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[Introduction to] Conceptions of Leadership: Enduring Ideas and Emerging Insights

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Conceptions of Leadership

Enduring Ideas and Emerging Insights

Edited by

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction and Commentary

DAVID M. MESSICK

In the spring of 1999, two of this book's editors, Kramer and I, met for lunch at the Sheraton Hotel in Chicago. Kramer was on the faculty of the Graduate School of Business at Stanford University and I was on the faculty of the Kellogg School at Northwestern University. One of the topics that we talked about during lunch was the shift in emphasis in both business schools away from cooperation, trust, communication, coordination, and the like, to the related but distinct topic of leadership. Kramer and I were social psychologists and knew that the topic of leadership had been an important theme in some of the earliest research on group processes. However, as social psychology experienced an infatuation with the "cognitive" revolution in psychology, the topic of leadership shrank into obscurity. By the turn of the millennium, though, there were some new ways of thinking about leadership that had not been introduced to the business school environment. Why not, we thought, have a conference and invite some of social psychology's most creative innovators to a conference to discuss these new approaches to leadership and then publish a book based on the talks? The conference was held in August of 2000 at the Kellogg School of Management, and the book based on this conference, *The Psychology of Leadership*, was published in 2005. Two of the creative innovators who were invited to the conference and who wrote chapters for the book are the other two editors of the current book, Allison and Goethals.

Now, a decade, more or less, later, and there has been a virtual tsunami of books and articles about leadership. When the issue of updating the earlier book was first raised, Kramer and I wondered what the point of a revision would be. We then became aware of the creative work by Allison and Goethals and realized that there was indeed a body of research that had not been described in their earlier book. So Kramer and I discussed the idea of a revision with Allison and Goethals, and we all agreed that such a project was worth exploring. After much discussion and the

exchange of scads of ideas, the current book was agreed upon by all of us, who, we should note, are all associated with the University of California, Santa Barbara, where I was a faculty member, Allison and Kramer were graduate students, and Goethals was a visiting scholar.

The familiarity of us four editors with each other is a blessing but also a shortcoming. We are all male, white, North American university professors. These facts surely limit our views of what constitutes good leadership and who qualifies to be thought of as a leader. Famous people from around the world, people like Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Mother Teresa, are all well known and admired. But there are many others who would be unrecognized by most Americans. Take, for instance, Lee Kuan Yew (familiarily known in Asia as LKY). LKY was the first prime minister of Singapore and one of the most famous and admired political leaders in Asia. When one of us (DM) taught in Hong Kong to a broad mix of Asian executives, LKY was one of the most popular figures executives wrote about to illustrate excellence in leadership. Consider also Molly Melching, about whom a book has appeared (Molloy, 2013). She is a volunteer in a not-for-profit organization in Senegal who spends time in rural villages where the practice of female genital cutting is a well-established cultural tradition. She has begun the process of gradually eliminating this barbaric practice from hundreds of villages in Senegal but remains relatively obscure in the United States. Finally, think of Simon Bolivar. His name is recognized by a fraction of US scholars, but he is famous throughout Latin America for having led the South American people in a rebellion against Spanish domination. Indeed he has one nation named after him (Bolivia) and is widely known as *el Libertador* throughout Central and South America. He is to Latin America what George Washington is to the United States.

Inescapably then, we editors are constrained by our backgrounds in our selection of “core” issues about leadership, and we are constrained in ways that will often be invisible to us. For instance, we are all social psychologists and have read much of the same literature on leadership. But that literature is different from that which a political scientist or a journalist or a military historian will have read. Their books on core concepts would be different from ours—not better, necessarily, nor worse, just different. The way we define leadership is likely to differ from the way people whose backgrounds and experiences are different from ours define leadership. This fact is true about professional experiences and it is equally true about political and social differences. Most citizens of the United States, for instance, would not consider Fidel Castro to be a hero and a leader, but most Cubans would. Most North Koreans think their leaders have almost godlike qualities and most Americans think these leaders are monomaniacal lunatics. What is implied by these differences is that leadership, like beauty, may be in the eye of the beholder. If history is written by winners, one will either be viewed as a hero or a terrorist depending on who wins.

