Connections From The Director

The demographic make-up of the United States is changing rapidly as we move toward the millennium. We live in a global village rich in cultural diversity. This shift is mirrored in our labor force, schools, religious organizations, government, and in our neighborhoods. Managers and leaders across all labor sectors look much differently than those portrayed in photographs and television footage twenty years ago.

"Already 1 American in 4 defines himself or herself as Hispanic or nonwhite. By 2056, when someone born today will be 66 years old, the 'average' U.S. resident, as defined by Census statistics, will trace his or her descent to Africa, Asia, the Hispanic world, Arabia—almost anywhere but white Europe." (Time Magazine, 1990).

The proverbial question is what, if any, implications does this have on leadership in groups, organizations, or communities? There are no easy answers to this question. Unfortunately, little research has been conducted specifically on cultural influences on leadership. Those who believe that cultural diversity does not impact leadership dynamics and interactions are asking for hard facts and evidence to prove their position. Believers in the premise that culture influences the way individuals lead and express themselves base their argument on the cultural differences in communication and values. Despite these arguments, a critical task exists for leadership scholars to pursue a research agenda in this area. Higher education, with its many resources, is in an excellent position to provide some answers to this question.

There is a tendency for us to pursue the perfect model into which the mosaic of cultural diversity in leadership will fit so that we may get on with the business of training and developing leaders. It is too difficult, if not impossible, to endorse a particular archetype of a leader who will be effective in today's pluralistic society. Perhaps the best direction is to allow and to encourage people to develop leadership styles that coincide with their own cultural profiles, if indeed our lens enables us to see the global village around us.

Nance Lucas, Director
National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs

ASSOCIATION OF FRATERNITY ADVISORS JOINS NCLP

In a recent Executive Board meeting, the Association of Fraternity Advisors (AFA) voted to join and endorse the National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs. In so doing, AFA supported the work of the NCLP and affirmed the benefits to their members and to fraternity and sorority chapters.

Welcome AFA!
Cultural Influence on Leadership
"It All Depends on How You Look at It"

By Harold E. Cheatham

Introductory Comments

Once I realized how dated my knowledge of leadership concepts and language was, the invitation to offer these reflections was too much to resist. The challenge was to write informatively about the confluence of my passion-multiculturalism-with leadership training. Like any decent student, I turned to colleagues, who are up-to-date on leadership theory and practice, for some insights and a crash course on the latest literature. That strategy led me to some more recent tomes and their full circle back to my older collection. What I discovered is that the tried and true concepts yet are touted by the leadership gurus. Among the gems is the conclusion that leaders are made rather than born and, moreover, that those who pass the leader litmus test are more self-made than they are made by others or by the immediate situation. A pervasive theme in this literature is that there are enduring societal values and virtues and that those who are or would be leaders are the embodiment of those values and virtues. That is, leaders are honest, inspiring, competent, intelligent, forward looking, fair minded... attributes that taken together comprise what is referred to as credibility (Kouzes & Posner, 1990).

Warren Bennis (1990) offers a rather somber social commentary, the central theme of which is announced in its title: Why leaders can’t lead and then amplified in the subtitle” The unconscious conspiracy continues. He reiterates his earlier contention that American organizations are “underled and over-managed.” Exemplary observations offered to support Bennis’ contention of our national undoing include: “Government has ranged from small and informal to big and effective to big and dumb, blinded now by its own red tape, functioning more of, by and for itself than for us” (p.25), and “Our machines have multiplied and subdued us...” “Our children have the bodies of middle-aged people. Computers run our airlines and trains and phones, which may be why none of them run on time or very efficiently” (p.25). Bennis’ commentary is laced with truisms and such terms as “bereft,” “bereaved,” “adrift,” “grief,” and with such images as “the thinking man’s Rambo,” “corporate honchos,” and “McHeroes.” Eventually Bennis advances the incontrovertible truth that much (all?) that is bad in America has been visited upon us by those lacking in virtue which is the prerequisite to true leadership. The recognizable great leaders of days gone and the “country’s last true national leaders” are identified by name. And so are those Bennis finds to be “Hollow men in a hollow era” (p.60). In the postscript he notes that national recovery lies, in part, in: “remaining open redefinitions... and admitting of a future that is unlike the past.”

"Among the gems is the conclusion that leaders are made rather than born and, moreover, that those who pass the leader litmus test are more self-made than they are made by others or by the immediate situation."

