership (M. Hogg, 2001). When the self is defined in collective terms; collective interest is experienced as self-interest, meaning individuals are intrinsically motivated to contribute to the collective good (D. van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, & van Gijk, 2000). In this research, however, the focus is on self-identity as it represents a fundamental building block in the development of authentic leadership because empirical evidence for the relationship between leadership to relational self-construal (personal identification or self-identity) is much scarcer compared to evidence for the relationship between social identification and leadership effectiveness (B. van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, De Cremer, & Hogg, 2004). D. Van Knippenberg and Hogg (2003a) and M. Hogg (2001) suggested that elements of charismatic and transformational leadership may be primarily associated with personal identification, whereas other elements such as one's identity as an organizational or community member are primarily associated with social identification with these collectivities. However, this position remains to be tested.

There is a substantial body of evidence linking self-identity to leader effectiveness in charismatic and transformational leadership (e.g., De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2002). As B. van Knippenberg et al. (2004) noted, core to the self and identity approach to leadership effectiveness is an understanding that the way we perceive ourselves; our self-concept or identity; strongly informs our feelings, beliefs, attitudes, goals, and behavior (Leary & Tangney, 2003). Taken together, research examining the self and collective identity has suggested that leaders construe the self in personal, relational, and collective terms. The salience of these different self-construals varies across situations, relationships, time, and context (Aron, 2003; Brewer, 2003; M. Hogg, 2003).

In sum, the self-identity system of the proposed model assumes that a strong sense of identity is a prerequisite for the development of authentic leadership. If leaders are not clear on their needs, values, motivations, abilities, and other important elements of self-definition; it becomes very difficult for them to know how to develop as a person and as a leader (Avolio et al., 2004; Gardner et al., 2005). The self-identity system consists of both cognitive (i.e., self-efficacy) and affective (i.e., self-liking) components. In addition, the system encompasses both multiple self-identities (i.e., self as leader, self as parent) as well as a subset of subidentities such as self-knowledge or self-congruence which may be salient at different times and in different contexts (see Figure 3).

From the research reviewed in this section, the following propositions regarding the self-identity system in authentic leadership are postulated:

- Proposition 1a:* Authentic leaders have a greater sense of self-awareness than inauthentic leaders.
- Proposition 1b:* A leader's healthy and authentic self-identity is one in which the component subidentities are integrated.
- Proposition 1c:* Authentic leaders have a more differentiated self-identity than less authentic leaders.

### **The Leader Identity System**

Leader development is the creation of new aspects of the self that specifically relate to the leader role. I use the construct of leader identity as the bridge between personal and collective identity since it combines unique, individual characteristics of self-identity along with group-oriented aspects of collective identity. This system acknowledges that the individual self coexists with both the relational self (those aspects of the self-concept that are shared with partners and define the person's role or position within significant relationships) and the collective self (those aspects of the self-concept that differentiate in-group members from relevant outgroups) (Sedikides & Brewer, 2001). At the individual level, leader identity is derived from the leader's self-identity and the human capital he or she brings to the leadership role. At the collective level, leader identity develops as a function of shared experiences from which shared identities of leaders and followers emerge. Authentic leaders have a highly developed sense of how their own roles as leaders and carry a responsibility to act morally and in the best interest of others (May et al., 2003). As a construct, leader identity resonates with Sparrowe's (2005) comment that "the emphasis on authenticity as 'to thine own self be true' should be complemented by authenticity disclosed in regard one holds for others" (p. 135).

The leader identity system consists of three subidentities: (a) leadership self-efficacy, (b) leader reputation, and (c) leader prototypicality. The leader identity system component of the model is consistent with recent conceptualizations of identity that acknowledge multiple aspects of self-construals and, as a construct, illustrate the dual individualist/collective nature of the roles of a leader.

#### *Leadership Self-Efficacy*

Self-efficacy plays an important role in leadership research. By extension, leadership self-efficacy represents a leader's self-perceived capabilities for the general leadership tasks of directing setting, gaining follower commitment, and overcoming obstacles. More specifically, it refers to the leader's judgment that he or she can successfully exert leadership by setting the direction for the work group, build relationships with followers in order to gain commitment to change goals, and work with followers to overcome obstacles to change (Paglis & Green, 2002). McCormick (2001) defined leadership self-efficacy as an individual's perceived capability to perform the cognitive and behavioral functions necessary to regulate group process in relation to group achievement. He treated leadership self-efficacy as a focal construct that affects the goals leaders select, their motivation, the development of functional leadership strategies, and the skillful execution of these strategies.



### *Leader Reputation*

Leader reputation is the second subidentity in this system. Ferris, Blass, Douglas, Kolodinsky, and Treadway (2003) defined reputation as “a perceptual identity reflective of the complex combination of salient personal characteristics and accomplishments, demonstrated behavior, and intended images presented over some period of time as observed directly and/or reported from secondary sources” (p. 215). Building on this definition, A. Hall, Blass, Ferris, and Massengale (2004) suggested that leader reputation is a perceptual identity of a leader as held by others that serves to reduce the uncertainty regarding the expected future behavior of that leader. This definition is consistent with the dual nature of the constructs making up this identity system. Like leadership self-efficacy, leader reputation has an individual and a collective component. On one hand, leader reputation is based on the leader’s perceptions of himself or herself as a reputable individual; on the other hand, leader reputation is determined by external constituencies. Hence, leader reputation may be conceptualized as both an individual and group construct. Furthermore, according to the authors, just as leaders may embrace several self-identities, they also might have multiple reputations, each signaling the likelihood of behavior specific to a given context.

A. Hall et al. (2004) argued that the reputation a leader achieves can serve as a proxy for role episodes, such that a leader’s reputation (like a history of interaction) provides information regarding the leader’s abilities and values. Ferris et al. (2003) found that increased reputation is associated with greater trust which is associated with autonomy, concepts that play a role in authentic leadership. Whitmeyer (2000) reported that a leader’s reputation can significantly influence the development of stakeholder trust. The reputation of leaders influence the trust and confidence we place in them and ultimately our assessment of leadership performance and effectiveness.

Authentic leaders build their reputation on trustworthiness, high moral standards, and the positive psychological capacities and resources they bring to the leadership role and model for followers’ authenticity through self-awareness and relational transparency. They foster positive affective states which then spread and reverberate through social contagion processes to positively foster emotional and cognitive development of other organizational members as well as organizational learning and transformation (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). A favorable leader reputation is predicted to facilitate the development of authentic leadership.

### *Leader Prototypicality*

Finally, leader prototypicality comprises the third subidentity in the identity system. Reichers, Haslam, and Hopkins (2005) argued that those in a position to direct the group are individuals who are seen to be most prototypical of the group position in a given context. There is considerable evidence suggesting that leadership is contingent upon leaders being perceived as being prototypical of a social identity that they share with followers (Duck & Fielding, 2003; Turner, 1991; D. van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003b). As a result, the most prototypical member assumes the mantle of leadership. There is a substantial body of evidence linking self-identity to leader effectiveness in charismatic and transformational leadership (e.g., De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2002). As B. van Knippenberg et al. (2004) noted, core to the self and identity approach to leadership effectiveness is an understanding that the way we perceive ourselves (our self-concept or identity) strongly informs our feelings, beliefs, attitudes, goals, and behavior

(Leary & Tangney, 2003). Taken together, research examining self and collective identity has suggested that leaders construe the self in personal, relational, and collective terms. The salience of these different self-construals varies across situations, relationships, time, and context (Aron, 2003; Brewer, 2003; M. Hogg, 2003).

The social identity theory of leadership (M. Hogg, 2001; M. Hogg & van Knippenberg, 2003) proposes that because group members to a greater or lesser extent treat the group, and thus the group prototype, as a source of information about social reality; they are more open to the influence of group prototypical leaders. Moreover, they are more likely to trust group prototypical leaders as representatives of shared identity who have the group's best interests at heart. Therefore, group members are more likely to endorse more prototypical leaders since they tend to be perceived as attractive and effective. The proposed greater effectiveness of prototypical compared to nonprototypical leaders is supported by a variety of studies in the laboratory as well as in the field (e.g., Fielding & Hogg, 1997; B. van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005; D. van Knippenberg et al., 2000).

The most basic prediction from this theory is that as group salience increases, perceived leadership effectiveness becomes more determined by leader prototypicality and less determined by the possession of general leadership qualities since social identity theory suggests that ability to lead depends on the capacity to represent a group consensus. Reichers and Hopkins (2001) stated that leadership activity and leadership effectiveness largely revolves around the leader's ability to create identity definitions and engage people in the process of turning those definitions into practical realities. Without such an identity, there is nothing to bind leaders and followers together. The identity definitions a leader generates are determined by his or her leader identity and by context.

Leaders are actively crafting, defining, and redefining identities beginning with self-identities and leader identities associated with the leadership role. The self-identity and leader identity systems are interdependent. According to Reichers et al. (2005), leadership is a matter of what it means to be *us* in a given context. Leaders actively define the category themselves and engage in behaviors to enhance their prototypicality, while followers actively weigh and interpret the definitions offered to them. Both leaders and followers are active interpreters of the social world. Consequently, it seems reasonable to argue that leader prototypicality develops and stems from the symbiosis of self-identity and leader identity. The merger of these two identity systems allows leaders to integrate personological characteristics (self-esteem, self-efficacy) with the demands associated with the leadership role such as facilitating the integration of individual and group identities.

*Proposition 2a:* Authentic leaders have a stronger sense of leadership self-efficacy than inauthentic leaders.

*Proposition 2b:* Authentic leaders have stronger and more favorable reputations than inauthentic leaders.

*Proposition 2c:* Authentic leaders are more likely to assume the role of prototypical member than inauthentic leaders.

### **The Spiritual Identity System**

One of the few constants is the belief for most people in the omnipresence and omniscience of a higher being/God or superordinate spirit. Individuals develop a sense of

spiritual self in relation to a higher power or God and by recognizing the sacred and divine within them.

James (1902) provided an early yet enduring conceptualization of identity development. He posited that the study of an individual's identity involves considering two aspects of the self: the *I* (self-as-subject) and the *me* (self-as-object). An individual's *I* functions consciously and objectively to create and connect the various *me* views and maintain a sense of continuity of self across time. The types of *me* created by the *I* include the material me (family, home, belongings), the social me (how one is seen and responded to by others), and the spiritual me which describes a person's inner life. James (1910/1968) referred to this spiritual me as "the true, the intimate, the ultimate, the permanent me which I seek" (p. 43). It is the highest level of self-organization, more advanced than the material me and the social me. The distinction between the *I* and the *me* has proved amazingly viable and appears as a recurrent theme in most treatments of the self (Harter, 1999; Lewis, 1991).

Since the time that James proposed his early model of the self, identity theorists from different schools of thought (psychodynamic, cognitive, narrative, and systems theory) have extended and modified his work. But by and large, they have abandoned the emphasis on spiritual self-conceptualization. For James (1902), the spiritual self manifests in spiritual experiences or what the author refers to as mystical experiences. These spiritual experiences become internalized and integrated with the person's self-identity until people see themselves as spiritual beings. Themes of spirituality are woven through many aspects of their lives because people recognize spiritual experiences across many settings.

The role of spirituality in leadership and the workplace has generated quite a bit of attention in both the popular press and the research literature, reflected in the recent proliferation of articles and books (e.g., Ashmos & Duchon, 2000; Gunther, 2001; Mitroff & Denton, 1999; Thompson, 2000) that speak to the growing interest in spirituality in the corporate world. In addition, research has shown that the core benefits of organizational transformation are not merely economic. Instead, the nonmaterial, spiritual aspects of transformation may be the most profound for individuals, organizations, and society (Milliman, Czaplewski, & Ferguson, 2003; Neal, Lichtenstein, & Banner, 1999). For many practitioners, on the other hand, the surge in literature on spirituality raises the red flag that this may be the next management fad especially when attempts to integrate spirituality into existing management practices are simply seen as means through which people can be exploited (Elmes & Smith, 2001). Promoting spirituality in organizations and institutionalizing spiritual practices such as meditation or prayer is raising suspicions about the spirituality in the workplace movement since employees' spiritual yearnings and needs can be used as a way to manipulate and exploit workers to fulfill selfish or materialistic objectives of organizations or management (Cavanagh & Bandusch, 2002).

### *Development of Spiritual Identity*

Spiritual development and the development of an individual's spiritual identity or spiritual self are poorly understood with few models to guide researchers in the rapidly growing fields of workplace spirituality and spiritual leadership. Part of the lack of theories of spiritual development and spiritual identity stems from the lack of consensus associated with definitions of spirituality. Similarly, there are few cohesive theories of spiritual formation, growth, and development which come from religious or theological traditions, psychological perspectives, or those that claim to be neither faith nor discipline based. Regardless of underlying philosophical

foundations, most conceptions of spirituality embody notions of a path, a journey, a process, and a developmental sequence; they also include references to inner life, meaning and purpose, connectedness, and transcendence.

Some theories (e.g., Fowler, 1981; Helminiak, 1987) assume that the development of spirituality proceeds similarly to other areas of human development such as cognitive or moral development. If this is indeed the case, then spiritual development would stand with the other psychologically defined conceptions of human development such as Piaget's cognitive development, Kohlberg's moral development, and Loevinger's ego development theories; especially when spiritual development is treated as human development as in the models proposed by Fowler and Helminiak. Nevertheless theorists (e.g., Fowler; Helminiak; Kegan, 1982) who assume continuity in spiritual development do make some allowances for periodic discontinuities while still seeing the process as largely continuous. Opponents (e.g., Delbecq, 1999, 2000; Mitroff & Denton, 1999) of spiritual development as a continuous process have argued that discontinuities have a significant influence that negates any idea of a linear development. For example, spiritual markers, epiphanies, or other discontinuous awakening experiences can profoundly redirect a person's spiritual development as conversion experiences have shown. For example, Neal et al. (1999) cited CEOs and managers who provided examples of intense moments of suffering or epiphanies as transforming experiences and pivotal aspects that profoundly influenced their spiritual development.

A somewhat different approach to spiritual identity development has been pursued by narrative theorists who rely on stories as their sources of data. Narrative stories of identity development (McAdams, 1993, 1996) integrate psychodynamic, cognitive, and systems theories into a more complete conceptualization of the self. Narrative theorists have proposed that an individual's Jamesian *I* creates meaningful or coherent life stories or self-stories. Sparrowe (2005), for example, argued that authenticity is not achieved by leaders' and followers' self-awareness of their inner values or purpose; rather, it emerges from the narrative process in which others play a constitutive role in the self. The author suggests that through self-stories; individuals develop a narrative identity which represents the portrayal of the whys of one's life, if not by means of a causal explanation then through an accounting of how those events are related.

The self-stories that are created include various self-symbol, self-schemas, and self-other scripts. From the perspective of narrative theory, individuals achieve a healthy identity as they develop a coherent life story that integrates their various self-stories into a meaningful whole (McAdams, 1993, 1996). A person's sense of a storied spiritual self may develop through self-awareness, relationships, and interactions at work or through membership in spiritual communities. Self-stories can be analyzed for themes of spiritual development and spiritual identity as many of them describe the spiritual path taken or spiritual values to which the individual subscribes. The spiritual architecture of this identity system is built on three pillars or subidentities: self-disclosure, self-transcendence, and self-sacrifice.

### *Self-Disclosure*

Self-disclosure refers to the process of revealing one's inner self to others. Self-disclosure aids in self-acceptance because revealing more of oneself allows more opportunities for others to accept an individual. As acceptance by others increases, so does self-esteem because self-esteem is based heavily on how we are perceived by others. Self-disclosure also means opening oneself

to a higher power, admitting to spiritual needs and struggles. Self-disclosure requires that individuals expose their vulnerabilities, opening themselves up to pain and suffering. Bunker (1997) has argued that expressing vulnerability becomes an important leadership component when it comes to connecting with others at a basic level of humanness. For example, discussions of trust in organizational authorities typically emphasize the vulnerability of individuals in follower roles and their dependence on those above them in the organizational hierarchy (Kramer, 1996). Shamir and Lapidot (2003), in a multimethod study which combined quantitative and qualitative elements, reported that the vulnerability of senior leaders to team leaders stemmed from the fact that their leadership, like that of all leaders, depended on the trust of their followers (Hollander, 1992). The leaders, Israeli army commanders in a very hierarchical organization, depended on followers no less than their followers depended on them. The authors concluded that the leaders' vulnerability was due to the essential relationship between subordinates' trust and superiors' ability to lead.