But winning or losing may depend partly on unpredictable geological events like storms, earthquakes, or droughts, or equally unpredictable social events, and who is a hero and who is a villain acquires a random element. Flip a coin. Heads you have a leader and hero; tails you have a scoundrel. This fact, along with the subjective nature of leadership judgments mentioned above, may be inevitable and immutable. But they can also be problematic for one trying to create a logic of leadership that is "objective," in the sense that judgments of leadership do not depend on one's own position, and systematic, in that these judgments do not depend on random events. Eliminating the impact of chance is probably a more difficult challenge than eliminating the impact of one's position. A major reason why this is so lies in what has been called the "outcome bias" (Baron & Hershey, 1988). The outcome bias refers to the fact that in judging the quality of an act, the result of the act—the outcome—is used as a cue. If the outcome is a good one, the act or the decision is seen as good; if the outcome is poor, the act or decision is judged to have been poor. This relationship characterizes judgments even when it is clear that the outcome depends not only on the decision but also on a random event over which the decision maker has no control. So imagine two people at a roulette table deciding to place a large bet on a single number. The first is lucky and wins her bet but the second is unlucky and loses hers. People will judge the first person to be a better decision maker than the second, despite the fact that they made identical decisions. The outcome bias violates the principle that the quality of a decision must be assessed on the basis of the information that was available to the decision maker at the time the decision was made, not on the basis of a subsequent outcome. The outcome will influence a judgment of how lucky the decision makers were, but not the quality of the decision *per se*.

The rule is this as it applies to leadership. Only those individuals who have made a significant difference in the world, in one way or another, are considered leaders. But to make a significant difference one must be lucky as well as skilled. We cannot count the number of business executives who tried but failed to build lasting organizations, failed often because of poor economic conditions, competition from unexpected places, the sudden introduction of new and better products, political advantages given to competitors, and so on. Leadership books are written about those who survived and thrived, even if they did essentially everything the failures did except experience bad luck. Just as we as a species are the result of a long process of evolution for which we can take no credit, successful people are the result of an evolutionary process which has eliminated many others with similar qualities. The survivors were lucky. The failures were not. A difference between biological evolution and the selective pressures for success in one's lifetime is that the survivors of the latter often attribute their success to their qualities rather than to luck. One result of this process is the flood of "leadership by autobiography" books on the market.

A principle that accompanies the outcome bias is what Fischhoff and Beyth (1975) call “creeping determinism.” When an event that is a priori uncertain happens, we tend to think that it was inevitable. Thus explaining the past, where everything is mostly known, is very different from predicting the future. People tend to be very good at the former, and very poor at the latter. When we think about tomorrow, the world is “iffy.” When we think about yesterday, what happened must have been destined to happen. The paradox is that the future is highly uncertain whereas the past is deterministic. What this means for studies of leadership is that winners appear to have been destined to win, not just lucky. Their successes must reflect qualities that are stable, permanent, and exceptional. We can illustrate this principle with a recent sports example. In the 2013 NBA championship, in game 6 between the San Antonio Spurs and the Miami Heat, with essentially no time left and San Antonio ahead by three points, Heat guard Ray Allen shot a three-point shot from the corner. This shot had at best a 40 percent chance of going in. If it did not, the Spurs win the title. If it did go in, the game is tied and goes into overtime. At this point, the outcome is totally dependent on chance. The shot does go in and the Heat goes on in overtime to defeat the Spurs, and the Heat also wins game 7 to win the series and become the NBA Champions for the second straight year. The press writes about the Heat as a team of destiny. But what seems clear is that the Spurs and the Heat are two excellent teams either of which could have won the series and the championship. It was pure luck that the Heat won on Allen’s three-point shot but it was not pure luck that the Heat was within striking distance so that the three pointer could do the trick. In other words, both skill and luck were necessary for victory.

Here is another example that is more pertinent to the content of this book. In the early years of the last century, two parties set out to be the first to reach the South Pole. A British party was led by Robert Falcon Scott, a Captain in the Royal Navy and an experienced explorer. A Norwegian party was led by Roald Amundsen, an explorer with extensive experience in polar conditions. Each of these teams set out in the summer of 1910 (Amundsen left Oslo on June 7 in the *Fram* and Scott sailed out of London on the *Terra Nova* on June 10). While they had different routes to sail to Antarctica, both teams arrived on the Antarctic continent in the antipodean spring (Northern autumn). After enduring the winter of 1911, both expeditions left for the pole in the spring, Amundsen on October 20 and Scott and his team on November 1. The round-trip journey was to be approximately 1,500 miles—on foot! In a competition of this sort, there are at least two goals. The first is to be the first team to the goal and thereby win eternal fame in the annals of exploration. This goal can only be achieved by one of the groups. This race will have one winner and one loser. The second goal is to return safely with all the team members. This goal is not zero-sum and both teams can win in this game against a viciously cold nature.