NCLP STAFF:
Nance Lucas
Director
Susan R. Jones
Coordinator & Newsletter Editor
Dr. Susan Komives
Scholarship & Research Editor

Recycle Symbol
This newsletter is printed on recycled paper.
static or of no particular importance. This ought to materialize as a weighty proposition for those involved in leadership training in a diverse, multicultural society.

Cultural Influences

Above I have intended less to provide book reviews than to identify in descriptive terms the base for a paradigm shift in leadership training. Although there is an occasional citation of characteristics generally ascribed to women and ethnic minority culture (e.g., inclusiveness, collaboration, complementarity, reciprocity) the reviewed literature makes no apparent nor specific accommodations to either gender or cultural influences on leader values or behavior.

An abundant and growing literature exists that suggests that conventional paradigms overlook participants' world views and how these affect their behaviors and interactions (cf., Cheatham, 1991; Ibrahim, 1985). One's world view is comprised of one's societal and sociohistorical experiences. Hence how one knows and how one acts on that knowledge does not necessarily conform to a conventional list of principles. Cultural differences are important sources of discrepant perceptions, beliefs, and actions. An abundant literature establishes that people differ by culture in the salient behavioral characteristics and values that they embrace.

Not all cultures nor their individual members subscribe to the values of the dominant or Eurocentric culture on which many extant models are based. Important differences have been chronicled regarding groups' value orientation toward human nature (good/bad/immutable), human relationships (relational/complementary/hierarchical), relationship to nature (coexistence/subjugation), time (past/present/future) and activity (being/doing/being-in-becoming) (cf., Ibrahim, 1985). Lack of understanding of or appreciation for these differences can but produce leaders who are deficient in the attitudes, knowledge, and skills that are required for effective functioning in a multicultural, multi-ethnic society. Transformational leaders must comprehend the diversity of human experience. No single leadership style will well serve leaders in the twenty-first century.

A Paradigm Shift

Leadership literature, theory, practice, and research appears to be essentially monocultural or "culturaliy encapsulated" as was charged of counseling, psychotherapy, and related helping professions prior to review and revisions of the past two decades. Yet many leadership concepts incorporate or are susceptible to multiculturalism. For example, if one accepts the propositions that leadership development is self development, and that self development is based upon a set of personal convictions it seems to inhere that leadership is culturally based.

Leadership training programs have a professional and ethical responsibility to train leaders with competence to lead across cultures. What seems to be missing is a systematic and coherent conceptualization of the role of culture in leadership training and development.

What seems to be missing is a systematic and coherent conceptualization of the role of culture in leadership training and development. In effecting the paradigm shift, a multicultural or culturally based theory of leadership might be built observing the base of considerable progress registered in counseling, psychology, and the related helping professions.

An Afterword

Ironically, as I plunge toward the press deadline, today's headlines and news analyses report the findings of the commission charged to investigate the August 1991 Crown Heights (New York) community clash between indigenous Hasidic Jews and African Americans. David Dinkins, the city's first African American mayor, has been roundly excoriated for failure to exercise decisive and timely leadership (i.e., immediately send in police battalions to put down the disturbance). Dinkins, reputedly hopeful for re-election, acquiesced to the commission's findings, promised that due to newly instituted police reforms such an event "will never happen again", and took full responsibility for failing to lead. Thoughtfully considering his own sociocultural experience with the ethnic and religious dynamics as well as his perception of the probable response to an immediate police presence, at least one person, an African American minister from the affected community, raised his voice to intone that
in the matter of whether or not the mayor had exercised timely leadership: "it all depends on how you look at it."

References


Dr. Harold Cheatham is Professor of Education and Head of the Department of Counseling and Rehabilitation Education at Penn State University, University Park, Pennsylvania.

A CALL FOR CLEARINGHOUSE MATERIALS!

We invite you to submit leadership program materials (brochures, pamphlets, course syllabi, etc.) to the clearinghouse. Your materials will be categorized in the clearinghouse according to program type (retreats, emerging leaders, academic courses, community service, etc.) and shared with NCLP members who request information about specific programs.

Our goal is to include as much information as possible in the clearinghouse so we can be effective in our mission to provide quality services and a wealth of information to our colleagues. Ideally, we would like to have information on every higher education leadership program! The materials you send us will serve as the foundation for a network among leadership educators from all over the country and internationally.