### *Self-Transcendence*

According to Fairholm (1998), this spiritual dimension underscores not only virtuous behaviors but also an attitude of openness to the transcendent meaning of human existence. The author proposed a model of leadership that results in five levels ranging from managerial control to spiritual holism. Self-transcendence; as defined by Cloninger, Svrakic, and Pryzbeck (1994); includes components such as creative self-forgetfulness, transpersonal identification, and spiritual acceptance. Carey (1992) argued that authentic leadership implies self-transcendence that comes only with genuine self-enlightenment and is the product of reflection and introspection. Strack, Fottler, Wheatley, and Sodomka (2002) interviewed 20 transformational leaders who defined spirituality as God or some other transcendent power, the source of personal values and meaning, an awareness of one's inner self, and a way of integrating all aspects of oneself into a whole. Piedmont (1999) referred to spiritual transcendence as the capacity of individuals to stand outside their immediate sense of time and place and develop a more holistic and interconnected perspective, recognizing a synchronicity to life and developing a sense of commitment to others. These different definitions imply that transcendent individuals recognize the limitedness of their human existence which is anchored in a specific time and place and consider encompassing visions of life that are more holistic and interconnected.

### *Self-Sacrifice*

Historically, Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, and Martin Luther King demonstrated self-sacrificial leadership. Contemporaneously, Suu Kyi of Burma, prodemocracy leader and Nobel Prize winner, spent 6 years under house arrest fighting for the freedom of her country. Anne Mulcahy, CEO of Xerox, sacrificed her personal life to take charge of a corporate turnaround. Other business leaders as well as political, grassroots, and religious leaders; especially during economic downturns and crises such as 9/11; have made selfless contributions that have fueled the interest in the role of sacrifice in leadership (Halverson, Holladay, Kazama, & Quiñones, 2004). Leadership often entails suffering since the tasks involved require physical, mental, psychological, and emotional labor which takes a toll on even the most resilient leader since they are not immune to the pain, internal conflicts, and stressors that arise from the need to wear protective masks.

Self-sacrificial leadership goes beyond an individual's motivation to help others or selflessness. It has been defined as the total/partial abandonment, and or permanent/temporary postponement of personal interests, privileges, and welfare in the: (1) the division of labor (by volunteering for more risky and arduous tasks); (2) distribution of rewards which involves giving up one's fair and legitimate share of organizational rewards); and/or (3) voluntarily refraining from using position power and privileges. (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1998, p. 399)

If the leader is perceived to be self-sacrificing, perceptions of effectiveness and charisma are positively influenced (Yorges, Weiss, & Strickland, 1999). Self-sacrificial leadership promotes the image of leaders as being willing to incur personal costs to serve the mission of the group and organization, especially when exposed to external threats or crises. Self-sacrificing leaders deny themselves personal privileges and share pains and hardships with their followers. Many political and grassroots leaders, for instance, have given up their freedom by spending time in prison to demonstrate the severity of their causes (House & Shamir, 1993).

Several authors (i.e., Avolio & Locke, 2002; Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Burns, 1978) have suggested that leaders willingly sacrifice for the collective good of their work group, organization, or society at large. For example, B. van Knippenberg and van Knippenberg (2005) argued that being self-sacrificial is probably one of the most direct ways for a leader to state that he or she considers the group's welfare to be important and explicitly shows the leader's commitment to the collective. Moreover, the authors suggested that a leader's self-sacrificing behavior will create pressure on followers to do the same, thereby prescribing what kinds of behavior are expected in light of the group's common cause.

Finally, the model presented here postulates that spiritual development and spiritual identity are central to authentic leadership development. Parameshwar (2005), in a phenomenological study, examined significant life events from the autobiographies of 10 internationally renowned human rights leaders. The author showed how the spiritual generativity of ego-transcendental processes metamorphosed from challenges to opportunities for these leaders as they responded exceptionally to life-defining and life-altering circumstances. Leaders included Viktor Frankl, Paulo Friere, Mahatma Gandhi, Helen Keller, and Rigoberta Menchu; leaders known as both authentic and spiritual leaders. In responding to challenging circumstances, the leaders uncovered what they perceived as ways in which the human spirit is held hostage within the thick nexuses among institutional structures. In these situations, the leaders' actions also affirmed a higher purpose/moral principle/inner God and denied societal norms/authority structures/laws that get in the way. Studying the ego-transcendental, exceptional responses of leaders from different continents, time periods, religions, and educational and professional backgrounds is timely because it teaches us how spiritual leadership can enable us to engage with the vexing challenges we face.

Based on the foregoing discussion, authentic leadership development is the process by which the self-identity and leader identity systems converge and become unified in the spiritual identity system which directs leaders' and followers' moral compass, motivation, and emotions toward optimization of performance and the establishment of an organizational climate that nurtures the human spirit at work and positive, strength-based organizational cultures. In sum, spiritually authentic leaders draw from the selfless ground of the human experience; they recognize the emotional labor involved in the tasks and responsibilities of leadership as well as the suffering and sacrifice that are integral components of authentic leadership. The question of whether self-sacrificing leadership leads to greater authenticity of leaders and followers or

enhances follower performance is an empirical issue that has not been addressed. Hence, in the absence of empirical data, the assumption that leader self-sacrifice leads to leader effectiveness of positive follower outcomes is tenuous at best (Klenke, 2005).

*Proposition 3a:* Authentic leaders exhibit greater willingness and greater degrees of self-disclosure than inauthentic leaders.

*Proposition 3b:* Authentic leaders use ego or self-transcendental processes as exceptional responses to challenging circumstances (Parameshwar, 2005).

*Proposition 3c:* Authentic leaders are more likely to engage in self-sacrificing behaviors than inauthentic leaders.

Figure 3 presents the full version of the model which includes several subidentities in each of the three proposed identity systems.

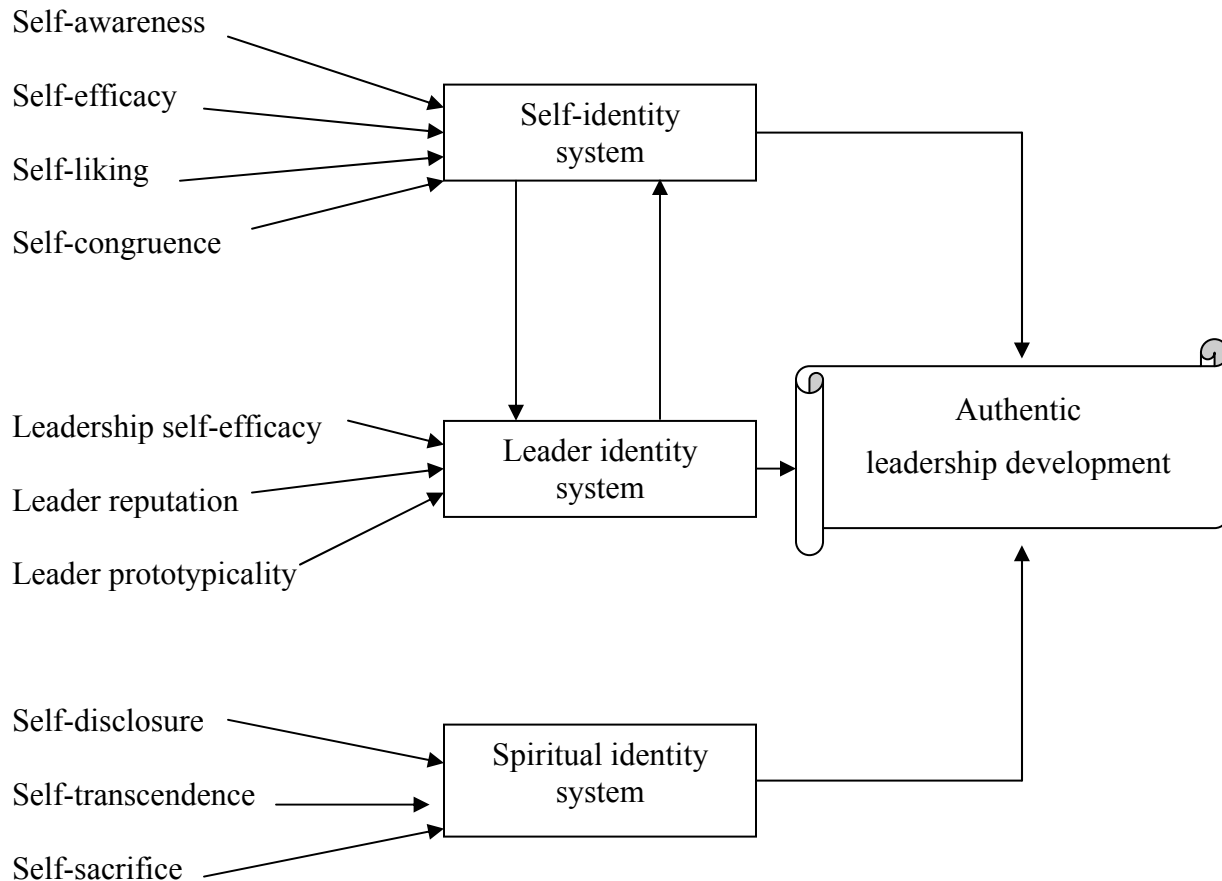


Figure 3. Toward an identity based model of authentic leadership.

## Conclusions

As a new construct, authentic leadership is still in the nascent stages of development; therefore, the emergence of several perspectives is to be expected. This research attempts to make several contributions to the ongoing theory-building work (e.g., Avolio et al., 2004; Gardner et al., 2005; Ilies et al., 2005; Klenke, 2005). First, a model of authentic leadership is offered that relies on the single explanatory construct of identity which operates at different levels of analysis: individually, identity is captured by the self-identity system and its component elements; collectively, as the leader identity system and its correlated subidentities; and holistically, as the spiritual identity subsystem also comprised of several constituent components. As such, this research challenges the existing approaches which have drawn from positive psychology constructs such as hope, resilience, and optimism and flow to frame authentic leadership and followership development by focusing and defining the authentic leadership construct from an identity framework.

The model of authentic leadership introduced in this article is a triumvirate that includes self-identity, leader-identity, and spiritual identity systems. The self-identity system encompasses the intrapersonal self defined by internal dispositions, abilities, and dynamics. The leader identity system reflects the interpersonal self as defined by the leader's relationships with others. It serves as the bridge between the individual and the collective self or social identity and is associated with group membership and group process (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Both the self- and the leader identity systems are embedded in the spiritual identity system. The model assumes that authentic leaders are motivated to sustain multiple identities in harmony and congruent with one another. Brewer (2003) posited that balance or the optimal self can be achieved by adjusting individual self-construals to be more consistent with the group prototype by developing a stable leader identity system or by shifting social identification to a group that is more congruent with the self-identity system. Finally, the spiritual identity system functions as a superordinate configuration of behaviors based on transcendent behaviors and values.

Despite notable differences in construct definitions and models of authentic leadership presented here, Avolio and Gardner (2005) argued that the commonalities shared by the models, even at the early stage of development of this emergent construct and field of inquiry, suggest that some agreement on core elements of authentic leadership and followership may be surfacing. For example, self-awareness is a core facet in many models of authentic leadership; however, it is a messy variable to operationalize. The measurement challenges and issues regarding the self-awareness and identity constructs are significant. These constructs are inherently clinical concepts which typically have been studied with qualitative, clinical methods (D. Hall, 2004) which are underrepresented in leadership research. Additionally, we need to develop more and better quantitative approaches to the study of identity as self-awareness and the closely related concept of identity are difficult to define and even harder to measure.

As with all new fields of inquiry, much work needs to be done particularly with regards to (a) achieving greater clarity of construct definitions, (b) addressing measurement issues, and (c) avoiding construct redundancy. With respect to construct clarity, Cooper et al. (2005) pointed out the need to identify key dimensions of authentic leadership and then create a theoretically based definition. They argued that the current definition of authentic leaders as

those who are deeply aware of how they think and behave and are perceived by others as being aware of their own and others' values/moral perspective, knowledge and strengths;



aware of the context in which they operate; and who are confident, hopeful, optimistic, resilient, and of high moral character. (as cited in Avolio et al., 2004, p. 805) is very broad, contains many diverse elements from diverse domains (traits, states, behaviors, contexts) that pose serious measurement challenges. I would add to the caveats voiced by these authors that the above definition is not a definition of authentic leadership as a process but a definition of authentic leaders as persons. We have evidenced this same problem of confusing leaders as persons with leadership as a process through the history of the field.

At the present time, the study of authentic leadership is hampered by both lack of construct clarity and the absence of a reliable and valid instrument of authentic leadership. Achieving construct clarity involves identifying the relevant construct dimensions, specifying the interrelationships among construct dimensions, and identifying the boundaries within which the constructs elements are interrelated in a lawful manner (Dubin, 1978). The social sciences have a strange inability to recognize that a theoretical model must have boundaries even if the boundaries are overlapping. Finally, the issue of construct redundancy involves the need to avoid overlap between construct dimension of authentic leadership and other values-based theories such as transformational, servant, and other types of inspirational leadership. One of the important research challenges ahead is establishing the discriminant validity of the authentic leadership construct. If discriminant validity cannot be established, then the question raised by Cooper et al. (2005) regarding the need and necessity of creating other leadership constructs becomes highly relevant. If the authentic leadership construct is not unique (i.e., fails to demonstrate discriminant validity), time and effort may be more effectively spent using existing theories to address questions generated by authentic leadership.

### *Directions for Future Research*

Since the study of authentic leadership is in the nascent stages of development; many avenues to refine the construct and move from the conceptual phase to an empirical, theory building, and testing phase await the leadership researcher. As noted earlier, development and validation of a measure of authentic leadership that allows researchers to distinguish the construct from similar constructs empirically are needed (Cooper et al., 2005). In addition, studies are needed that relate authentic leadership and followership development to other areas of human development such as cognitive or moral development longitudinally. Also needed are qualitative studies such as retrospective cases of authentic leaders employing narrative analysis, which may be particularly useful in identifying the construct dimensions of authentic leadership. In addition, Eisenhardt (1989) made a persuasive case for building theory from case study research involving either single or multiple cases. Continued development of theory is a central activity when building a new construct.

Another avenue for future research involves the use of critical incidents of authentic and inauthentic leader behaviors to produce typologies of authentic leader behaviors that may be instrumental in defining the nomological network of the construct domain more precisely. Yet another promising area of research would look into the role of trigger events in the lives of authentic leaders such as Mother Teresa and Bill George or the crucibles of authentic leadership which Bennis and Thomas (2002a) defined as “a transformative experience through which an individual comes to a new or an altered sense of identity” (p. 6). Qualitative interviewing lends itself to the elicitation of significant life stories that have served as trigger events and can be followed by an examination of the transformative effects of leveraging self-disclosure, self-

transcendence, and self-sacrifice (Parameshwar, 2005) that are hypothesized here to be dimensions of the spiritual identity system of the authentic leader.

Although much work remains to be done, the authentic leadership construct is important and promising since it focuses scholars' attention on the inner dynamics and leadership as *being* as opposed to leadership as *doing* or *having*. It assumes that the inner life of leaders and followers composed of different identities guides and motivates their behaviors which, according to Shamir (1991), are often guided by imagined possibilities and "faith" (p. 409). Spiritual identity is posited to be at the core of authentic leadership, presupposing that leader and followers exhibit positive selves and leader identities that are shared. Shared identities at multiple levels of analysis, in turn, enhance individual and organizational effectiveness and performance. Duchon and Plowman (2005) did indeed report a positive relationship between scores on a spirituality measure and work unit performance. Authentic leaders not only enhance performance and motivation; they not only have a highly developed sense of how their roles as leaders carry the responsibility to act morally and in the best interest of others (May et al., 2003); they also enhance and deepen followers' spiritual identity by creating conditions at work that nurture the human spirit.