Amundsen won both contests. He reached the Pole on December 14, 1911, and he and all of his men returned safely to the coast and then to Norway. Scott not only arrived at the Pole after Amundsen, on January 16, 1912, but he and all of his men died of starvation and hypothermia on the long, arduous trek back. So Scott lost both times. He was beaten to the pole by Amundsen and his team, and he was beaten by the brutal weather in Antarctica. The most comprehensive account of this rivalry is probably that of Huntford (1999) who attributes Scott's failures to a series of blunders and irresponsible decisions. Scott was, according to Huntford, a vaingloriously inept figure who was more concerned about his image, reputation, and place in the panoply of British exploration than about overcoming the obstacles that he and his men faced. His tragic death and that of the four men with him was, according to Huntford, directly attributable to Scott's mistakes, oversights, judgmental flaws, and planning errors. But Susan Solomon (2001), in her wonderfully titled book, *The Coldest March*, takes a different spin on this historical disaster. Her book title refers to one of the coldest months of March in Antarctic history, and to the march of Scott and his men in their effort to reach a depot where food and fuel were available. (They died about ten miles from this depot.) Solomon's thesis is that Scott and his men were brave, well-organized, and prepared, and, but for the unusually bitter weather they encountered that required them to sit immobile in a tent for nearly a week, they would have prevailed. Had they not been so unlucky, she argues, Scott and his men would have returned home and been considered heroes. While they were not the first to pole, they had man-hauled their own provisions, whereas Amundsen's team had depended on dog teams to haul theirs, thus exhibiting the superiority of British grit and endurance.

Leadership generally implies getting results. Great leaders produce great things. But great results do not imply great leadership. Great leadership requires achievement of a social nature. Great leadership results in the outstanding performance of a social unit, be it an athletic team, an army, a political unit, or a business enterprise. We can illustrate this point with a sports example.

A leader of a sports team should take his or her team to the highest level—a championship or something close to it. If we examine the last 40 years of college basketball teams that won the NCAA tournament to claim to be the best team in the United States, we find that in only 5 years of these 40 did that championship team include the player selected by the Associated Press as the National Player of the Year. So the best player was usually not on the best team. Outstanding individual performance is not tantamount to outstanding leadership. The fastest person, the best shot, the strongest, the brightest, the most generous or the least generous, these people are not necessarily excellent leaders. They may be extraordinary, but they are not necessarily extraordinary leaders.

Leadership requires something more, something different. Many of the chapters in this book explore what these qualities might be. There are

several points to be stressed here. The first is that leadership in different contexts may require very different talents. What are the qualities required to be a top-notch general? Are they the same that are needed to lead a platoon into dangerous combat? Are they the same as those needed to be a successful college basketball coach? And are these qualities the same as those needed to be the captain of the college basketball team? We can ask about the extent to which different domains require different types of leaders. Is what we need in politics the same as what we look for in sports? For that matter, does successful leadership in football, for instance, draw on the same skills as successful leadership in baseball or soccer or basketball? Is what we need in politics the same as business or sports or warfare or exploration or science or religion. Extending this question a bit, we may ask if leadership in the United States requires different skills from leadership in China, Kenya, Chile, or France. Even more specifically are the ingredients of successful leadership in politics in China similar to those needed to excel in sports in Chile? Discussions of leadership are often more concrete and meaningful when they pertain to a rather narrow and concrete domain like American politics or German soccer than when they are abstract and general. A related issue is whether leadership processes vary at different levels of the same organization. Staying with the example of German soccer, does the head of the Bundesliga, the governing body for professional German football or soccer, face different challenges from the coach of Bayern Munich, for instance, who may be an ex-player but who plays zero minutes on the field, or from the captain of the team who is on the field and in the midst of the competition. The leadership requirements for these three different levels of organization within "German soccer" are very different.

Another issue to be highlighted here is a distinction made between two types of leadership in small groups. More than half a century ago, a distinction was made between "task specialists" and "socio-emotional specialists" (Bales, 1950). Task specialists are leaders who have particular skills at solving the problems faced by the group or organization. They are the ones who seem to "know what to do" to solve a problem or to avoid a disaster. The skills needed to be task leaders will vary as widely as the spectrum of problems that could beset the enterprise. These leaders are externally oriented in that they are focused on the challenges coming from without that endanger the group or organization.

