will help practitioners make leadership happen more fully for the collective good, independent of their position in the web of relationships that shapes their organization.

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INTRODUCTION

MAPPING THE TERRAIN

Convergence and Divergence Around Relational Leadership

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Relations: an aspect or quality (as resemblance) that connects two or more things or parts as being or belonging or working.

Relational: characterized or constituted by relations.

Relationality: the state or property of having a relational force; the state or condition of being relational.

Relationship: the state of being related or interrelated; the relation connecting or binding participants in a relationship; a state of affairs existing between those having relations or dealings.

The "relational turn" has arrived to the scholarly field of leadership studies, as it arrived earlier in other fields and disciplines (Berscheid, 1995; Emirbayer, 1997; Stite, 2004). Many leadership scholars now acknowledge that both leaders and followers are "relational beings" who constitute each other in such—leader and follower...leader or follower—in an unfolding, dynamic relationship (Brooker, Schoorman, & Tan, 2000; Cavovani, Lindgren, & Packendorff, 2007; Dachler & Hosking, 1995; Ford & Senn, 2006;...
Ospina & Sorensen, 2006; Utz-Bien, 2006). This powerful idea is quite consistent with the notion of "relationality," as understanding that individuals and collectives constitute a field of relationships (Bradbury & Lichterstein, 2000, Carroll, Levy, & Richmond, 2008). As Gergen (2009) claims in his book *Relational Being*, "the individual represents the common intersection of relationality and collectivity" (p. 150). Bringing relationality to the leadership of metaphor relationships* (p. 397). He goes on:

...in all that we say and do we manifest our relational existence. From this standpoint, we must abandon the view that those around us cause our actions. Others are not the causes, nor we their effects. Rather, in whatever we think, remember, create, and feel, we participate in relationships. (p. 397)

What would it mean for our understanding of leadership to seriously filter in current constructs through a relational lens? What would the notion of "participating in relationship" imply for our ideas of leaders and followers, for their agency, and for the leadership phenomenon as such? What would be the implications of redefining actors who are engaged in leadership processes and relationships from rational, self-contained individuals to contextual, relational beings?

While some scholars are increasingly posing these questions, they are yet to be answered for the field as a whole. Despite significant efforts to address them in the literature, relational concerns remain largely unresolved in the leadership conversation. Suffice it to say that this challenge is taken up, new ways of tackling the field's recurrent concerns—process and context (Osborn, Hunt, & Jauch, 2002), language and discourse (Dachler, 1992; Fairhurst, 2007), time and levels of analysis (Marrone, Tedluk, & Carson, 2007; Yammarino, Dionne, Chun, & Danerseus, 2005)—have yet to emerge. After all, these issues are at the core of unpacking what it means to talk about relational leadership. We believe that the time is ripe to face them head-on. The budding convergence of interest in relational leadership across a group of diverse leadership scholars represents the perfect moment to seize the opportunity.

The field cannot afford to wait any longer. As we have entered the twenty-first century, issues of relationality have become more evident and are now paramount in the attention of those experiencing the reality (and practice) of leadership. Indeed, the incipent development of the relational turn in leadership scholarship lags behind the demand for relational solutions in the world of practice. There is a hunger to find novel ways to respond to the organizing challenges stakeholders face in our post-industrial, communication, technology-driven, social media-oriented, global society. A complex social environment—characterized by conditions such as scarcity, uncertainty, interdependence, diversity, participation, and paradox—makes even more evident the relational nature of social processes like organizing

or even our primary resources. We are contextual beings, with built relational resources to other contextual beings. (Slife, 2004, p. 174)
and leadership (Blandin, 2007; Root, 1993; Uh-Bien, Marion, & McKelvey, 2007). There is increasing awareness among practitioners that today, no one single person can provide leadership acting alone (Csikszentmihalyi, 1994). They recognize that complex, adaptive challenges (Heifetz, 2005) require the collective action of many people, located in different parts of the system of systems. Interpreting the type of leadership required to successfully address the demands of this complex and nested environment is a task of utmost urgency (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002; Kelman, 2010).

The convergence around interest in the relational dimensions of leadership has great potential to help close this gap and define the future direction of the field. This, however, requires an understanding of the interaction of the field. This, how much, requires an understanding of the interaction of the field.

