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## [Introduction to] Leadership Ethics

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# LEADERSHIP ETHICS

## VOLUME I

*Theoretical Aspects of Leadership Ethics*

Edited by

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and Patricia H. Werhane



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# Introduction: Theoretical Aspects of Leadership Ethics

*Joanne B. Ciulla*

**A**lthough the field of leadership ethics seems new, theories about how leaders should behave are quite ancient. This volume explores old and new theories and ideas about the ethics of leaders and leadership. The articles draw from philosophy, religion, history, and the social sciences. There has not been much theoretical work on leadership ethics in the leadership studies literature, because most of the research has been done by social scientists. Yet if you critically examine prominent leadership theories, you discover that many of them contain either explicit or implicit normative assumptions about leaders and leadership. The first three sections of this volume examine some of the foundational issues in leadership ethics. These include the meaning of the word “leader,” normative leadership theories, and the overarching theme of the relationship between ethics and leader effectiveness. In the next two sections, we explore some of the ethical challenges that seem to be inherent in the role of a leader. The last section looks at leadership through the lens of various moral concepts and theories.

When philosophers ponder the ethics of leadership, they consider the moral obligations of leaders and followers, the moral principles that they use to make judgments, and the ethical problems that are unique to being in a leader/follower relationship. Social scientists seek accurate descriptions of leaders’ behavior, traits, and the way leaders influence followers and followers influence leaders. Philosophers and social scientists examine some of the same aspects of leadership ethics using different methods and asking different questions. Philosophers evaluate ethical behavior and the norms of ethical behavior in leaders, whereas social scientists describe and measure moral behavior. They often look at different sides of the same coin, but they do not always agree on what the coin is. That is why the articles in the first section of this volume address the question, “What is a leader?”

## **Foundational Questions about Ethics and the Meaning of Leadership**

The articles in this section unmask the moral concepts behind the meaning of leadership. We begin with the article “Leadership Ethics Mapping the Territory.”

This was the first article to outline the field of leadership ethics. In it Joanne B. Ciulla argues that ethics is so embedded in the idea of a leader that ethical assumptions lurk below the surface of most so-called “value-free” empirical studies and are embedded in the way researchers define leadership. After examining sample definitions of the word “leader” from research in the 20th century, she observes that the meaning of the word “leader” is a social construction that reflects the values and conditions of the times. When researchers define leadership, their definitions do not differ much in terms of what a leader is, but they differ in terms of what a leader ought to be. From her analysis of definitions, Ciulla concludes that most leadership research ultimately aims at answering the question “What is good leadership?”

This is a difficult question to answer because of what Ciulla calls “The Hitler Problem,” which was originally based on an observation that Gardner made. The Hitler problem is about how to answer the question “Was Hitler a good leader?” The answer is “yes” in terms of some of the ways that he was effective and “no” in terms of the morally horrendous things that Hitler did. The Hitler Problem shows us that you cannot give an unqualified answer to the question “What is a good leader?” without considering both ethics and leader effectiveness. Out of this simple observation she formulates the overarching question for leadership ethics, which is “What is the relationship between ethics and leader effectiveness?”

Social scientists have also examined the emotional and implicitly normative properties of the word “leader.” James R. Meindl, Sanford B. Ehrlich, and Janet M. Dukerich’s classic article on the romance of leadership offers insight into the social construction of leadership. Their research shows how the meaning of “leader” has been romanticized to the point where people think that leaders can and do control the fates of their organizations and followers. From the three studies in their article, Meindl et al. draw some intriguing conclusions about leadership research. First, they worry that the increasingly romanticized view of leaders will push researchers to demystify leadership by quantitatively studying it. They argue that this kind of scientific study might end up trivializing what is important and different about leaders. Empirical studies often filter out attributions that are uniquely part of how people construct their idea of a leader. Many of these attributions relate to the moral qualities and responsibilities of leaders. Second, Meindl et al. suggest that the romance and mystery of leadership may be what sustains followers and moves them to work with leaders toward a common goal. Lastly, Meindl et al. illustrate one of the most morally distinctive aspects of leaders. Unlike people who are not in leadership roles, we hold leaders responsible for things that they did not know about or do and are unable to control. This is because people need to believe that someone is responsible for the things that happen around them, which explains why human beings need leaders (and also gods). Moral concepts such as responsibility are embedded in the idea of what a leader is supposed to be.