One promising approach to further construct development and the development and validation of a measure of authentic leadership, its origins, and effects can be found in Cialdini's (2001) full-cycle psychology construct which describes a research program as a process of "continual interplay between (a) field observation of interesting phenomena, (b) theorizing about the causes of these phenomena, and (c) experimental tests of the theorizing" (p. 32). As Chatman and Flynn (2005) noted, by combining observational and experimental methods in a continual recursive pattern, robust findings that offer causality, relevance, and generalizability may emerge.

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### About the Author

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## **On Impassioned Leadership: A Comparison Between Leaders from Divergent Walks of Life**

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This paper discusses team-based findings collected from leadership courses in higher education and pertaining to leaders from various disciplines, time frames, and backgrounds. Biographies of these leaders were reviewed, after which students listed the positive and negative traits of each leader. Subsequently, the author of this paper applied the phenomenological approach in order to find common themes among these remarkable individuals and draw an overall conclusion. Some similar qualities detected were confidence, hard work, risk taking, and communication skills. Yet, the greatest common factor among these leaders was the passion they displayed toward realizing their purpose. This passion was not only the core of their drive but also the overarching quality in achieving their purpose. The greatest difference among these leaders was found in the goals they set out to achieve with their skills.

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As part of the structure in a course titled “Leadership Theory and Practice,” performed at a Los Angeles based university during several semesters in 2004, 2005, and 2006, a number of world-renowned leaders were reviewed. The course instructor, who is also the author of this paper, provided the students with a series of biographical documentaries (A&E biographies) of various leaders. The choice in the 2004 classes fell on Fidel Castro, Jesus Christ, and Mahatma Gandhi, while the 2005 and 2006 courses selected Fidel Castro; Mother Theresa; Martin Luther King, Jr.; and Al Capone.

Assessment of these leaders was based on their leadership skills, not on whom or what they represented. The intention was not to praise or condemn these people but to review their leadership styles, characteristics, and the determinants that occurred during their rise to prominence. Specific concentration areas for each of these individuals were the following:

1. What relationship could be found between the leader, the followers, and the situation?
2. What were this leader’s perceived positive qualities?
3. What were this leader’s perceived negative qualities?
4. What outstanding traits could be detected within this leader?

In this paper, the mentioned leaders first are evaluated individually with a review of their positive and negative leadership traits, as listed by the course participants after reviewing the

documentaries. Subsequently, the traits of these leaders are compared, in order to bring similarities and contradictions to the surface. Finally, a list is presented of traits that can be perceived as directions on the road to success, based on the presence of these traits among the leaders reviewed.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of studying these leaders was to detect a set of common factors among them in order to create a profile of important qualities needed in leadership. This, then, should also be considered the contribution of this study to leadership theory and practice.

The choice of these particular leaders was based on the following factors: (a) they were all familiar to the students in some way; (b) they had acquired world renown, whether positively or negatively; (c) these leaders harbor a timeless celebrity, as they remain well known in society even though some of them have long passed away; and (d) the availability of video material about these leaders in local libraries.

### **Leadership Theories Investigated**

When reviewing the findings from this study, an interesting combination of leadership theories surfaced. The oldest theory, the leadership trait paradigm, was most prominent in this study, which will become clear to the reader throughout this paper. In their explanation of the trait theory of leadership, House and Aditya (1997) asserted, "A large number of personal characteristics [are] investigated such as gender, height, physical energy and appearance as well as psychological traits and motives such as authoritarianism, intelligence, need for achievement, and need for power" (p. 410). Because the leaders in this study are all renowned individuals, the physical aspects were left out of scope, but the psychological traits and motives received broad attention. The charisma theory, an element of the trait theory, is prominently present in this study. "Charismatic leaders are exceptionally self-confident, are strongly motivated to attain and assert influence, and have strong conviction in the moral correctness of their beliefs" (House & Aditya, p. 416).

The leader behavior paradigm also surfaces in this study, as various acts of the selected leaders were reviewed and compared. "The initial guiding assumption of the behavioral paradigm [is] that there are some universally effective leader behaviors" (House & Aditya, 1997, p. 421).

As the situation and the followers were also considered in this study, starting with point 1 in the concentration areas (what relationship could be found between the leader, the followers, and the situation?), it can be confirmed that situational leadership theories also served as contributing factors in the formulation of the findings, although not as profusely as trait and behavior approaches. Northouse (2004) asserted, "The basic premise of the [situational] theory is that different situations demand different kinds of leadership" (p. 87). The influence of situational theories is illustrated in this paper when presenting behaviors such as empathy and communication skills and is explicitly reviewed in the conclusive section of this paper.

A recurring leadership style in this paper is the transformational leadership style which, according to Northouse (2004), is "one of the current approaches to leadership that has been the focus of much research since the early 1980s" (p. 169). Northouse explained, "Transformational leadership is a process that changes and transforms individuals. It is concerned with emotions,

values, ethics, standards, and long-term goals, and includes assessing followers' motives, satisfying their needs, and treating them as full human beings" (p. 169). Northouse continued, "Transformational leadership involves an exceptional form of influence that moves followers to accomplish more than what is usually expected of them. It is a process that often incorporates charismatic and visionary leadership" (p. 169). As an extension to the transformational leadership style, inspirational and motivational leadership are also mentioned in this paper. Several authors (House & Aditya, 1997; Ilies, Judge, & Wagner, 2006) have considered motivational leadership an aspect of charismatic and transformational leadership.

### *Leadership Focus of This Paper*

The theoretical focus of this paper is based on the assumption that leaders are made when individuals work toward developing a certain set of qualities and behaviors and consider the circumstances and followers at hand. As an extension to this assumption, the paper attempts to demonstrate that no single theory should be considered when reviewing leadership; different theories come into play in the development of a comprehensive picture of appropriate leadership. All theories have demonstrated their advantages and disadvantages over time, and it would be deficient to focus on just one theory when studying a phenomenon as timeless and prominent as leadership.

### *New Insights to be Gained From This Paper*

This study does not only demonstrate that multiple theories need to be taken into consideration when one wants to draw useful conclusions about leadership, but it also reveals the important fact that leaders can utilize their skills, traits, and behaviors in positive and negative ways with equal success. The paper further illuminates that leadership requires a high level of adaptability or flexibility from the leader, which demonstrates that leaders should also be aware of the fact that it would be inadequate to classify their leadership style within merely one theory.

Although not extensively, the paper also mentions a not earlier explored fact about a possible negative relationship between leadership and family connectedness, which may be an interesting topic for future research.

## **Methodology**

To execute this study, the author of this paper used the phenomenological approach, which is qualitative in nature. "A phenomenological study describes the meaning of the lived experiences for several individuals about a concept or the phenomenon" (Creswell, 1998, p. 51). The concept or phenomenon in this study was leadership. Students were asked to provide extensive answers to a set of questions, geared toward the four focus points listed earlier. The author subsequently applied a process of horizontalization in order to eliminate redundancies. "The original protocols are divided into statements or horizontalization. Then, the units are transformed into clusters of meanings expressed in psychological and phenomenological concepts" (Creswell, pp. 54-55). This process is also known as phenomenological reduction. The author then clustered the answers into themes and, afterward, applied textual and structural description in order to compile the findings as they are presented in this paper. Figure 1 represents the chronological order of execution of this study.

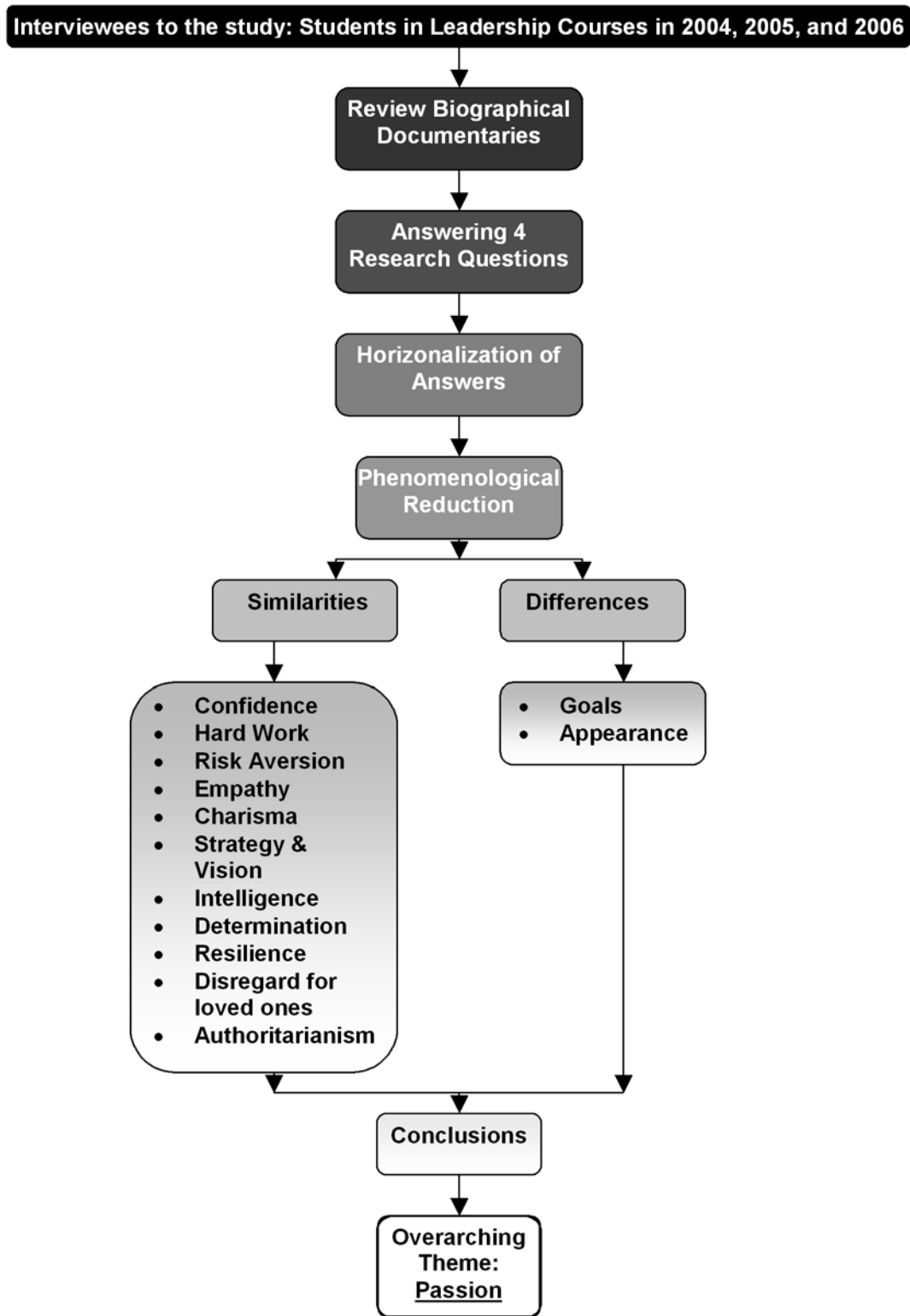


Figure 1: Impassioned leadership study model.

### Some World-Renowned Leaders: An Overview

#### *Fidel Castro*

Born and raised in an upper-middle class environment, Fidel Castro Ruz was not exactly the poor sufferer one would possibly expect. According to A&E's *Fidel Castro: El Comandante* (Cascio, Zeff, & Goldberg, 1996), Castro enjoyed a decent education and moved around in fairly upscale circles while growing up. Yet, he soon became aware of the snobbishness among several of his fellow students when they excluded him from their glamorous society events. This experience was one of the main instigators of Castro's aversion to oppression of the underprivileged by the affluent (Cascio, Zeff, & Goldberg, 1996).

Castro demonstrated some important leadership traits from early childhood on such as determination and a great level of self-confidence. He had an enormous drive, developed an imposing posture, and displayed resilience whenever his missions failed. He just got up, regained his composure, improved his strategy, and tried again.

When the 1952 elections in which he had planned to campaign for a parliamentary seat were cancelled due to a coup d'état led by Fulgencio Batista, Castro's mind was set: he would do whatever it took to become Cuba's future leader. After a failed initial attempt to overthrow the government and a consequential prison term, Castro started collecting a team of loyalists around him. He equally participated in their stern guerilla training and, with that, created an atmosphere of respect, understanding, and empathy between himself and his allies (Cascio, Zeff, & Goldberg, 1996).

A closer look at the situation around the time of Castro's establishment as Cuba's leader in 1959 illustrates that Batista's regime had grown increasingly unpopular among the Cuban people and that he, Batista, had lost the support he initially experienced from the United States (Cascio, Zeff, & Goldberg, 1996). The discontent among the Cuban people created a fertile climate for Castro to seize power as a hero. His empathetic approach toward the downtrodden soon made him an icon in his country. Castro established close relations with the Soviet Union, nationalized the local industry, imprisoned or executed opponents, and established a climate of lasting tension with the United States.

What can be derived from an analysis of Castro as a leader? There was a clear and intense relationship between Castro, his followers, and the situation at the time he took leadership. The contemporaneous disgruntlement of the Cuban people toward the government made it easier for Castro to step into power as a liberator. Castro exhibited a transformational leadership style as he was able to influence his followers' values, ethics, standards and long-term goals at a deep emotional level. According to Hughes, Ginnett, and Curphy (2002), "Transformational leaders articulate the problems in the current system and have a compelling vision of what a new society or organization could be" (p. 402). As described in *Fidel Castro: El Comandante* (Cascio, Zeff, & Goldberg, 1996), Castro was able to influence his followers to accomplish more than what was normally expected of them. He intensely participated in the process of changing Cuba's political climate, not from a distance but as a member of the guerilla troops who lived among the poor people in Cuba's inland and who ultimately instigated the change. *Fidel Castro: El Comandante* (Cascio, Zeff, & Goldberg) illustrated how he established close relationships with inhabitants of the interior, taking care of their needs, and winning their support through his message and passion. Whether perceived in a positive or negative light, Castro ultimately changed Cuba's entire social and economic structure. Even some contemporary

sources have attested to Castro's constructive impact on Cuba. Erikson (2004), for instance, claimed that even Washington thinks that Cuba's influence in Latin America is on the rise, thanks to Castro's leadership. Sweig (2007) added that Cuba is far from democracy, "but it is a functioning country with highly opinionated citizens where locally elected officials (albeit all from one party) worry about issues such as garbage collection, public transportation, employment, education, health care, and safety" (p. 39). Sweig continued that despite increasing corruption, "Cuban institutions are staffed by an educated civil service, battle-tested military officers, a capable diplomatic corps, and a skilled work force. Cuban citizens are highly literate, cosmopolitan, endlessly entrepreneurial, and by global standards quite healthy" (p. 39).

Castro's most listed positive and negative qualities by the leadership students after reviewing *Fidel Castro: El Comandante* (Cascio, Zeff, & Goldberg, 1996) are listed in Table 1. Some traits of Castro that stand out are (a) his posture and looks which made him an impressive figure; (b) his charisma and charm, his influence exceeding the boundaries of his physical presence; and (c) his great team-building skills.

Although the listed positive qualities in Castro outnumbered the negative ones, one should consider the strength, manifestation, and impact of each quality or skill on all stakeholders. Fidel Castro remains an intriguing person to analyze. Mayer (2001) commented that the American public, as of today, has mixed feelings about Castro, to almost the same extent as they did in the 1960s. Castro tries to keep his private life concealed from the ever-spying eyes of eager journalists. Above all, he has managed to establish a legacy. Whether liked or disliked, loved or hated, accepted or condemned, his name is world-renowned.

