

Leadership without Domination? Toward Restoring the Human and Natural World

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Abstract: The author constructs a theory of sustainable leadership in contrast to exploitive leadership and argues that all leadership in the modern world falls somewhere on a continuum between these two extremes. The definitions developed for sustainable and exploitive leadership hinge upon the purposes toward which leadership is applied. The concept of sustainable leadership is further defined by exploring its authentic, inclusive, and developmental applications within society. The author concludes that sustainable leadership serves an integrative role of applying human agency toward creating/restoring the health of the human/natural world and that, therefore, the concept of sustainable leadership is highly relevant to both sustainability educators and society at large.

Keywords: leadership; critical pedagogy; critical theory; transformative pedagogy; social justice; sustainable social change.

The Crisis of Leadership in the Modern World

Modern Western consciousness abstracts humans from nature. This divide is not only a division into two, it is a tiered dualism: humans on top, nature acting in all supporting roles (as tool, as resource, as setting). The subjugated “other,” first conceptualized as nature itself, is born with this divide. And there have been many “others” as systems of hierarchy have proliferated to encompass gender, “races,” non-Western cultures, and more. Cultural systems of hierarchy in Western societies and the projection of a hierarchical worldview upon nature itself can be considered among the keystone concepts upholding the house of cards that is the unsustainable, globalized, industrial world.

Given the formative role of hierarchy in shaping unsustainable and destructive modern patterns of “development,” the concept of leadership itself is often confounded with hierarchy. Given this history, the idea of leadership for sustainability raises suspicion: can modern societies employ leadership in service to sustainability? Or are Western concepts and practices of leadership themselves so infused with notions of hierarchy that they remain irreconcilable with (re)creating¹ sustainable societies? These are crucial questions for sustainability educators and

¹ I place “re” in parentheses here and in other places throughout this essay in recognition that relatively nonhierarchical, place-based cultures and remnants of these cultures remain in diverse places globally. For members of these cultures, the “re” in phrases such as “re-create sustainable leadership” may not apply. The parenthetical “re” also recognizes that, for some peoples and places, examples never have existed or no longer exist to draw upon for

practitioners today since, central to the effort of (re)constructing sustainable societies is the need to dismantle many of the organizing concepts and values of the modern world, concepts and values that feed and are fed by the widespread domination and exploitation of people and of nature by the powerful few -- the “leaders” of the modern capitalist world.

Can we develop leadership today that is not inherently corrupt and manipulative? Can we organize people effectively within systems of leadership and followership in order to recast societies into forms that nourish and justly serve people and nature simultaneously? What might such systems of leadership and followership look like? And on what values and practices would they be based? These are the questions underlying this exploration in search of a leadership for sustainability. At the heart of this exploration is the idea that sustainability cannot be achieved in the absence of social justice because social injustice derives from the same mindset – the same narrowly instrumental orientation to the world and others -- that fuels environmental destruction. To pursue sustainability through manipulative and exploitive means would mean creating new systems of domination that would feed the creation of new, unsustainable systems. Can we (re)create leadership without domination?

This essay explores this question through developing several claims:

- 1) The purposes served by leadership are centrally important to sustainability so that, in developing leaders, we must ultimately focus on what leadership is *used for*.
- 2) Any system of leadership that moves people toward sustainability must be anchored in a concept of authenticity that drives toward creating reciprocal, mutually nurturing, sustaining relationships among people and between humans and the environment.
- 3) Differential authority must derive from a system within which everyone has access to serve as a leader.
- 4) Leadership can be learned in a sustainable social context, and it must be actively developed in everyone for a society to remain sustainable.
- 5) Sustainable leadership is integrative and ultimately place-centered.

Through developing these claims, this essay sheds light on the purposes sustainable leadership must serve and, thereby, constructs a concept of sustainable leadership. This concept is further clarified in this essay by illuminating formative characteristics of leadership for sustainability that distinguish it from command and control leadership.²

In short, this essay conceptualizes sustainable leadership as a form of community praxis in which one coalesces and directs the energies of a group toward ends that enhance the integrity and long-term health of the community and the life and life-support systems of which it is a part. Sustainable leadership is also, most importantly, a form of *power with, not power over*, others. Through its praxis, sustainable leadership nurtures the leadership potential of followers in the recognition that the leadership of any one individual or group is, and should be, a temporary

sustainable leadership and living, meaning that sustainable social systems must be created for the first time from scratch.

