Feminism, Globalism, and Leadership: How Women Make a "Worldly" World

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Abstract

The influx of women into leadership, management, and idea leader roles is clearly one of the significant aspects of globalization over the last 50 years. While women are still underrepresented in global business and politics, their influence on reconceptualizing leadership models is undeniable. While it would be difficult to precisely determine a “feminist” perspective on leadership, idea leaders such as Follett, Kanter, and Wheatley have influenced the concept and practice of leadership beyond any gender construct. The unique themes within their work are present in the global dialogue that is reframing how we think about leadership. This paper will discuss 1) common themes related to power, relationships, conflict, change, and motivation that are found in writings of these idea leaders; 2) implications these themes have for reframing leadership in the context of worldly leadership; and 3) how these “feminist” perspective themes, frameworks, and implications compare to some exploratory data.
Feminism, Globalism, and Leadership: How Women Make a “Worldly” World

The influx of women into leadership, management, and idea leader roles is clearly one of the significant aspects of globalization over the last 50 years. While women are still underrepresented in global business and politics, their influence on reconceptualizing leadership models is undeniable. While it would be difficult to precisely determine a “feminist” perspective on leadership, idea leaders such as Mary Parker Follett, Rosabeth Kanter and Margaret Wheatley have influenced the concept and practice of leadership beyond any gender construct. The unique themes within their work are present in the global dialogue that is reframing how everyone thinks of leadership.

This paper is divided into three primary sections. The first section of this paper discusses the common themes related to power, relationships, conflict, change, and motivation that are found in the writings of Follett, Kanter, and Wheatley. We argue that the common themes in the writings of these women idea leaders are helping to reframe the discussion of leadership in the context of a hyper globalized world. For example, all three authors have a more holistic view of organizations that places greater emphasis on measured change and relationship preservation. The role of leadership is reframed as being a shared function with common responsibilities where change is systemic, organic, and intentional. The second section of this paper describes the ideal “world” as proposed by these women idea leaders. This critical analysis will define elements of leadership from a U.S. centric “feminist” perspective. But if we have reconceptualized leadership based on women idea leaders, and if we have now an emergent view of a feminist theory of leadership, then we are left with the question of whether or not this is making a difference, as women step into important leadership roles. Are women leaders more likely to manage, as women idea leaders suggest? Are women leaders more systemic, relational,
and approaching change in different ways than their male counterparts? The conclusion examines how these “feminist” perspective leads to a reconceptualization of leadership and behavior in organizations that is more compatible with the worldly perspective.

The Reframing of Leadership by Follett, Kanter and Wheatley

Assumed differences in leadership behavior, based on gender, are probably as old as biological gender differences. Most creation stories, including the Judeo/Christian Adam and Eve, describe a difference in, if not a conflict between, genders. Gilligan (1982) made popular again an open discussion of these differences, building on questions surfaced by Kanter (1968). Ely and Meyerson (2000), Matin and Collision (2002) and Kark (2004) are among many who have taken the age-old questions of gender into model concepts of leadership, with Kark focusing on the gender elements of transformational leaders. More recently, Madsen (2008a; 2008b) completed comprehensive studies of female leadership practice in higher education and government.

The previously mentioned studies and others helpfully focus on the practice of leadership, often noting that women leaders are gradually gaining entry into roles once reserved for men. They use common models (e.g., transformational leadership, situational leadership, emergent leadership) and/or common contexts such as the business, higher education, government, or community to show patterns in how women leaders might approach problems differently. Absent or at least underdeveloped in this discussion is an examination and critique of how women scholars may conceptualize of leadership differently than male scholars. While it can be argued that in western society women are underrepresented in leadership roles in various sectors, there are well-recognized women contributors to the academic leadership dialogue.
In this paper, we will examine the conceptualization of leadership from the perspective of three women idea leaders: Mary Parker Follett, Rosa Beth Kanter, and Margaret Wheatley. Each provides what we argue are unique perspectives on leadership, rooted in gender. We acknowledge that much of the traditional literature on leadership in the period of our concern (1920-2009) is written by men. We also acknowledge that genderized conversations about how a particular leadership style or strategy might be adapted to women are rare. Male orient leadership is seen as the norm. We further note that these women authors do not, for the most part, genderize their discussion of leadership (the exception is Kanter). They write for a general audience of leaders and managers, without many direct references to feminism, gender, or adaptation.