Table 1: Fidel Castro's Most Listed Positive and Negative Qualities

Positive qualities	Negative qualities
Motivating: provided especially lower class Cubans with a sense of self-esteem.	Over confident: sense of superiority in knowledge.
Independent: still able to manage in spite of heavy embargos.	Mismanaging: clung to a failed ideology.
Determined: focused on becoming Cuba's leader.	Stubborn: practicing "Fidelism" in spite of everything. Even today, he leads with an "iron fist" (Erikson, 2004, p. 32).
Resilient: continuous reemergence after defeat and imprisonment.	Excessively sensitive: too rigid and inflexible, driving away even initial advocates.
Courageous: Remained true to his values, regardless of what others thought, said, or did.	Authoritarian: unable to accept change during the first 30 years of his leadership.
Confident: strong believe in self and visions.	Coercive: Dissidents were punished.
Communicative: team building in times of action.	
Inspirational: Participated in action when and where needed.	
Empathetic: established free medical treatment and education for the poor.	

*Jesus Christ*

According to practically all sources that report about Jesus Christ, this extraordinary man was from humble beginnings. Not that this was an unknown factor, as the story of Christ's birth is one of the most famous worldwide. However, the authorities interviewed in the A&E biographical documentary *Jesus: His Life* (Talley, 2005) reviewed for this particular leadership analysis stated that, unlike in the famous Christmas story, Jesus was probably born in Nazareth, the hometown of his parents, Josef and Maria. The sources claimed that Jesus was presumably raised to become a carpenter like his father. He was Josef and Maria's oldest but not only child. He had several siblings, at least 3 brothers and a few sisters, according to various scholars interviewed in the documentary (Talley).

Talley's (2005) documentary *Jesus: His Life* further reported that little is known about the first half of Jesus' life, except for the incident in the synagogue at age 12 when he impressed the elders with his intellect. In general, most of the sources assumed that Jesus led an ordinary life as a member of an ordinary Jewish family. The sources also asserted that he may have had some exposure to life outside his hometown at various occasions. These encounters may have planted the seed for his roaming years later.

When reviewing the life of Jesus Christ, the term *inspirational leadership* comes to mind. "Inspirational leaders instill an intrinsic drive that is fueled by a higher purpose, a sense of mission, and a commitment to a vast array of possibilities" (Kerfoot, 2001, p. 242). Prusak and Cohen (2001) confirmed, "It's vital to give people a common sense of purpose, which is a matter of good strategic communication and inspirational leadership" (p. 92). Jesus' first experience with inspirational leadership may have been his confrontation with John the Baptist in the Jordan. If perceived from a leadership perspective, we can conclude that John the Baptist became Jesus' mentor, igniting within him the impetus to become a transformational and motivational leader. As mentioned earlier in this paper, several authors (House & Aditya, 1997; Ilies et al., 2006) have considered motivational leadership an aspect of charismatic and transformational leadership. Whether as a follower of John or individually, Jesus apparently interacted with a multitude of people after his encounter with John the Baptist. However, his whereabouts in this timeframe are mainly based on speculations. According to *Jesus: His Life* (Talley, 2005), when Jesus returned to his hometown, Nazareth, his fellow citizens did not appreciate the change he had undergone and even felt threatened by the stranger he had become in their eyes. As usually happens with people who outgrow the environment in which they were raised, Jesus was soon chased out of his hometown. Yet, with his charisma and his powerful message, he soon collected followers on his journeys through other cities. This is where he made his name and fame. He held speeches in synagogues; was widely praised for his eloquence, wisdom, and healing powers; and continued to gather crowds of devotees everywhere he went.

One can question whether the miracles that Jesus performed during his lifetime, such as changing water into wine, walking on water, and resurrecting the deceased, were acts of mass hypnosis, mass suggestion, or real miracles, but his popularity was undisputable. No wonder that he became a clear and present danger in the eyes of the assigned contemporaneous leaders. Jesus' case, therefore, can be seen as an illustration of citizen (unofficial) leadership versus assigned (official) leadership. Couto (1995) explained that citizen leaders "facilitate organized action to improve conditions of people in low-income communities and to address other basic needs of society at the local level" (p. 12). Couto further stated, "Citizen leaders usually do not choose leadership. They do not even seek it" (p. 13). "Citizen leaders are not showered with



traditional forms of recognition” (Couto, p. 15). Mabey (1995) added, “Action marks the citizen leader. Knowing is insufficient without action” (p. 316). Piovanelli (2005) portrayed Jesus “in his prophet-like status” (p. 395) as a definite charismatic character in his time. And, as his influence among the masses grew, so did the fear of King Herod for being overruled by this strange inspirational figure.

What can be derived from Jesus as a leader? The relationship between Jesus and his followers was one of inspiration. Most of his admirers were primarily attracted to him as a result of the stories of his supernatural powers, and they wanted to experience these powers, either for themselves or for their less fortunate loved ones. Once Jesus’ name was established through word of mouth, the crowd kept on swelling like fans around a celebrity. Jesus also exhibited a transformational leadership style; he influenced the lives of many of his followers. In addition, Sendjaya and Sarros (2002) attributed strong servant leadership qualities to Jesus in regard to his approach toward followers. “Servant leadership emphasizes that leaders should be attentive to the concerns of their followers and empathize with them” (Northouse, 2004, p. 309)

Jesus’ most listed positive and negative qualities by the leadership students after reviewing Talley’s (2005) documentary are listed in Table 2. Some of Jesus’ outstanding traits were (a) his physical flexibility which enabled him to adapt to various difficult situations such as fasting in the wilderness for a fair amount of weeks; (b) his obvious energy considering that traveling in those days mainly happened by foot or donkey; and (c) his strong will and great self-perception, meaning Jesus’ ability to rise above the mediocrity of an average life in an average town to become one of the greatest and most influential leaders of all time.

The question remains whether Jesus, had he not taken the risk of being assassinated, would have also risen to the immortality that he now enjoys. Of course, his appearances after his death remain inexplicable. But, like so many other leaders after him, his legacy definitely skyrocketed after his passing.

Table 2: Jesus Christ's Most Listed Positive and Negative Qualities

Positive qualities	Negative qualities
Passionate about his message: advocated nonviolence, respect, and empathy, among other values.	Over emotional: when he perceived injustice, he could get outraged.
Self-confidence: influenced others starting at a young age, Claimed to be the only way to God.	Stubborn: continued his mission at even the highest price. Jesus drove his risk predilection to the point of no return.
Inspiring and charismatic: gained followers wherever he went.	Over confident: was uninhibited when it came to intellectual encounters.
Intelligent: was capable of formulating answers that could be interpreted in multiple ways.	Unwilling to compromise: was not receptive to any other vision than his own.
Determined and courageous: even when he realized the immense risk of his mission, he continued it.	
Influential: changed the lives and perspectives of many. Jesus' legacy grew immensely after his death, even though he was often ridiculed during his life.	
Faithful: believed that everything happens as it is written, so it is no use to fight against it.	

### *Mahatma Gandhi*

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born in 1869 in Porbandar in the region of Bombay (Du Toit, 1996). He has often been described as the spiritual and political leader of India who led the struggle for India's independence from the British Empire. Gandhi studied law in London. In 1893, he went to South Africa where he spent 20 years opposing discriminatory legislation against Indians (Kleinedler, Pickett, et al., 2005). In 1914, Gandhi moved back to India after successfully organizing a civil disobedience movement against the South African government (Bates, 1998). He became the leader of the Indian National Congress, advocating a policy of nonviolent noncooperation to achieve independence (A&E Television Networks, 2004a). In his strife for equality amongst all Indians, he started a civil disobedience campaign which led to his incarceration on the count of conspiracy. After his release from prison in 1933, Gandhi turned his attention to the plight of the Untouchables (lower orders in India), and he began to organize his "Quit India" movement with the onset of the Second World War (Bates). After India's independence in 1947, he tried to stop the Hindu-Muslim conflict in Bengal which led to his assassination in Delhi by Nathuram Godse, a Hindu fanatic (A&E Television Networks, 2004a).

Gandhi is most famous for his satyagraha ideology which entailed a nonviolent strategy of leading. Satyagraha is the instrument of silent and nonviolent protest against certain unjust overt or covert actions by the authority (Ghosh, 2002). He reached his goals in South Africa and India without violence but with iron determination. Mohandas Gandhi was an advocate of (a) independence for India from Great Britain, (b) Hindu–Muslim unity, and (c) the end of Untouchability. As a preacher and practitioner of nonviolence, best described as passive resistance through soul force instead of active resistance through physical force, Gandhi became world famous and earned the name of Mahatma which is Sanskrit for *great soul*.

In his satyagraha teachings, Gandhi explained that the nonviolence practice yields to an aggressor but does not cooperate. This strategy assumes that even the cruellest opponent will ultimately melt by the sight of his cruelty. Rightfully, Blake (2005) pointed out the limited applicability of this strategy by concluding, “Satyagraha requires an opponent with a moral conscience (the British in India, for example); it will not work against unprincipled totalitarian regimes—Hitler’s Germany or Stalin’s Russia” (p. 225). Gandhi was described further as “a profound visionary looking for solutions to problems faced by mankind all over the world” (Saha, 1997, p. 219) and as “a practical politician who tried to translate many of his visions into action” (Saha, p. 219).

What can be derived from Gandhi as a leader? There was an indisputable relationship between Gandhi, his followers, and the situation in South Africa and India at the time he took on his leadership position. The oppression of Indian workers and the consequential dissatisfaction of the Indian people made it easier for Gandhi to become the people’s representative. Gandhi exhibited transformational leadership by arousing and elevating the “hopes and demands of millions of Indians . . . whose life and personality were enhanced in the process” (Burns, 1995, p. 101).

Gandhi’s most listed positive and negative qualities by the leadership students after reviewing the A&E documentary *Gandhi: Pilgrim of Peace* (Cascio, Cambou, Cox, Morowitz, & Martin, 2000) are listed in Table 3. Some of Gandhi’s outstanding traits were (a) his authentic appearance, almost always half-naked, yet fierce, and the epitome of humility and frugality; (b) his charisma and knowledge, with an influence transcending the ages, becoming greater and gaining more respect and followers after his death; and (c) his great motivational skills.

Like most of the leaders reviewed, Gandhi’s positive traits outnumbered his negative ones. Yet, the magnitude of the damage done with those negative qualities toward those closest to him should not be underestimated. Apparently, Gandhi was a man who meticulously cultivated the establishment of a great legacy yet did not care too much about those toward whom he should have demonstrated ultimate respect. “Charity begins at home” was, according to the examples of Gandhi’s negative traits, not a very popular statement in the Gandhi household. Nevertheless, Gandhi remains a highly and widely revered individual, increasingly growing in his fame and legacy as time progresses.

Table 3: Mohandas Gandhi's Most Listed Positive and Negative Qualities

Positive qualities	Negative qualities
Empathetic: related to the perspective of the oppressed.	Domestically violent: "neglected and even humiliated Kasturba [his wife] most of his life and only after her death realized she was 'the warp and woof of my life'" (McGeary, 1999, ¶ 11).
Perseverant: was imprisoned, neglected, and belittled many times by the British government.	Disrespectful toward those closest to him: "spent years testing his self-discipline by sleeping beside young women. He evidently cared little about any psychological damage to the women involved" (McGeary, ¶ 11).
Strategic: his strategy of satyagraha, nonviolence, made him a global icon long after his death.	Authoritarian toward those closest to him: "expected his four sons to be as self-denying as he was" (McGeary, ¶ 11).
Courageous: dared to place his life on the line for his purpose.	Inflexible: had a discomfort with "Western ways, industrialism and material pleasures" (McGeary, ¶ 10), "never stopped calling for a nation that would turn its back on technology to prosper through village self-sufficiency, but not even the Mahatma could hold back progress" (McGeary, ¶ 10).
Belief in his purpose: nothing could keep him from realizing his purpose, not even multiple assassination attempts.	
Persuasive: he could negotiate very well with strong opponents.	
Intelligent: Gandhi's legal background helped him develop great strategies without crossing legal boundaries.	
Resilient: Gandhi emerged several times after being captured or defeated.	
Inspirational: participated in action when and where needed.	

*Mother Teresa*

“Today, perhaps no figure has come to symbolize undiluted goodness, piety, and compassion more than the small, elderly Albanian nun Agnes Bojaxhiu—known to millions as Mother Teresa” (Fosl, 1999, p. 115). Besides being born in Kosovo in 1910, not much is known about Mother Teresa’s early life. At the age of 12, through Jesuit missionaries, she learned about the desperately poor in India and never forgot. Six years later, she joined the convent and, now named Sister Teresa, went to India (McCormack, 1999). At the age of 18, she entered the Sisters of Loreto’s convent in Ireland as a novice. The Sisters of Loreto, a teaching order, sent her to Bengal in 1929 (Mukherjee, 1999). After taking her vows, Sister Teresa taught in a convent school in Darjeeling in West Bengal for a short period (Stiehm, 2006). She took her final vows and became a professed nun in 1937 (Stiehm). In the 1940s, she received what she referred to as a “call within a call” (Stiehm, p. 86) and requested to work alone. Stiehm explained that Mother Teresa left her convent in 1948 and began teaching in the slums.

The slums soon made her realize that she needed at least some minimal medical training, so she obtained that in Paris. She subsequently opened some classrooms for destitute children in Calcutta and was gradually joined by other nuns, resulting in her House for the Dying which opened in 1952 (A&E Television Networks, 2004c). In October 1950, she received Vatican permission to start her own order. “In some mysterious way, Mother Teresa received what she had prayed for. Without that change, there would have been no possibility of gathering workers around her in a religious order. The Missionaries of Charity would never have come into being” (Egan, 1997, p. MT2).

The mission’s order was best captured in Mother Teresa’s speech when she was awarded the 1979 Nobel Prize for Peace. At this occasion, she stated, “I am grateful to receive it in the name of the hungry, the naked, the homeless, the crippled, the blind, the lepers, and of all those who feel unwanted, unloved and uncared for throughout society” (“Mother Teresa, Winner of 1979 Nobel Peace Prize, Dies at Age 87,” 1997, p. 86).

In 1965, Pope Paul VI placed the Missionaries of Charity directly under the control of the papacy. He also authorized Mother Teresa to expand the order outside of India (*Women’s History: Mother Teresa*, n.d.). This was the start of a rapid growth of Mother Teresa’s order, entailing the initiation of new homes all over the world. Starting with Venezuela, the order spread to Rome and Tanzania and even further to various countries in Asia, Africa, and Europe including Albania. Sheldon (1994) confirmed this growth: “The Missionaries of Charity numbers more than 1,000 nuns who operate 60 centers in Calcutta and more than 200 centers around the world, including foundations in Shri Lanka, Tanzania, Jordan, Venezuela, Great Britain and Australia” (p. 185).

Egan (1997) enumerated how attention towards Mother Teresa grew as she received more and more honors including the Ceres Medal of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, the Pope John XXIII Peace Prize, and the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion. Egan continued, “During her 70th year, being awarded the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize made her name and work even better known around the world” (p. 18). Hines-Brigger (2003) reported, “Just over six years after her death, Pope John Paul II beatified Mother Teresa of Calcutta, founder of the Missionaries of Charity” (p. 8).

What can be derived from an analysis of Mother Teresa as a leader? Along with Mahatma Gandhi; Martin Luther King, Jr.; Nelson Mandela; and other great world leaders; Mother Teresa has been described as an integral leader who “requires a multi-disciplinary, multi-

level and developmental approach” (Pauchant, 2005, p. 211). There is, in Mother Teresa’s case, an obvious relationship between herself as a leader, her followers (the nursing nuns, as well as the poor, ill, and rejected), and the situation. Her vocation was based on a calling, and this call became only stronger when she got confronted with the harsh situation of those who live and die on the streets with no one to care for them. Mother Teresa’s mission, as she laid it out, was one of a kind, which the world needs on a more continuous basis. Mother Teresa exhibited transformational leadership. She influenced the lives of many of her followers worldwide.

