

Learning and Teaching in Educational Leadership SIG Newsletter

The LTEL-SIG brings together discipline specialists, educational theorists, curriculum developers, educational researchers, classroom experts, practitioners, policy makers, and others concerned with teaching in Educational Administration.



Message from the Chair

Welcome to the Fall 2016 Issue of the LTEL SIG Newsletter.

This being my first year as the SIG's Chair, I determined that it was time to enter a discourse concerning what the purpose of our SIG was, is, and should be. The question: what and how the future work of our SIG should be emphasized and pursued?

To that end, working with our Newsletter Editor Ian Sutherland, we chose two contributors. The first is the SIG's first

chair, one who could bring a perspective based on the history of the SIG (see Ira Bogotch's "An Invited Critique"). We follow that article with a glimpse of one path to explore for the future (see "A Call for Framing Education Leadership from a Cognitive and Learning Sciences Lens" by Steve Myran). I call your attention to the important and thoughtful questions that both scholars raise.

Bogotch's and Myran's thinking is that there has been a level of disregarding by our field: one speaks to a narrowing of educational leadership theory and the other of an ignoring of what the learning and cognitive sciences have discovered that is applicable to our discipline.

By pointing out that schools and systems have been built on empirically untested assumptions (as Myran does), and claiming that our research is ignoring the dynamics found across social sciences and therefore not confronting the problems of reconstructing egalitarian community and democratic and socially just society (as Bogotch does), both authors force us to step back and consider reconceptualizing everything we are doing in our field.

These critiques delineate queries that we need to investigate. Has teaching and learning research *narrowed* leadership theory development? Do we continue to present courses as linear and unproblematic - perhaps now even more than ever before - because we have allowed the standards and outcomes movements (*which I would argue are externally-driven and not based on our own profession's on-going research and practice*) to dictate program content and development? Are we in need of a broadening of our research of the learning and teaching of educational leadership where we incorporate curriculum theory and the complicated conversation that then arises (Pinar, 2004) which is about "discovering and articulating, for oneself and others, the educational significance" of the courses we teach and the learning we require "for self and society in the ever-changing

Inside This Issue

1	Message from the Chair
3	An Invited Critique
11	Promotion News
12	A Call for Framing Educational Leadership from a Cognitive and Learning Sciences Lens
13	Awards
18	Graduate Student News
18	Information Age Publishing
19	Award Nominations

historical moment?” (p. 16). Are we ready to reconstruct schools from the bottom up, based on not a modernist scientific management model that runs counter to what we know about how people learn? Where do these questions leave us in our search for effective leadership pedagogies/andragogies that will reinforce the aim of developing an educational system that aims for democratic community and social justice?

We live in a postmodern condition where we teach (and have our students learn) that change is a constant, and that we are living in a time of fuzziness that cannot be answered simply through the Cartesian beginnings of our discipline. So, let's begin the discourse! It is my hope that these articles will begin the needed discussion to define a direction to move forward for the SIG. Start writing if you are wanting to respond or contribute; your thinking is important and welcome.

Don't forget to check out our other activities featured in this Newsletter.

LTEL SIG Awards – Kottkamp Dissertation of the Year

Remember, your best 2016-graduating doctoral student(s) should be nominated for the Kottkamp Award. Nominations are due by the end of January, 2017... but you should be nominating now! For more information, contact Dr. Vicki Park (vicki.park@sjsu.edu).

The LTEL SIG Award - Distinguished Faculty Award

This award is given to recognize a distinguished record of excellence in research related to teaching and learning in Educational Leadership and Administration. We need nominees for award! For more information, contact Dr. Edward Fuller (Ejf20@psu.edu) or Dr. Mariela Rodriguez (Mariela.rodriguez@utsa.edu).

Graduate Students in the SIG

Please have your graduate student contact Mounir Bourkiza (see his article in this Newsletter), our Graduate Student Representative, for more information important to them.

Remember, *you should be sharing this newsletter with all your colleagues* as we continue our efforts to increase our membership and develop a SIG that will continue to meet the needs of those interested in the study of learning and teaching in educational leadership.

See you soon at UCEA or, most importantly, at our annual Business Meeting this Spring at the AERA Annual Meeting from April 27 to May 1 2017 in San Antonio, Texas! Tiffany Wright, the SIG Program Chair, has put in hard work processing the research submissions and creating special sessions for our SIG. A deep and well-deserved “thank you” to her for that effort.

Warmest Regards,

Daniel Reyes-Guerra, PhD
SIG Chair

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Learn more about the LTEL SIG online at:
<http://www.aera.net/SIG129/LTELSIG129>



An invited critique: From Teaching in Educational Administration to Learning and Teaching in Educational Leadership (1994 to 2016)

Ira E. Bogotch

Florida Atlantic University

Overview and Assessment

The last two decades, 1994 to 2016, have seen a proliferation in the presentation and publication (peer-reviewed) of research studies focused on school leadership preparation programs and leadership learning and development overall. Within this emerging literature, educational leadership researchers have designed studies that search for *direct* evidence linking leadership preparation to school leadership performance and, in turn, to school improvement and student achievement. In other words, research focused on leadership preparation/learning now represents an established research agenda within the professoriate.