² See Wheatley, 2007, for a discussion of the failings of command and control leadership. This essay is also inspired, in part, by Wheatley’s call for forms of leadership that are up to the task of reinventing the culture and practices of leadership in order to make it inherently life-enhancing, life-giving, and life-supporting rather than life-destroying.

service to others. Sustainable leadership welcomes new leaders and creates space for their leadership potential to grow. In a world-system replete with entrenched systems of hierarchy and characterized by competition, sustainable leadership is a contradiction. To realize sustainable leadership would entail deep social change.

Through developing a concept of leadership for sustainability this essay can inform the character, purposes, and practices of activists, educators, and others whose work continually redefines and teaches leadership in our changing world.

1) Leadership is only as good as the purposes it serves.

Leadership discourse and training that assumes practices of leading in any situation and for any purpose can be compared reduce leadership to a tool that can be used to further *any* human endeavor -- whether or not the given activity is just or sustainable. This essay demonstrates that leadership within systems of modern capitalist hierarchy is unequally rewarding to some while oppressive and exploitative to others and nature. Leadership in this context is not authentic leadership -- it is opportunism, and it creates extreme imbalances among societies and between humans and nature.

In order to understand command and control leadership as the dominant mode of social organization today, it is important to understand the context within which that form of leadership has emerged and thrived.³ The purposes leadership has served in the world-system have defined its character. Reinventing leadership would mean repurposing it and, consequently, changing society in deep and important ways.

A Brief History of Opportunistic Leadership in Global Political Economy

What we see in systems of inequity in global political economy is an enforced program through which the winners of old remain the winners indefinitely and continue to manufacture the rules of the game in order to ensure their economic and political advantage (Achebar & Simpson, 2005; Barlow & Clarke, 2002; Black, 2001; International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, 2003; Manley, 1987; Marcuse, 1964; Norberg-Hodge, et al., 2002; Scheer, 2002). The command and control system is not a form of sustainable leadership. It is predatory and opportunistic.

Examples of opportunistic leadership abound in modern, global, capitalist societies. Alan Miller (1999) gives an historically based account of how capitalist opportunism spread globally, creating persistent economic and political inequities between former imperialist colonizers and former colonies whose lands and peoples were the objects of conquest. Inequity was built into the colonial system by the leaders of empire: the colonial system created an intentional hierarchy in which colonies served their rulers in multiple ways. Colonies, as such, were never intended by their conquerors to be allowed to develop diverse, healthy economies in which wealth was

³ Forms of command and control leadership (slavery, for example) have existed for long periods of time in human history, but the way most of us experience that form of leadership today is through our interactions with many dominant systems of social organization such as the globalized economy. Because the globalized economy organizes the leadership/followership experience of so many people worldwide in such important ways, understanding command and control systems within that system is particularly important to understanding current conceptions of leadership.

distributed widely. Such a formula would, after all, create colonies that could eventually challenge their rulers. Instead, colonies served as the extraction grounds for empire, producing or otherwise delivering up raw materials for empires while employing conquered peoples in the process of extraction through systems of slavery and low wage labor (Miller, 1999).

This colonial system was perhaps the most significant factor in creating the uneven “development” of the modern capitalist world today. Once the colonies were free to compete on their own in the rapidly globalizing marketplace, they found themselves hopelessly behind their former rulers who had become the modern industrialized nations of the world. Because they had served for so long as the resource extraction grounds and a pool of cheap labor for empire, the former colonies had not developed strong modern infrastructures, accessible and modern education systems, diversified manufacturing sectors capable of producing a wide variety of finished goods, or resilient traditions of democracy. The value of some of these developments within a context of sustainability is questionable, but they are none-the-less indispensable for a nation to compete effectively in a globalized, industrial economy (Miller, 1999).