Mother Teresa’s most listed positive and negative qualities by the leadership students after reviewing the A&E documentary *Mother Teresa: A Life of Devotion* (Drury & Bullough, 1999) are listed in Table 4. Some traits of Mother Teresa that stand out are (a) her openness and frankness which helped her establish a powerful network of people from all walks of life; (b) her tremendous willpower which transformed her visions into actions no matter how long it took; and (c) her eloquence and alertness, meaning she was never shy of words and strong statements.

One of Mother Teresa’s most criticized qualities was her apparent preference of saving souls for her religion to saving lives. Cooke (2004) wrote, “As Teresa herself openly acknowledged, her work and that of the Missionaries of Charity is not about healing bodies, it is about saving souls” (p. 55). Mother Teresa (as cited in Cooke) never made a secret of the real priority of her order: “We are not nurses, we are not doctors, we are not teachers, we are not social workers. We are religious, we are religious, we are religious” (p. 55). Cooke subsequently concluded, “So the squalor of the bodies is of less importance than the effort through prayer for their souls” (p. 55). Reviewing the current whereabouts of Mother Teresa’s Order of Charity in what is now called Kolkata and what used to be Calcutta, Cooke stated, “With this set of priorities in mind, it becomes understandable that the nuns spend more time at prayer in the well-appointed and clean chapels than tending to the relatively few people the Order actually cares for” (p. 55). Elaborating on the reprehensible circumstances described, MacIntyre (2005) reported, “I worked undercover for a week in Mother Teresa’s flagship home for disabled boys and girls to record Mother Teresa’s Legacy, a special report for Five News broadcast earlier this month” (p. 25). MacIntyre remarked, “I winced at the rough handling by some of the full-time staff and Missionary sisters” (p. 25). He provided some examples of the disheartening images he witnessed, “I saw children with their mouths gagged open to be given medicine, their hands flaying in distress, visible testimony to the pain they were in. Tiny babies were bound with cloths at feeding time. Rough hands wrenched heads into position for feeding” (p. 25). MacIntyre claimed, “Some of the children retched and coughed as rushed staff crammed food into their mouths. Boys and girls were abandoned on open toilets for up to 20 minutes at a time” (p. 25). MacIntyre concluded, “Slumped, untended, some dribbling, some sleeping, they were a pathetic sight. Their treatment was an affront to their dignity, and dangerously unhygienic” (p. 25).

Table 4: Mother Teresa's Most Listed Positive and Negative Qualities

Positive qualities	Negative qualities
Belief in her mission: continued practicing her calling even when her name and organization were opposed.	Intolerant: had little patience regarding negligence from her coworkers.
Self-confident: dared to approach great supporters and obtain powerful allies such as the pope and many philanthropists worldwide.	Disregard of family: did not return to Albany until after her mother's death.
Perseverant: devoted all her time and energy to her vocation even when she started growing older and weaker.	Inflexible: was not open to other perspectives such as proponents of abortion and artificial contraception.
Disciplined: led by example, started early and worked late.	Calculative toward her mission: her preference for saving souls for her religion to saving lives has been heavily criticized.
Consistent: maintained her faith and continued to believe in her God throughout the disparities she witnessed.	
Motivational: encouraged the rejected ones to dare facing life again.	
Visionary: initiated a new order though she already had a well respected position.	
Communicative: knew that speaking on public forums served as great promotion for her organization.	
Honest: was very straightforward, openly opposed abortion and artificial contraception and did not care about possible consequences.	
Courageous: expanded her organization to unfamiliar territories.	
Empathetic: her compassion for the less fortunate made her one of the most admired figures of all times.	

*Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Born in Atlanta, Georgia, as the son of a minister, Martin Luther King, Jr. was raised in the contemporary, conventional way of segregation between Blacks and Whites. He earned two bachelor's degrees, one in Sociology (from Morehouse College, a prestigious higher educational institution for Black males) and one in Divinity. He then attended Crozer Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania where he graduated as valedictorian in 1951. After that, he attended Boston University where he received his PhD in systematic theology in 1955 (Wolfson & Moynihan, 2003).

One of Kings' earliest immediate confrontations with racial thinking was when he fell in love with the White daughter of the chancellor at the college where he was enrolled. She explained to him that their relationship could not go anywhere due to the segregative mindset that was prominent at the time (Kirby, Gopaul, & Cascio, 1998).

On June 18, 1953, he married Coretta Scott and had four children. In 1954, King accepted the pastorate of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama (Nobel Foundation, 1964). "He was ready, then, early in December, 1955, to accept the leadership of the first great Negro nonviolent demonstration of contemporary times in the United States. . . . The boycott lasted 382 days" (Nobel Foundation, ¶ 2). The Nobel Foundation further described, "On December 21, 1956, after the Supreme Court of the United States had declared unconstitutional the laws requiring segregation on buses, Negroes and whites rode the buses as equals" (¶ 2). King was arrested during these times of boycott, had his house bombed, and suffered several forms of personal abuse. Yet, stated the source, "at the same time he emerged as a Negro leader of the first rank" (¶ 2).

In 1957, he became the president of the newly formed Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and began to broaden his active role in the civil rights struggle while advocating his nonviolent approach based on the ideas of Henry David Thoreau and Mohandas Gandhi as well on Christian teachings (A&E Television Networks, 2004b).

King returned to Atlanta in 1959 to take over partial leadership of his father's church. During those years, King had repeated fallouts with his father who opposed the antisegregation involvements of his son and who referred to him as a disgrace to the family. Nonetheless, King invested much of his energy in the ensuing years into organizing protest demonstrations and marches (A&E Television Networks, 2004b). In those years, King endured several incarcerations, was stoned and physically attacked, and found his house bombed by prosegregation groups. He was also placed under secret surveillance by the FBI due to the strong prejudices of the FBI director, J. Edgar Hoover, who wanted to discredit King as both a leftist and a womanizer (A&E Television Networks, 2004b).

King's greatest achievement recorded was his leadership in the great march in Washington, DC on August 28, 1963. Martin Luther King Jr.'s goal was to promote the formation of the Beloved Community, envisaging a new social order wherein all kinds of people and groups would live together in unity and share equally the abundance of God's creation (Vail, 2006). In 1964, at the height of his influence, King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. He subsequently used his newfound powers to attack discrimination in the North (A&E Television Networks, 2004b). King's popularity started waning when he expanded his criticisms of American society, berating the impact of the war on the country's resources and energies (A&E Television Networks, 2004b). King was assassinated on April 4, 1968 in Memphis, Tennessee



while preparing to lead a local march in support of the heavily Black Memphis sanitation workers' union, which was on strike at the time (Sussman, 2005).

What can be derived from M. L. King, Jr. as a leader? The relationship between King, his followers, and the situation, was obvious. There was racial segregation. Blacks needed a charismatic, strong, influential leader to guide them and unite them toward legal progress. King was basically bombarded as their leader without initially even wanting it: he just happened to be at the right place at the right (or wrong) time. This fact leads to the conclusion that King could also be considered a citizen leader. As previously stated, "Citizen leaders usually do not choose leadership. They do not even seek it" (Couto, 1995, p. 13), and "Citizen leaders are not showered with traditional forms of recognition" (p. 15). Like all the leaders described, King exhibited transformational leadership: he influenced the lives of many of his followers nationwide. Throughout his leadership, King "displayed philosophical commitment to nonviolence" (Wycliff, 2006, p. 22), continuously trying to "explain to young black people why they should forgo self-defense in the face of homicidal violence by Klansmen and white vigilantes who were often in league with law enforcement" (Wycliff, p. 22).

King's most listed positive and negative qualities by the leadership students after reviewing the A&E documentary *Martin Luther King, Jr.: The Man and the Dream* (Kirby et al., 1998) are listed in Table 5. Some traits of King that stand out are (a) his eloquence as a speaker, meaning that his refined vocabulary and sophisticated way of formulating his sentences resulted in him being well respected and well listened to; (b) his charisma and charm, meaning that his influence exceeded the boundaries of his physical presence both in a positive way (motivating the Blacks to stand up for equality) and negative way (aggravating those who preferred blind patriotism over truthful yet stinging criticism of U.S. foreign policy); and (c) his phenomenal strategic insight which led him to great victories in his strife against segregation.

Regarding King's unethical behavior, there have been countless rumors and writings launched about his plagiarizing activities not only with regard to his doctoral thesis but also pertaining to his "I Have a Dream" speech. Murphy (2003) wrote, "King's rampant plagiarism has received widespread comment, but is for ideological and political reasons relegated to what astronomers call a 'black hole'" (p. 326). According to Murphy, the public has decided to ignore or accept King's grave dishonest practices because he was such a great social reformer. "This is, of course," stated Murphy, "a form of public hypocrisy" (p. 326). Murphy continued,

To the extent they allow themselves to be conscious of the plagiarism, those who value the King myth (and they are overwhelmingly powerful in opinion-making circles in the United States today) consider this a justifiable hypocrisy that serves a good end. (p. 326)

With specific reference to King's most famous speech, Murphy claimed,

That peroration . . . bears an uncanny resemblance to the peroration concluding the speech of a black Republican, Archibald Carey, Jr., then a member of the Chicago City Council, to the 1952 Republican National Convention eleven years before King's speech. (p. 326)

Although the detected positive qualities in this leader outnumber the negative ones, just like the other leaders described, one should, again, consider the impact of each quality or skill on all stakeholders. King was obviously not too concerned about the feelings of his closest collaborator, his wife. His adultery was infamous and must have hurt her own self-esteem.

In reviewing King's legacy, Albright (2000) exclaimed, "Dr. King has become a symbol" (p. 219). He subsequently enumerated, "1. a symbol of calming harmony in a world of angry conflict—for every generation, 2. a symbol of human understanding in a world of bigoted

ignorance—for every generation, 3. a symbol of tolerance and unity in a world of parochial disharmony—for every generation” (p. 219). Albright concluded, “Dr. King’s lessons of justice, brotherhood, and harmony should have no boundaries of race, nationality or time” (p. 219).

Martin Luther King, Jr., controversial as he may sometimes be reviewed, remains an icon in America’s history and has established a global legacy which definitely makes him one of the most interesting figures to analyze as a leader.

Table 5: Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Most Listed Positive and Negative Qualities

Positive qualities	Negative qualities
Communicative: had a great voice projection that engaged his audience and overpowered his opponents.	Adulterer: was a Christian preacher but also a habitual womanizer.
Intelligent: dared to approach influential people without the inhibition he might have had if his education had been moderate or low.	Low self-esteem: needed to prove himself and demonstrate that he could get all the women he wanted.
Fearless: lost all inhibitions in realizing his mission once he realized that he would be assassinated.	Unethical: King reportedly plagiarized parts of his doctoral dissertation as well as his famous “I Have a Dream” speech.
Inspiring: motivated his followers toward organized resistance in marches that attracted national and international attention.	
Determined: let nothing withhold him from reaching his goals once he had accepted his position as leader of the civil rights movement.	
Resilient: only grew mentally after each imprisonment or attack he had to endure.	
Strategic: centered his antisegregation campaigns in areas where the police chiefs were known as racists, instigated emotional and unprofessional responses, and brought the officers into trouble.	
Courageous: stood for what he believed, regardless of the aversion of powerful opponents such as the FBI and various political groups.	
Self-confident: exerted this quality well in his position as the leader of an oppressed group.	

*Al Capone*

One leader who may raise many eyebrows when mentioned as such is Al Capone. Capone was born Alphonse Capone in Brooklyn, New York in 1899 as the fourth son of seven children born of parents who had immigrated from Naples (Harrington, 1997; Kobler, 1971). Capone made an early start in his criminal career by joining two gangs, engaging in petty crimes, and getting suspended from high school at age 14 (Kobler). Soon thereafter, he moved up to a more vicious gang and obtained the nickname he would despise all his life, Scarface, when he made a brutal move on a young lady and got slashed by her brother in the right cheek with a switchblade (Luciano, 2003).

Capone married in 1918 to an Irish girl who bore him a son that same year. However, his deep involvement in the underworld caused him to move to Chicago the next year, apparently because he had been involved in a few homicides and some vicious confrontations with rival gangs. In Chicago, Capone started working for Johnny Torrio, a local gang leader (Luciano, 2003). Within 3 years, Capone moved up from being just a small, insignificant grunt worker to second in line in the gang hierarchy. When Torrio barely survived an assassination in 1925, he returned to Italy, leaving the organization in the capable hands of Capone. Prior to this assignment of succession, Torrio had already made sure that Capone was able to run the organization by leaving him for various lengths of time in full control. During those periods, Capone always demonstrated insight and strategic skills. Involved in a variety of prohibited activities such as illegal gambling, prostitution, and alcohol, Capone had an annual income that sometimes equaled 100 million dollars (Luciano). This made him largely immune to prosecution due to witness intimidation and the bribing of city officials with amounts that could easily run up to \$20,000 (Kobler, 1971). Although unproven, Capone has been claimed responsible for seven of the most notorious gangland killings of the century in the 1929 St. Valentine's Day Massacre. Luciano explained,

On January 8, 1929, it was said that Aiello and Moran gunned down Pasquino Lolordo, yet another president of the *Unione Siciliana*, which Capone had supported. This was the last straw. Capone's waiting game was over. He went after Moran with a vengeance. He ordered a hit. No ordinary hit. It was to be a multiple murder unleashed with bestial fury. Known as the St. Valentine's Day massacre, it would become infamous around the world. (p. 48)

Capone, always smooth and clean before the crowd's eyes, got captured when new laws endorsed in 1927 enabled the federal government to pursue Capone. "The two major aspects of Capone's activities that fell within the federal purview were bootlegging and income-tax evasion" (Kobler, 1971, p. 270). With the conviction of income tax evasion, he received an 11-year sentence (Luciano, 2003). While serving time in an Atlanta prison, he was still able to run his business; but, when transferred to Alcatraz in San Francisco, he was guarded so heavily that he became incapable of maintaining control. It was not long thereafter that his empire started to crumble.

When Capone started showing signs of dementia in the mid 1930s, apparently from an untreated case of syphilis, he spent his last incarcerated year in the prison hospital. After his release, he retired to his Florida estate and abstained from all mafia interests. He died in 1947 from the syphilis that had deteriorated his health.

What can be derived from Capone as a leader? The relationship that existed between Capone, his followers, and the situation was one that could be perceived as driven by control and

coerciveness. His opponents knew how ruthless he was, and his followers were well aware of the price of treason. Although being a member of his organization was a voluntary initiative of the gangsters, they knew that exiting was almost always equivalent to death. Capone exhibited transactional leadership. Transactional leaders “motivate followers by setting goals and promising rewards for desired performance” (Hughes et al., 2002, p. 416). Capone did not care about lasting relationships but preferred fast paced, transaction-oriented affiliations.

Capone’s most listed positive and negative qualities by the leadership students after reviewing the A&E documentary *Al Capone: Scarface* (Towers, 2005) are listed in Table 6. Some traits of Capone that stand out are (a) his hard work, whether physically or mentally, depending on the situation at hand; (b) his well groomed appearance which earned him great respect from the people with whom he dealt; and (c) his visionary skills, giving him a leading edge in several of the ventures he undertook in his victorious years.

Capone, in this line of leaders reviewed, is the only leader of whom the lists of positive and negative qualities are equally long. Furthermore, his negative qualities were infinitely more destructive than his positive ones, which made Capone a fairly unpopular individual to those who perceive leadership as an act merely involved in positive behavior and societal elevating outcomes.

Capone, although listed in the annals as one of the 20th century’s most infamous criminals, still remains an intriguing person around whom various books, documentaries, and other information sources have been created. As an interesting side note, Ylagan (2005) argued, “Al Capone, according to [Chris Mathers], first coined the term ‘money laundering’ in the 1930s. It is a witty play of words descriptive of Capone’s ‘front’ business for his illegal liquor business” (p. 1).