Philosopher Eva Kort argues that the answers to “What is a leader?” and “What is a good leader?” are in fact the same. She goes on to say that group actions, not leader/follower relationships, reveal the features that identify *real* or *proper* leaders from cases of *formal* or *purported* leaders. For example, a concertmaster holds a formal leadership role. If she gives the orchestra instructions that the musicians know are bad, they will follow her because of her position. In this case, the concertmaster is merely a purported leader, not a proper leader. Kort says that only when the concertmaster participates in the plural action of the orchestra in the right sort of way is she a leader in the proper sense. Notice how a *purported* leader simply describes the position, whereas a *proper* leader or *real* leader judges that the person in that position is doing her job the right way. Leaders are people whom we choose to follow because they seem competent and – where relevant – ethical. Kort’s definition of *real* leaders refers to leaders whose ideas people voluntarily endorse and act on in various situations. We frequently hear Kort’s description of a leader in ordinary conversation. When we say “she is a *real* leader,” we mean that she leads in a way that leaders should lead, which is in a good way.

Plato’s characterization of leadership in the *Republic* describes a *real* leader, or what he calls a *true* leader, as ethical, effective, and un-self-interested. For Plato leading is a craft, and the virtue or excellence of every craft is about performing its function well. So a doctor practices the craft of medicine not for himself but for the health of his patients, and a ship’s captain is a ruler of sailors and leads for the good of the sailors. Plato observes that being an ethical leader is difficult and not in a leader’s self-interest because an ethical leader is bound to make some people unhappy – for example, friends and family do not receive special favors. Plato’s language is similar to Kort’s when he discusses the craft of leadership. He says, “anyone who is really a true ruler does not by nature seek his own advantage, but the advantage of his subjects.” Plato’s *true* ruler is a just or moral ruler. Plato and the ancient Greeks call unjust rulers by a different name – tyrants.

## Normative Models of Leadership

Given the normative assumptions and attributions embedded in the idea of a leader, we are not surprised to find normative models and theories of leadership. A normative model or leadership theory consists of explicit moral norms for analyzing leaders and leadership. One of the oldest normative models is servant leadership. It has been around since ancient times but was made popular by Robert Greenleaf in 1977 (also see Volume III, Article 68). The idea of servant leadership is simple – leaders are supposed to serve followers. Yet when we look at history, we see that that is easier said than done. Even today, we find societies and organizations with leaders who operate on the assumption that followers are there to serve them. According to Greenleaf, it

is not enough for servant leaders to be ethical and care for their constituents. They also have a moral obligation to improve their followers. Greenleaf says the test of servant leaders is whether the people they serve become better, freer, healthier, and more likely to serve others, especially the less fortunate.

One of the most influential leadership theories is James MacGregor Burns' theory of transforming leadership. It rests on the idea that leaders and followers have an obligation to make each other morally better. Burns believes that leaders should improve their followers *and* followers should improve their leaders. According to Burns, transforming leadership grows out of "the seedbed of conflict." Burns criticizes 20th century social science doctrines that focus on harmony, adjustment, and stability because he thinks that conflict is a catalyst for change, innovation, and empowerment. In Burns' model, dialogue emerges out of conflicts in which both leaders and followers move toward agreement about shared moral values, and in this process they elevate each other's moral values. Change comes when they agree on higher-order values about what is important. Burns says we judge leaders by two types of values – modal values and end values. Modal values, such as honesty and integrity, concern the way leaders and followers work with each other. End values are overarching moral norms, such as equality and justice, which encompass the ultimate ethical standards for judging the actions of leaders and followers. Transforming leadership aims at empowering followers and making them independent of their leaders. Burns' description of the transforming process resembles Jürgen Habermas's (1987) discourse ethics, which is a common theory used in European discussions of leadership ethics.