That was not always the case. As the Teaching in Educational Administration Special Interest Group's first program chair, I recall reading blind reviews of TEA-SIG proposals communicating the sentiment that "the topic and quality [of the proposals] are not up to AERA, Division A research standards." More than a few of those early reviewers opposed both the self-reflectivity of the written proposals as well as the limited classroom and/or program/institutional foci which dominated the research designs. They seemed to say that the topic of teaching and learning might be appropriate for extended conversations, but it did not qualify as legitimate AERA/UCEA research.

In the first official AERA program of the SIG, Lynn Bosetti and Benjamin Levin (1995) captured the SIG's *raison d'être*. In their introductory remarks, they wrote:

Teaching is an important part of the work of most professors of educational administration. However, unlike research and service, innovations in teaching tend to be developed by individual and small groups and passed on to others, if at all, by word of mouth and personal contact. We know that there are many interesting teaching practices in educational administration programs around the world. Continued efforts to alter and improve teaching are vital to our programs. Yet there are few regular vehicles for exchanging ideas about teaching, especially when compared with the opportunities for exchanging scholarly work. Journals publish few articles on teaching in educational administration, and these tend to be relatively abstract. Conferences of academics tend to focus much more on research than on teaching. The lack of opportunity in this area is particularly problematic in that teaching changes primarily through various sorts of informal exchange. The advent of the TEA SIG last year gives us a vehicle within AERA to give more attention to teaching issues.

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Much has changed since the early days of the TEA-SIG. Today, it is no longer a question whether one's own teaching and learning are legitimate topics worthy of empirical research and debate. But there was another sea change which teaching and learning opened, and that was that *all* educational leadership professors could contribute to this dialogue, not just members of UCEA or regular attendees of AERA. In other words, the very topic of teaching and learning (of leadership) helped to democratize our field and bring wider diversity of people and ideas – as never before. Looking back, I don't think the TEA/LTEL-SIG has received the credit it deserves for this unintended, but powerful, consequence.

At the same time, a new question needs to be asked of the professoriate, namely, whether the subfield of teaching and learning research has had an unintended consequence of narrowing research on leadership theory development. That is to say, has the self-reflexivity and self-study of our field of educational leadership redirected scholars away from studying the socio-cultural dynamics, school-community partnerships, and leadership for social justice in contexts beyond leadership preparation programs? Remember, the distance between leadership preparation and actual administrative practices continues to make the search for direct evidence elusive in terms of school, student and community effects. Of course, there is no reason why both leadership development studies and theory-building cannot be conducted in concert, except for the fact that this artificial and empirical distinction continues to be promoted by individual researchers, by our professional associations, and by our scholarly journals.

In 1998, I wrote a feature article for the then TEA-SIG newsletter (published by our sponsor, Eye on Education). The article was titled, "What's in our name?" It was written many years before Professor Robert Kottkamp as SIG Chair led the call to change the name of the SIG from Teaching in Educational Administration to Learning and Teaching in Educational Leadership. In the concluding section subtitled "Developing Programs," I wrote a generative framework, deliberately building in

ambiguity because it is impossible to predict a democratic future for educational leadership. Rather than assigning familiar course titles, I offered a logic chain which may still be relevant today.

How do pedagogical leadership practices (teaching/learning/researching) transform thinking and action? For me, the answer lies in combining these practices with programmatic efforts... My current notions of program follow this "logical" sequence: First, individuals begin to see "things" as differences, alternatives, multiples, and as fragments. Second, moral discourse is added to the interpretations of differences, alternatives, multiples and fragments in a way that emphasizes social contexts. Third, ordinary events and interactions need to be experienced by everyone from the perspectives of power and privilege. In this rarefied atmosphere, the head is both clear and dizzy. I view power as a necessary out-of-body learning experience on the way towards leadership. Fourth nonjudgmental and descriptive discourses is taught and practiced on the differences, alternatives, multiples and fragments. Fifth, past knowledge and previous experiences are brought to the table by all participants. If we know more than we practice, why can't we do things differently? Sixth, the question WHAT IF is asked, then practiced in the context of shared decision-making. Seventh, change/implementation are investigated from different units of analysis: self, classroom, grade, subject, school, system. Eighth, new knowledge is generated from old topics as the familiar is once again deliberately made strange. Ninth, aesthetic intelligences is used to express understandings and lead to culminating (creative) activities. Tenth, external validation procedures are developed for all of the work presented and performed. As part of the validation, a comparison between ordinary and exemplary leadership-in-practice is presented for reinforcement and further redundancy.