This paper takes the form of a feminist critique (Sillars, 1991), as it examines the unique, gender-informed perspective that these three authors bring to leadership theory. Our work is inherently political. Further, our study is U.S. centric. Granted, the United States has been the home to many of the key organizational theorists and has been a driving economic force during this time frame. We acknowledge that while the U.S. is not the only source of key thinkers in the field, it is the source of those that we analyzed. The three women idea leaders were selected for study because their work contains common themes, yet each woman lived in a unique time and faced a different generation of challenges and opportunities. The following section contains a brief biographical overview.

Women Idea Leaders

Mary Parker Follett was born on September 3, 1868 in Massachusetts (Follett, 1924). She graduated from Radcliffe College in 1898 but was denied a doctorate at Harvard, because of her gender. Prior to graduation, she published *The Speaker of the House of Representatives* (1896),
and later *The New State* (1918) and *Creative Experience* (1924). New Jersey Bell Executive Chester Barnard read and incorporated many of Follett’s ideas into his enterprise. As an advisor to the President Theodore Roosevelt, he assisted the president in seeking out Follett to be his personal assistant on managing not-for-profit, non-governmental, and voluntary organizations. She authored a number of books and several groundbreaking essays. Follett’s most significant intellectual contribution was her understanding of lateral processes within hierarchical organizations. Clearly, she was not trapped in the military or church hierarchy metaphors for organizations. She could see the broader more complex matrix-style organizations and the importance of informal processes within organizations. Follett passed away on December 18, 1933.

Rosabeth Kanter, born in 1943 in Cleveland, Ohio, graduated from Bryn Mawr College with honors in 1964 (Kanter, 1977). She studied sociology at the University of Michigan (M.A., 1965; Ph.D., 1967) and completed postdoctoral studies at Harvard University (1975-76). Kanter taught sociology at the University of Michigan (1967), Brandeis University (1967-73, 1974-77), and Yale University (1977-86). In 1986, she was appointed to an endowed chair at the Harvard Business School as professor of business administration; she had previously taught sociology at Harvard (1973-74). Kanter has written numerous books and academic articles on organizational issues, with particular emphasis on change management. Her classic 1977 study of tokenism entitled “Men and Women of the Corporation” shows how being a minority in a group can affect performance due to enhanced visibility and performance pressure. Her most widely read book is probably “The Change Masters” (1985) that is a foundational book on large-scale organizational change.
Margaret Wheatley received her doctorate from Harvard University and holds an M.A. in systems thinking from New York University (http://www.berkana.org/, 2009). Her practice as an organizational consultant and researcher began in 1973. Since then she has served as a professor of management in two graduate programs. Her approach includes systems thinking, theories of change, chaos theory, leadership and the learning organization: particularly its capacity to self-organize. She describes her work as opposing “highly controlled mechanistic systems that only create robotic behaviors” (p. XX). Wheatley is president of the Berkana Institute that serves to link life-affirming leaders in many countries. Her most widely read book is “Leadership and the New Science” (1992), which examines chaos and complexity theory as a metaphor for management theory.

The most obvious similarities between these women idea leaders are gender, national origin, and graduate school. All were/are prolific authors, all are valued thinkers in the United States, and all attended Harvard at some time. There are also some notable differences. Follett’s early interest was in political process. She focused her early writings on the public organizations that were emerging across the United States in the early 20th century, as state, county, and local governments organized in growing communities. Kanter was also a product of her time, focusing more on formal and informal structures of corporations. In her writings on gender difference, Kanter (1967) examined the different roles for men and women in the context of corporations as cultures. Wheatley has both a corporate and a non-profit focus, but she is much more theoretical and metaphorical than either Kanter or Follett. She stands on the shoulders of both Kanter and Follett but incorporates science as a metaphor that leads to a more holistic view of organizations in a worldly world. Indeed we argue in this paper that while Follett and Kantor narrow the gap between the traditional and the worldly view of leadership, Wheatley fills in the gap.
To see the central differentiating points of these women idea leaders, we are comparing their approaches to power, relationships, conflict, change and motivation.