Although colonialism as a command and control system of direct territorial rule by dominant national powers is more or less over, the unequal power relationships between the industrialized and the developing worlds continue through imperialism. Imperialism manifests as a form of economic, cultural, and political domination similar in its effects to colonialism but without direct administration of foreign territories by nation states (Miller, 1999). Under this more recent hegemonic order, acting through a system of international free trade agreements, the industrialized powers of the world continue to extract raw materials and take advantage of cheap labor. According to economist Richard Douthwaite (2004), free trade within such a system benefits the wealthy at the expense of the poor because it drives down the prices of commodities to match the lowest prices globally. For those individuals, companies, and nations who are in the business of selling raw materials and agricultural products and who tend to operate on a very thin margin of profit, opening local markets to global competition can be devastating. While many products can be produced in many places, there are some environments that are better than others for doing so, and it is generally in these locations that production can be accomplished most cheaply. When other producers in less advantageous locales must compete with advantaged producers, they often cannot make ends meet. Thereby, diversity (and, therefore, resilience) is lost in the local economy. Small producers lose their economic security while the big players in the global economy -- who can produce virtually anywhere they like at low cost by locating where environmental, labor, and other costs are low -- are further freed to dominate global markets (Norberg-Hodge, Merrifield, & Gorelick, 2002).

International finance and debt serve as additional tools for opportunistic leaders to create dependency (Miller, 1999, pp. 85-86). Developing nations, in their attempts to create the infrastructure that would allow them to compete in the global marketplace, have assumed extremely heavy debt loads, borrowing from sources such as the World Bank and regional development banks. And, due to their historically-generated, lopsided development, they have not been able to compete effectively with the industrialized world. For these nations, the playing field is impossibly tilted in favor of the industrialized powers. Meanwhile, the United States, the world’s foremost debtor nation, continues as the world economic leader due to its historical

position of dominance and the economic and political systems that were constructed to reinforce that dominance.⁴

In the interest of justice and sustainability, it matters a great deal where we are being led and for what purposes. The global economic system described here functions as if there are no limits (physical or ethical) to exploiting both people and nature to fuel the engines of economic growth and secure profits for business leaders. Wealth has also become concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. Leadership for “success” in such a system is not sustainable leadership; it is simply domination.⁵

An exploration of the history of global inequity, capitalist concentration of market control, and profits reaped by imperial interests, reveals that the purposes served by leadership 1) inform all meaningful discussion of the character of leadership and 2) create a foundation for developing a concept of sustainable leadership. Our discussion here breaks sharply with leadership literature and training that seeks to be apolitical. Seemingly apolitical leadership training and literature is, in fact, *very* political precisely because it does not overtly question what leadership is used *for* and, thereby, tends to reinforce the notion that authentic leadership can be practiced in any context, however skewed the power relationships that define the context might be. Such a conception of leadership tends not to question hierarchy in that the boss and the leader are conflated, as though it does not matter whether a person follows a leader by choice or must submit to follow a “leader” in order to keep earning a living. In the context of such overt hierarchies, any technique or practice of leadership, however profound or worthy, can be used for manipulation and control of the followers as well as for ecologically destructive ends. Effective leadership techniques practiced in ultimate service to destructive systems may even mask social contradictions and thereby delay radical action for social justice.

To reveal the ideological content of much leadership training and literature, though, is not the same thing as to say that work in areas such as industrial democracy have no merit. Because most of us now live and survive through an unjust and unsustainable capitalist system, we are living an internal and external dialectic of authenticity/inauthenticity. We cannot simply extract ourselves from historical realities, and our choices in how we want to live are in fact limited. This is the struggle of leadership: how can one, several, or many lead authentically toward a just and sustainable future in these times of converging socio-ecological crises that derive, in large measure, from pervasive systems of exploitive leadership?