To address this problem, we suggest that the research (Romani, Prince, & Topcu, 2011) across the multiple views of relational leadership can substantially advance the theoretical and empirical understanding of the processes that shape leadership. Interplay can clarify the interaction of these dimensions and help practitioners face challenges with more useful concepts that offer insights to help practitioners face challenges with more useful concepts. We offer a "map of the terrain" that locates the rich debates that have emerged throughout the chapters and dialogues in this volume. Because knowledge of the paradigmatic assumptions and assertions behind these debates is key to advancing dialogue in relational leadership, we begin by providing background in the philosophy and sociology of science to ground readers in issues of incommensurability and paradigm interplay (We elaborate on this in Chapter 1.) In this discussion, we contextualize leadership within the broader conversation of organization and social science research. We then present our "map" (Figure 1.1) that depicts a continuum of paradigmatic perspectives brought by the authors in this book. This map helps readers to see the not-so-obvious philosophical assumptions and paradigmatic assertions implicit in the authors' theorizing. We conclude by de-
scribing the logic and structure of the book, and we provide an overview of
the book's contents with a summary of the chapter contents.

THE NEED FOR INTERPLAY

This book aims to speak to leadership scholars—both those with a long
trajectory in the field and those in training—who aspire to produce knowl-
edge on leadership that is also relevant to practice. We hope the conversa-
tion resonates across perspectives regarding what constitutes legitimate
research (more about this below). Because issues of legitimacy are critical to
establishing the basis for an interplay among diverse scholars, we introduce
below some ideas from the philosophy and the sociology of science to set
the stage for the conversations that follow.

The Contested Nature of Knowledge Generation

Embedded in contemporary social science research debates are ques-
tions regarding how can something be known. Answering these questions
requires answering in turn questions about how can we develop knowledge
about the world and what is the nature of the world and of human beings. These
questions, drawn from the philosophy of science, reflect concerns of meth-
doing (how can we capture the object of research), epistemology (how
ontology (what is the nature of reality),
do we know what we know) and
respectively. The pragmatic methodology answer depends on responses to
these ontological and epistemological questions, which in turn inform the theo-
retical perspectives of the proposed research. This sequence of influence
happens whether the researcher is aware of it or not.

Scholars who have similar perspectives on questions of ontology and epiphen-
ology will most likely agree on the best way to do research (i.e., method-
ology can science). Hatch and Yanow (2008) argue that the word "methodology" can
refer to the philosophical presuppositions embedded in research met
oodology, they argue, "provide logical structures from which to
derive procedures of inquiry (methods), and they frame the ways in which
we understand their products." (p. 4). Hatch and Yanow (2008) invite man-
gagement and organizational researchers to be more explicitly reflective
about these presuppositions and assumptions, as a way to foster scholarship in
organization studies. With this book, we see this call extending to leader-
ship, as questions of this nature pervade the discussion in a field where the

tendency has been to skip the ontological and epistemological reflections and
start with theoretical and methodological considerations.

With respect to the sociology of science, also embedded in contem-
porary theoretical and research conversations is the question of what counts
as legitimate scientific research and what does not. Thomas Kuhn's work
(1962) has strongly influenced this conversation with his book The Nature of
Scientific Revolutions. By introducing the idea of scientific paradigms compet-
ing with one another for legitimacy, Kuhn ignited an exchange about how
science develops and changes over time. A paradigm is "a model that gov-
ers scientific inquiry in a discipline at a given time" (Ricoucci, 2010, p. 22),
one to which most members of that community commit and use. Paradigms
are rooted in agreements around how the three questions described above are
answered. Nature science, says Kuhn (1962), develops through iterative
periods of what is called "normal science," where scientists tend to agree on
basic ontological and epistemological assumptions and therefore use
existing paradigms to engage in puzzle solving (rather than innovation),
using methodological tools appropriate to those assumptions. Transitions
from one paradigm to the next happen through a transformative process
(scientific revolutions) whereby old assumptions, questions, and answers
are challenged and replaced by a new paradigm. Competing paradigms
may coexist for a while, creating schisms in a field that reduce the potential
for knowledge sharing.

Kuhn (1962) saw cyclical stages of scientific development, from pre-par-
digmatic stages (with no single set of agreements or paradigm on how to
do science, with lots of dynamism and creativity) to normal science (where
creativity gives way to more routinized processes of scientific accumulation,
often increasing productivity but also producing straight jackets that stifle
innovation). Then, a new revolution would take place, when the assump-
tions of the unified paradigms would be challenged, and the competition
among paradigms—old and new—would yield innovation, gradually giving
way again to another cycle of normal science. An important characteristic
of a normal science phase is the preference for a deductive (theory test-
ing) over an inductive (theory building) mode of inquiry. Normal science
motivates a preference for testing and refining hypotheses from theories
previously derived from the data. An inductive mode that allows the data to
speak for themselves, building theory from the ground up, is less preferred
in normal science mode. This reduces the opportunity for innovation and
methodological pluralism.