**Power**

Beginning with the notion of power, we note that while each of the three authors is different, all three add upon the other to lead to a reconceptualization of power. First, Follett (year) suggested that power was always “with” something. It was not an isolated concept, but rather in relationship to others. She thus separated herself from the traditional male notions of power, particularly popular in the early part of the 20th century, where power was help within the person. For Follett, power remains in the relationship. To become powerful, one must build relationships. Second, Kanter (year) extended this notion with her discussions of employee “buy in,” but as a participant in the knowledge revolution, added that knowledge is an essential component to power. People contribute to the power building relationship by the knowledge that they bring into the relationship. Finally, for Wheatley (year), power and relationship cannot be separated. She gives a more interactive dialogic view of power by talking about the interaction that creates new information, leading to the ability to react to the environment. We see her rooted in Follett’s notion of relationship and accounting for Kanter’s emphasis on information. But Wheatley really goes beyond showing how in a world where information is vital for survival, power can only emerge from productive and positive relationships.

**Relationships**

For each of the idea leaders discussed in this paper, it is difficult to discuss power without discussing relationships. Each has a chicken/egg view of power and relationships. It is important to note that the more traditional views of power place it in the individual. Power is built, in the
traditional notion, by seeking relationships that are new venues for influence. Relationships are the conduit for power, not the co-creator.

In the more traditional view of relationships, each brings something of value to a negotiated action. But for Follett (year) “integration” is the preferred method. She says that any relationship dealing with difference also includes domination, compromise, or integration. If you choose domination, only one side gets what it wants. If you choose compromise, neither side gets what it wants. It is by integration that both sides may get what they want (1924). Thus, Follett sets the stage for implying that knowledge, power and right action are helpful in a relationship, not in an individual.

Kanter (year) goes on by arguing that leaders must build local relationships that are lasting. She argues that companies that focus on local relationships will grow globally. Kanter plays the gender card by saying that companies that integrate women into the workforce have created better, longer lasting relationships locally. Women in the workplace bring something that is irreplaceable.

Wheatley (year) has a more global and interactive perspective. In her discussion of “Core Practices of Life-Affirming Leaders,” she says that leaders cannot lead alone. It is always, she argues, a shared function held in a relationship. She says, “No one person is smart enough to know what to do” (p. XX). She also suggests that people will only support that which they help to create. In order to trust each other to make action we need to include each other.

Conflict

The traditional metaphors of organization see conflict in a war or athletic competition metaphor that has a winner and a loser, or they see it as something that should be avoided because it causes waste. Follett (year) was one of the first management theorists to advocate
operationalizing conflict resolution. Follett viewed conflict as something that is inherent in human interaction, that it can be resolved, and that it is productive because it creates learning opportunities. Kanter (year), particularly in her earlier writings, saw conflict in a more traditional way; as a waste. She said conflict is created by pride of employees. She seems to say that love and unity are the opposite of conflict. Women, she says, bring love and unity into the workplace. She seems to feel that more women in the workplace will reduce the conflict before it arises.

Wheatley (year) has multiple conceptualizations of conflict. Conflict around diversity, for example, is negative. Conflict about discovery that leads to dialogue and learning is positive. In the moment, it is difficult to know if a conflict is positive or negative. But Wheatley extends yet again the ideas of both Follett and Kanter by talking about the need not to resolve conflict and create a perfectly peaceful environment, but seek disturbance. She says, “One of our greatest friends on this journey of discovery is a very strange ally—disturbance. It feels important to me to highlight disturbance’s role as a friend because I have come to see certainty as a curse.” (Disturb Me Please, 2000, p. XX) [this needs an author’s name instead]

Change

So we come to the critical and most diverse topic addressed by the three authors—change. Follett (year) simply argues that there must be individual change before there can be organizational change. She goes on to observe that having the same approach and the doing the same things, but expecting a different result, is insanity. This mechanistic view of organizations is understandable, but is hard to distinguish from the traditional, linear, cause-effect view embedded in most management literature of the time.