Be watching for a NCLP program survey in your mailbox this fall. Information from returned surveys will enlarge NCLP's leadership program database. Members of NCLP, upon request, will have access to this information.

Please send your leadership materials to:

National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs
University of Maryland at College Park
1135 Stamp Student Union
College Park, MD 20472-4631

WHOOPS — (sorry)!

In our last issue we incorrectly spelled Roger Nozaki's name.

He is the Director of Campus Compact and his correct telephone number is 401-863-1119.
Program Spotlight

Diversity on Campus: A Pledge and A Plan

Southern Methodist University

by Craig Slack

Historically, much of the emphasis on improving race relations on college campuses has focused on providing programs and services that help ethnic minorities adjust to the institution. As student development educators, it is incumbent upon us to help white students develop a community and world perspective by gaining a better understanding of the cultural milieu that now exists. A. Kenneth Pye, President of Southern Methodist University (SMU), set the tone in 1989 for the campus community in his inaugural university report stating, "The times demand the best thinking of broadly educated individuals whose perspectives must be global, whose expertise must cross the artificial barriers of discipline, and whose cultural understanding must reflect the new diversity of demographics" (p.11). The SMU Student Affairs Intercultural Development Model was broadened in 1989 from its original focus of support and retention efforts for the minority students on the campus to include a new directive. This directive is guiding the Division in assisting white students in altering their attitudes, behaviors, and appreciation of ethnic minorities on the campus and in the larger community.

In the context of the SMU developmental model, programs are designed in a manner that focus on cognitive and affective dimensions, bringing out desired sensitivities and behavioral changes. Programs within the model must have clear objectives and meaningful measures. Program planners go beyond satisfaction surveys ("Did you like this program"), carefully measuring learning and specific outcomes. The SMU model is grounded within the theoretical framework of David S. Hoopes Intercultural Learning Process, a stage theory of student development. The learning process is based on an individual's progression through seven stages of multicultural development.

The stages include:
1. Ethnocentrism;
2. Awareness;
3. Understanding;
4. Acceptance/respect (tolerance);
5. Appreciating/valuing;
6. Selective adoption; and
7. Multiculturalism.

The Department of Intercultural Education and Minority Student Affairs created an Intercultural Education Plan (IEP) to be used as an appraisal process. The Student Activity Center staff adapted the IEP for use with leaders of student organizations on campus. John Lepp (1987) suggests when students are challenged by conflict and disagreement to understand cultural differences, "the campus activities educator can assist students by making them aware and helping them understand the cultural basis of the disagreement." The appraisal process provides the activity staff with an opportunity to impact student leaders' and/or organization members' attitudes and beliefs through intercultural learning, as they engaged in the IEP assessments. The appraisal provides students with a developmental framework that presents them with challenges which demand responses in the form of the identification and assessment of "intercultural deterrents" (barriers to full ethnic minority group participation and position intergroup relations) and the creation of "elimination strategies" (goals and strategies to facilitate corrective actions). Student leaders analyze their organization in respect to three content areas:

ENVIRONMENT — tangible objects and physical locations which reflect a desire to create a culturally diverse community, supports the inclusion of diverse people and encourages multicultural interaction. Example: posters and decorations in group's offices or space that depict a wide range of cultures.

ATMOSPHERE — Actions intended to create or suggest a particular mood of acceptance and support for cultural and ethnic diversity. Example: publicizing and encouraging organization members to attend cultural events outside of their own programs.

STRUCTURE — systems, like the Constitution, By-Laws, policies, procedures, training and programs that focus on positive intercultural relations, and the recruitment/retention of minority students as members and leaders in the group. Example: the wording of the Constitution, By-Laws and all public relations/promotional materials will reflect inclusive language. Specific strategies will be developed to

"The times demand the best thinking of broadly educated individuals whose perspective must be global, whose expertise must cross the artificial barriers of discipline, and whose cultural understanding must reflect the new diversity of demographics."
recruit applications from minority populations.

This comprehensive approach of examining organizational structure, atmosphere, and environment is a systematic way of engaging student leaders, white and non white toward a personal and organizational multicultural perspective. The formulation of the IEP by student, student leaders, and student organizations at SMU has provided the foundation for difference to be expressed.