Much water has passed under the bridge since Kuhn (1962) introduced
and later redefined these ideas (Bird, 2000). Yet, the idea that "paradigm
shifts" are at the core of scientific development permeates conversations
about what constitutes legitimate "knowledge generation" in the context of
science and social science. With some exceptions (e.g., Walker, 2006),

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this conversation might be relatively new within conventional leadership studies (particularly in the context of the U.S.). Yet, it has been present in exchanges about the "scientific" identity of most disciplines (Boudon, 1984; Ritzer, 1980; Weiner & Palermo, 1973), as well as in multidisciplinary 1988; Ritzer, 1980; Weiner & Palermo, 1973), as well as in multidisciplinary research on the sociology of scientific knowledge (Boisot & McIver, 1982; Daft & Lewin, 1996; Davis & Marquis, 2005; Hassard & Kellerman, 2010; Hatch & Janow, 2003) and public administration (Ospina & Dodge, 2005; Baccucci, 2010).

From Paradigmatic Closure to Dialogue across Perspectives

Twenty years ago the first editors of the journal Organization Science invoked Kahn (1962) to argue that the field seemed to have "prematurely settled into a "normal science" mindset," forcing researchers to move too soon toward "conceptual and methodological boxes" (Daft & Lewin, 1996, p. 2). They also highlighted the dangers of a situation when "convergent thinking" overcomes a field before it has matured (p. 2). Reiterating the emergence of organization science as a new discipline, the editors made the case for taking seriously the scientific tasks associated with doing pre-normal science, rather than moving too quickly to the narrow confines of normal science that result in paradigmatic closure.

The editors observed the fact that organizational scholars spanned many disciplines and fields of inquiry, from anthropology to economics, and from organization behavior to organization theory. They argued that this made organization theory difficult to find common ground—a single paradigm to govern scientific practice. They lamented the limited set of topics considered. They also observed that the editors thought that this narrow focus of paradigmatic closure precluded dominant approaches from adequately addressing the complexity and multidimensionality of the subject of study.

These observations may very well apply to leadership studies, where the entity perspective (with its multiple theoretical manifestations and its quantitative bias) may have become too paradigmatic too soon. Some of the strategies the editors proposed to loosen the existing straitjackets could not be more relevant for the dialogue needed today in the leadership field. For example, they propose focusing on equivocal problems—that is, problems whose solutions would be of interest to all scholars, not just those interested in a particular area. They also propose using "heretical" research methods—going beyond the dominant logical positivist tradition—by opening research to a new grammar, new variables, new definitions, and new logics that produce novel theoretical explanations. In addition, they suggest opening the space for creativity, innovation, and "heresy," all of which require taking a step back from a methodological to a philosophical conversation, and only then going forward to theory and methods.

These calls resonate strongly in relational leadership research today. With its variety of ontological and epistemic stances, relational leadership offers a promising entry point for such a conversation. Perhaps more importantly, relational leadership transforms the aspiration for methodological pluralism from a philosophical longing to a pragmatic concern: the need to advance more serious theoretical and practical understandings of the complex social realities of leadership.

Incommensurability of Paradigms

Achieving multi-paradigmatic theory building requires relational leadership scholars to engage one another in conversation. This, in turn, requires clarity about each other's perspectives. We cannot reach this point until we move beyond hardened positions of incommensurability toward more open (and informed) minds of paradigm interplay.

Entity and constructionist leadership scholars often inhabit different paradigmatic communities, and therefore do not know how to speak to one another. It is understandable that some would see their assumptions as "irreconcilable"—in Kahn's (1962) term "incommensurable," meaning not even comparable by the same standards or measures. Discussions about the incommensurability of paradigms have filled many pages of social science debate, with Kahn himself giving back and forth on the issue (Sankey, 1995). We see these issues come to life later in this book in dialogues about the extent to which entity and constructionist perspectives on leadership (and their preferred methodologies) can be integrated, reconciled, or even produce insights of common interest.