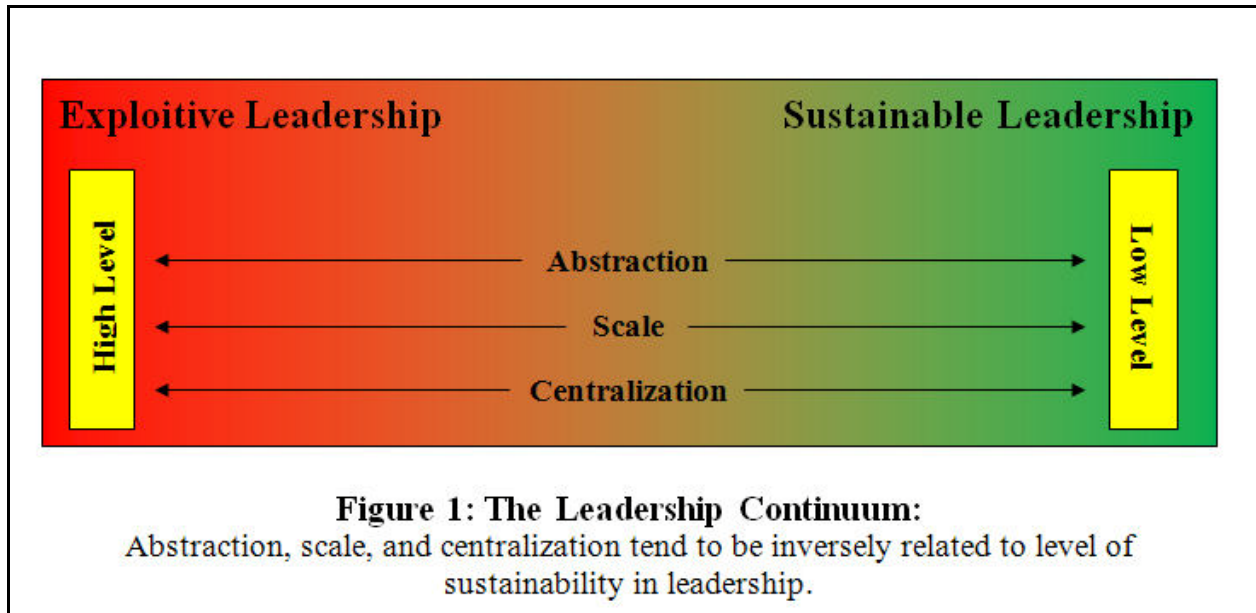
⁴ An important difference between this current economic imperial system and that of colonialism is that capital is now less centered in and dependent upon nation states as platforms for capital accumulation and political sources of legitimacy. Presently, capital has become mobile and abstract, and its legitimacy in acting independent of nation state controls is supported and enforced through international free trade agreements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) as well as through the World Trade Organization (WTO). Additionally, the NAFTA treaty even gives multinational corporations chartered in its three signatory nations (the United States, Mexico, and Canada) the right to sue a signatory nation directly for regulatory and other actions deemed “tantamount to expropriation” (which has been at times interpreted to include government regulatory interference with potential profits) (Moyers, 2002).

⁵ Changes in organizational leadership style utilized in service to the exploitive world-system offer no real remedy to injustice and unsustainability. It matters little when a multinational corporation that is severely damaging the planet employs teams of employees at the production level in ways that increase worker control because the purposes served by this democratizing diffusion of leadership are ultimately destructive of people and planet.

The Purpose of Leadership: A Foundation to Defining Leadership Across a Continuum

Three important constituents of the purpose of leadership can help us define a continuum of leadership character: degree of centralization of authority, level of abstraction, and scale of operation. The continuum of leadership ranges from exploitive to sustainable leadership. Within this continuum, those forms of leadership that are less abstract tend to be more sustainable (Kemmis, 1990) while the distancing afforded to practitioners of highly abstract forms of leadership tends to encourage exploitation in the form of collective violence. Collective violence can be defined as large scale damage inflicted on people and the environment by large numbers of people (Summers & Markusen, 2003, p. 215). In other words, people are less apt to inflict harm in service to personal gain on those people and places with whom/which they share meaningful and intimate relationships -- especially when they intend to stay put in place and community (Shuman, 1998). Similarly, scale of activity also matters: the larger the scale of operations, the greater the opportunities for abstraction. Scale, in turn, relates to an additional important factor in characterizing the purposes and practices of leadership along a continuum ranging from exploitive to sustainable: degree of centralization of control. Potential for hierarchical domination and exploitation increases with centralization of control, and this same centralization of decision making and concentration of profits are perhaps the most useful tools to those who would use leadership to exploit for (perceived) personal gain.