Since then, the predominant research agendas in teaching and learning have focused on aligning programs and courses to leadership standards – either to be infused across the program or to be taught as course titles. In either case, however, our research has not pushed leadership preparation program faculties to develop their own unique and contextual logic chains for teaching and learning. So

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long as we see the knowledge base in terms of parts of a program and not a unity of program (aka a curriculum), we end up fragmenting educational leadership as a field. In the processes of developing standards, however, the work invariably entails conversations regarding the order of the standards, in curricular terms, the scope and sequence, which is an implicit chain logic, but not sufficiently explicit so as to advance theory development around diversity and complexity. While over time, the leadership standards themselves have become less directive, less prescriptive and more of a guiding framework – so say the authors - but whether or not educational researchers write inside of a developmental framework or emphasis subject-matter content, we know from policy research, when policies are implemented, they may be used differentially for political purposes. For example, the standards become developmental, formative or summative depending more on power and politics than on curriculum inquiry research and validity studies.

Knowing Our History

What would the founders of the TEA-SIG say about the LTEL-SIG? Who were these professors? To answer these questions, we need to put ourselves inside the decades of the 1980s and 90s for purposes of context. In the years prior to the SIG's founding at AERA in 1994, two professional educational leadership associations, NCPEA and UCEA, had established forums for conversations on preparation programs and teaching methods. Their histories have been well documented (Achilles, 1994; Griffiths, 1979; Murphy, 1992). Achilles (1994) did a 40-year comparison of programmatic reforms in educational leadership beginning in 1950

[Cooperative Program in Educational Administration (CPE A), 1950-1959 CPE A]

and continuing through the National Policy Board, 1987. He came to one “inescapable conclusion”:

Educational Administration [EA] reforms have maintained a trend begun in 1950, at least in terms of form or structure of the proposed reforms. . . . The similarity of the form and structure of the 1980s vision statements and the historical record is incredibly evident. . . . If one accepts the verisimilitude and the need for improvement, the 1980s reports are not visionary; they represent refinements of a goal long since set but not yet attained.

In fact today, we are still debating in both research and practice, structural issues of leadership recruitment, selection, cohort models, interdisciplinary coursework, seminal readings and core values, appropriate cognate areas, research designs, evaluation measures, and, most notably, internship experiences. The original TEA-SIG actually had two birthdays: a hastily called meeting in 1993 chaired by Judith Martin, Phillip Hallinger, and Edwin Bridges. Their behind the scenes work established bylaws and official recognition by AERA as a SIG. At the 1994 Business Meeting, a full slate of officers were “elected.” That is to say that everyone who volunteered for a SIG office was “elected” and told by those present to figure out the structure and roles for themselves. That's essentially how I became the SIG's first Program Co-Chair [along with Woody Hughes of Pepperdine University] for 1995. The following year, 1996, I assumed this role alone.

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I have shared with you some of the hurdles in calling research studies on teaching and learning legitimate within AERA and UCEA. But it is important to understand that in those formative years, leadership was indeed an overtly contested topic. At one invited SIG meeting, the speakers included Donald Willower and Fenwick English. The two had been invited individually, but when they learned about the other speaking, they both wanted to drop out. I had already assumed the SIG Chairpersonship and so I asked the Program Chair, Joseph Claudet of Texas Tech, how we should proceed. It was Joe who choreographed an elaborate dance whereby when one speaker finished, he would exit stage left, while the second speaker entered stage right. Neither speaker interacted – in accordance with their wishes. The Q&A – moderated by Phillip Hallinger - was also coordinated by Joe who looked right and left to signal who would respond. As you read this paragraph, what are you thinking? How would this be handled in 2016, wherein our field, which is just as divided and diffuse as ever, has become more convergent (dare I say politically correct?) given the emerging dominance of both leadership standards and the role played by the Wallace Foundation?

The history of leadership standards has been well documented and continues to influence the structures and mindsets of our field. At the same time, the Wallace Foundation has commissioned studies and used grant monies to set out a reform agenda for educational leadership. In other words, our field continues to be driven by external authorities demanding structural reforms as well as by our own professional research struggles in rethinking our knowledge base and connections to the field of school leadership practices. These tensions also reflect how vulnerable our field has been and continues to be today, whether we benchmark this vulnerability back to Raymond Callahan's classic 1962 study, or Griffiths' 1979 overview, or Joseph Murphy's 1999 "quest" for identifying a center, or English's infamous 2007 UCEA Presidential Address on the anatomy of the field in which he told the audience that after all of our research and reforms, we were no closer to finding our Louis Pasteur. This is a rich history that cries out for contemporary interpretations to inform all teaching and learning empirical studies. We cannot let this remain forgotten.