The chapters in this book are also illustrative of this debate: of the tensions it generates, and of the barriers and opportunities for authentic exchanges. The challenges tend to come more strongly from the constructionists side, which has long felt left out of the conversation by a lack of understanding (and concern) from the entity side. Drawing from Collins (2010), Deetz (1996) summarizes this problem in his description of tensions among paradigmatic stances (1996, p. 204):

Any research group dominating over time becomes inward looking, isolated from the problems of the larger society, and filled with blinkers and trained incapacity. Its acts of perpetuation exceed its attempts at social service, in part because they are not practiced. Similar to most societies, marginalized research groups have a hard time learning systems themselves, and their own and the dominant one—and dominant groups only one. (Collins, 1989)
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For this reason, efforts to generate dialogue to date have mostly occurred on the constructionist side, by scholars who have become frustrated that the “dominant group” (entity scholars) has not acknowledged or understood issues. Their frustrations in trying to be heard have led them to make the same arguments, which in turn further aggravates the same issues that are not acknowledged by the other system. Entity scholars, in turn, have had reason to “learn” from the other system. Entity scholars are therefore not a “shared understanding” of the system that gives rise to cycles of incommensurability.

We see the challenges of trying to break this cycle in each of the dialogues in this book. For example, in Chapter 18, Dian Marie Hosking sees these perspectives as not commensurable. The epistemic communities that represent these perspectives make “tolerantly different assumptions” about the research questions and address different types of practical concerns. Therefore, she argues for “multiple thinking spaces.”

An interesting impasse happens, however, when Hosking opens the dialogue organized for this book by inviting Boas Shami to an exchange framed around the relational rules that have guided both her own scholarship and her relations (Chapter 16). This way, Hosking was inviting Shami to dialogue while defining the terms of engagement from within her paradigmatic view. This was not comfortable for Shami, who decided to first step back and offer ideas for the dialogue from within his own perspective (Chapter 17).

Reframing Hosking's invitation to speak from within his paradigmatic view, Shami urges us to find common ground around some core understandings of the essence of leadership so that the conversation can take place. Unknowingly, however, in searching for a commonly accepted definition of leadership (a premise definition of the knowers), he de-facto reduces the chances for a conversation with constructionists, whose “anti-essentialistic” ontology would argue against researcher-imposed definitions (see Chapter 1). Consistent with his postpositivist orientation, Shami warns scholars to agree on a minimal definition of leadership. In inviting Hosking to agree on a definition, Shami takes what, for Hosking, as a constructionist, is an incommensurable stance. Whereas postpositivism assumes that the essence of objects exists independently of the knower (and therefore we need to have a precise definition of our constructs), constructionist inter-subjectivism assumes there is no essence in objects themselves. Instead, meaning is given by participants as they co-construct it in context.

The crux of the issue here is not that (as Shami seems to conclude) there is no “agreed upon” phenomenon called leadership. It is that postpositivism, with their “realist” orientation, think leadership can (and must) be precisely defined by the researcher; while constructionists, with their inter-subjectivist orientation, think leadership must be understood as “defined” by those who construct it in their interactions, in very particular contexts. Precisely therefore, another impasse happens in the conversation when Hosking, consistent with her constructionist and critical orientation, resists the notion of a universal core that defines the essence of “leadership” as a fixed point of departure. Instead, she advocates for the need to explore the meaning that is given to leadership in the specific context in which it emerges. We see the challenge of incommensurability again in the dialogue between Gail Fairhurst and John Antonakis (Chapter 15). Less explicit than Shami, but equally categorical, is Antonakis—coming from an entity postpositivist perspective—in his dialogue with constructionist Fairhurst. Agreeing with Fairhurst about some of the methodological faults of leadership research, he indicates that he welcomes any kind of leadership study that builds useful theory as long as it meets “four basic conditions of the scientific method.” When these are listed, it becomes apparent that they reflect a postpositivist approach to science—again rendering de facto his approach incommensurable with interpretivist scholarship.

In the dialogue between Bill Drath and David Day (Chapter 8), Day insists thinking about a continuum rather than “truly discrete ontological and epistemological classes,” thus suggesting openness to incommensurability. While pointing to some potential areas of convergence, he is nevertheless categorical about the primacy of agency over relationships in leadership (consistent with his entity paradigm). He recognizes the potential incommensurability of this position, asserting that perhaps this difference is at the core of the entity and constructionist impasse because it represents “a fundamental disagreement about the ontology of leadership.”