The IEP provides a platform for the creation of a wealth of multicultural programming on the campus. Some examples are:

**SMU Intercultural Council (SMUIC)** — In 1990 SMUIC was established by the SMU Student Senate as one outcome of their IEP. The Council is made up of student representatives from many chartered student organizations with the purpose of opening lines of communication within the organization system in relation to the issue of difference. The Council serves as a resource to the organization system, a think tank and problem solving group, as well as programmers.

**Standing Intercultural Committees** — Many student organizations, such as Program Council, Student Senate, Greek Council and Student Foundation, have established standing intercultural committees, guiding the development and implementation of IEP’s for each of the groups.

**Panhellic Intercultural Program Assistants** — The PIPA program was designed to assist sorority chapters in their efforts to diversify their membership. The program focuses on all aspects of a Greek member’s life in an effort to increase the cultural diversity, sensitivity, and awareness within the Greek system. There is a committee made up of representatives of each of the chapters charged with the task of providing training, disseminating information, and serving as a resource while working towards accomplishment of the IEP.

There are many cultural celebrations and campus-wide educational programs sponsored annually. The campus community celebrates Intercultural Awareness Week, Diez y Seis de Septiembre, Black Emphasis Month, Chinese New Year, International Week and Variety Show, Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration, Native American Heritage Month, Cinco De Mayo, Juneteenth Celebration, HARAM-BEE along with Hispanic Issues forum and the Intercultural Student Leaders Conference and the Intercultural Summit for representatives of all student organizations.

Through the design and use of the Intercultural Education Plan (IEP) there has been a wave of cooperation on the campus being led by students, through activities and programs, and creating a campus community which not only tolerates but appreciates, values, and celebrates cultural diversity.

Craig Slack is the Coordinator of Student Organizations at Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas.

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**Upcoming Leadership Happenings**

**September 11-13**
“Dangerous Ideas: Expanding the Limits of Leadership”  
Tulsa, OK  
1993 Annual Leadership Conference  
National Association for Community Leadership  
317-637-7408

**October 15-16**
International Conference on Servant-Leadership  
Indianapolis, IN  
Keynotes by M. Scott Peck and Max DePree  
The Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership  
317-925-2677

**Mark Your Calendar Now for:**

**June 2-4, 1994**
Tenth National Conference for College Women Student Leaders  
Sponsored by the National Association for Women in Education  
George Washington University, Washington, D.C.  
202-659-9330 (more details to follow)
Leadership Training Concepts & Techniques

Leadership Experiences of Students of Color: Implications From a Student Leadership Research Project

By Kevin Kruger and Sandra Carter

The past fifteen years have seen a significant increase in leadership development/education initiatives in higher education. Concurrent with this increased emphasis on leadership development has been an emphasis on diversity and how to meet the needs of students who are not White males (Smith, 1989). While these two issues have simultaneously received increased attention, the intersection of leadership development with an increasingly diverse student population has only begun to be researched.

Earlier examination of leadership development models with women found that many of the theories used in leadership education may not be as valid for women (Rosener 1990, Helgesen, 1990). This would suggest that similar problems may exist for members of different racial groups. However, the literature regarding the applicability of current leadership models for students of color is limited. In light of the lack of research in this area, a qualitative research study was conducted at a public, research institution to investigate the leadership experiences of students of color and to determine whether they deviated from experiences upon which traditional leadership models are built. The study attempted to answer the following questions:

1) How do students of color describe their leadership experiences?
2) Are the leadership experiences of students of color different in predominately White groups than in their same race organizations?
3) How do students of color conceptualize organizational dynamics, such as communication and conflict?

Sample

The sample consisted of 21 undergraduate students. The participants were identified by the researchers as experienced leaders who had held more than one leadership role. Sixteen of the students were African American, four Asian American, and one Hispanic.

Results and Discussion

Themes emerged in three key areas:

a) Communication styles;
b) Leadership styles; and
c) Organizational structure and dynamics.