Bernard Bass builds his theory of transformational leadership on Burns' theory. We did not include Bass's work in this volume but is worth saying a few words about his theory because of its influence on other leadership theories. As a social scientist, Bass focuses on measuring transformational leadership. Bass and his colleague Bruce Avolio developed the Multi-factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), which is extensively used in leadership research (Avolio and Bass, 1991). Bass's (1985) theory of transformational leadership does not incorporate Burns' emphasis on conflict and the dialogue between leaders and followers about values, nor does it include normative considerations using end and modal values. Instead Bass focuses on how leaders use their idealized influence (charisma), intellectual stimulation, individual consideration, and inspirational motivation to change followers so they perform well. Moral concepts are implicit in some of these variables, but unlike transforming leadership theory, there were no explicit overarching ethical norms in his theory.

Ciulla criticizes Bass's theory of transformational leadership because it depends on charismatic leaders who could be evil transformational leaders such as Hitler. Bass (1998) then attempts to put his theory on a moral footing by contrasting transformational leaders who are ethical with *pseudo*-transformational leaders who are unethical. In a later article, Bass

and Steidlmeier (1999) distinguishes between *pseudo*-transformational leadership and *authentic* transformational leadership. He then describes the moral qualities that leaders should have and asserts that only moral leaders are transformational. Bass's argument fits with the normative connotation of leadership that we have seen in other articles – only the *real* or *authentic* leaders are ethical. As Price (2003) argues, however, Bass's adjustment to his theory does not work because Bass assumes that altruism is adequate for ethical success, yet there are many cases where altruistic leaders are seriously misguided about the nature of morality.

The theory of authentic leadership evolved out of Bass's work on authentic transformational leadership, positive psychology, and popular management literature on the subject. The Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) measures self-awareness, balanced processing, internalized moral perspective, and relational transparency (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, and Peterson, 2008). Since there are many variations of this theory and an extensive literature on it, we have included a review article, "Authentic leadership: A review of the literature and research agenda." Some researchers define authentic leadership along the lines of Fred Luthans' and Avolio's definition – "a process that draws from both positive psychological capacities and a highly developed organizational context, which results in both greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviors on the part of leaders and associates, fostering positive self-development" (Luthans and Avolio, 2003, p. 243). This definition later takes on some explicit moral elements such as: "a pattern of leader behavior that draws upon and promotes both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate, to foster greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency on the part of leaders working with followers, fostering positive self-development" (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 94). Authentic leadership focuses on how leaders' self-knowledge contributes to making them effective and ethical leaders. There appears to be an inherent circularity in the notion of morality in this theory. Morality seems to be both the result of a leader being authentic and a quality of authenticity. Nevertheless, this is another example of a theory that connects moral leadership with leader effectiveness and characterizes *real* or *authentic* leaders as ethical leaders.

The next normative theory of leadership, "ethical leadership," is a descriptive study designed to help us understand how ethical leadership affects leader effectiveness. The authors Michael E. Brown, Linda K. Treviño, and David Harrison define ethical leadership "as the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making." They ground their work in social learning theory and emphasize the idea of leaders as role models. The theory also draws on the literature on transformational and

authentic transformational leadership. Brown et al. isolate moral variables such as honesty, trust, fairness, openness, and consideration and hypothesize that ethical leadership will be positively related to employees' satisfaction with their leaders and employee effectiveness. The name "ethical leadership theory" is somewhat misleading in that the instrument used in these studies only measure people's attributions of ethical leadership. The fact that the majority of people attribute ethical qualities to a leader is not sufficient to say that the leader is ethical. A complete picture of what constitutes ethical leadership requires both descriptive studies and analysis of leaders based on a broader set of moral norms and philosophical questions concerning the nature of morality in leadership.

The next article in this section looks at one of these broader ethical questions: "For what and to whom are leaders responsible?" The theory of responsible leadership draws some of its ideas from the previous articles. The authors, Nicola M. Pless and Thomas Maak, define responsible leadership as a "values-based and thorough, ethical principles-driven relationship between leaders and stakeholders who are connected through a shared sense of meaning and purpose through which they raise one another to higher levels of motivation and commitment for achieving sustainable values creation and social change." Their theory draws on discourse ethics as well as the business ethics literature on stakeholder theory and corporate social responsibility. Responsible leadership theory proposes an expansive way of thinking about the scope of leaders' moral obligations in terms of the stakeholders and interests inside and outside of their organizations. This view of leadership holds leaders responsible for a far wider range of people and things than other theories.