Kanter (1983), on the other hand, makes change central to her writing. Her famous work entitled “The Change Masters” is one of the first in a long list of management books on leading
change. Kanter describes seeing change as threat or opportunity. “Segmentalism,” which Kanter describes as the forces that limit the organization’s ability to know itself and limits corporations’ ability to innovate and change. She says, “Under segmentalism, change is a threat. It is perhaps because there has been so much segmentalism in large American corporations that so many managers I talk with feel dislocated, disoriented by changes” (p. 62).

For Kanter and Follett, positive change is a choice. They imply a naïve sense that good intentions, innovation, and fearlessness will bring about positive change. Wheatley sees it differently. For Wheatley (year), change is inherent in all systems. Change is a constant. The prerequisite to change can be fear or hope. That is our only choice. Wheatley (year, this should be the distrubuges leaders to drill down into themselves and acknowledge their ignorance and embrace uncertainty with hope. She says (cite reference),

Noticing what disturbs me has been an incredibly useful lens into my interior, deeply held beliefs. When I'm shocked at another's position, I have the opportunity to see my own position in greater clarity. When I hear myself saying, "How could anyone believe something like that?!" a doorway has opened for me to see what I believe. These moments of true disturbance are great gifts. In making my beliefs visible, they allow me to consciously choose them again, or change them. (p.1)

Motivation

Motivation is intentional change. How do leaders transmit the intention to change? How do they direct others to change? For Parker (Follett?) (year), whose framing is always based on her experience with American democracy, the best kinds of change come from the people. Bottom-up communication will push the company in the right direction. She argues that coercive power motivating change is the curse of the universe. She coins the term “co-active power” and
Feminism and Leadership says it leads to the enrichment and advancement of every human soul. In a similar theme, Kanter (year) argues that it is the segmented organizational system that limits contact with the ideas of others that is demoralizing and demotivating. She says, “The motivation to solve problems declines in segmental systems. Segmentalism discourages people from seeing problems” (p. 32). For Wheatley (year), people are self-motivating. They need meaningful work, meaningful problems to solve. They need clear vision and respect. But for Wheatley, the whole idea of motivation is problematic. She says there is a simpler approach to motivation that is much more effective. She believes people need to be trusted and optimistically considered good. She explained that if you want somebody to be something that they are not, they should be treated as if they already are.

Our reading of the authors in the area of power, relationships, conflict, change and motivation is clearly superficial. Each one gives these topics a much greater treatment than we have described in this short paper. But even in this superficial read, it is clear that there are themes that are beginning to emerge that differentiate these idea leaders from the mainstream thinkers of their time. In the next section, we will describe the significance of these themes in a reconceptualization of leadership in a global context.

Critical Review

In this section, we will argue that women conceptualize leadership and some of the key aspects of organizations differently than their male colleagues. We use, of course, the three authors that have been the focus of this study. While we cannot say how generalizable our claims might be, we are confident that there is a divergence of perspectives that is somewhat, if not largely, gender based that looks at power in a different way, places a different definition and emphasis on relationships, reconceptualizes conflict and change, and takes a more holistic view
of motivation. These views are not exclusive to one gender. These views are surely embraced and advocated by some men. Some women also repudiate them. But these statements do, we believe, begin to be the basis of a feminist perspective on leadership. We claim “a” feminist perspective on leadership. It is not “the” feminist perspective on leadership. Three different authors might yield a different perspective. Kark (2004) rightly suggests that feminism creates a lens through which one can see the world. Follett, Kanter, and Wheatley each have a similar lens.

We are very far upstream in our study. That is to say that we are not looking at actual gender based differences between managers as did Eagly and Johnson (1990), nor do we examine how gender impacts perception of social context (Ridgeway, 2001). We are doing a rhetorical analysis looking for a differing reconceptualization of some of the key points of leadership in order to create a foundation for examining how women leaders might behave differently. Our findings can be summarized in Table 1.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

Power

Traditional concepts of power clearly place it within the individual (Hammond, Anderson and Cissna, 2003). The oft cited French and Raven Model (1959) provides a power typology-reward-coercive-referent-expert-and legitimate—that is located within an individual. An individual has the power to reward, coerce, etc. Pfeffer (1992) extends the traditional view of power that is mechanistic, with individuals like batteries storing power to be used to motivate, lead, and direct.