The leadership continuum, as a whole, holds at one extreme the leadership of exploitation, a form of leadership that uses everything and everyone necessary to perpetuate the leaders' privileged status, and nothing more. This form of leadership is essentially manipulative and instrumental. At the other end of the continuum is sustainable leadership. Pittman (2007) defines "living sustainability" as "the long-term equilibrium of health and integrity maintained dynamically within any individual system (organism, organization, ecosystem, community, etc.) through a diversity of relationships with other systems." Additionally, according to examples of sustainable indigenous inhabitation of place (Armstrong, 1995; Berkes, 1999; LaDuke, 1999; Martinez, 1997; Nelson, 1983; Salmon, 2000; Sveiby & Skuthorpe, 2006), for humans to live sustainably, their actions must be guided by an ethic of reciprocity in relationships with other people and with nature, an idea to which we will return below. Leadership for sustainability is a form of coalescing and directing group action in ways that promote living sustainability as defined by Pittman (2007). It represents a normative commitment to health, integrity, and self-actualization for individuals as well as for the community as a whole.



The distinction I draw between exploitive leadership and sustainable leadership is one that hinges on what leadership is *for*. If we are to lead toward sustainability globally, we must ultimately concern ourselves with the effects of our leadership on the health and integrity of other people and nature. When acting within a model of exploitive leadership, one's only aim is to remain in a position of (perceived) advantage over other people and nature.

2) Sustainable leadership must be authentic.

If we use leadership as a vehicle through which to envision and then enact sustainable systems, that leadership must be authentic. Robert Terry's work *Authentic Leadership: Courage in Action* (1993) offers an excellent point of departure for considering what an authentic leadership for sustainability might look like. Terry's conception of leadership focuses especially on social justice aspects of sustainability. According to Terry, "Leadership is a subset of action" (1993, p. xviii), but not just any kind of action. "Leadership depends on the ability to frame issues correctly – that is, to answer the question, What is *really* going on?" And, "Leadership ... depends on the ability to call forth authentic action in response to the issues it identifies" (Terry, 1993, p. xvii). True leadership, according to Terry, is represented by calling forth a *fitting* response to "what is really going on." It means seeking mutually beneficial and liberating ends.

Determining what is really going on (unveiling the truth of things) and offering a fitting response entail developing an understanding of social power and how that power is often used in manipulative, oppressive, and, therefore, inauthentic ways. This process involves reading the world in deeply critical ways. Authentic leadership entails developing political clarity and acting upon that clarity in service to inclusiveness and social justice. Authentic leadership, therefore, derives from a normative framework of praxis. On these points, Terry's leadership philosophy articulates well with the work of Robert K. Greenleaf (1970/1991) and Paulo Freire (1970/2000).

Greenleaf's concept of servant leadership offers a clearly defined ethical and relational foundation for leadership that aids in formulating responses to the world that are indeed *fitting*. According to Greenleaf (1970/1991), a servant leader works to build the leadership capacities of

others rather than simply to maintain his/her own position of power. The servant as leader sows the seeds of long term change because s/he shares ownership of the changes s/he leads with those who follow or who lead from their own positions. Philosophies and practices enacted through shared leadership are more likely to survive and evolve over the long term than are the philosophies and practices of single, dominant leaders, and are therefore likely to serve sustainability over the long haul.

Greenleaf contrasts the servant leader with the dominator leader who is “leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions” (1970/1991, p. 7). Greenleaf’s ideas articulate well with discussion of the two extremes of the leadership continuum: sustainable and exploitive leadership.

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 he benefit, or, at least, will he not be further deprived?” (Greenleaf, 1970/1991, p. 7).

Greenleaf’s emphasis on increasing the autonomy, and therefore the leadership potential, of the served coincides well with the critical pedagogy of Freire (1970/2000). According to Freire, freedom -- in the form of political clarity -- is achieved through naming the world to identify forces of manipulation and indoctrination, and this articulation forms a basis for praxis (1970/2000, p. 88). Greenleaf’s emphasis on the public sharing of the fruits of leadership also coincides well with the notion that a sustainable world would not concentrate power in the hands of the few while causing the vast majority to live in misery.

Terry (1993) offers additional theories on leadership that extend and further clarify Greenleaf’s (1970/1991) concept of the servant leader. These theories revolve around the concept of authenticity. Authentic leaders, according to Terry, must be concerned, not only with what decisions are made, but also explicitly with *how* they are made. Decisions must be made in a transparent and open way and must “acknowledge the significant features of the human condition” (Terry 1993, p. 108). In taking this approach, authentic leadership treats people with respect and acknowledges that they have a right to engage in the decisions that affect their lives and communities. Authentic leadership, therefore, engages *justly* in service to justice. This conception of leadership articulates well with the idea that leadership for sustainability must be a socially just leadership.