## **Ethics and Effectiveness and the Problem of Dirty Hands**

We now take an in-depth look at the relationship between ethics and effectiveness and the difficulties leaders have filling the demands of both. In the first article, Ciulla elaborates on the historical and philosophical background behind the idea of good leadership as ethical and effective leadership. The article raises questions such as: "To what extent is an incompetent leader unethical?" What role does moral luck play in the assessment of leaders? Ciulla outlines the various dimensions of ethics and effectiveness that comprise both philosophic inquiries and the normative leadership theories in the previous section of this volume. These dimensions include the ethics of the leader as a person, the ethics of the leader/follower relationship, the ethics of the process of leadership, and the ethics of the actions leaders take. She observes that leader effectiveness can also be a normative concept depending on the scope and time frame of the assessment. Long-term sustainable notions of effectiveness tend to include normative assumptions; whereas



short-term assessments of effectiveness are either morally neutral or sometimes unethical.

John Gardner writes about the challenges of effective leadership in the public sector. He argues that the public wants leaders who are willing to act on their moral principles, yet throughout history leaders have not always been able to honor them. Gardner's cure for this problem is similar to Burns'. Gardner says that the job of a leader is to develop commitment and responsibility in followers and seek a common ground based on the overarching values of society such as justice, freedom, equality, and the dignity of the individual. He believes that the moral goals of leadership are to release human potential, to balance the rights of the individual with the needs of communities, to keep faith with the values of the leader and the pluralistic values of society, and to encourage individual initiative.

Like Gardner, Niccolò Machiavelli also knows how difficult it is for leaders to act on their moral principles, especially when they operate in a competitive environment. In this famous selection from *The Prince*, Machiavelli tells us that the Prince needs to know how to do wrong when it is necessary. To be effective, he does not need to be loved, but he must not be hated either. Machiavelli says it is important for a Prince to appear moral, even if he is not, because if he does not pretend to be moral, he may lose some of his power over the people. Lastly, Machiavelli notes that leaders should be strong like lions, cunning like foxes, and decide when they want to keep agreements and when they do not. Readers often write off *The Prince* as an immoral argument about the ends justifying the means. However, Machiavelli offers us an astute description of a central moral challenge of leadership. He does not recommend that leaders behave unethically but rather explains why it is difficult for them to be ethical. Because leaders hold responsibility for the well-being of others, they may face situations that compel them to make a deal with the devil.

Philosophers call this deal with the devil the problem of "dirty hands," and Michael Walzer's article explores this problem. Walzer says no leader leads innocently. The job of most leaders is inherently utilitarian, yet we tend to judge the moral character of leaders in terms of their virtues and their commitment to moral principles. Hence, leaders confront a tension between their own ethical values and consistency and the obligations that they have to their followers. Sometimes a leader's moral obligation to prevent harm to followers can only be filled by doing something unethical. We call such cases ethical dilemmas because they have no satisfactory moral solutions to them. In these cases, any choice leaders make leaves them with dirty hands. Walzer thinks that feeling dirty is a good thing because when leaders stop feeling dirty and easily rationalize bad behavior in the name of the greatest good, they lose their sense of morality.

## Ethical Failure and the Abuse of Power

Power stands out as another obvious challenge to ethical leadership. How leaders get, use, and control their desire for power has long fascinated writers, historians, philosophers, and devotees of tragedies and soap operas. The appropriate use of power requires self-control, which is a fundamental part of most moral theories. We begin this section with The Buddha's "First Sermon" because his ruminations on human nature and desire help us appreciate the temptations of power. According to Buddha, desire is the source of human suffering. These desires include everything from the desire to stay young to desires for fame, power, wealth, etc. Buddha tells us that the only way to end suffering and find happiness is to conquer our desires and follow the eight-fold path – a set of moral principles concerning right behavior. He reminds us that leaders are fallible human beings who require massive self-control because their positions give them means to indulge their desires and sometimes create an unquenchable thirst for things like sex, money, power, or fame.