Each of the authors says real and productive power is created in a relationship, clearly setting the stage for a reconceptualization of relationships and change. The feminist view, beginning with Follett, introduces a different model that is more compatible with the notions of
worldliness and sustainability. Follett, in her 1918 book called “The New State,” makes a strong case for a practiced democracy. For Follett, power is defused in the citizens and comes into use only through the appropriate interaction between citizen and citizen or government and citizen. She says in papers from the London School of Economics, "It seems to me that whereas power usually means power-over, the power of some person or group over some other person or group, it is possible to develop the conception of power-with, a jointly developed power, a co-active, not a coercive power” (p. XX). In this line, Follett introduces the possibility that power resides not in the individual, but in the relationship.

The notion is continued by Kanter (1983), who describes a more linear, mechanistic view of power that is more compatible with the traditional view as she describes “Power Failure in Management Circuits.” But this metaphorical notion is not unfaithful to Follett’s idea that power in located in the relationship. For Kanter, power comes from knowledge that flows within a social network. The “management circuit” that she describes is indeed a social network of complex relationships that a knowledge generating.

Wheatley (1992) extends this notion and writes about power in the individual as weak and less significant than the power that can be harnessed through relationships. The relational power is “emergent,” according to Wheatley, which means that it is not only sustaining, but also sustainable. “Emergent phenomena always exert much greater power than the sum of their parts, and they always posses unique qualities that are different from the local actions that engendered them” (p. XX).

**Relationships**

It is difficult for Follett (1918) to see herself outside the context of the collective. Unlike the largely individualist thinkers of her day, she placed great emphasis on community ingenuity.
She clearly described how good ideas become great as they become subjects for interaction. As the group owns the ideas, they are enhanced through the democratic process. Later in her papers from the London School of Economics, Follett (1932) blurs self and other so significantly that we are left to assume that the co-creation of ideas is the only way ideas exist.

It is now evident that self and others are merely different points of view of one and the same experience, two aspects of one thought. Neither of these partial aspects can hold us, we seek always that which includes self and others. To recognize the community principle in everything we do should be our aim, never to work with individuals as individuals. If I go to have a talk with a mother about her daughter, I cannot appeal to the mother, the daughter, or my own wishes, only to that higher creation which we three make when we come together. (p. 23)

Kanter (1997) once again masks her approach in more traditional language, speaking of humans as “assets” to be “leveraged” (p. XX). But at the core, much of what she describes in her ongoing work on change is related to adjusting a relationship to change an organization. Kanter lacks the metaphor of science that permeates Wheatley’s work. Not traditional, linear science, but complexity based science. From that Wheatley (1992, 2006) draws a rich, sustaining, and worldly view of relationships in the context of a larger system, placing emphasis on communication to sustain. She said:

In nature, if a system is in distress, the solution is always to connect it to more of itself. As the network of relationships is rewoven and strengthened, the system processes new information and becomes healthier. A human community becomes stronger and more competent as new connections are formed with those formerly excluded, as it brings in
those who sit on the periphery, as communication reaches more parts of the system, and as better relationships are developed. (p. XX)

Thus, sustaining organizations are lead by people who build relationships and continually feed their colleagues new information. Leadership is the process of relationship building through information feeding. Power comes from what a group can do together when they have enough information for common action.

Conflict

Conflict is inherent in all groups, according to the traditional view. Conflict arises within the group around conflicting perceptions. It arises from outside the group in the form of competition. Competition and conflicts, according to the traditional view, identify the stronger, the more fit, the winner.

For Follett, conflict should be replaced with collaboration. Collaboration is an opportunity to learn. Competition is an opportunity to learn. In previous pages we introduced Follett’s (1924) notion of integration, which is, by our reading, a no conflict oriented way of discovery. She said,

If your business is so organized that you can influence a co-manager while he is influencing you, so organized that a workman has an opportunity of influencing you as you have of influencing him; if there is an interactive influence going on all through the time between you, power may be built up. Throughout history we see that control brings disastrous consequences whenever it outruns integration. (p. XX)

Kanter (1983 echoes a similar concern as she discusses how leaders in organizations have lost connection with their people. Conflict, she asserts, arises from the gap between what leaders think their employees know and what they really know. The assumption of ignorance leads to the
neglect of creative capacity that, when under utilized, goes away. She clearly asserts that people and not the system or the organization, are responsible for success. In an attack on “scientific management,” Kanter says people “constituted not assets but sources of error” (p. 18).