Socio-emotional specialists, on the other hand are focused on maintaining smooth and harmonious relationships within the group or organization. Their focus is on what is happening within the unit, not on the threats from outside. Creating an internal environment that supports all the members of the group is the goal of the socio-emotional leader. Sometimes, both types of leadership are exhibited by the same person. An illustration of such a combination is given by Dean Smith (2005), the legendary retired basketball coach of the University of North Carolina. Smith's book, *The Carolina Way*, is one of the most useful books about the

psychology of leadership that has been written by one whose job was not psychology. We quote Smith to illustrate one detail of task leadership, and one detail of socio-emotional leadership. First, task leadership.

If the opponent had the ball in a tie game with the shot clock off, we weren't about to back off defensively and let it hold the ball without a problem. Instead we pressured it, tried to trap out of our double teams, tried to make it uncomfortable and force a turnover. We weren't content with letting the opponent dictate the action. That followed our philosophy of being the aggressor, not the reactor. However, at ten seconds remaining, we would back off with our defense, pay special attention to the opponent's best shooter, and hope for overtime. (p. 203)

This description of a strategy for dealing with the unhappy situation that the opponent has the advantage of having the ball as time is expiring and having the chance to either win or draw is a clear example of managing an unpleasant, unlikely but important detail of the task—how best to avoid losing the game.

Now this next passage is about Smith the socio-emotional specialist, focusing on the maintenance of team coherence and reinforcing the concept that every person associated with the team is of importance and is crucial for the team's success. In basketball, attention focuses on the shooter and the player who scores the most points. Smith asks how did the shooter get the ball to make the shot in the first place. He says he discussed this idea with legendary UCLA coach John Wooden. Wooden said that he wanted the recipient of a pass that led to a basket to thank the passer or to wink at him. Smith writes,

This was a good idea, but I wanted a stronger, more visible signal of thanks. I preferred a gesture that the fans could see. The media too. So we asked the player who scored to point to the man who gave him the pass and resulted in the basket, to show appreciation for an unselfish act that helps the team.

It was a rule in the early years as head coach: Thank the passer by pointing to him. We insisted on it in practice and games. It became contagious. Soon my assistants and I were pointing to the passer; next the substitutes on the bench picked up on it; then the fans at our home games were standing in their seats pointing to the passer. The public address announcer at our home games began saying, "Assist to Karl, basket by Jones." It went just as I hoped: a show of appreciation for the passer: applause for his unselfishness; recognition of his good play. As the seasons went by I seldom had to mention it to our players. The North Carolina tradition was set in stone. Players picked up on it automatically. If they failed to do so, I didn't hesitate to remind them. (p. 165)

Dean Smith was a basketball coach whose leadership incorporated principles of both task leadership and socio-emotional leadership. His book is a priceless analysis of leadership in college sports.

Mentioning Dean Smith to illustrate excellence in leadership leads naturally to a question that lies at the very heart of the study of leadership. Is leadership always good? It seems to be so since many schools now teach "leadership" as if they are teaching virtue or goodness. Is there such a thing as bad leadership? Some scholars think that there is (Kellerman, 2004) and that bad leadership needs to be understood as well as "good" leadership. Some scholars argue that leadership always involves a shared goal between the leader and the followers (Wills, 1994), but the goal may not always be shared by others. Most Americans do not view Adolph Hitler as a great leader, but German citizens in the 1930s and early 1940s certainly did. Who is right? Or does it make sense even to pose that question? There seem to be two positions on this issue. The first is that leadership should be judged only by the process of influencing others. Take the definition offered by Gardner (1990), for instance.

Leadership is the process of persuasion or example by which an individual (or leadership team) induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers. (p. 1)

Gardner says nothing about the quality of the goals. They may be laudable or they may be larcenous. This definition does not discriminate. It focuses on the process of leadership not on its objectives. By this standard, we may judge Hitler to have been as good a leader as Churchill or Eisenhower (except for the fact that he lost the war and they won). Hitler rallied the German people and many others to his cause and by Gardner's definition he illustrated leadership. (Notice that Gardner does not say anything about achievement.) However there are those who argue that Gardner's view of leadership is incomplete, that leadership involves inducing others to pursue admirable, moral, ethical objectives. You cannot praise the leadership skills of the men who organized the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, according to this alternative view. One form of bad leadership has to do with guiding people or leading people to do bad things. Realizing that people may differ about what is and is not moral or ethical, we may generally call leadership that guides others to commit or support immoral or unethical "unethical bad leadership."