In our next article, Dean E. Ludwig and Clinton O. Longenecker use the Biblical story about King David and his adultery with Bathsheba to illustrate the moral dangers of success. Ludwig and Longenecker call these moral hazards "The Bathsheba Syndrome." This syndrome begins when leaders are successful and become isolated from others in the organization and complacent about their work. They do their job on cruise control and lose their strategic focus. When this happens, leaders start abusing the perks of their job, such as access to resources, and they indulge their desires. Such leaders have an inflated belief in their ability to control outcomes, which can lead to risky behavior. King David and leaders throughout history have abused their power to cover up improprieties such as sex scandals and monetary improprieties. The cover-ups are often worse than the original deeds because leaders drag subordinates into them and make inappropriate use of organizational resources. When followers discover leaders' improprieties and their attempts to cover them up, such leaders lose credibility even when they do not lose their jobs.

Terry L. Price digs into other kinds of moral mistakes that leaders make in his article, "Abuse, Privilege, and the Conditions of Responsibility." Sometimes leaders think that they are acting ethically because they are misguided about their moral beliefs. Although anyone can hold moral beliefs that are wrong in some way, leaders are different in that when they act on mistaken moral beliefs, they affect more people and bring about greater harm. Price describes two varieties of mistaken moral beliefs: The first relates to the content of morality or the sorts of things that are right and wrong. Price notes that leaders who grow up in unethical environments or have abusive backgrounds may not have learned about right and wrong as children. While they can and should alter their views as they grow older, some do not. This

explains (but does not excuse) some moral mistakes of leaders. The second variety of moral mistakes concerns the scope of morality, or who is and is not bound by certain moral requirements. Since we often give privileges to leaders, leaders sometimes see themselves as special and not subject to the same rules as everyone else.

After articles that tackle the personal ethical challenges of power, success, and privilege, the next article looks at the willingness of leaders to share power. In “Leadership and the Problem of Bogus Empowerment,” Ciulla says leaders empower followers by enabling them to recognize the power that they have, helping them regain the power that they lost, or by giving them power that they never had. She defines empowerment as instilling the confidence, competence, freedom, and resources for followers to act on their own judgments. Bogus empowerment ensues when one or more of these factors are missing. Some leaders do not trust their followers and/or are reluctant to give up some of their own power. What Ciulla calls authentic empowerment occurs when leaders trust employees and are honest with them about the scope and kind of power they have. Empowering followers gives them responsibility for what they do, but it does not make leaders any less responsible for their actions or the actions of their followers.

Two brief selections from Aristotle’s *Politics* support this point. Aristotle again discusses power in regards to followers, or in his case, citizens. Aristotle tells us that the state should be set up to make citizens happy, and that educating and cultivating virtue in leaders and followers offers the best means for achieving this end. In the first article from Chapter 4 Book V of *Politics*, Aristotle says leaders and citizens should know how to command and how to obey – they learn how to lead by learning how to follow. In the course of the discussion, Aristotle contrasts the citizen, or free man, with slaves and women using comments that may be offensive to the modern reader (and probably a few ancient ones too). However, he makes the point that the morality of “free” followers or citizens is not much different from that of leaders and that leaders and followers should work as partners in the endeavors of the state.

We include Aristotle’s second article because it describes how different kinds of leaders exercise power. Aristotle maintains that justice requires some notion of equality between leaders and followers, regardless of the way that a state is organized. He also asserts that you cannot have a just state without just citizens, and if leaders want virtuous and responsible followers, they must give them some discretion and power.

## Self-Interest and Altruism in Leadership

In this section, we turn to an ethical challenge inherent in the idea of a good leader and the romance of leadership. We expect leaders to look after the

interests of followers and put followers' interests first. When we choose a leader, we assume that he or she will look after the greatest happiness or good of people in businesses, countries, communities, and organizations. In part we know this simply because of how disappointed and angry people get when leaders put their self-interests ahead of the interests of their followers. Transparency International, the NGO that studies corruption around the world, enshrines this idea in its definition of corruption. They define corruption as "the abuse of entrusted power for personal gain" (<http://www.transparency.org/>). In short, when we entrust leaders and institutions with power, we expect them to use it for us, not for them.