In the area of communication styles, assertiveness emerged as a major theme. This was particularly true of the African American students. The emphasis on assertiveness led to more open and direct communication in their organizational meetings. However, the students also indicated that they felt compelled to alter their style of communicating and dealing with conflict when they were involved in predominately White groups. "When I'm in White groups, I have to tone down my style because they think I'm angry if I'm direct like I am in my Black groups. They seem intimidated so I try not to be as direct," shared one student. The focus on assertiveness and altering their communication styles in predominately White groups is supported in part by Steward, Jackson, and Jackson (1990). They found that successful Black students used different interaction styles in predominately White groups than when in predominately Black ones. In this study the students found that by altering their communication style in White groups the White students were less intimidated. Sue and Sue (1990) state "Black styles of communication are often high-keyed, animated, heated, interpersonal, and confrontational" (p. 64). Many of the African American students, with an awareness of this, indicated that they sometimes knowingly used their more direct style to ensure being heard in predominately White groups.

A strong theme in the area of leadership styles was the participants' focus on delegation. The students described a style of delegation involving not only delegating tasks, but also delegating authority and responsibility. The students also spoke of the value of input, communication, and involvement from the group members.

In the third area, organizational structure and dynamics, it was found that the distinctions among official roles (president, vice-president, etc.) were often seamless or blurred. Everyone seemed involved in all aspects of the running of the organization. "We are like a big family, working together, getting things done," shared one student. Another key theme centered around the manner in which meetings were run. The participants described their meetings as more relaxed and less controlled by traditional meeting rules (i.e., Robert's Rules of Order). Communication occurred in a less formal way and business was conducted in a more fluid manner.
This fluidity allowed the leaders to attend to the social and emotional needs of the group members as well as to attend to formal business.

The findings regarding leadership styles and organizational structure may be tied to developmental issues. McEwen, Roper, and Langa (1990) identified “Fulfilling Affiliation Needs” as a key developmental issue for African American students. On a predominately White campus, one of the main ways of fulfilling this need for Black students is through participation in Black organizations. Students may choose to use more inclusive styles of leadership to encourage as many students as possible to get involved. This might also explain why the students in this study described their meetings as attending to social and emotional needs of the members as well as attending to business. The goals of these organizations and their leaders appear to be broader than the goals traditionally addressed by leadership development programs.

Implications

The findings of this study indicate that many of our traditional leadership development programs may be contradicting the way students of color describe their leadership styles. The students in this study consistently spoke of leadership techniques and organizational dynamics that favor characteristics of transformational leadership theories. This suggests a need to incorporate more of the emerging theories into our leadership programs.

The traditional theories of conflict management, power and meeting management offered in many leadership programs may be communicating a valued or preferred style of leadership that contradicts the styles discussed by these students. Leadership educators may need to broaden their theory base in these areas when working with students of color. In particular, educators need to work with all students to help them understand and accept different styles of communicating and dealing with conflict.

This study opens the door to future research on the leadership experiences of students of color. Further study is needed to determine to what extent these themes vary in the various racial/ethnic groups and how these differences can be taught and validated in our leadership development programs.

References


Dr. Kevin Kruger is Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs at the University of Maryland Baltimore County.

Sandra Carter is a Doctoral Candidate at the University of Maryland at College Park.

Thanks & Farewell!

Donna Swartwout, Coordinator of NCLP since its inception and the first editor of Concepts and Connections, has moved on to Colgate University where she is the Director of Residential Life. The Clearinghouse has benefitted through Donna’s dedication to NCLP’s mission. We wish her well and know she will bring NCLP new members from the great Northeast! Good luck to Donna!

Joining the Clearinghouse staff as the new coordinator is Susan R. Jones. Susan is currently a doctoral student in the College Student Personnel Program at the University of Maryland. Last year she worked in the Office of Campus Programs developing and teaching a course on Leadership and Community Service. Prior to coming to the University, Susan was Dean of Students at Trinity College of Vermont.
NCLP Proudly Announces the Availability of Its LEADERSHIP SCHOLAR PAPERS

The National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs strives to bring the best leadership education strategies, resources, and thinking to leadership educators in higher education.

A new service of NCLP is the publication of low-cost, timely series of leadership papers.

Leadership Papers are available for purchase by contacting NCLP. The cost is $5.00 for NCLP members and $8.00 for nonmembers.