That we are still engaged in the elusive what and the problematic how (see Townsend & Bogotch, 2008) which results in multiple Piagetian parallel plays variously called instructional leadership, leadership for learning, school-based management, school improvement, distributive leadership, transformational leadership, transformative leadership, equity and choice, and leadership for social justice. The search for leadership along the lines of efficiencies and effectiveness characterize the educational leadership professoriate as engaged in a repetitive and contested quest for meaning(s) and values. Ideological debates across New Public Management, Progressive Education, Neo-liberal globalism and international and cross-cultural research all continue to vie for journal space and attention.

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The question is whether we can afford to continue to replay the above dynamics driven by external authorities and our own career trajectories. Should not our efforts be focused on communicating to our publics the purposes of education as truly educative and moral? Unfortunately, Dewey is not alive to guide us. Translating Dewey via Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom (2004) – a study commissioned by the Wallace Foundation - wrote:

The lesson here is that we need to be skeptical about the “leadership by adjective” literature. Sometimes these adjectives have real meaning, but sometimes they mask the more important underlying themes common to successful leadership, regardless of the style being advocated. P.6

Leithwood et al. concluded that the recommendations related to leadership preparation required more research as the evidence (from “research”) was not persuasive/conclusive. Herein lies the rub: what evidence is conclusive/trustworthy? Can programmatic research ever be trustworthy given multiple contextual variables? This and other important questions were addressed internationally by Jackie Lumby, Gary Crow and Petros Pashiardis in their 2008 Handbook on leadership preparation. The handbook was sponsored by three professional organizations, the University Council for Educational Administration, based in the United States, the British Educational Leadership, Management, and Administration Society, and the Commonwealth Council

Educational Administration and Management. As such, it sought to bring evidence of international collaborations. As recent as 2008, most of the literature still focused on descriptive accounts of distinct programs and modes of delivery with evaluation research still mired in participants’ perceptions and satisfaction, not performance. What is also clear is that leadership preparation has been strongly influenced by research on school improvement – seeking to give aspiring administrators a better understanding of the conditions of schools (as organizations, communities, etc.) as they exist, not as they could or might be. The objectives remain to improve practices (structurally, politically, culturally, and ethically). It is within this framework, that state and national standards have been developed. We have not *advanced leadership development as new learning theories* which take into account world events, a democratic ideal, diversity, and beyond school efforts to minimize social injustices.

Assessing Progress

As is the case of civil rights, our progress can be documented. The field of educational leadership is demographically more diverse. Outlets for publications have provided researchers opportunities to explore international topics of interest, cross-cultural analyses, cultural relevancy, political identities, critical race theories, case analyses and pedagogical leadership issues.

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A forgotten classic is a book titled *Leadership and Learning* by Jentz and Wofford, published in 1979 by McGraw-Hill. It was based on school leadership case studies: “This book presents a theory of personal learning. That learning leads to changed leadership styles as pictured in five cases of administrative conflict and analyzed in commentaries” (p. 3). Methodologically, the authors asked a single leadership question: “How do you see yourself offering leadership in your particular situation?” (p. 179). This approach represented a very different kind of research question for educational leadership. Previously, the underlying assumption of leadership research began as “all things being equal.” Jentz and Wofford presented a view of practical sense making that was decades ahead of the rest of the field. It was not until educational leadership began to accept culturally relevant frameworks, critical perspectives including feminism, and adult learning theories, that the concepts of learning and context became enmeshed in the literature on leadership. But here, too, we must look for evidence on how such research has disrupted mainstream thinking and practices, the persistence of institutional racism as a societal reality, poverty, migration/immigration, and the need to be more inclusive. So, while demographic progress can be cited/referenced, mindsets of deficit thinking, “fit” and “not-a-fit” continue to dominate school district hiring and personnel policies and practices around the world. Nevertheless, significant progress is continuing as diversity extends beyond demographics into the widening range of leadership ideas.

The road to programmatic reforms has been far more difficult and complex than program designers, philanthropic donors, and policymakers had anticipated. I noted in 1998, for example, while programs have striven to include more field-based activities and stronger, if not longer, internships (Milstein, 1993), such innovations have created other programmatic needs such as improved field-site mentoring (Daresh & Playko (1994) and rubric criteria for portfolio assessment (Peters & March, 1994). Thus, what may have begun as a genuine desire to meet the immediate needs of practitioners [i.e., schools and school districts] has led to implementation difficulties along with the need for both new and continuing research studies.

It should be evident that both educational leadership researchers as well as text publishers have taken their cues from these policy and structural dimensions. Such work is timely, and is needed in order for programs to catch up to the fast pace of innovations and implementation. The LTEL-SIG plays an important role in promoting these research efforts, albeit in most instances posthoc. Courses and subject-matter content, however, are still presented as straightforward, linear, and unproblematic. Every higher educational institution in the US has been subject to market forces. A fast growing number of educational leadership programs have, therefore, embraced an entrepreneurial-orientation towards their delivery and content ranging from distance learning to off-campus cohorts. While these structural changes almost always necessitate some changes in the content of the program, none would surprise Achilles were he alive today.