Plato observes that being an ethical leader is not in one's self-interest. So if this is true then why would anyone want to lead? In Arnold M. Ludwig's provocative article, "Why Rulers Rule," he argues that people are ultimately motivated to lead for their own interests, even when those interests are the same as that of their followers. Using historical and evolutionary studies he argues that competition and sex motivate men (as in "males") to lead. The idea that leaders should be altruists or utilitarians does not enter into the equation. Ludwig maintains that people do not need particular training or superior intellect to be leaders because charisma and the ability to intimidate and manipulate others usually determine who emerges as a leader. This article makes a number of claims that readers might find repugnant, especially those that compare human leaders with alpha-male gorillas. Ludwig agrees that human leaders are usually morally superior to gorillas but says this fact merely confirms his argument about the evolutionary nature of leadership. When we look at the history of leadership, we cannot ignore parts of Ludwig's description. Thugs and charismatic leaders play a prominent role in shaping history and in leadership today. Furthermore, we cannot deny that male leaders have and still do sometimes use and abuse their power for sex.

In a similar vein, we turn to a selection from Thomas Hobbes' classic work *Leviathan*. Hobbes says that human beings are equal in that they are self-interested and want similar things in life. As a result of this, without leaders and government, we would be in a constant state of war with each other. This state of war, based on selfish behavior, would not serve anyone's interest because there would be no commerce, arts, or society. In this world, life would be "solitary, nasty, brutish, and short." According to Hobbes, we turn over some of our power and freedom to leaders because they are better able to ensure our ability to pursue our own interests.

While Hobbes' notion of a social contract is a political idea, it also captures the implicit idea that we give leaders power so that they will use that power for us. According to Rabintra Nath Kanungo and Manuel Mendonca, the only way to ensure leader role effectiveness is by engaging in altruistic acts that reflect leaders' desires to benefit others. They define altruism as "others before myself," and understand it as both a moral and a practical principle of leadership. An altruistic leader inspires trust and reciprocal behavior in

followers, which helps groups of people work together to reach common goals. Kanungo and Mendonca argue that effective leaders are motivated by their need for altruism. This need to put others first compels leaders to empower and encourage followers and unite them under a shared vision. Kanungo and Mendonca believe that the quality of altruism is the secret to effective leadership. This provocative idea may be somewhat simplistic, because as Price points out, a leader might engage in altruistic behavior but have a mistaken sense of morality – for example, some terrorists are altruists.

The last article in this section is about the ancient Greek and Chinese virtue of reverence. Its author, Paul Woodruff, defines reverence as the virtue that keeps leaders from acting like gods and becoming tyrants. Using a variety of contemporary and historical examples, he illustrates the bad things that happen to leaders who fail to practice this virtue. Reverence does not address self-interest or altruism per se. It focuses on leaders' ability to respect followers because leaders see themselves and their followers as parts of a larger whole, and they both share a devotion to some higher set of ideals. As a mixture of humility and respect, reverence stands as a check against destructive over-confidence that results in unethical and ineffective leadership. Reverence requires leaders to listen to their followers and this inoculates leaders against becoming isolated or thinking that they are special. Drawing on Confucius' writing, Woodruff emphasizes the importance of ceremonies as a way of cultivating reverence and instilling respect in leaders and followers for each other and the larger picture to which they belong.

## The Role of Trust, Care, Virtue, and Duty

This section offers a sampling of literature that engages specific moral concepts and theories to characterize ethical and effective leadership. Perhaps no work exemplifies the age-old interest in leadership ethics better than the first article in this section by the Egyptian sage and advisor to King Djedkare Isesi, Ptah-Hotep. Written between 2400 and 2300 BCE, *The Instruction of Ptah-Hotep* is one of the oldest surviving papyrus manuscripts. Some of Ptah-Hotep's advice sounds quite contemporary. He observes that the people do not overthrow gracious, truthful, law abiding, kind, and just leaders. Ptah-Hotep highlights the importance of humility and reminds leaders to remember their roots. Some of his comments about humility echo Woodruff's description of the virtue of reverence (Volume I, 22). According to Ptah-Hotep, powerful leaders should be admired for their knowledge and kindness. They should not lavish favors on others – or in modern terms, depend on transactional leadership – and they should do their jobs conscientiously.