Kanter (1978, 1983), as do Follett and Wheatley, do not deal with the issue of conflict as much as they deal with “segmentalism” (p. 67). It is not conflict as much as it is isolation that keeps people from living their full lives within the context of the organization. As a core practice for life affirming leaders, Wheatley (2006) says, “Solve unsolvable problems by bringing new voices into the room. Systems grow healthier as they connect with those formerly excluded. New and different information changes how we define the problem, and make new solutions available” (p. 1). Bringing new voices into the room is not a strategy for making rivals or enemies. It is not a competitive strategy. It is a renewing strategy that embraces change.

**Change**

While change is a central theme for each of the authors, change is conceived differently by them all. Follett (1924) examines the problematic of imposing change. She argues that leaders cannot use power or shared power, only provide opportunities for others to develop power. Thus, change is a collective act that cannot be fully anticipated by an individual leader.

Kanter (1983), who has written prolifically on change and change strategies, advocates a much more leader centric view. While it would not be fair to summarize her approach in these few lines, it is fair to say that Kanter offers a more traditional view, focusing on speed, strategies for flexibility and incremental change over big break-throughs. Like Follett, she encourages a broad involvement of others and widespread sharing of information.

Wheatley (2006) extends both Follett’s and Kanter’s work, and using the complexity theory based notion of emergence, describes how change occurs from “the bottom up” in
hierarchical organizations. She said, “Change begins as local actions spring up simultaneously in many different areas. If these changes remain disconnected, nothing happens beyond each locale. However, when they become connected, local actions can emerge as a powerful system with influence at a more global or comprehensive level.” (Wheatley & Frieze, 2006, p. XX).

Wheatley’s notion of change is similar to and influenced by Edward Lorenz (Wheatley, 1992), a leading chaos theory scientist who developed the notion of “sensitive dependence on initial condition” (p. XX). She further suggests that a strong network of relationships is essential for this positive, ongoing and productive change to occur. It is in this holistic paradigm where Wheatley begins to bridge from the feminist perspective to the more worldly perspective.

Motivation

Some might define motivation as localized change imposed on others. This is clearly contrary to each of the authors we have described. Follett (1924) sees motivation as a hollow act. She says that to confer power on others is an empty gesture that does not motivate. She argues that it is the role of leaders to help others self motivate by growing power for themselves.

Similarly, Kanter (1983) writes extensively about empowerment. In a position that is different from Follett, Kanter seems to argue that people can be motivated through opportunity for innovation.

It is Wheatley (1992) who really takes us into a complete reconceptualization of motivation that on the one hand seems to say that motivation is irrelevant, and on the other hand show us how intentionality “emerges.” Wheatley (2006) writes about the life cycle of emergence suggesting that if one has the context for meaningful work, motivation is not an issue. In the first stage of emergence, people form networks of likeminded others. While networks tend to have fluid memberships and semi permeable boundaries, meaning begins to form. People develop
common language and some shared goals. In the second stage, Wheatley suggests that communities of practice form where good ideas race through the network, infusing it with innovation. People do not need to be motivated because they are hungry to participate and serve both their own needs and the needs of others. In the third stage, a system of influence grows whose form can never be predicted. The innovations of the previous stages become the norms. Critic become believers and innovators gain status. Motivation, again, is irrelevant.

Wheatley’s notion of emergence is particularly important in our discussion of the “worldly world.” She says:

Emergence is the fundamental scientific explanation for how local changes can materialize as global systems of influence. As a change theory, it offers methods and practices to accomplish the systems-wide changes that are so needed at this time. As leaders and communities of concerned people, we need to intentionally work with emergence so that our efforts will result in a truly hopeful future. No matter what other change strategies we have learned or favored, emergence is the only way change really happens on this planet. And that is very good news. (Wheatley & Frieze, p. 1)

In Wheatley’s work we begin to see the emergence of meta themes that, while they will remain undeveloped in this paper, are worth mentioning. Follett, Kanter and Wheatley offer a more participating, non-hierarchical view of organizations that is relationships based. Rather than the military hierarchy or sports metaphor (Morgan, 1977) the three seem to be influenced by family, ecology, and living systems.
Comparisons and Implications

It many have been over 100 years ago when Follett first began adding to the literature on leadership. Clearly her ideas reached beyond the traditional perspective and into a more worldly view. But she did not go far enough. Kanter, who tied these ideas more closely to the current business literature, further strengthened the threads started by Follett. It is clear that Wheatley, more than any of the authors, lead us to a notion of what leadership will be like in a worldly world.