Still absent are studies seeking to integrate the “what works” and “evidence-based” findings with discussions on the purposes, means and ends, of education in society. Today, the field privileges quantitative designs as legitimatizing “evidence” even as we are correlating within-school variables with leadership attitudes, behaviors and student achievement.

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In so doing, we – government funding agencies - have ignored strong evidence from theoretical argumentation as well as strong qualitative designs. The result has been the evolution of a “new science” of learning and leadership as studies seek to strengthen the correlations or add other explanatory variables. The studies have generated lists, checklists, models and conceptual frameworks, a few of which rise to the status of citations in high impact journals. But how do we know whether these “abiding frameworks” are, in fact, more worthy of practice and promotion than others that are also found inside the peer-review literature and foundation studies? Should we, in fact, be chasing after a leadership science?

In many instances, the learning science surrounding educational leadership does not explain or predict desired results. In fact, the methodologization of the research has become the criteria for evidence, ignoring the very real social dynamics of economics, sociology, politics, and the problems of continuously rebuilding community and democracy in the direction of equality and social justice. Many prominent researchers tell us to ignore what we cannot control, but does not this advice take away our power as educational leaders and researchers?

To which I ask, how exactly has the learning science of educational leadership improved the lives of teachers, students, and their families, directly?

Let us continue as independent researchers to build theories and models; but at the same time, require that such theories acknowledge our history as one way of knowing our present and moving into the future. Let us ask that today’s researchers interpret what those who came

before us might say of both our own scholarship as well as advice to be given to the editors of the three UCEA affiliated Journals: *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *The Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership*, and *the Journal of Research on Leadership Education*. Again, the LTEL-SIG, in my view, has an important leadership role in setting out an agenda grounded in curriculum, pedagogy, and leadership development theories.

1. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the TEA-SIG Business Meeting at AERA, Seattle WA, April, 2001

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Promotion News

Share your promotions, new jobs, graduations, and awards with the LTEL-SIG Newsletter committee to feature your accomplishments in our next newsletter!





A Call for Framing Educational Leadership from a Learning and Cognitive Sciences Lens

Steve Myran, Old Dominion University

One of the dominant themes in the field of educational leadership today is that leadership matters in terms of student learning; that effective school leaders can develop the capacities of teachers which in turn can improve student learning outcomes (Darling-Hammond, L., LaPointe, Meyerson & Orr, 2007; Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom 2004; Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, Anderson, Michlin, & Mascal, 2010). More specifically, it is widely cited that school leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school related factors that contribute to student learning (Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom

2004). Others however have disagreed, (Wiseman & Goesling, 2000; Neidermeyer, 2003; Jackson, 2004; King, 2006) and have provided counter evidence to this assertion calling into question the strength of this relationship.

While the tone within the field has increasingly adopted the position that leadership does in fact matter in terms of promoting and shaping student learning, even within this body of evidence there seems to be flaws in logic where scholars maintain this assertion without understanding *how* it matters and what the “essential ingredients of successful leadership are” (Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom 2004, p. 1). Similarly, to date, little is known about how leadership skills and behaviors penetrate school cultures and are then utilized by teachers (Frank et al., 2011). This seems to reveal propositional fallacies, specifically that it affirms the consequent fall in reasoning. The assumption that leadership is a necessary condition for student learning establishes that if there are improvements in student learning, then it must be true that the presence of a priori assumptions about various leadership characteristics or behaviors are associated with these gains in learning. Here we see what Young and Lopez (2005) refer to as the “circular relationship” among our research canons and the questions we ask and the answers we find. It may further reveal a more functionalist view of learning, one that is well supported by the fields’ foundation in scientific management, but is incongruent with the learning and cognitive sciences.

What is particularly troubling is that the students themselves are not prominent in the discussion of student learning (Portela, in Ruairc, Ottesen, & Precey, 2013), taking a passive role or are absent from the discussion entirely (Frost, 2011), where the students themselves are not viewed as an equal part in the dynamic relationship between students, teachers and school leaders (Portela, in Ruairc, Ottesen, & Precey, 2013) and within in the dynamic and ecologically complex context of schooling. Perhaps more importantly, there is a tendency within the field to conceptualize learning as the outcome of a process that is directed and controlled by leadership. Such instrumental and functionalist perspectives misrepresent the nature of knowledge and knowing, disregarding the reciprocal relationship between the learner and their learning contexts (Bandura, 1978; 1985; Alexander, Schallert & Reynold 2009). Instead these perspectives emphasize deterministic outlooks about schools and their leaders further suggesting that knowledge can be delivered or disseminated to passive recipients of a known body of knowledge. Many have criticized these functionalist outlooks (Apple, 1995, 1996; Bowers, 1988, 1995; Kerr, 1996; McLaren, 1995; Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

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As John Dewey (1902) argued, it would be easy to dismiss the way schools are organized as something external to the purposes and ideas of education, but in fact “the manner in which the machinery of instruction bears upon the child...really controls the whole system” (1902, cited in Tyack & Cuban, 1995). In this way these seemingly fine-grained interpretations of the field are important to raise, explore and grapple with.