Some leaders may simply be incompetent and that is a different category of bad leadership, "incompetent bad leadership." As we noted earlier, leaders often have task requirements that need executing and leaders are expected to know how to accomplish these tasks. But sometimes they do not. They may think that they have the skill to perform well when in fact they do not. In other circumstances the tasks may simply be too difficult for the leader to manage. In this domain we encounter the issue

of achievement again; incompetent leaders cannot achieve the goals that are expected of him or her. Incompetence, unfortunately, is rife. We see almost daily examples of executives who failed to achieve corporate goals, of military officers who simply cannot meet their objectives, of political leaders who fail to fulfill the electoral promises they make.

A particularly virulent type of bad leadership occurs when a person is both unethical and incompetent. It is sometimes claimed that two wrongs make a right, but in this case two wrongs make for a uniquely sinister and dangerous combination. The type of bad leadership that we have in mind here is the type that conceals the true objective of the leader and also conceals that inability of the leader to achieve the false objective. A superb illustration of this type of leader is the notorious Bernie Madoff, the investment guru who promised investors impossible returns on their investments while concealing his Ponzi scheme from them, his followers, and concealing his inability to create the kinds of returns he promised. He was incompetent as an investor—indeed he did no investing at all—and his goal was the immoral one of stealing from people who trusted him.

So leadership is not always “good” leadership just as accounting is not always “good” accounting and brain surgery is not always “good” brain surgery. But the goal of those who want to learn about leadership and those of us who teach about leadership is to focus on “good” leadership and the qualities and skills that create and maintain it. In this book we hope to highlight some of the core concepts that promote good leadership (and also good followership). So we turn now to the chapters in the book.

Conceptions of Leadership

We have called this book “Conceptions of Leadership” to highlight the fact that there are many concepts of leadership. We have not called the book, “*The Conceptions*” because we do not claim to be exhaustive about the ideas presented here. Go to Amazon.com and type in “Leadership Books.” (I just did this.) You will find that there are over 100,000 entries. I can promise the reader that there are not 100,000 ideas about leadership that are worth examining. There are probably fewer than 50. What we are offering is a subset of these conceptions, a subset that we think contains some of the most important ones. Some of these conceptions are enduring, they have been around for a long time (e.g., Idiosyncratic credit), and some are relatively new or emergent (e.g., Heroic leadership). We have roughly organized these conceptions into two broad and somewhat overlapping categories, “Conceptions of Leadership” and “Processes of Leadership.” The first section deals with the beliefs about, the qualities of, and the obligations of leaders. The second part of the book focuses more on the “how” of leading and some of the attendant consequences thereof. In our second chapter, Lipman-Blumen traces some historical views

about leadership. She notes how the concept has evolved from Grecian times to modern times. What is especially interesting about her chapter is the mapping of the changes in views about leadership to the changing requirements of leaders. For instance, Greek philosopher kings were not elected and they did not have to appeal to a large and diverse electorate. The American view of leadership changed to reflect the growth of American corporations and the needs of managers to understand much more than simply speech-making. Her chapter documents the point made earlier that tasks of leaders change as we move era to era, from nation to nation, and from domain to domain. Leaders of today's multinational corporations must be global to an extent never imagined by Machiavelli, for instance. Next, Bazerman highlights the obligation of modern leaders, especially of corporations, to stay aware of what is happening in the organizations they lead. Leaders must *notice* what is going on in order to stop undesirable or unethical actions done by subordinates. This surveillance becomes challenging in today's multinational corporations. How does one create a surveillance process that can alert a leader to potential problems while not violating rights to privacy? If it is the ethical duty of the CEO to shape the conduct of his or her organization, how can that be accomplished? In the last quarter of a century we have seen the failure of major corporations whose demise is directly attributable to either corrupt (immoral) or incompetent leadership.