Capone has managed to establish a legacy, whether perceived as instructive or destructive. So, regardless if liked or disliked, loved or hated, accepted or condemned, his name is world renowned.

Table 6: Al Capone's Most Listed Positive and Negative Qualities

Positive qualities	Negative qualities
Influential: managed to expand the power of his organization to a level that was beyond the imagination of his predecessor.	Adulterer: was a womanizer and was rarely ever at home.
Family oriented: took care of his entire extended family after his father's death.	Over confident: thought that he would always be able to coerce, bribe, or eliminate anyone who crossed his path.
Strategic: won the sympathy of the poor by sponsoring their food in the early depression years.	Ruthless: would have his closest confidant assassinated if he detected signs of betrayal.
Determined: worked hard to impress his leaders in order to move up the ranks of power.	Manipulative: did everything to remain popular in the eyes of the public, always ensuring a spotless alibi.
Courageous: went to great lengths for his goals regardless of the consequences.	Authoritarian: led his gang with an iron hand through the chaotic 1920s.

### Comparing the Leaders

In the following segment of this paper, the reviewed leaders are evaluated, first on their similarities and then on their differences. Before comparing these leaders with one another, again, note that this paper is strictly focused on individuals who made a name for themselves in the world, whether positive or negative, and who clearly had skills that made them the outstanding persons they became. Regardless of the emotional perspectives some readers may have toward one or more of these individuals, whether seen from a religious, racial, or moral point of view, this paper merely reviews their leadership qualities, the strategies they used, and the ways they carried themselves through life in order to find out what their driving motives and traits were and what leadership scholars and other interested individuals can learn from these attributes.

#### *Similarities*

*Confidence.* Once they had set their goals, they went for them regardless of the price they had to pay. In three of these cases, it cost these leaders their lives; Christ, Gandhi, and King were all slain by opposing members of their societies. In the cases of Castro, Christ, Gandhi, Mother Teresa, and King, it is also remarkable that they were all standing up for a suppressed group, advocating their needs and trying to mince their suffering. It can be vividly imagined that many contemporaries of these leaders may have perceived them as arrogant because of their drive and self-prophesized value for those they represented. Yet, while Castro, Christ, Mother Teresa, and Gandhi took it onto themselves to become the leader of the group they represented, King initially had to be persuaded into taking on his position. Nevertheless, King, too, had a remarkable dosage of self-confidence when it came to the realization of his goals. Capone, on the other hand,

displayed his confidence in a different way: he impressed his superiors and proved his value in brutal actions as were appropriate in the circles in which he moved.

*Hard work.* All of the described individuals went to extreme lengths to achieve their goals. Castro was an active member of the guerilla army that attempted to overthrow the Batista government. In Christ's case, there are many stories that reveal his alertness while his disciples were sleeping, most remarkably on the night he was arrested by the Romans. Gandhi's hard work was not only demonstrated by his lean appearance but also by his antioppression activism in South Africa as well as India. Mother Teresa's hard work was demonstrated by her long hours of wakefulness. In 1993, Bunnewith reported, "Mother Teresa is always up by 4. When asked how she can routinely go to bed after midnight and be up only a few hours later, Cormier said Mother Teresa tells people, 'I sleep fast'" (p. A1).

King's hard work was demonstrated by his successful coordination of multiple mass marches; his other tireless efforts to enhance equality in the United States; and his eternal preparedness to be interviewed, travel, execute speeches, and participate in nonviolent opposition activities. His Nobel Peace Prize is also evidence of King's perceived hard work. Capone's hard work was demonstrated by his rapid rise to the mafia top and his ingenuity that led to the financial wealth he generated in the 1920s.

*Courage.* All of the reviewed leaders had to display great courage to achieve the immortal names they now have. Without exception, they all engaged in controversion, thereby risking the hate and opposition of influential groups. Castro was and is still despised by the well-to-do Cubans who fled the island. Christ was despised by the Romans and Jews alike because he dared to call himself "King of the Jews." Gandhi was hated by those who wanted the caste system to remain in tact and who opposed independence. Mother Teresa fell out of favor of the prochoice groups as a result of her firm opposition of abortion and artificial contraceptives. King was opposed by various groups, starting with the White supremacists. Yet, some of the Black and various political streams also expressed a great antagonism toward this leader. Capone was opposed by rival gangs as well as governmental and judicial groups.

*Empathy for the less fortunate.* Although this urge to help the oppressed can be considered genuine in the cases of Castro, Christ, Gandhi, and King, some sources have questioned Mother Teresa's motives (i.e., Cooks, 2004). Mother Teresa's legacy, the Order of Charity, is more focused on gaining souls for Christianity than saving lives of people based on humanitarian convictions. In regards to another leader, Capone's generous acts toward the poor and downtrodden were mainly focused on gaining influence and popularity than real empathy for these sufferers.

*Charisma, particularly through communication skills.* These leaders won their supporters with their superior speaking skills which enabled them repeatedly to take control of chaotic situations. Not only were these leaders, each for their own, capable of changing the minds of important people among their contemporaries, but they were also capable of using their visions in applying their influence toward the right persons and entities in order to expand their power.

*Strategic insights and visionary skills.* Throughout their recorded explorations, these qualities were exposed for each of these leaders. Castro used his strategic insight to work his way

into power in Cuba by using the climate of dissatisfaction with the contemporary Batista regime. Christ used his visionary skills to predict future events to his disciples. He also used his strategic insights when he performed some of his famous multiplication miracles of bread and wine in front of entire crowds, thereby establishing great fame and respect. Gandhi used his strategy of Satyagraha, or nonviolent civil disobedience, in South Africa as well as India with great success in spite of initial opposition from various educated groups. Mother Teresa used the strategy of setting up a great public relations network and a line of influential contacts with the Vatican to achieve the legal and financial support she needed to establish and later globally expand her Order of Charity. King used the strategy of selecting grave judicial opponents of civil rights to ignite campaigns in their cities of responsibility, knowing they would sooner or later lose their temper and ridicule themselves. Capone used strategies of supporting the poor in harsh depression times in order to build a civil support system.

*Intelligence.* Although not all formally highly educated, all of these leaders demonstrated a high level of insight, level-headedness, and awareness in order to achieve their goals in the effective and lastingly impressive way they did. Three of the six leaders described possessed prestigious degrees: Castro and Gandhi were lawyers while Martin Luther King, Jr. held a PhD in Systematic Theology. Mother Teresa was a teacher and further educated herself in basic nursing when she planned on starting her Order of Charity in Calcutta. According to sources in the A&E documentary *Jesus: His Life* (Talley, 2005), Christ had earned his job skills as a carpenter from his father but furthered his education through roaming all over the continent in which he was born, thereby meeting several Brahmins and learning from various cultures. Capone obtained the intelligence he needed for his career (street smartness and calculated unscrupulousness) early on in his life as a street gang member and used these skills later to eliminate his opponents and corrupt the local legal system.

*Determination.* None of these leaders would have earned their legacy, whether positive or negative, if they had not held onto their visions throughout all the contemporary opposition that they undoubtedly received from various sides.

*Resilience.* This quality is closely related to determination as well as these leaders' visionary skills. After formulating their vision, these individuals remained determined to reach the set goals and maintained their resilience during their numerous threats and setbacks. Castro was not discouraged after the initially failed invasion on the Batista administration. He learned from the mistakes he made, recomposed, and came back with a better plan next time. Christ did not let the repeated rejections from the elders in his hometown Nazareth bring him down. He moved to neighboring cities and spread his word there; this is how he gained influence and created his crowd of followers. Gandhi did not let the oftentimes negative criticism of his nonviolent civil disobedience distract him. He stuck to his strategy throughout many incarcerations which ultimately paid off greatly. Mother Teresa did not let the rejecting attitude of some countries toward her Order of Charity discourage her initiative. She kept on trying; if not welcome in one country, she tried another. King, like Gandhi, followed the road of nonviolent disobedience consistently, regardless of the heavy criticism from opponents and supporters alike, and ultimately obtained the same level of success and greatness with this strategy in spite of multiple incarcerations. Capone, in his triumph years, only became greater

after each setback. When he was sent out of New York to cool off in Chicago, he became an even bigger and more brutal mafia leader.

*Disregard for those closest to them.* Less obvious but still present among the leaders is this trait. Castro divorced and disregarded his wife when he was in prison and found out that she was on Batista's payroll. Christ left his home to spread his teachings and rarely saw his mother again until the day he was crucified. His siblings and other close relatives were not even mentioned in the scriptures. Gandhi regularly ridiculed his wife and imposed unreasonable demands on his sons. Mother Teresa, having left as a young woman, did not return to her home country until after her mother's death. King ridiculed his wife through his repeated adulterous behavior. Capone, although strongly connected with his parents and siblings, also ridiculed his wife in the same manner as King through habitual adultery.

*Authoritarianism.* Although applied to various degrees by several of these leaders, there are examples of authoritarian tendencies in all of them. Castro has been known as a leader who does not appreciate other viewpoints. He has imprisoned and eliminated many of his opponents over time. Christ's rage in the temple where a market was being held is one of the most famous examples of his potential authoritarian behavior. Gandhi's authoritarianism may have been limited to the private circle. Yet, it is known that he was not particularly kind towards his closest family members. Also, in his battle against sexual temptation, he slept with naked young women without touching them only to serve his own purposes, without considering these women's feelings. Mother Teresa was known for her roaring anger against the smallest inefficiency from her subordinates. King, like Gandhi, may have limited his authoritarian traits to his private life. After all, nonviolent opposition does not leave too much room for obvious authoritarianism. However, his adulterous behavior may refer to that trait as it can be assumed that his wife was not in agreement with his adultery. Capone has been well known for his authoritarian, coercive approach. He silenced everyone who dared to cross his path, and murder was not an issue of hesitation.

*Impassioned way of going for their goals.* In practically all of the cases, with a possible exception of Capone, these leaders did not primarily care for wealth accumulation or role modeling. They were primarily driven by their passion for the purpose they had formulated in their lives.

### *Differences*

*The goal they set with their given set of leadership skills.* While 5 of the 6 reviewed individuals were at least once seen as saviors of a large group of people, one of the individuals, Capone, preferred to use his skills in a negative setting, where no progress was aimed but personal and organizational enrichment at the expense of an entire society.

*Appearance.* An interesting observation is that while Christ, Gandhi, Castro, and Mother Teresa did not particularly seem to care about their appearance, King and Capone were always extremely representative. Although there could be no greater difference than the goals of King and Capone, it also has to be noted that both, to a certain degree, engaged in various kinds of ethical misconduct. King has been accused of plagiarism in multiple crucial cases as well as



adultery, and Capone has been recognized as one of the greatest mafia criminals as well as an unparalleled adulterer. The care for a professional appearance between King and Capone may have been culturally ingrained as both resided in the United States.

### Conclusion

As has been reviewed in this paper, there are more similarities than differences among the six leaders analyzed in this paper. Particularly, the similarities were of a very interesting nature. This may lead to the conclusion that, although only measured on a small sample of leaders and perhaps not in all cases applicable with the same degree of success, the following traits can be considered important in leadership:

1. Confidence: A great leader needs to know where he or she wants to go and believe in himself or herself in the way to realize that goal.
2. Hard work: A great leader will establish trust by displaying hard work, knowing that subordinates get motivated when they know that their leader does not leave it all up to them.
3. Courage: A great leader knows that decisions oftentimes need to be made without all the desired information at hand. Responsible risk taking is part of successful leadership, whereby the leader knows that it is the follow-up after a decision which frequently guarantees the success or failure of a project.
4. Empathy for subordinates: A great leader maintains contact with followers and demonstrates interest and empathy without getting too involved.
5. Communication skills: A great leader communicates to his or her followers in the first place, in order to ensure their support, and to other stakeholders as well, in order to keep all parties informed of the direction.
6. Strategic insight and vision: A great leader lays out a plan of action, as well as one or more alternative plans, in order to realize his or her vision. A great leader knows that without a vision, every direction is as good as another.
7. Appropriate intelligence: Although not every great leader has to have a high formal education, it is crucial for a leader to have useful knowledge about the business and its environment in order to determine directions.
8. Determination: A great leader has tremendous willpower without being overly stubborn. He or she will focus on the goal yet realize when, due to developments in the market or the industry, a change is necessary.
9. Resilience: A great leader does not get discouraged by setbacks along the way but knows that setbacks are part of the learning process. The leader will learn from the setbacks, recuperate, and move on with a stronger and better plan.

Most remarkably, the overarching theme weaved through all the qualities which makes a difference between a mediocre and an unforgettable leader is passion. All of the leaders were impassioned about their purpose. This passion has turned out to be the outstanding quality which has led to the immortality of their names and actions. Figure 2 illustrates how the great leadership qualities are aligned with each other and how passion forms the overarching characteristic in becoming an unforgettable leader.

An interesting observation may be that all of the reviewed individuals demonstrated a significant lack of connection with those closest to them, even though these were most likely the people they relied on for mental and emotional support. One could conclude that the need for

greatness may be inversely related to family devotion. This could be an interesting topic for future research. Figure 2 should be seen as an ideal representation of great leadership, including all common qualities derived from this study with respect for close relatives as a foundational element.

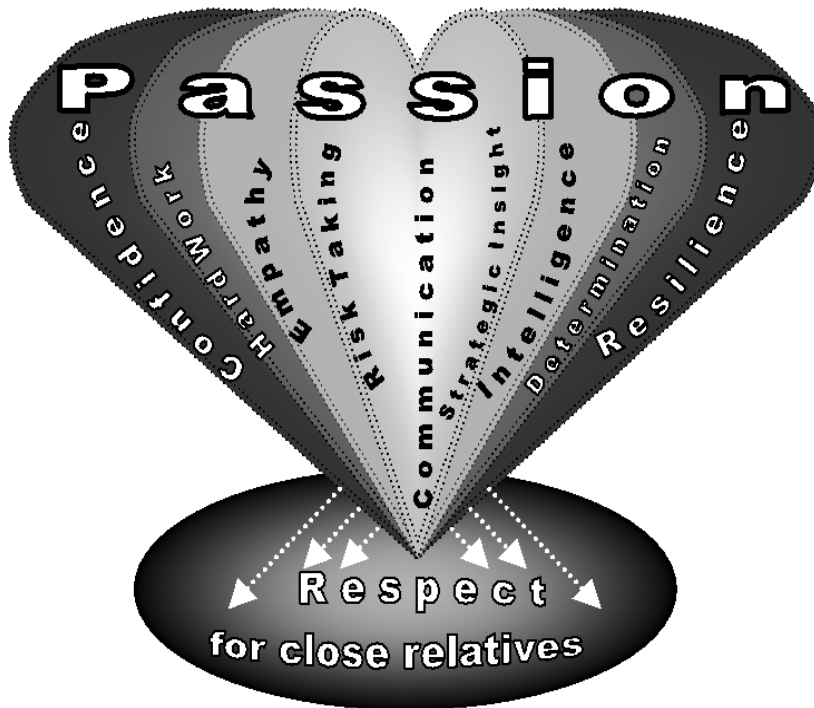


Figure 2: The elements that procreate impassioned leadership.

### *Implication of Findings*

The qualities that surfaced through this study (confidence, hard work, empathy, risk taking, communication, strategic insight, intelligence, determination, resilience, passion, and respect for close relatives) require one important prerequisite in anyone who would like to engage in leadership: the will to develop them. It may not be that everyone has the ability to develop these qualities to the same extent. But, attaining life experience usually contributes significantly in advancement and maintenance of these qualities. While there may be good leaders who lack the final quality (respect for close relatives), the other traits are absolute necessities for success in leadership. However, as was also demonstrated, one should incorporate flexibility in the perception of these qualities. Intelligence, for instance, does not necessarily have to be expressed in formal education.