As Callahan (1962) pointed out, all aspects of schooling were explicitly designed to be analogous to the industrial-age factory. This analogy and the assumptive appropriateness of the bureaucratic rationality for how schools are run became the “grammar” (Tyack, 1994) of our field. While the more prominent role of learning in more recent conceptualizations of leadership and organizations is an important evolution of our field, learning itself tends to be interpreted through this grammar, remaining as part of the industrial analogy where we see learning as a part of the means of production rather than a meaningful goal in its own right. This is related to Heck and Hallinger’s (2005) observation that there is a reluctance in the field of educational leadership to assess and contrast the value of various conceptual and methodological approaches which leaves the field to fall back to what they describe as individual judgments.

Moreover, they highlight the field has struggled to identify and clearly define definitions of leadership and point out that in some cases scholars have simply avoided the issue all together by suggested a focus on “building middle-level or domain specific theories of leadership” (p. 233). In this way, the assumptive appropriateness of scientific management as the de facto theory has been allowed to remain the dominant view while alternative models remain on the periphery. Perhaps most importantly, this acceptance of the de facto theory of leadership allows an ill-defined and conflated view of learning to go largely unchallenged and just as importantly for the substantive body of knowledge about teaching and learning found in the learning and cognitive sciences to go underutilized by the field of educational leadership.

What do we Know about Learning?

So what do we know about learning that hasn’t been adequately integrated into the theories and practices of leadership? As Keith Sawyer (2006) pointed out, by the time researchers had begun systematically studying how people learn, the massive bureaucracies that support public education had already been well established along

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We welcome submissions for the LTEL-SIG Kottkamp Dissertation of the Year Award!



The Robert Kottkamp Outstanding Dissertation Award recognizes a recent doctoral graduate as well as her or his dissertation advisor. The dissertation, successfully defended during the previous calendar year, may investigate educational leadership preparation and development programs, assess the impact of preparation on leadership practice, examine policy issues related to state or national leadership standards assessment and credentialing, or contribute through disciplined inquiry to the knowledge base about learning and teaching in educational leadership. The dissertation award also recognizes the contributions by former SIG Chair Robert Kottkamp (emeritus professor at Hofstra University) and co-founder of the UCEA/LTEL SIG Taskforce on Evaluating Leadership Preparation Programs. Please continue to check our website and your email for submission information.

knowing, teaching and leading such organizations. As a result, schools as we have come to know them today, were designed based on a set of assumptions that were never empirically tested. This has been hugely problematic for our field because these assumptions cast the student as the product of schooling. Sawyer (2006) outlined these assumptions as 1) knowledge being seen as a collection of facts and procedures, 2) the goal of education was to disseminate these facts and procedures to students, 3) viewed teachers' job as transmitting this knowledge to students, 4) that simpler facts always proceed more complex ideas, 5) and success was achieved when students could demonstrate they'd mastered these facts and procedures through testing. This traditional view, what Papert (1993) called *instructionism*, is seen as inculcating students with the skills needed in an industrial economy. We can see this perspective ironically enough in scholarship on learning organizations that tend to frame the concept for this an economic and changing nature of work and production perspective (Paletta, 2011; Senge, 1990), while others (Silins, Mulford & Zarins, 2002) defined learning organizations in terms of structure and climate but disregard the learning and cognitive science literature, seeming to privilege organizational components while leaving learning itself ill-defined and lacking conceptual and empirical grounding.

This scientific management outlook about schools, leadership and learning are notably contrasted with the learning and cognitive sciences growing body of evidence about how people learn. In the last 20 years, a number of notable efforts have been made to synthesize the research on learning in ways that could be useful to people outside these academic fields as well as to practitioners. *How Children Learn* from the International Bureau of Education (2001), the *American Psychological Association's Learners-Centered Psychological Principles* (1997), the National Academies Press, *How People Learn* (2000), *The Cambridge Handbook of the Learning Sciences* (Sawyer, 2006) and APAs (2015) *Top 20 Principles from Psychology from PreK-12 Teaching and Learning* all provide substantive counter evidence about assumptions about the nature of knowledge, learning and knowing found explicitly and implicitly in the discussion above.

At the risk of oversimplifying this complex literature, most scholars would readily agree that one of the key principles of learning is what Vosniadou (2002) describes as learning environments that encourage students to be active learners. As she points out, "Learning at school requires students to pay attention, to observe, to memorize, to understand, to set goals and to assume responsibility for their own learning. These cognitive activities are not possible without the active involvement and engagement of the learner" (Vosniadou, 2002 p. 8). Similarly, Bandura (1997; 2006) proposed the overarching concept of human agency which he outlines has having four core properties; intentionality, forethought, self-reactiveness, and self-reflectiveness. As Bandura (2006) points out, through one's human agency and self-regulation, one can set goals and proactively work towards those goals while assessing their progress, making subsequent adjustments and achieving their goals. In this way, one can see that students are not the passive recipients of effectively led bureaucratic organizations, but active and deliberate agents who give shape and direction to their own learning experiences.