Our next selection looks at another moral concept that seems embedded in the idea of leadership, care. Ciulla uses the story of Nero "fiddling" while Rome burns to illustrate why leaders have to be in the right place during a

crisis to demonstrate care and fill the needs of their followers. We still use the expression “Nero fiddled while Rome burned” to describe the callous and feckless behavior of leaders. In this article, Ciulla shows how a leader’s location during a crisis serves as a physical or symbolic representation of care. As many of the articles in this volume indicate, people expect leaders to look after them. Care means attending people’s needs, concern for their welfare, and attention to their problems. It is also a feeling. Ciulla uses examples of leaders who are criticized or thrown out of office because they failed to be in the right place during a crisis. These leaders refused to go to the site of the crisis, stayed on vacation, or failed to return to their office. Ciulla says we cannot expect all leaders to feel care for their followers; however, leaders have a duty to care and show that they are attentive to followers’ needs in times of crisis. One way they do this is by being in the right place at the right time.

Leaders who have virtues such as kindness, care, and justice possess what Alejo Sison calls “moral capital.” He says that moral capital consists of character and excellence in regard to the context in which a person operates. He uses Aristotle’s notion of virtue, which is a combination of the moral and practical knowledge that we apply to everything we do. Virtues are habits of behavior, such as honesty and courage. We do not say that someone is honest or courageous unless they practice honesty and behave courageously. According to Aristotle, the end of life (and by extension leadership) aims at *eudaimonia* or happiness in terms of human flourishing. Virtues are particularly useful moral concepts for the study of leadership. They comprise the way people do things – they are habits that we learn from leaders and other role models in society. Unlike values, which are things we believe are important, you cannot have a virtue without practicing it – you are what you do. Hence, the virtues of a leader are observable. Like Ptah-Hotep, Sison says that leaders need moral capital, which includes wisdom, virtue, and goodwill to influence followers and to cultivate virtues in followers. For Sison, morality is a source of power and influence for leaders.

The last article in this volume focuses on duty as the ethical core of leadership. Drawing on the moral philosophy of Immanuel Kant, Norman Bowie creates a model of a leader who operates according to Kant’s strict set of moral requirements. Bowie compares and contrasts his Kantian notion of leadership with other leadership theories. Kant’s theory of ethics rests on respect for the dignity of all human beings. He says that all humans have an autonomous will and should be treated as ends and not used as means to an end. Kant’s categorical imperative states that we must act on the principles that we would want everyone to act upon, so leaders are not exceptions to the rules. Bowie tells us that a Kantian leader would have an obligation to develop the autonomy of followers, which would entail giving followers the freedom to make their own rational choices. In another formulation of Kant’s categorical imperative, Kant says that all people should behave as if they live

in a “kingdom of ends.” This means everyone in a society makes and follows the rules of morality through their interactions with each other. Bowie concludes that a Kantian leader would not want obedient followers. Such leaders would aim to develop free, empowered, and responsible followers. Although framed around a different set of assumptions, Bowie’s Kantian description of a leader resembles many of the goals of transforming leadership.

## Conclusion

As we have seen in Bowie’s article and the others in this volume, even though the approach of each author is different, there is a quite a bit of overlap concerning the issues at stake in leadership ethics. This theoretical heterogeneity is imperative in a new field because it stimulates research and ideas from across the academic and philosophic spectrum. We hope that by putting so many disciplines to work in one field we will see the kind of cross-pollination that leads to real progress in leadership ethics. The most promising future research will combine historical insights and philosophic analysis with empirical studies that describe how leaders behave and are perceived to behave. Lastly, we should keep in mind the fact that leadership ethics is about more than academic research. Progress in this field has the potential to influence the way we select and develop leaders, who in turn affect the way all of us live and work.

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