The following papers are available for purchase:

leadership Paper #1:
"Diverse Voices of Leadership: Different Rhythms and Emerging Harmonies"
by Dr. Kathleen E. Allen,
Vice President of Student Development,
College of St. Benedict

leadership Paper #2:
"African Men at Risk"
bY Bernard Franklin,
Assistant Dean of Student Life
Kansas State University

leadership Paper #3:
"Teaching, Educating, and Developing Men: The Missing Piece in Student Development Education in Colleges and Universities"
by Bernard Franklin,
Assistant Dean of Student Life
Kansas State University

leadership Paper #4:
"Leadership Assessments: A Critique of Common Instruments"
bY Nancy Snyder-Nepo
University of Maryland at College Park
and
Susan R. Komives
University of Maryland at College Park

An order form for the Leadership Scholar Papers is on the back of this page.
Please indicate on the form below which leadership scholar series you wish to purchase and in what quantity. The cost of each leadership paper is $5.00 for NCLP members and $8.00 for non-members. Please send the completed form and a check payable to the University of Maryland, 1135 Stamp Student Union, University of Maryland at College Park, College Park, MD 20742.

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The Leadership Bookshelf

Reviewed by Davon L. Williams

The New Leaders: Guidelines on Leadership Diversity in America

The importance of creating diverse organizations cannot be understated. The New Leaders comes at an important time when individuals are looking for guidelines to wrestle with the task of creating a diverse work environment. The research Morrison and her research team conducted on the experience of white women in corporate America in Breaking the Glass Ceiling was continued by investigating the practices of sixteen U.S. based public and private organizations, recognized for their efforts to encourage the advancement of white women and people of color. The research team interviewed managers within the organizations: both men and women of diverse race/ethnicity to gain their perspectives of their organizations' movement toward creating a diverse work environment. The recommendations of the book are based on the successes and failures of these efforts.

The New Leaders allows the reader to look inside these organizational cultures through the eyes of its management. Two of the sixteen organizations are educational in nature. The book provides scenarios that may be familiar to some and enlightening to others. It presents a realistic view of the process of creating a diverse leadership. While acknowledging the difficulty of the task, the author does not let institutions off the hook in their responsibility of creating such a leadership. Although the title focuses on the advancement of leadership, The New Leaders is also about creating an environment that supports these nontraditional managers.

Part One of The New Leaders sets the tone by describing the benefits of "taking on the diversity effort", discussing the "scope and severity of the problems that currently exist in organizations", and introducing a model that links the major advancement barriers to key factors in leadership development. Part Two familiarizes the reader with diversity practices, accountability, development, and recruitment that promote leadership diversity through a threefold diversity strategy: education, enforcement, and exposure. Part Three presents the five-part action plan:

1) Discover (and rediscover) diversity problems in the organization;
2) Strengthen top-management commitment;
3) Choose practices that fit a balanced strategy;
4) Demand results; and
5) Use building blocks to continue progress.

The action plan to develop diversity in an organization is a composite of "what the organizations did right, sometimes the second time around".

Reading The New Leaders affirms for me the fact that indeed there are barriers that exist, even within organizations considered to be doing well. While this is not encouraging, it is reassuring to know that the experiences had been documented in a tangible way so that even a traditional manager might understand. Discussion of the diversity practices gives me tips on how to work within my organization to develop my potential for advancement.

The principles suggested in The New Leaders can be applied to the development of student and professional leaders. I was challenged to think about the type of environments I have created. Has good intention translated into effective practice? What challenge, support, and recognition has been provided to individuals for their work in creating diversity in the environment? Do the diversity practices of accountability, development, and recruitment exist within the structure? Particularly as it relates to student leadership, does an environment exist that supports the participation of nontraditional
leaders in all facets of student organizations, not just those that relate to their issues? Students should feel the environment is open to their involvement. They should be shown in tangible ways that their participation is valued and expected. As a student developer, am I providing the training and development for nontraditional leaders? Will my students understand the necessary procedures to develop their careers and actively participate in society? Will they be leaders who are able to create and manage diverse work environments?

The New Leaders contributes to the literature on diversity. It discusses the realities of the nontraditional leadership development process and presents a model for action. And, if the reader permits it to do so, the book challenges us to ask what we have contributed to the development of these leaders.

Dawn L. Williams is a Senior Research Associate and Doctoral Candidate at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, New York.

Editor's Note: As a function of the National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs, we will profile other leadership centers and activities across the country. The profile on The Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership is a follow-up to the Concepts & Connections issue focusing on community service and leadership.

The Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership

By Larry Spears, Executive Director

Who is the Servant-Leader? “The servant-leader is servant first... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead... The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant — first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or at least, not be further deprived?”

from The Servant as Leader

Robert K. Greenleaf

With that description, Robert K. Greenleaf coined the term servant-leadership, and then went on to spend nearly two decades in active exploration of the meaning and application of this seminal leadership concept through a dozen books and essays. In so doing, he launched a quiet revolution which is increasingly not-so-quiet. Indeed, servant-leadership is beginning to impact some of our deeply-embedded notions concerning what it means to both lead and follow others.

Servant-leadership is gaining influence as an institutional philosophy and model in both for-profit and non-profit organizations; its use as the theoretical and ethical basis for trustee education; its use in the training and educational programs of community leadership organizations; and its application, in conjunction with experiential education programs, in what has come to be called “service-learning.”

A number of leadership and management education courses at colleges and universities now include Greenleaf’s books or essays as required readings. In addition, several college courses have been developed specifically on servant-leadership. Finally, servant-leadership has been embraced by a number of people who are involved in personal transformation movements, including both men’s and women’s groups, and in Jungian psychology. The Greenleaf Center continues to gather information on these and other applications of the servant-leader model, and to make them more widely known.

The Center’s mission is to fundamentally improve the caring and quality of all institutions through a new approach to leadership, structure, and decision-making. Servant-leadership emphasizes increased service to others; a holistic approach to work; promoting a sense on community; and the sharing of power in decision-making. The Center has an expanding range of programmatic offerings, including: the worldwide distribution of some sixty books, essays, and videotapes on servant-leadership; a one-day introductory workshop program which has been funded by an initial three year grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation; a Speaker’s Bureau; Reading-and-Discussions Groups; a scholarly research program called the Greenleaf Archives Project; consultation, education, and training opportunities for institutions wishing to implement servant-leadership; and, an annual International Conference on Servant-Leadership. It has also recently become a membership organization. In essence, the Greenleaf Center exists to sow the seeds of servant-leadership worldwide.

The Greenleaf Center invites you to consider attending Leadership Synergy: The 1993 International Conference on Servant-Leadership. This annual conference, which will be held in Indianapolis on October 15-16 will feature keynote addresses by two Greenleaf Center members, M. Scott Peck (author of The Road Less Travelled and A World Waiting To Be Born) and Max DePree (author of Leadership is an Art and Leadership Jazz).

For a conference brochure, or for more information on servant-leadership, contact:

The Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership, 1100 W. 42nd St., Suite 321, Indianapolis, IN 46208. (317) 925-2677 (phone); (317) 925-0466 (Fax).
Scholarships & Research Updates

Cultural Influences and Pluralistic Leadership
By Susan R. Kontides

Two themes emerge in reviewing scholarship and research on leadership and cultural influences (and diversity influences in general). One theme reflects an interest in the development of leadership in people who represent diversity by gender, race, ethnicity, and other salient characteristics so they might become empowered to engage in effective leadership. The second theme revolves around anyone being an effective pluralistic leader able to develop and lead diversity in organizations and in the workplace. The former theme leads to educational interventions for target populations requiring a genuine understanding of leadership assumptions from within that culture and relevant context and not the more dangerous application of traditional leadership assumptions which may create dissonance. The latter approach leads to knowledge, awareness, and skill development of all including traditional leaders who now lead units with more diversity. This approach increasingly includes an understanding of white racial identity as a filter for viewing specific racial identity of people of color. Most published work addressing either theme is currently narrative or theoretical. Applications are made from racial identity development theories and various writings on cultural competence. There is little research to guide practice in direct applications to leadership among college students.

The 1990 Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership (Free Press) contains an extensive compilation of leadership relating to diverse groups including a 22-page chapter on "Leadership, Blacks, Hispanics, and Other Minorities" and a 45-page chapter on "Leadership in Different Countries and Cultures". Bass observes that Black leaders are the subjects of most of the published research with substantially less attention to Hispanic leaders and Jewish American leaders. Research on Asian Americans and Native Americans is so sparse he could make only brief comments. Even the research on Black leaders and Black followers is dated (most studies generated in the Civil Right's context of the 1960's and 1970's) which could be arguably problematic in application a quarter of a century later. I recommend readers study these chapters despite the dated findings to serve as a basis for what is known and what is needed. Certainly, with global awareness and global education being a cornerstone of many campus mission statements, students need an understanding of leadership from a multi-national perspective. Bass' chapter on leadership studies is a good beginning.