Although constructionists Drath and Fairhurst, like Hosking, advocate allowing the perspectives to co-exist, and inform one another and are willing to accept insights gained from postpositivist research, they also make strong paradigmatic assertions regarding the limits of postpositivism in addressing relationality. They urge entity scholars to take the notion of relationality more seriously by unpacking its more constructionist meanings. For example, in his dialogue with Day (Chapter 8), Drath, while not denying the existence of leaders or their agency, suggests these are less interesting points of entry than the question, “What’s going on with leadership from a whole-system perspective?” He also questions whether only one form of influence—from leader to follower—can be defined as leadership, and invites Day and other postpositivist scholars to recognize and revisit this objectivist belief (see Chapter 1).
In her dialogue with Antonakis regarding how relationality can be researched empirically (Chapter 15), Fairhurst argues against the "heavy reliance" she sees "on the study of individuals to discern relational patterns." Highlighting potential for complementarity, she points out that most leadership theorizing focuses on predicting and causally explaining leadership, when what is needed is the use of theories "more heuristically to make leadership relationships intelligible and open to insight in ways that we would not otherwise have had."

As we see throughout these dialogues, the genuine desire for communication is as palpable as the tensions and passions that surface in the exchanges. A key issue that arises, however, is the deep challenge of being in communication with one another when the basic assumptions across the perspectives are not well understood (and are often misunderstood). The tensions between the two perspectives become evident as soon as scholars make choices on how to do research, whether they are aware of taking a paradigmatic stance or not.

In some cases, the dialogues again remind us of a degree of epistemic closure that may be indicative of a field that became too paradigmatic too soon. But is this enough of a reason to engage a conversation that will "rock the boat"? After all, leadership studies is experiencing great vitality and legitimacy as an academic field. Why not just continue to let all flowers bloom and let the quality of the products dictate their standing? We return to Deetz (1996):

As we gradually learn socially the positive effects of diversity—beyond "separate but equal" and integration—organization science can also benefit from better discussions. This does not mean that we each should automatically find other groups' issues and procedures interesting or helpful, but we should be aware that all of them are. But let us make our claims and the relation between our claims and procedures clearer: so objection and conflict can be on those grounds rather than impose traditional problem statements and methods on those doing something else. In doing so, the ultimate point is not in arguing it out to get it right, but to reclaim the suppressed tensions and conflicts among the many contemporary stakeholders to negotiate a life together based on appreciation of different and responsible decision making. (p. 294)

An Alternative to incommensurability: Paradigm Interplay

Consistent with this quote from Deetz (1996), we offer in this book another approach to the issue of incommensurability across leadership perspectives. Our original—somewhat idealistic—motivation to produce this book was to generate dialogue that would create common ground. We now realize that not only was this goal unattainable, it is undesirable. Rather than try to produce assimilation across assumptions, a more beneficial approach is paradigm interplay (Romani et al., 2011). Paradigm interplay recognizes the value of heterogeneous assumptions and insights from multiple perspectives for advancing understanding. The focus in paradigm interplay is on highlighting connections and distinctions among paradigms—identifying resonances as well as tensions—and using these to learn from one another.

There is no need to give up one's paradigm of choice. Rather, paradigm interplay represents a constructive way to develop theory when normal science reaches a point where competition for legitimacy among incommensurable paradigms shuts down communication. Paradigm interplay opens up a space where competition has led to a narrowing of the field, stifling our ability to develop new approaches and generate broader understandings. To illustrate the value of interplay, in our concluding chapter we present a paradigm interplay across the perspectives represented in this book in order to advance a multi-paradigmatic understanding of relational leadership. For now, with this introductory chapter we reiterate the ideas that still hold behind our motivation to produce this book. First, neither perspective is "right"; they are just different; each is more and less helpful in illuminating various dimensions of leadership phenomena. Second, the differences do not preclude learning from the others' gained understanding of relational leadership; if anything, they promote it. Third, for genuine sharing and learning to happen, scholars in both "worlds" must be able to understand and recognize the worthiness of multiple perspectives and respect what the others are trying to do and say.