Additionally, authentic leaders are self-compelled to engage in action that resonates with their conception of the world as it is and as it should be (Terry, 1993, pp. 110 & 128). According to Terry, such action further deepens the authenticity of one’s presence in the world. It is therefore important for authentic leaders to attain the political clarity of which both Terry (1993, p. xvii) and Freire (1970/2000) speak so that they can act within a framework of understanding “what’s really going on.” In the present time of converging crises that include climate change, resource depletion, pervasive pollution, a rapid rate of species extinction, global concentration of wealth and power, massive poverty, and more, political clarity that undergirds authentic leadership must drive movement toward sustainability (Pittman 2007).

Authentic leadership, according to Terry, resolves contradictions in the modern world and makes possible a worldview that is fully integrated with one’s lived presence. Terry notes the presence of contradictions that must be identified and acted upon in a process of politically

clear leadership: “Many of us sense a deep, pervasive, and profoundly disturbing disconnection between the world that we experience as we actually live in it and the world that we create and describe in our rhetoric and imagination” (1993, p. 113). As a further means to shed light on the connection between leadership and social contradictions, Terry contrasts inauthenticity in action with authentic engagement in the world:

To be involved inauthentically is to feel cheated and manipulated. The alienated feel that they have no power; the inauthentic feel they have pulled a disconnected lever without quite knowing where and how, so that shadows are confused with reality (1993, p. 113).

By contrast, authentic leaders live in response to their sense of political clarity in service to a vision for a better world. According to Terry, “Authenticity entails action that is both *true* and *real* in *ourselves* and the *world*” (1993, pp. 111-112). Authentic leadership in our time entails living into being a transformed, just, sustainable world.

According to Terry, “If the purposes that we once took for granted are now suspected to be inauthentic, there is no way to move ahead authentically until those purposes have been reviewed and alternatives proposed” (1993, p. 122). The current crises of sustainability illuminate the folly of the “common sense” world of the modern industrial age. It is time to recognize the inauthenticity of the industrial paradigm and to engage in authentic forms of leadership capable of envisioning and creating sustainable human/nature systems.

In holding fast to the notion that authentic leadership corresponds with action that is socially just, Terry (1993) offers a conception of leadership that is not relativistic but normative in function -- it calls upon us to carefully examine what leadership is *for* and to establish guidelines for what leadership *should be for*. In this sense, authentic leadership serves as a vehicle for the expression of social values. According to Terry, a socially just conception of leadership can be self-correcting if it remains flexible and open to participative new discovery about the world as it is and as it should be. Authentic leadership maintains an outward focus on the world. It exists as a dynamic, yet normative, interaction with the world rather than as a rigidly fixed set of beliefs about the world. Terry states:

Authenticity holds together what we know and do in living tension with what we do not know, avoid doing, or have misled in doing. Therefore, while the test of the leadership ideas of action and authenticity is initially their utility, it is ultimately their own authenticity (1993, p. 127).

Terry’s conception of leadership as open, flexible, and responsive to the influx of new ideas (and the bearers of these ideas) reveals a potential for realizing a normative leadership for sustainability that explicitly rejects totalitarian embodiments.

The works of Terry (1993), Greenleaf (1970/1991), and Freire (1970/2000) contribute to a highly relevant conception of leadership in service to transforming an unjust world, and this emphasis on justice forms a central organizing framework for any form of leadership that can be called authentic and sustainable. Such leadership serves real needs of people for material sufficiency, personal dignity, and meaningful and consequential participation in the decisions that affect their lives. Such leadership takes people seriously as subjects in the world rather than conceiving of them as mere tools to be manipulated and controlled in order to serve the ends of a powerful global elite. As Terry states, “Authentic power resists oppression; inauthentic power

terrorizes the innocent” (1993, p. 110). Terry’s articulation of authentic leadership specifically asserts that power for its own sake is antithetical to authentic leadership in service to social justice. Ecologically inclusive applications of Terry’s concept of authentic leadership will be explored below as part of a discussion of the integrative aspects of sustainable leadership.