### *Endnote*

Individuals with leadership aspirations should realize that authoritarianism is not necessarily a bad thing but should be applied with moderation in appropriate circumstances. In crises, for instance, authoritarianism can be helpful when followers need clear directives and no

lengthy team decision-making procedures. As many leadership gurus have clarified before, there is no single recipe for great leadership. Leadership is an interaction between the leader, the followers, and the situation. Given these aspects, the right strategy should emerge.

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### About the Author

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## *Leadership Reflection*

# **A Devoted Christian's View on Development of Spiritually Formed Leadership**

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### **A Call to Spiritually Formed Leadership**

As faith-oriented leaders, we are called to a challenging and difficult responsibility to model leadership that is both relational and transactional in its formulations and applications. To succeed in this calling, we must embrace a whole person model of leadership learning, living, and serving, which, at its core, is a process of spiritual awakening and formation. At the very heart of this calling is a commitment to whole person development designed to produce spiritually formed leaders able to change their world through stretched minds, cradled hearts, and reformed hands known for their noble, effective, and sacrificial service.

I believe we must address, more intentionally, the needs and means for an integrated view of whole person leadership development anchored to the fundamental elements of spiritual formation. To that end, we need a profile for spiritually formed leadership that will serve not only our own sense of mission but contribute to the larger purposes of the Divine in and through His human creation. The foundations of my thinking are anchored to a leadership development process that began when I was an undergraduate student. The initial lessons learned in that setting continue to fuel my processes, passion, and pedagogy as I seek to be spiritually formed and reformed in every dimension of my leadership calling.

This paper describes a personal pilgrimage into the mission, message, and meaning of spiritually formed leadership. It is primarily a theological rather than methodological journey, a process of transformation more than information. It is more autobiographical than pedagogical. It is not my intent to present this model as the final answer for our important work or to suggest that my thinking fully defines all of the dimensions and implications of such a sacred task. Rather, the goal is to encourage, motivate, and inspire you to take your distinctive understandings, experiences, and applications of the call to spiritually formed leadership to their next levels. I do assert that as Christ-centered scholars of leadership formation, ours is ultimately

a calling to stretch minds, cradle hearts, and equip outstretched hands for effective, noble, and sacrificial service.

### **Stretching Minds, Cradling Hearts, and Equipping Hands**

In the fall of 1966, I began a journey of leadership formation that challenged my thinking, touched my heart, and prepared my hands for service at levels I could not have imagined. Lacking a high school diploma, but convinced that I needed an education to fulfill my sense of calling, I came to Spring Arbor College (now University) in Michigan. There I encountered a call to radical whole person leading; I confronted something called the Spring Arbor Concept.

I did not fully appreciate the concept while I was a student. I felt leadership was more a matter of doing rather than of thinking and being. Despite my resistance, an integrated profile of those who serve God's purposes as leaders in their generation began to emerge. I became convinced that I must be a leader of the tough mind and the tender heart if I was to use my hands effectively and contribute meaningfully to the work of God's Kingdom. Today, my passion for Christ, vision for service, and commitment to let the mind of Christ be in me (Php. 2:5) and the love of Christ show through me remains rooted in the images of a lamp, the cross, and a needy world that I first encountered as a student at Spring Arbor.

### **The Lamp of Learning: Stretching the Renewed Mind**

In the context of Spring Arbor University's approach to whole person education, I was challenged first to commit my life to a head first journey. Having come to faith in Jesus Christ out of a troubled and dysfunctional home, I needed to understand that it was necessary to become a mature follower of Christ through the discipline of the renewed mind. I was challenged to understand that leadership, in the context of spiritual formation, requires a head first commitment.

I learned that effective discipleship is driven by the Great Commission mandate to go and make disciples, teaching them to obey all that Jesus commanded (Mt. 28:20). The building blocks of mature leadership rest upon the foundation of divine revelation. Those who follow Christ so they can lead effectively see the world differently because they understand it through the mind of Jesus. He is the clearest revelation of all that is ultimately and eternally true. Effective leaders can only define reality when they have understood ultimate reality in the One who is the way, the truth, and the life.

The relationship with Jesus Christ begins with revelation, the divinely initiated enlightening, that we need a Savior. Isaiah 1:18 (New International Version) reads, "'Come now, let us reason together,' says the Lord. 'Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.'" Jesus spent more time teaching than in any other single activity. The primary means He used to turn fishermen, tax collectors, harlots, and zealots into revolutionary leaders able to turn their culture upside down was the transforming of the mind guided, guarded, and enabled by the Spirit of Truth. While these disciples marveled at our Lord's miracles; they were enlisted by His message, a call to a Christian-counter culture delivered with a depth of insight and level of authority they had not experienced previously. This life of the enlightened mind shaped the thinking of leaders who influenced the intellectual, social, and cultural world for centuries after Christ's death.

The early Church Fathers believed that followers of Christ should be broadly skilled both in and beyond the teachings of Scripture and the Church in their search for truth. This head first leadership was fueled by the conviction that all that is true finds both its genesis and its sustenance in the One who is the way, the Truth, and the life (Jn. 14:6) that in Him we live and move and have our being (Ac. 17:28). As a result, leaders throughout the history of the Christian movement emphasized following Jesus with minds transformed rather than conformed to secular paradigms. Learning and serving were anchored to the conviction that all truth is God's Truth.

Martin Luther (1530), in a sermon to the political leaders of his day ("Keeping Children in School"), established the central place of education in leadership formation, championing the renewing of the mind across multiple learning disciplines. He taught that children needed to study not only languages and history but also singing and music together with the whole of mathematics. The ancient Greeks trained their children in these disciplines and, as a result, he believed, grew up to be people of wondrous ability subsequently fit for anything.

John Milton (1644), in his "Tractate on Education" sent to Master Samuel Hartlib, emphasized the value of broad and comprehensive learning, what we know today as the Liberal Arts, when he suggested that a complete and generous education is one that fits a person to perform all the offices, both private and public, of peace and of war. He (1644) insisted in his treatise "Of Education" that the goal of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents by knowing God and; out of that knowledge; to love Him, imitate Him, and be like Him.

T. S. Elliott picked up the theme of a discipleship that deepens when we seek to learn beyond our cultural and intellectual comfort zones. Mary Cox Garner (2004), in *The Hidden Soul of Words*, quoted Elliott's belief about stretching the mind: "No one can become truly educated without having pursued some study in which they took no interest – for it is part of education to learn to interest ourselves in subjects for which we have no aptitude" (p. 69).

C. S. Lewis (1976), in a sermon entitled "Learning in War Time" in *The Weight of Glory*, challenged the future leaders of his day to take time for a thorough education even in the midst of national turmoil.

To be ignorant now would be to throw down our weapons and betray our uneducated brethren who have, under God, no defense but us against the intellectual attacks of the heathen. Good philosophy must exist, if for no other reason, because bad philosophy needs to be answered. (p. 58)

As an emerging leader, I was challenged at Spring Arbor to know God in every expression of creation and discipline of human learning. To lay Christ as the only foundation calls us to catch God at work in every place, plan, process, and person so that we can advance His purposes in each for the glory of Jesus Christ. I discovered a new application of a favorite childhood game. With the belief that God is always up to something somewhere and with someone, I chose to greet each new leadership challenge with the prayer, "come out, come out, wherever you are." In that place I now call alma mater, I gave myself to the Christ-centered commitment of stretching my mind, reaching for the highest levels of learning, so that I might lead others into the deepest levels of revelation.

As we master the disciplines of the stretched mind, laying hold of the lamp of learning, we honor Paul's command not to be conformed to the world but transformed by the renewing of your mind (Ro. 12:2). I challenge you, fellow pilgrims and purveyors of Christ-modeled leading, to be head first disciples and lifelong learners; studying to show yourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth (2 Ti. 2:15). We are privileged as spiritually formed leaders to be called to model and encourage the life of the



renewed mind. Only as we continue to learn to lead, stretching our minds and thoughts beyond all that we currently know, can we be fit to lead with courage, conviction, and clarity.

### **The Cross: Cradling the Restored Heart**

One of the great challenges of head first leadership; however; is that left to itself, learning can lead to arrogance, isolation, and self-preoccupation. The greater the knowledge we acquire, the more critical it is that, with the learning, we nurture compassion. Knowledge is the blossom of the exercised mind. Compassion is the fruit of the circumcised heart. The cross became for me the symbol of the restored heart.

The Great Commission focuses on the head first calling of teaching them to obey all Jesus commanded. The Great Commandment is the key to employing our knowledge for the ultimate good of humanity. We must embrace Jesus' command to love the Lord our God with our total being, body and spirit as well as mind, and to love our neighbor as ourselves (Mt. 12:30-31). The Great Commission's is the method of informed leadership. The Great Commandment's call to love God, our neighbor, and ourselves is the motivation that restores and renews the hearts of spiritually formed and transformed leaders.

It became clear that while I held the lamp of learning in one hand, I must embrace the love of God demonstrated on the cross of Christ with the other. To comprehend Jesus Christ as the Truth; we must apprehend Him as the way and the life in every dimension of learning, living, and serving. Jesus becomes our supreme teacher when we embrace Him as our suffering Savior. Loving God and humanity answers the "so what" questions of learning, providing both meaning to and motivation for the pursuit of Truth. Our leadership is enlivened when it becomes the means to change both hearts and minds. To embrace the cross is to receive Christ's redeeming work accomplished on that tree; following its shadow into sacrificial, risk-taking love for others.

My experiences in Spring Arbor's community of learners were punctuated often by the convicting and conforming presence of our Lord's love in our midst. During my days as a student, and in the years following on the administration and faculty, my life encountered what I see now as divine appointments that forced me to confront the Lord's redeeming love of Calvary. Often, these occurred in chapel, awakening me to a need for forgiveness or the hunger for a deeper commitment. At other times, it was a sustained knocking, disrupting my academic and social calendar for days until His work was completed. I realize now that He was present in the curricular, cocurricular, and extracurricular activities; lovingly reminding me that in Him, my intellectual, social, and professional life has its ultimate meaning.

Embracing the saving and transforming work of the cross sets us free to pick up the love lessons of that cross, challenging us to invest and spend ourselves for others. In light of the Jesus model of effective leadership, I believe that good leadership is anchored to good teaching. Good teaching is as much a factor of the heart of the teacher as it is the head. One of the most important resources for me in this quest to embrace the cross in my calling to lead by teaching has been Parker J. Palmer's (1998) *The Courage to Teach*. Palmer laid out the following premise, "good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher" (p. 10). He continued,

In every class I teach, my ability to connect with my students and to connect them with the subject, depends less on the methods I use than on the degree to which I know and trust my selfhood – and am willing to make it available and vulnerable in the service of learning. (p. 10)

In one of my teaching assignments, a student gave me a plaque whose saying sums up the challenge to embrace the cross perspective in our leadership formation pedagogy: “To learn and never be satisfied is wisdom, to teach and never be weary is love.” I saw the crucified Jesus so often at Spring Arbor in the lives of faculty, staff, and fellow students who became His encouragers for embracing the love of the cross. Theirs was a journey of a long obedience in the same direction, willing to embrace at any cost and consequence God’s call to love unreservedly and lead sacrificially. A few of those living epistles continue teaching and mentoring today’s students in the “most excellent way” (1 Co. 12:31). So many others, now held by the nail-scarred hands of Jesus, live for me as models of what philosopher Elton Trueblood (1996) called disciples of both the tough mind and the tender heart.

This restored heart is the value added expected by the vast majority of those who follow us. They not only want to know what we think but also long to know who we are and what we feel. For those of us who believe that the call to the life of leadership is a means to invest deeply in the lives as well as the minds of those our leadership influences, the principle of self-sacrificing love rings true. In the conviction that God so loved us that he gave His Son (Jn 3:16) and that the Son so loved that he gave His life; we find the courage to learn, teach, love, and lead like Jesus.

### **The Waiting World: Reformed Hands**

With the lamp of learning in one hand and the cross of the Christ in the other, Spring Arbor’s Concept called me to a life of leadership that produces tangible, life-changing, and world-shaping results. Throughout the centuries, mature followers of Jesus not only thought clearly and loved deeply; they served nobly, effectively, and sacrificially. Transformed minds and purified hearts are manifested in and validated by the exceptional work they perform and the sacrificial service they render. Spiritually formed leadership; as Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1937/1995) eloquently communicated by both pen and life; is usually a costly one, focused on the needs and opportunities of a waiting world.

To and for what end are we enlightened by learning and enlivened for loving? It is so that we can do the Father’s business as revealed in the life of Christ. Spiritually formed leadership is that which extends capable hands for noble, tangible, and measurable purposes. Like the Master; we are called to serve the poor, bind up the broken hearted, proclaim release to captives, recover sight to the blind, liberate the oppressed, and declare that now is the time of the Lord’s acceptance (Lk. 4:18-19). It is a call to demonstrate the breadth of our learning and the depth of our loving by stretching out competent, compassionate, reforming hands to serve a needy world.

I believe that enlightened and enlivened leaders develop a compelling sense of social justice and global responsibility that calls them to touch the least, the left, and the lost. It was on a mission trip to Spanish Harlem in the inner city of New York my junior year of college that I touched the heart and was challenged to extend the hands of Christ. Subsequent opportunities to serve and teach abroad in Europe, the Middle East, and Far East deepened my understanding that wholeness requires a commitment to serve the purposes of God in our generation for every tongue, tribe, and nation. It is in the conflicts and contexts of cross-cultural and multicultural engagement that our ideas are challenged and hearts stretched to serve global leadership causes larger than ourselves.

Reforming hands, however, not only serve compassionately but also competently. Too often, committed Christians appear to sacrifice competence on the altar of compassion. We must

do what we do with all of our might for the glory of God. The need for discipline, diligence, and the commitment to achieve our fullest potential in the work at hand must guide our whole person understanding. This is a call to professional excellence if our loving acts are to be both credible and effective. Christ taught with an authority and clarity that exceeded even the most skilled and learned of His day (Mt. 7:29, Mk. 1:22). He achieved His fullest potential through diligence and courage; we who lead in His name must do no less if the results of our leadership are to reflect the nobility of our King and Lord. He completed His task with a sacrifice of full surrender, doing what no other was able to accomplish. This cup-of-cold-water service is, as the early Church understood in James 2:14-26, the tangible evidence that true wisdom is comprehended and perfect love embraced.

### **A World-Changer's Profile: Christ-Centered Leadership that Serves the Present Age and Beyond**

As I return, after three University Presidencies, to my first love of preparing and investing in the next generation of global leaders, I feel the need to develop a series of affirmations that integrate the foregoing elements of spiritually formed leadership into a functional whole. Ultimately, I contend, spiritually formed leadership must be centered more in a person (Jesus Christ) than in a philosophy, theory, technique, or process.

It was through the 2004 conference of the International Council for Higher Education that I found the context that informs this next chapter of my calling. Using the framework of the Conference's purpose statement (Cole & Ganaken, 2004), I have developed a series of affirmations designed to tie the elements of spiritually formed leadership to the hub of Christ-centered learning, loving, and serving. These are summarized as follows:

- Affirmation 1. Christ-centered leaders are connected intimately to the purposes of God in relation to creation and particularly humanity. Recognizing that we are created in the image of God and given the responsibility of caring for His creation, we lead with a sense of divine calling to be good stewards of creation in general and humanity in particular.
- Affirmation 2. Christ-centered leaders are holistic; striving to achieve their full potential in body, mind, and spirit. As such, their opportunities for both personal and societal transformation are unlimited.
- Affirmation 3. Christ-centered leaders embrace the Christian perspective as reflected in God's Word. They are empowered to appropriate those perspectives by the Holy Spirit's gifts and graces to initiate a positive, practical, and respectful dialogue with the world about the implications of such perspectives. Unfortunately, the stridency of much of our dialogue as intentional and serious minded Christians often limits the impact of our ideas.
- Affirmation 4. Christ-centered leaders move beyond cognitive learning and skill acquisition to intentional discipleship as their ultimate objective. Through the conscious integration of faith, learning, and living; Christ-centered leaders examine their professional missions and motivations, asking how the fruit of their labor relates to the purposes of God. Christ-centered leaders not only analyze the outcomes of their efforts but also explore their implied morality.