The following two chapters both focus on individual differences in leadership qualities, but in very different ways. Simonton examines the methods that scholars use to study people, sometimes quite deceased, who have been important leaders, particularly political leaders. Suppose one wishes to study men who have been president of the United States, he asks. All but four of these men are dead. He then reviews methods that can be employed to attempt to assess the qualities of these people and illustrates one of the methods by having experts rate the characteristics of each of the past presidents. Hoyt's contribution examines the differences between men and women in leadership roles and highlights the difficulties women have in attaining such roles as a result of stereotypes about women in general, or women in masculine roles in particular. She also addresses the double burden saddling some women of being female and African American at the same time. She argues that women may be handicapped by stereotype threat, the well-established decrement in performance by members of stereotyped subgroups if they are faced with a task threatens to validate the stereotype. For instance a woman's performance on a "masculine" task, such as arithmetic computation or giving orders, may be diminished by the concern that she is expected to do less well than a comparable man.

In the first of the final two chapters in this section, Caruso, Fleming, and Spector explore recent research on the important quality of emotional intelligence in leadership. They review research indicating that standard intelligence tests fail to measure some of the essential qualities

of effective leadership, qualities such as decisiveness and self-confidence. Emotional intelligence purports to measure competencies involved in reasoning with and about emotions, competencies that are essential in leading others. Much of the chapter explores methods of assessing emotional intelligence.

In the final chapter in this section, Goethals and Allison explore the quality of "charisma," a special aura that emanates from some persons that gives them a nearly spiritual feeling. The authors illustrate this quality by discussing the "three kings" in the late twentieth-century America, Dr. Martin Luther King, Elvis Presley, and Muhammad Ali, and transporting their inferences about the qualities of these men to Abraham Lincoln. This chapter is rich in speculations about the evolutionary and psychological origins of our human vulnerability to charismatic leadership and its quasi-theological appeal.

The second section of the book deals roughly with things that leaders do to enhance their effectiveness. This is not to say that they intentionally manipulate followers, although they may, but to adduce activities that leaders perform that help enhance the adherence of followers. In the first of these chapters, Kramer and Elsbach feature the central role of the crucial but elusive concept of trust. Without trust, either in the benevolence or competence (or both) of the leader, followers have little incentive to be loyal. Creating trust therefore is an essential task for a leader. The creation and maintenance of trust is accomplished to some degree by the types of stories or narratives that circulate, formally or informally, about the leaders. And it is this aspect of leading that McAdams explores in his chapter. We all create narrative life stories, McAdams argues, but those of leaders have some special qualities. He illustrates his position by reference to Barack Obama and George W. Bush, two recent presidents of the United States. Despite their stark political differences, he argues, there are notable similarities in their life stories; they are both stories of redemption. Allison and Goethals, in the next chapter, stress the central role of narratives in leadership. They introduce the concept of the heroic leadership dynamic to refer to the processes by means of which stories of heroes and leaders inspire and inform people. People are informed about appropriate modes of action and about deeper truths about human existence. They are inspired to reach for goals that may seem unreachable, like immortality. Stories of heroic accomplishment seem to be present in all human societies and may be considered to satisfy a fundamental need in human growth.

The final three chapters deal with the process of influence, broadly speaking, a topic of central concern to social psychologists. Forsyth presents a thorough review of research on the processes through which people influence each other. One of the important points he makes in this chapter is that various influence strategies have differing depths of impact, which is to say some modes of influence yield mere compliance while others produce true internalization. In other words, not all followership

is the same. Some is deep and some is shallow. Hollander's chapter echoes this theme while spotlighting the role of followers in allowing leaders latitude in action, a phenomenon he labels, "idiosyncrasy credit." Hollander emphasizes the dual nature of influence in leader-follower relationships; leaders certainly influence followers but followers also have an impact on their leaders in terms of the expectations that the leaders must meet to maintain the position of leadership. Influence is a two-way street, Hollander reminds us, not one-way as some authors tend to imply.

The final chapter in the book examines the use and misuse of power—one form of influence—by leaders and asks the question, "Why do leaders sometimes behave in ways that are predictably counter to their own interests?" Kramer explores the processes that might support and promote such self-defeating behavior and provides insights into traps that leaders might fall into in their efforts to be successful. His chapter might be thought of as a psychological analysis of the types of actions that the brilliant historian Tuchman (1984) chronicled. Kramer asks how such disasters could have happened and shows that it is actually not that difficult.

This book does not pretend to say everything important that there is to say about leadership. But what it does say about leadership is important and useful in understanding and promoting good leadership.

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