Further defining learning, Alexander, Schallert, and Reynold's, (2009) work that sought to define the learning from a holistic "topographical perspective" is among the more important works in terms of a balanced and dimensional definition of learning. The authors lay out 9 core dimensions of learning:

1. Learning is change
2. Learning is inevitable, essential, and ubiquitous
3. Learning can be resisted
4. Learning may be disadvantageous
5. Learning can be tacit and incidental as well as conscious and intentional

Continued...

6. Learning is framed by our humanness
7. Learning refers to both a process and a product
8. Learning is different at different points in time
9. Learning is interactional

Given these nine dimensions they propose a definition that operates in concert with these core principles of learning.

Learning is a multidimensional process that results in a relatively enduring change in a person or persons, and consequently how that person or persons will perceive the world and reciprocally respond to its affordances physically, psychologically, and socially. The process of learning has as its foundation the systemic, dynamic, and interactive relation between the nature of the learner and the object of the learning as ecologically situated in a given time and place as well as over time. (Alexander, Schallert & Reynold, 2009 p. 186)

A strong theme across this literature is the active versus passive engagement of the learner. Here we see that students who actively seek out and reflect on learning goals (Benware & Deci, 1984), actively listen (McDonald et al. 1979; Spurline, Dansereau, Larson, and Brooks, 1982), engage in active information processing (Golinkoff & Rosinski, 1976; Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Miller, 1956; Ryan, 1980; Tharp, 1980; Wittrock, 1974; 1978), make predictions (Markman, 2013), use a deliberate variety of strategies and assume responsibility for their own learning (Wittrock, 1974; 1978), engage in active elaboration (Sökmen, 1997), use a variety of strategies (Weinstein & Underwood, 1985), make sustained and deliberate efforts (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987), engage in metacognitive behaviors (Chipman & Segal, 2013) and self-regulated behaviors (Pintrich, DeGroot, 1990) experience better learning outcomes, deeper processing, and new cognitive structures (Meichenbaum, 1980). Supporting this brief synthesis, in a statement of shared principles, the U.S. Department of Education and the National Science Foundation (1992) together endorsed mathematics and science curricula that "promote active learning, inquiry, problem solving, cooperative learning, and other instructional methods that motivate students" (p. 3). This highlights what we might call the primacy of active agency; that is, learning and development requires deliberate, active and self-reflective action on the part of the learner. Just as importantly, this brief synthesis also reveals that the learner is plays an interactional and reciprocal role in their own learning, which is incongruent with the instrumental and functional perspective our field is historically grounded in.

Changing Narrative: Privileging Learning over Leadership

Because much of the field of educational leadership research has relied on a logical positivist and reductionist research canon (English & Anderson, 2004), the specific ontological and epistemological perspectives tend to reify a functionalist view of school organizations (Burell & Morgan, 1979), limits the voice of humanities based educational research (Howe, 2009), and creates a dismissive environment for alternative research paradigms (Donmoyer, 1999). Moreover, our field's research traditions are too limiting to adequately explore the epistemological and ontological "baggage" of our field (English and Anderson, 2004). As Bandura (1985) so accurately stated, "what theorists believe people to be determines which aspects of human functioning they explore most thoroughly and which they leave unexamined. Conceptions of human nature thus focus inquiry on selected processes and are in turn strengthened by findings of paradigms embodying the particular view" (p. 81). In this way the more deterministic means by which our field has framed the role of school leaders in shaping student learning reifies these instrumental and functionalist perspectives and in turn constrained the epistemological, ontological and methodological approach to exploring these relationships.

Continued...

This is not to say that our field hasn't grappled with these issues. For example, Evens (1991) pointed out, "The deep significance of the task of school administration is to be found in the pedagogical ground of its vocation. It is the notion of education that gives the idea of leadership its whole purpose" (pp. 17, 3). However, given the tendency for the field to retrench to assumptions of scientific management, this instrumental and functionalist grounding constrains the entire enterprise. In this way an important question for our field to ask is, are our notions about leadership appropriately and adequately grounded in the vary science is purports to have influence over, that is learning.

The tendency for the field to reify and replicate its early grounding in scientific management keeps the tremendous knowledge base from the learning and cognitive sciences at arms-length. Perhaps the field is uncomfortable interrogating its own core assumptions? As Sawyer (2005) points out in the *Cambridge Handbook of the Learning Sciences*, "learning sciences research might also lead to more radical alternatives that would make school as we know them obsolete, leaving today's big high school as empty as the shuttered steel factories of the faded industrial economy" (p. 568). This kind of transformation, untethered from the assumptions of scientific management, and rebuilt from a far more appropriate theoretical grounding is not possible if the community of educational leadership scholars persists in perpetuating the instrumental and functionalist norms and habits long privileged in our field.