3) Everyone must have access to serve as a leader.

Totalitarian leadership systems are characterized, in large measure, by limiting access to positions and roles of leadership throughout society. In direct contradistinction to Terry’s conception of open, self-correcting leadership (1993, p. 127), totalitarian systems attempt to centralize and control ideas generated within a society about the state of the world, both as it is and as it should be. Totalitarian systems are inherently unjust and unsustainable in that they remain unresponsive to what’s really going on and, instead, seek to dictate a given reality into existence. The modern capitalist economy as described above is totalitarian. Totalitarian systems both refuse to actively promote the potential for leadership throughout society and also refuse to respond authentically in service to the people. In taking these actions, totalitarian systems can sow the seeds of their own destruction since forms of oppression that negate the value of people invariably generate social resistance, and often violent action.

In order to move toward sustainability, authentic leadership systems, in contrast to totalitarian leadership, must offer paths to differential authority that are open to everyone in a given society. This claim derives from John Rawls’ conception of social justice as articulated by Ian Barbour (1993, p. 37). As a principle for leadership, this notion contradicts totalitarian tendencies to attach political offices and powers to hereditary lines and to social ranks and categories from which many are totally and indefinitely excluded. Totalitarian leadership embodies and solidifies hierarchies consisting of paths to power that are unassailable and hopelessly remote to the vast majority of people. Kingdoms and dictatorships come to mind, but even nominal democracies and “free” markets can be totalitarian in these respects.

In order to maintain open paths to leadership and to encourage broad political participation and the development of leadership potential throughout society, differential authority should change hands periodically. Although monarchies and dictatorships that are more benevolent than some democracies today may exist and certainly have existed, perpetual concentration of power can be dangerous, particularly within the context of modern capitalism where power most naturally manifests in manipulation and exploitation (Marcuse, 1964). In order for any society to be benevolent in comparison to modern capitalist societies, the people need to exercise meaningful control over key aspects of their own lives. In any comparatively just and sustainable society, authentic leadership must be active throughout society on multiple levels.

Such was the case within the kingdom of Ladakh before it was subsumed under Indian government rule, and it remains the case to some extent today although Ladakh is increasingly becoming entangled with the modern capitalist world (International Society for Ecology and Culture, 1993; Norberg-Hodge, 1991/1992). In traditional Ladakhi society, leadership that meaningfully shaped the lives of people was developmental, small scale, and local. It also was decidedly *not* abstract in that the Ladakhi people, in order to prosper in their isolated and demanding environment, exercised an ecological leadership of place that emphasized reciprocal practices of working directly with nature and each other.

Many indigenous traditions of recognizing the leadership of elders offer examples of leadership that are characteristically open to all who attain the proper level of experience as evidenced by age. *Authentic* leadership of elders would also remain open and responsive to the voices and concerns of youth.

4) Leadership must be actively developed in everyone in a sustainable society.

In keeping with the idea that leadership must authentically engage in transforming the inauthentic in ourselves and the world and building upon the idea that paths to leadership must be open to all, leadership should be actively developed in everyone in ultimate service to sustainability. Nurturing the authentic leadership capacity in all people involves cultivating people's critical thinking (Brookfield, 1987; 2000) and related transformative capacities (Mezirow, 2000). The critical thinking advocated by Brookfield (1987; 2000) and the transformative learning advocated by Mezirow (2000) are both firmly anchored in the essentially Freirian (1970/2000) practices of naming the world and transforming the self and the world through praxis. As we have seen, these practices also form the foundations of authentic leadership as articulated by Terry (1993).

The faith of these authors in the power of average people to create meaningful and beneficial change in the world also articulates well with Paul Rogat Loeb's argument, presented in his book *Soul of a Citizen: Living with Conviction in a Cynical Time* (1999). Loeb argues that leadership is *learned*, step by developmental step, when properly nurtured and supported in community (chap.3). For Loeb, leadership is not *inborn*; it is therefore a possibility for all. Fostering the potential for learning authentic leadership ought, therefore, to be a central aim of sustainability education, and this education need not -- in fact should not -- be limited to institutional contexts.

Sustainable leadership is integrative and ultimately place-centered.