We believe that engaging this conversation around relational leadership can help address urgent concerns within each paradigm. For scholars comfortable with the entity perspective, it may open new and creative ways to tackle burning puzzles, such as how to more effectively incorporate time, context, and intersecting levels of action (e.g., levels of analysis) and their reciprocal influences. For scholars comfortable with the constructionist perspective, the conversation may open new and creative ways to theoretically translate dense ideas of relationality into usable constructs for advancing empirical research that are consistent with their postmodern ontologies. For scholars interested in either perspective, it may produce insights for developing theories with more practical implications for leadership—thus offering practitioners something more than simplistic formulas or hardly actionable and complicated propositions.

Finally, the entity and the constructionist perspectives of relational leadership represent two ideal types, or what Max Weber would describe as "constructs," that can be used as the reference from which to compare what we see in the world (Roth & Wertsch, 1978). Despite the gap that separates
scholars espousing the two perspectives, neither reflects a single unitary approach; instead, they represent clusters of "communities of inquiry" with members who approximate (in different degrees) the same ontological project and epistemic stance. These stances in turn motivate preferences for similar theoretical lenses and methodological choices. For this reason, rather than thinking of two separate "camps" we view leadership scholars within a continuum between two poles.

In Chapter 1, we expound the assumptions behind the various stances associated with each pole. We also more deeply discuss the way leadership research is conceived by each perspective, and the problems these differences have created for the field. In the sections below, our focus is on locating the book contributors along the continuum to help readers better understand where the authors fall in the complex terrain of today's leadership studies. As we will see from this discussion, what our mapping reveals is that the issue is not one of dichotomies (pure entity; pure constructionist) but rather one of a range of perspectives.

MAPPING THE TERRAIN: LOCATING AND INTRODUCING CONTRIBUTORS

A key purpose of this introductory chapter is to help the reader work their way through the myriad assumptions and paradigmatic issues raised by the authors in this book. We do this with our "map of the terrain" in Figure I.1.

Figure I.1 is organized along a continuum of ontologies ranging from fully modernist to fully postmodernist (cf. Boisot & McKelvey, 2010). At the core of the modernist stance is the belief that there is a single truth about our objects of study, and that it is possible to approximate this truth with some certainty, independent of any subjectivity (i.e., objectivism). At the core of the postmodernist stance is the idea that there are multiple truths about our objects of study, and that the most we can do is attain a glimpse of these truths through interpretations of people's negotiated subjective understandings (i.e., subjectivism). (There are, of course, variations within these stances, which are further developed in Chapter 1.)

Modernist assumptions resonate with the orientation to science originally called positivism, and its contemporary version, postpositivism (or neo-positivism). Postmodernist assumptions resonate with the orientation to science called interpretivism (Hutch & Yavas, 2003; Yavas & Schwartz-Shea, 2004). Of particular interest to our discussion is one version of interpretivism, called constructionism.

With modernism and postmodernism as poles, the continuum ranges from soft to hard shades of gray between the poles. The most objectivist versions of postpositivism are positioned on the far left of the axis; the most

Figure I.1: The contributors. A continuum from entity to constructivist stance on leadership.
subjectivist versions of interpretivism are positioned on the far right of the axis. The shades in between reflect slight differences in orientation as a function of the contributors' distance from either one of the extremes.

We offer this table with two important caveats. First, the table represents our effort to make sense of the contributors' positions in a complex leadership terrain, and we alone are responsible for any misplacement; scholars themselves might not agree with their location on the continuum. Second, the one-dimensional nature of written text does not do justice to this complexity. In reality, there may have been more overlaps and slight movement to the right or the left of the continuum if we had been able to physically align the contributors in a two- or even a three-dimensional representation.

As the table suggests, the various book contributors who use an entity perspective fall under the broad umbrella of modernism/postpositivism; the various contributors who use a constructionist perspective fall under postmodernism/interpretivism. Some constructionists may be more postmodernist than others—just as some entity scholars may be more positivist than others. This may be reflected in their theoretical orientation, as well as in their applications of social science with consequent definitions of rigor. Variations among positivist/leadership researchers are mostly a function of commitments to theoretical schools, and the consequent methodological choices in their empirical research designs. Constructionists differ according to what each scholar accentuates when looking at leadership as an emergent phenomenon, for example, language and interpersonal communication or narrative or organizational processes.

Specific contributions from each perspective approximate to different degrees the extremes to their left and right respectively, with no contributor falling on the far extremes on either side of the continuum. The arrows are intended to represent degrees of movement away from objectivism and toward subjectivism. A three-dimensional application of this model would depict this continuum as a cylinder, in which the two extremes converge according to the privileging of the individual in both perspectives of leadership. (We return to this topic in Chapter 1.)