Here I take the position that the learning and cognitive sciences have been largely ignored by the field of school administration and leadership; preferring to stand behind what Beachum (2008) called the "convenient covert cloak of positivism, scientific management, and/or structuralism." I take the position that the future of our field rests, in large measure, on our ability to better capitalize on this tremendous knowledge base and avoid the historic tendency to replicate the bureaucracies

that grew out of the push to build on product and efficiency oriented assumptions about teaching, learning and the administration of schools. In this way I argue that the underlying assumptions about the student as a passive recipient in their own learning has reached its functional and philosophical limitation. Without a substantive shift in how we view the student I argue virtually all research based leadership and instructional practices will lack their potential fidelity as the result of being filtered through a belief system, which is fundamentally at odds with what we know about the importance of the student as active and deliberate agents in their own learning.

Taken together we can see what are arguably debilitating disconnects between what learning sciences researchers have discovered about the nature of teaching and learning and how we conceptualize, organize and execute and study leadership and schooling. Here I advocate for flipping the narrative and privileging learning over leadership. In doing so we can re-conceptualize our roles as scholars and practitioners of school leadership grounded in deeply principled understandings about the science of learning that respects the active and deliberate agency of the individual learner. This is not an easy task to say the least. Because active the role that we take in learning is largely hidden from plain view and requires purposeful reflection and engagement, by the time we are old enough and developmentally capable of more sophisticated metacognitive thinking, many of us have built up a conceptual system grounded in a knowledge dissemination and reception model. Capitalizing on the tremendous knowledge base we have at our disposal and avoiding the tendency to replicate assumptions and practices that are inadequately grounded in the science of learning will require a willingness to interrogate our individual and collection core assumptions about the field. Fundamentally we have to ask ourselves do our notions about leadership have appropriate and adequate grounding in the vary science we claim to have influence over.

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LTEL Graduate Student News

Mounir Bourkiza, Florida Atlantic University

As we approach the 30th annual UCEA Convention, I find my excitement level rising in anticipation to attend what will be my first major research conference. My professors have always emphasized the pivotal role of research conferences in the design of Educational Leadership programs in many institutions and have highlighted their indispensability in preparing future researchers.

Indeed research conferences provide an excellent opportunity for graduate students to refine their ideas and sharpen their arguments whether by attending the organized conference sessions or by engaging in the informal hallway conversations with peers, professors, practitioners, and leading researchers in the field.

Students who have not yet decided on their dissertation topic are also afforded a chance to be exposed to a plethora of ideas in the field of Educational Leadership and discover which topics arouse their interest and ignite their enthusiasm.

It is important for graduate students to plan in advance to take full advantage of what the convention has to offer. First, check with the graduate students association at your institution to inquire whether or not it reimburses for travel expenses. If it does, the university will typically require an application to be submitted a few weeks before the date of the event.

The UCEA website provides a detailed schedule with the sessions' abstracts and descriptions. Check the event program and make a schedule of the sessions that you would like to attend. If you find interest in sessions running simultaneously, it is not a bad idea to schedule both of them and then decide on one at the time of the event. In fact, it is good practice to have alternative sessions for your entire schedule.

One event that is of special interest to graduate students is the Graduate Student Summit; it starts one day before the general conference but it is worth the effort as students can hear what their peers are researching and studying at other institutions.

In planning for what sessions to attend, it is useful to keep in mind that the sessions are organized in different formats: Symposia, poster paper, presentations, round table debates, international community-building sessions, innovative sessions, special sessions, and critical conversations and networking sessions.

The convention is also a major networking opportunity, so be prepared to share your research interests and articulate your ideas to showcase yourself in the best manner possible. Looking forwards to meeting you in Detroit.

Mounir Bourkiza, Florida Atlantic University
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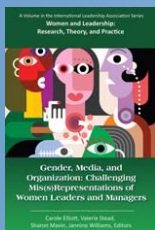
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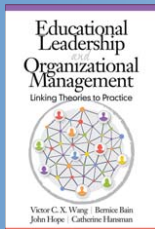
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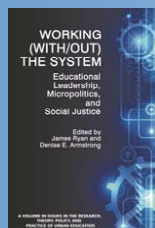
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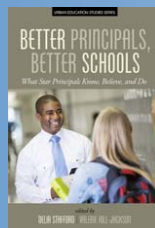
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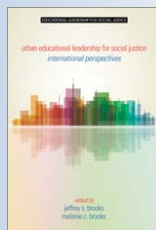
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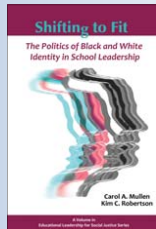
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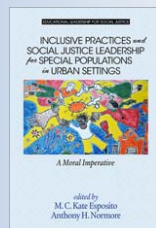
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