Wheatley’s approach is closer to a worldly notion of leadership for several reasons. First, her approach, driven by complexity science, is much more holistic. Unlike Follett, who was somewhat bound by a public administration paradigm, or Kanter who was clearly driven by a business paradigm, Wheatley sees with a wider lens. She is not just interested in making more effective leader, but what effective leaders will do for the world. She is not just interested in power for powers sake, but sustainability. She is not just interested in ethical leadership and right action, but in a stewardship perspective that is temporally holistic.

I Table 1 we detail how each of the areas related to leadership that we examine in this paper are evolving towards the “worldly” approach. First we show the traditional view. They we examine the feminist view. The final column adds the worldly view. Power moves from being held by individuals in the traditional view, to being held in a relationship in the feminist view, to being a co-creation in the worldly view. The worldly view of power, most cemented by Wheatley, suggests power is only gained when people come together around a common problem in a productive process (2006). As power emerges, so do the consequences of the action. Powerful acts are never single acts, but they are the result of persistence over time.
Similarly relationships are not just assets that create competitive advantage. Wheatley really extends the feminist perspective to suggest that relationships are all that we really have. Relationships are our sources of information, comfort and control. They provide context for meaning making and understanding. They bind us to collective action that directs the system. Conflict in the worldly paradigm, is not the way winner and losers are determined. In the worldly paradigm victory is an underdetermined concept. Conflict is also more than an opportunity to learn. Conflict is an opportunity to bring sustenance to the organization, to the system by productively working through differences that lead to adaptation and improvement. In the same way change is not something that can or should be limited. Change is emergent in the worldly paradigm. Once critical mass is reached, change occurs at a systems level above the influence of a single individual. For example, Wheatley writes about the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Think about how the Berlin Wall suddenly came down, how the Soviet Union ended, how corporate power quickly came to dominate globally. In each case, there were many local actions and decisions, most of which were invisible and unknown to each other, and none of which was powerful enough by it to create change. But when these local changes coalesced, new power emerged (p. 1).

Emergent change is not created nor motivated, as the traditional paradigm might suggest. In the traditional paradigm, even he feminist one, motivation creates action, which creates relationships. The result of right action and strong relationships is a positive sense of hope. Wheatley and the worldly paradigm say hope comes first. Action is diffused in a system of multiple relationships. Outcomes are underdetermined over time. But hope is what will keep us alive.

Hope is what propels us into action. We’ve been taught to dream of a better world as the
necessary first step in creating one. We create a clear vision for the future we want, then we set a strategy, make a plan, and get to work. We focus strategically on doing only those things that have a high probability of success. As long as we “keep hope alive” and work hard, our endeavors will create the world we want.

Surely there is much more work that needs to be done in conceptualizing leadership from a worldly perspective. In this paper we have shown how some of the ideas that orbit the complex notion of leadership have evolved through a feminist perspective to a worldly perspective.
Table 1: Five Themes of Approaches to Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Concept</th>
<th>Traditional View</th>
<th>A Feminist View</th>
<th>A Worldly View</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>Is held by “powerful individuals”</td>
<td>Is held in a relationship</td>
<td>Is a co-creation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Create competitive advantage</td>
<td>Are the locus of identity</td>
<td>Bind collective action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>Is an opportunity to win</td>
<td>Is an opportunity to learn</td>
<td>Is an opportunity to sustain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>Should be limited, controlled</td>
<td>Should be embraced Experienced</td>
<td>Is the same as opportunity, tipping points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Internal: Coercive most effective</td>
<td>Internal: Vision most effective</td>
<td>External: Created by the environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


http://www.berkana.org/pdf/BeyondHopeandFear.pdf


http://www.berkana.org/articles/core_practices.htm