The continuum depicted in Figure I.1, complemented with the longer discussion presented in Chapter 1, is offered to help make sense of the dense ideas and information provided in the chapters and the puzzles generated by their juxtaposition. It also offers the backdrop against which to consider the insights presented in the subsequent dialogues at the end of each part of the book. Our goal here is to offer readers material that helps them better understand the question of whether convergence is possible among the multiple perspectives, consistent with our aspiration to develop multi-paradigmatic understandings of relational leadership.
At the core of their framework is the suggestion that relational processes and social entities are mutually constitutive—that is, analysis of social entities and relational processes are "alternate manifestations of a unitary phenomenon." Focusing on role and relational identities, they consider how leaders and followers enact identities as they develop a leader-follower relationship. According to Seers and Chapin, "each relational interaction reinforces the individual actor's identity as leader or follower within that particular relationship." Hence, they argue that theoretical models in a relational, as opposed to an entity perspective, should explain both interaction processes and the levels taken on by defining attributes associated with all these entities of interest.

In Chapter 5, The Relational Practice of Leadership, Joyce K. Fletcher distinguishes traditional and relational/constructionist approaches to relational leadership, arguing for complementarity, rather than incommensurability, among these views. According to Fletcher, entity scholars focus on *interpersonal skills and competencies* that help us understand how to enact the type of relational leadership that is much needed today; constructionist scholars focus us on considering how broad systems of cognition and power co-create relational practices reflecting either leadership or non-leadership. Fletcher recognizes the value and limits of each perspective and warns readers of "the dangers of focusing on one to the exclusion of the other." Instead, she urges researchers to hold these perspectives together, even if this is "an uneasy alliance."

In her chapter, Fletcher identifies three micro-processes of relational practice that the entity perspective must address: fluid expertise, growth process beyond the dyadic, and achieving effectiveness outcomes through a relational stance. She also unveils three relational (constructionist) processes that undermine relationality: misunderstanding motives of relational behavior, devaluing relational practice through language, and conflating relationality with femininity. Bringing personal agency back into constructionism, Fletcher's framework helps practitioners reflect on their leadership by comparing dimensions associated with entity and constructionist relational practice, non-relational practice, and relational malpractice.

In Chapter 4, Systemic Constructionist Leadership and Working from Within the Present Moment, J. Kevin Barge focuses on exploring the implications of social constructionist ideas for developing leadership practices, recognizing that leaders work within continually evolving and changing linguistic landscapes. According to Barge, if we take the notion of social construction seriously, leadership is about meaning work and managing contexts. Therefore, people "who wish to construct leadership positions within teams, organizations, and societies" need to learn how to operate within the flow of conversation and develop practices that allow them to "make sense of it" in ways that shape direction. Barge accomplishes this by moving from a third-
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In this chapter, Kennedy et al. describe the challenges and tensions that occur when academics holding multi-paradigmatic perspectives attempt to work together in delivering leadership development programs. Using the characters of "Rachel" and "Meg," they describe the assumptions associated with differing paradigmatic views of leadership development and the tensions that arise when these assumptions come into conflict. This chapter brings to life the challenges of communisurability, even among scholars who are fully committed to working with one another.

At the core of Kennedy et al.'s chapter are issues of realism and subjectivism. Rachel, the constructivist "entity" scholar focuses on training participants in self-awareness using "objective" tools, methods, models, and technologies. Meg, the subjectivist "constructionist" scholar focuses on engaging with participants in the moment, using metaphor, imagery, and symbols to produce generative spaces in the face of unpredictability where collective learning will take place. These differences are sources of severe tension, that play out in struggles as the scholars work to maintain positions of openness, and even respect, toward one another.

In Chapter 7, "Un and Re-Packing Leadership Context, Relations, Constructions and Politics," Matt Alvesson and Stefan Sveningsson use critical theory to deconstruct what they see as a naive view of leadership: a tension-free, morally superior co-construction around shared common goals. Highlighting a social context of "politically charged co-constructions" where subjects are not equal, they explore four problematic assumptions of contemporary leadership (centrism, elitism, romanticism, and objectivism-LEEO). The critique targets both entity and constructionist scholars, since the latter tend to romanticize shared meaning while neglecting the role of power and multiple voices in co-construction.