Thomas Gordon and Marilyn Loden sought to identify specific dimensions of pluralistic leadership. Their 1989 qualitative interviews with over 200 workers led to survey research of another 450 employees. They identified six dimensions which seem important to leadership of diverse peoples in organizations. These dimensions are (1) "Vision and values that recognize and support diversity within the organization", (2) "Ethical commitment to fairness and elimination of all types of workplace discrimination", (3) "Breadth knowledge and awareness regarding the primary and secondary dimensions of diversity and multicultural issues", (4) "Openness to change based on diverse input and feedback about personal filters and blind spots", (5) "Mentor and empower diverse employees", and (6) "Ongoing catalyst and model for individual and organizational change" (from Loden & Rosener, Workforce America, 1991, p. 182-183).


The sparse research which exists studying any leadership phenomena using ethnic or cultural diversity lenses sadly often uses traditional paradigms instead of honoring multiple realities. Readers should critique any theory or research they read by examining what paradigm (lenses, filters, and assumptions) framed the study. There are some promising places to start your reading such as the Western Journal of Black Studies. Often books exploring gender differences in leadership or books on women in leadership include chapters on women and diversity (for example, see Marva Hughes' chapter on "Developing Leadership Potential for Minority Women" in Mary Ann Sagaria's 1988 Empowering Women: Leadership Development Strategies on Campus from Jossey-Bass). The Wellesley College Center for Research on Women has a number of papers focusing on women and diversity regarding leadership (for example, the 1982 paper by Patricia Bell Scott on Black women's leadership training.)
Resident Life educators Karen Roth (UC Davis) and Tim McMahon (University of Iowa) have done a series of programs at the American College Personnel Association conventions in which they review a wealth of research and scholarly writings to apply related theory to the study of leadership (e.g., community and leadership). Their 1991 paper noting numerous diversity applications "Cultural Competence: Leadership Through Awareness, Knowledge, and Action" is a good primer.

Two recent unpublished leadership research projects of college students have focused on diverse students. An ongoing inter-institutional qualitative research project at the University of Maryland Baltimore County and the University of Maryland at College Park has identified several leadership themes among students of color (i.e., predominantly African American, Asian American, and Hispanic students). They found clear messages in such arenas as how these students identify themselves as leaders, their ease in identifying campus and community based role models, the conflicts they experience between their cultural background and the reality of their organizations and college practices, their perception of gender differences in leadership, and their experiences in mono-cultural organizations different from predominantly white or mixed race groups. Dr. Kevin Kruger and Sandra Carter at UMBC are the primary researchers (301-455-2393).

Dr. Greer Dawson Wilson and Josh Powers at the University of Virginia have recently used the student version of the Leadership Practices Inventory to study their Black and White student leaders. They have a large number of women in their study and found different leadership practices in the area of vision and modeling the way. This research will be presented at the regional ACU-I this fall. A follow-up this year will include colleagues of these leaders. Write me if you know of other research projects on pluralistic leadership in process.

When researching the cultural dimensions of leadership, be sure to review both the process and content of your design. If the researcher is different from those being studied (surveyed, interviewed, or observed) insure the credibility of your processes and interpretation of findings with colleagues from those groups to minimize bias of your own lenses: Do you really know what your findings mean within that context? Examine if a leader-centric assumption is valid for the group/individuals being studied, or if the individuals need to be approached as members committed to accomplishing group goals: Is the appropriate frame the individual or the group? Explore ethical issues in research carefully before engaging in these studies. Is there any perceived risk to candor by groups who might feel marginalized or threatened by the campus environment? Even with the sacrifice of randomness, start a data base by studying convenience samples of every diverse group receiving leadership education on your campus to understand within and between group leadership practices. Several leadership assessment instruments may be appropriate as teaching/research tools such as the student version of the Leadership Practices Inventory (See the Nancy Snyder-Nepo paper on assessment instruments available from NCLP). Trainers and researchers are cautioned to review any assessment instrument for sex bias and cultural bias which can send a negative message to your student participants and provide invalid findings for some groups.

On another note: Barry Posner has developed an individual contributor version of the LPI. This instrument assesses the practices of group members and holds good promise for student leadership development to diagnose/assess individuals and groups to plan training interventions using the same five practices of the original LPI. Contact Barry Posner at the Leavy School of Business and Management, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA 95053 for information on the student version of the LPI. As usual, I am eager to hear from you to share research you are conducting or have discovered!

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