- Affirmation 5. Christ-centered leaders embrace a Great Commandment motivation that compels them to address poverty, illness, exploitation, discrimination, and oppression in the world. They possess a burden for those who; for reasons of culture, social position, political oppression, economic condition, race, gender, and ethnicity; are denied the basics of life's opportunities. Spiritually formed leaders are driven by the mission and motivation of Christ: to address and resolve human meaninglessness and suffering by understanding; going; teaching; serving; loving; and, if necessary, dying.
- Affirmation 6. Christ-centered leaders' learning and serving reflect the major biblical themes of justice, mercy, and humility (Mic. 6:8). All three of these are evidence of the transformation that comes when the mind is challenged to see and serve the world like the Christ.
- Affirmation 7. Christ-centered leaders think clearly and love deeply; providing noble service distinguished by its excellence, innovation, humility, and self-sacrifice. Spiritually formed leadership serves the present age and changes the world's future.

### **A Final Exhortation**

With Jesus Christ as the hub, the basic elements of spiritually formed leadership become a creative force in both precept and application. I am experiencing new energy for and deeper understanding of my calling as I examine these in the context of the teachings and actions of the Christ. As you take up your leadership calling, I encourage you to develop such an integrated approach that stretches minds, cradles hearts, and equips future generations of leaders to serve nobly a waiting world with both compassion and excellence.

We who are called to spiritually formed leadership have a unique, privileged, and providential opportunity to influence the holistic development of future generations. Ours is a sacred calling. Let us appropriate that calling by extending our competent and compassionate hands to a world that longs for our well-trained touch and caring embrace. Let us commit ourselves to this journey of lifelong leading, laying Jesus Christ as the only sure foundation. May we have a "new-every-morning" revelation of God in every place, plan, process, and person. Let us be fit for anything because the mind, heart, and outstretched hands of Jesus have become our everything. Together, let us lift up our lamps of learning and embrace the cross; a watching world awaits the touch of our outstretched hands!

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David Gyertson holds a Ph.D. in administration and management from Michigan State University. He has been the president of three accredited universities and two charitable foundations. Dr. Gyertson serves as an executive coach and transition consultant to CEOs in a variety of educational, non-profit, and Christian ministry settings. Currently, he serves as a distinguished professor of leadership formation in the School of Global Leadership & Entrepreneurship at Regent University.

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## *Practitioner's Corner*

### **In Search of Organizational Transformation**

Diane Norbutus  
*Regent University Alumni '07*

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A favorite line from *The King and I* is when the King of Siam, faced with something he did not understand, would tell the English woman, Anna, that it was *a puzzlement*. As the story unfolds, Anna, who the King had retained to educate his many children, contributed to the King's education, and the King contributed to hers. The differences in their perspectives are striking as they struggled to understand and be understood. Efforts toward organizational transformation easily fit this same dilemma. Some things are puzzlements, and the struggle to understand and be understood was a key insight in a recent research project on transformation (Norbutus, 2007).

The transformation under investigation was a reorganization in which I participated. It was identified by one participant as the "most transformational activity" he had seen while in that organization—a sentiment echoed by others. A comment from a research advisor was that each participant in the reorganization seemed to have completely different experience of the event. In addition to the diverse perspectives of the nine participants interviewed was the added complexity that the event was viewed for the research from two different perspectives to see if either paradigm had more explanatory power for the practitioner. Thus, what follows is a brief description of the reorganization, the two perspectives that were used, the results of the research, and implications for practitioners.

The reorganization came about in a participative way through the efforts of the senior executive and many organizational members involving a series of meetings and conversations. The basic reorganization added two major subunits to address organizational capability development as well as assessment of the newly developed capabilities. The senior executive announced the reorganization to all members in a series of "all-hands" meetings to acknowledge the change, assure everyone they and the mission would not be harmed by the reorganization, and to give an overview of the change. The change was implemented over months with meetings scheduled with the senior executive to monitor the progress. The senior executive left the organization about 1 year after beginning the reorganization process at the end of his normal 2-year tour of duty.

The first perspective that was used to examine the transformation was *episodic organizational change*—a systems-based macroperspective of organizational change where a change agent plans a specific change that is normally dramatic and infrequent. The metaphor for episodic organizational change is spatial—consistent of inertial organizations that typically go through infrequent, intentional, and discontinuous organizational change. An episodic change is seen as resolving a misalignment between growing environmental demands and an inertial deep structure. The typical change process is reflected in the three-stage change model of the unfreeze–move–refreeze sequence of activity. The need for leaders to unfreeze the organization was identified early in the change literature because stable human behavior was based on a generally stable situation with significant forces driving and restraining change. For change to occur, the force fields had to be altered in such a way that a counterforce did not emerge to drive the system back to preexisting equilibrium. From an episodic organizational change perspective, organizational transformation is viewed at a macrolevel with key concepts being “inertia, deep structure of interrelated parts, triggering, replacement and substitution, discontinuity, revolution” (Weick & Quinn, 1999, p. 366). It is a macrolevel view with the organization as the unit to be changed. By understanding the system, it is assumed the change agent/leader will be able to manipulate the system for the outcomes desired. For example, change agents are advised to sell the fancy corporate headquarters, change the reward system for top managers, and/or force honest discussion at meetings. Underlying this view is a Newtonian-based quest for predictability.

The second perspective that was used in the research was *continuous organizational change*—a process-based microperspective where organizational change is constant and can accumulate into significant transformational change over time. The basic metaphor of continuous change is temporal and acknowledges emergent and self-organizing aspects of organizing. From this view, change is happening all the time. It is constant, cumulative, and evolving. Organizational variation is not an abrupt or discrete event, nor is it discontinuous; instead, it is a series of ongoing and situated accommodations and adjustments to contextual factors. Over time, they may be sufficient for fundamental changes to be achieved. This is not deliberate planned change but variations in practice that create conditions for breakdowns, unanticipated outcomes, and innovations which are met with more variations. In this conceptualization, there is no guiding, in-control leader/change agent, no predictive process of change, nor a system that is to be changed (Stacey, 2007). Instead of an assumption of misalignment, there are changing individual, group, organizational, and societal patterns of interaction that produce the identities of the participants as they participate together (Stacey, 2003). Continuous organizational change views organizational transformation from a microlevel view. Local processes and emerging patterns are the focus in this process–relational perspective. Key concepts are “recurrent interactions, shifting task authority, response repertoires, emergent patterns, improvisation, translation, [and] learning” (Weick & Quinn, 1999, p. 366). Change is seen as part of the ongoing process of organizing, and equilibrium is not assumed. The influence process is of considerable interest for when one makes a gesture such as a suggestion, demand, or simply a furrowed brow. The meaning of that gesture is not known until the response is provided by another. An example is the growl of a dog. The meaning of the growl is only known when the response of the other dog occurs—does the second dog growl or cower? The entire act of gesture and response is the influence process which iterates. This social process has the potential for either maintaining the status quo or transformation (Stacey, 2003). Transformation or the potential for transformation is constantly emerging as unexpected conditions and actors interact

with organizational members who “innovate, improvise, and adjust their work routines over time” (Orlikowski, 1996, p. 63).

The results of the research included several comparisons between the two perspectives to help explain the experience of the participants, the usefulness of the analytic framework, and the intervention theory used. Contrary to the episodic perspective, participants talked about earlier reorganizations that always modified what had been before so were not discontinuous; they emerged from what was there. Organizations were not characterized or experienced as systems. People went to meetings, had conversations, made decisions about the reorganization in the midst of everything else they were doing to carry on the mission. In some respects, the change was intentional in that it was recognized that something needed to change. However, how the change was experienced by the participants fit the nonprescriptive continuous change metaphor more consistently. No one indicated they knew ahead of time what the change would look like. Instead, it was experienced as emergent. For example, a senior executive stated explicitly that he did not know he was asking for reorganization until, after a series of meetings, he realized that was what would give him a way to address some of the shortfalls identified by his colleagues. An example of the self-organizing aspect was when one participant/researcher chose to involve himself in conversations about reorganization, then chose to develop his own option, then chose to challenge a facilitator to get with the program, then chose to collaborate with other participants. This is self-organizing behavior because this participant/researcher made all this effort without direction from an authority figure (which I might add, he has done many times before and since). Another participant made a statement about the organization changing almost instantly after the reorganization was set in motion. He had earlier said that organizations were very hard to change. But, right in the interview, he identified an example for himself and, upon reflection, realized that the next change was almost instantaneous.

A second research result was that though the analytic framework for episodic change indicates change would be dramatic, the experience of the reorganization was not noted as dramatic by participants. One participant related that an organizational transformation was so unremarkable that it had gone unnoticed until pointed out to the senior executive and that, in sum, the result of that particular effort was transformational. The senior executive had to think about it before he realized the statement was true; it was not a dramatic transformation but a transformation none the less.

Third, the organizational change did have aspects of intention from several agents who intended a change. The reorganization had elements of progress but also elements that did not progress because they were not implemented. The change was not a predefined goal as would be expected with episodic change. The episodic model identifies change to be linear and progressive, following predictable steps. However, the experience of change was very different. Instead, according to many interviewees, the change process was a back-and-forth, give-and-take experience that had to balance the interests of all the stakeholders. Special mention was made of the accommodations made to get the agreement of an important group. Not all the organizational changes experienced were progressive as one in particular was identified as a step backward. Although there were factors influencing the change from funding groups and other stakeholders, they did not intervene. This change was developed by the membership and shared with leadership and other stakeholders. This experience fits well the continuous change model. In this perspective, the change agent would be looking for cyclical patterns instead of linear ones. In this change experience, continuous iterations of reorganizations were found. The change was a



redirection of what was already under way. An earlier change had not been successful, and there is no end in sight for further reorganizations.

An additional interesting result evolved from the coding done on the interviews. Coding from the continuous organizational change perspective, though conducted on exactly the same text, was much different from the episodic change perspective. During the coding of episodic organizational change, it was difficult to find codes that corresponded with the text. With continuous change, there were very often multiple and interrelated implications to code. This is reflected in the total codes found for each perspective. There were 372 coded passages for episodic organizational change and, using exactly the same text, 1,638 coded passages for continuous organizational change (over four times more coding was done using the continuous change perspective). This suggests that although the popular press has flooded the market with predictive, episodic change models, the experience of those participating in a transformative organizational change actually experience continuous change. They were much more aware of the day to day processes that were occurring as the transformation progressed as opposed to identifying the macrolevel steps of the overall process. And, it was not just that the interviewees ignored the big steps. One participant, trained to recognize the big steps, railed against the fact that the process used for the reorganization did not follow anything he had expected from his training. Episodic change is conceptualized at the macrolevel, and continuous change is conceptualized at the microlevel, so a significant difference in the coding numbers would be expected. Yet, with only nine participants, no statistically significant evaluation of the data is possible.

Overall, exploring the process of organizational transformation interviewees in this study found their experience better fits the continuous organizational change perspective. This perspective describes how change comes about and how the status quo is sustained. It explains the self-help behaviors seen in some executives. It explains the unfolding of the organizational transformation and why some see it as a transformation and others do not. The episodic model does not explain or include the essential interactive nature of how organizational change occurs and, because of its systems basis, does not have a way to account for transformational/unexpected outcomes. The continuous change model explains how organizational change happens from a microperspective, continuously through interactions which can be applied synergistically in specific situations with insights from the episodic change model when there is a need for the structure and direction inherent to the episodic model of intentional, planned change.

The implications of this study suggest that continuous change provides a more informed story of how change is experienced. When organizational change/transformation is not known in advance, this perspective can help inform the creation of change through a continuous collaborative process. For example, using the continuous change perspective allowed me to identify conversations that maintained the status quo such as the request by a senior executive to share resources and the response of inaction that maintained the status quo. There is no need to invoke a made up construct of deep structure. Conversations also allowed for the emergence of transformation through perpetuation of new patterns. For example, in one conversation, a participant was challenged to take the initiative to make changes (a gesture); this challenge motivated him to take on the reorganization effort which was a critical choice in the emergence of this organizational transformation.

In addition, an organization is not a monolithic thing that changes. For example, viewing the reorganization as a transformation was in the eye of the beholder with everyone having a

different perspective. Some interviewees said it was a transformation, some said it still had transformational potential, and some did not think it was transformational at all. Thus, although an organizational change occurred, did the entire organization as a monolithic thing change? Although transformation is not knowable in advance, leaders can identify patterns and, by doing so, influence pattern momentum. For example, from the macroview, transformation is historical. From a microview of continuous change, everyone has a different perspective. Because one is working at the microlevel, it is possible to identify transformational patterns along the way instead of waiting for historical validation.

Conversations are the heart of transformation. This opens the door to many relevant questions such as: what kind of gestures would get desired responses? Does it make sense to assume someone can control an organization? Does it make sense to assume someone can control another? Is it even appropriate to try? What are appropriate means of influence? Should an organization in the messy business of transformation focus on efficiency or effectiveness? How does one set conditions that would make transformation more likely? What are the consequences of the transformation having negative consequences? What is the implication for risk management? Are policies, processes, and rewards encouraging transformation? What are the characteristics of being stuck in a status quo conversation? Many of these questions can only be answered by those connected in their specific social web of organization.

Although the activities of leaders and managers are frequently viewed as separate, in continuous change perspective, the various activities are not separated. Regardless of what one is doing in relating to another, there is a possibility that something new will emerge from the conversation which explains the emergence of creativity, novelty, and innovation.

Thus, it is important in times of change for leaders to place primary emphasis on communication; it is through communication that the transformation moves forward. Specifically, those aspiring to lead can do so more effectively by becoming more conscious of their gestures and the responses they get to their gestures. Realizing that whatever the response, it is a gesture back to them (including no response), underscores the importance of focusing on this human dynamic. It is only through the response that the meaning of the gesture can be determined. Since everyone can make gestures relevant to a transformation, everyone is potentially a leader. A senior executive with position power, due to this power differential, will likely have more receptive people listening and responding than an entry level worker. But, even those commonly ignored can still make gestures that can get reinforced and eventually change patterns with more and more people involved in the conversation. For example, this was seen clearly in the research narratives. One participant/researcher with no positional authority was a key leader in the reorganization.

In sum, from a continuous change perspective, the leadership role moves from person to person as the conversation flows, resulting in patterns that maintain or transform their organization. Transformation is thus a collective process, cannot be determined in advance, and may have positive and/or negative components depending on the situation and shared leadership. Leadership is shown by participating in conversation (through gestures and responses) with implicit or explicit acknowledgement of power differentials by the people involved. Paying attention to the conversations, the patterns that are emerging from the conversations, and pointing out these patterns to then iteratively inform the conversation is the leadership imperative from this perspective.

In conclusion, continuous change has greater explanatory power to help the understanding of the experience of the reorganization. The experience was not about someone

being in control and changing the organization. Quite the contrary, this organizational transformation was experienced as people engaging in conversation. A senior executive with the greatest power differential described this organizational change as highly collaborative. When enough people agreed, he agreed; in many instances, that became the new way things were done. There were also times when he asked that something be done, and it was not. This is also explained by the continuous change perspective as informed by complex responsive processes of relating (Stacey, Griffin, & Shaw, 2000). This reorganization was a messy business with patterns of social agreement emerging on an ongoing basis. As one participant noted, once the reorganization was disseminated, it immediately changed. The conversations continued as they are still doing today. This research could become part of the conversation. It is a gesture to which others can determine their response as was the case between the King and Anna.

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Dr. Diane K. Norbutus earned her Ph.D. in organizational leadership from Regent University and is currently working for the U.S. government as a transformationalist. Her interests are in leadership, transformation, and application of complex responsive processes of relating. She has also recently written a paper for the Mastering Wicked Problems conference (please contact her for a copy of this paper).

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