The authors argue that leadership is an inherently social and political construct that is socially invented. They discuss how leadership discourses are constructed, and how these discourses shape our understanding of leadership. According to Alvesson and Sveningsson, viewing leadership as a social phenomenon must involve consideration of how macro dynamics like ideology, discourse, and institutionalized practices induce the micro dynamics of local relationship. One must view the entire gestalt—not just the leadership relationship—as leadership. In other words, leadership is not an already existing entity (a given), it is "an emergent outcome of situation," it is not an objective phenomenon, but the outcome of how people construct it as such.

Part I concludes with Chapter 8, "A Dialogue on Relational Theorizing," where David Day and Wilfred (Bill) Drath document the conversation triggered by reading the chapters in this part of the book. In Part II, contributors answer the question of how a "relational" perspective changes the way they do their research. Independent of whether the context of the research described is nonprofit and public (Chapters 9 and 10) or private (Chapters 11 through 14), contributors discuss methodological implications of relational perspectives.
ional assumptions and constructs, as well as challenges and opportunities for advancing relational leadership by way of empirical research.

Chapter 9, *Social Change Leadership as Relational Leadership*, is the sole contribution in Part II that takes an explicit constructionist perspective. Here Sonia M. Ospina, Érica G. Foley, Marion El Hadidy, Jennifer Dodge, and Celina Su describe a large research program. Among other things, they explore the consequences of bringing constructionism to frame, design, and interpret the data. They describe two research questions: the first, how do leaders decide at the heart of their commitment to relationality, that is, they search for the “how” of leadership? The key achievement of this research, the authors claim, is to find practical and rigorous ways to do social-science-based empirical research—exhaustively documented in entity perspectives as well as in some constructionist approaches—to its collective dimensions. According to Ospina et al., building on Giddens's theory of structuration, the authors identify a specific set of social practices through which policy entrepreneurs contribute to successfully mobilize policy reform or social transformation (e.g., the creation and agenda for policy reform or social transformation). They view these as reflecting the collective side of leadership for the common good.

In Chapter 10, *Integrative Leadership and Policy Change: A Hybrid Relational Process in Shaping Leader-Follower Relationships*, Neal M. Ashkanasy, Neil Paulsen, and Eugene Y.J. Tse integrate the latest developments in LMX and in emotions research to emphasize the affective dimension of leadership. They push the relational envelope by suggesting that relational approaches to leadership must conceptualize leadership processes more biologically, recognizing that organizational phenomena are produced by way of intrapersonal and interpersonal exchanges. Ashkanasy et al. offer "a multi-level conceptualization of relational leadership processes that incorporates the influence of followers and affective processes as key determinants of the leader-follower relationship quality." Specifically, they examine affective exchanges between leaders and followers based on processes of emotional contagion, and argue for the relevance of evaluating their impact on effectiveness. To address this research problem, they advocate for combined orientations and triangulated methods. They also promote multilevel quantitative methods, with a shift from a dyadic to a team context, to explore how context impacts behavior at the various levels.

In Chapter 11, *Relational Leadership: Creating Effective Leadership with Different Staff*, Lynn E. Offermann describes her efforts to shift from a "relationship-based" to a "relational" approach in a research project on leadership in cross-demographic organizational contexts. Offermann expands upon previous notions of relationality in postpositve research by introducing "issues of meaning" more typical of constructionist approaches. Problematizing the quality of the leadership relationship in contexts where followers
are demographically different, she links constructs like social categorization from relational demography theory to constructionist assumptions of leadership to argue that leadership emerges from shared agreements, and therefore a key leadership function is that of managing meaning.

Offerman identifies "relational best practices" in leading diversity and characteristics of highly successful diversity leaders. She discusses her finding that one's mother tongue poses a "potential relational leadership obstacle" in diverse contexts, acting as a barrier for "creating a shared leadership" in diverse contexts, acting as a barrier for "creating a shared leadership

In Chapter 13, Political Skill, Relational Context, and the Self in Relational Leadership Process, Darren G. Treadway, Jacob W. Breland, Laura A. Williams, Jun Yang, and Lisa Williams set out to expand the relational leadership theory framework by exploring how political communication processes...
REFERENCES


NOTES

1. The first, second, and fourth definitions were retrieved from [http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary); the third definition was retrieved from [http://www.webdictionary.com](http://www.webdictionary.com).

2. The challenge of definition is not lost on entity scholars, who have long struggled with the myriad definitions of the phenomenon, so much so that there are "almost as many definitions of leadership as there are leadership scholars" (Rom, 1993).