To lead sustainably, we must act from an ecological worldview, in full recognition that everything is connected to every other thing and that what goes around does indeed come around. If we want to live meaningful lives and enjoy the respect of others, we must recognize the meaning inherent in other people and in nature, and we must honor the integrity and the lifeways of all others, both human and nonhuman. I believe this living reciprocity is what Jeannette Armstrong has in mind when she describes the Okanagan experience of bonding with ancestral homelands:

As Okanagans, our most essential responsibility is to learn to bond our whole individual selves and our communal selves to the land. Many of our ceremonies have been constructed for this. We join with the larger self, outward to the land, and rejoice in all that we are. We are this one part of Earth. Without this self we are not human: we yearn; we are incomplete; we are wild, needing to learn our place as land pieces. We cannot find joy because we need place in this sense to nurture and protect our family/community/self. The thing Okanagans fear worst of all is to be removed from the land that is their life and their spirit (1995, pp. 323-324).

As suggested by Armstrong, social bonds and bonds between people and nature are most effectively understood and enacted within the context of real places that offer a shared context of community and nature extending over long periods of time. In such communities, actions and ideas -- and the benefits and consequences of these -- are most immediately known and visible (Armstrong, 1995; Shuman, 1998/2000, p. 8).

Centering sustainable leadership in place does not, however, mean that we should wall ourselves off from the world or disregard distant or global environmental and social problems. To extract ourselves in such a way from the world as a whole would be unspeakably irresponsible given our current global realities. Global capitalism has created an unhealthy interdependence -- a *codependence* from which it will be difficult to extract ourselves and our communities unscathed. In order to name this world and transform it, even by (re)localizing, we must fully know *this* world. We must know what we are up against and, to the best of our ability, think through the ramifications of our local actions in a world where everything has indeed been made to affect every other thing within perhaps the most unhealthy system of interdependence possible. Authentic and sustainable leadership must address the realities of globalization while simultaneously creating place-centered communities. Terry recognizes this need for a comprehensive approach to authentic leadership. He notes that, if we are to embody authentic leadership, we must seek to be inclusive of a broad and deep understanding of and intimacy with the world: "Comprehensiveness is the most inclusive quality of meaning. It seeks to add depth of insight, celebrate wisdom, and in its creation of meaning, affirm the joy and tragedy of existence" (1993, p. 227). To move this world toward sustainability, we must engage with it, not recoil from it. This engagement should, in large measure, take the form of place-centered praxis that consciously and simultaneously contributes to socio-ecological sustainability on a global scale.

Conclusions

Sustainable leadership, as conceptualized in this essay, is an historically and culturally embedded concept and practice. This conception of sustainable leadership -- rooted as it is in confronting and resolving the damaging social and environmental contradictions of the modern capitalist world -- is not intended to adhere now and forever to all human communities and lifeways. Certain aspects of leadership explored in this paper, however, do engage with enduring truths. The value of intimacy as expressed in healthy reciprocity and the profoundly meaningful and affirmative power of leadership as service rather than domination are among these truths. I also affirm here the potential for leadership to serve as an expression of the best of human agency. A quote from Terry that powerfully expresses this affirmation:

Leadership brings no answer to the table. It does come with questions and a disturbing sense of unease. Leadership is triggered by an unnerving experience of disconnection and inauthenticity. Leadership uses all its framing tools yet still faces the dilemma of action. It confronts an abyss of unknown consequences and obligations in any action it does take. The ripple effects of action are so vast and complex that no computer or cost-benefit analysis can totally analyze them. Duties often conflict; ethical choices are usually not made between right and wrong or good and bad but between conflicting rights and goods.

Yet in spite of these daunting realities, leadership lays claim to its responsibility (1993, p. 260).

Sustainable leadership, furthermore, must be anchored in authenticity and be open and accessible to all, and everyone should be supported and nurtured in the process of developing her/his own leadership potential. Sustainable leadership should specifically aim to create and nurture reciprocal, sustaining relationships among people and between humans and nature. Such leadership would expose the contradictions of exploitive leadership that is ultimately self destructive. The self destructiveness of exploitive leadership is currently evidenced by the widespread social inequity and environmental destruction that characterize our world today and that foretell disaster for all if our modern societies do not radically change course.

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