TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

Praise for Transformative Leadership in Action

'Transformative Leadership in Action offers a deeply reflective and reflexive account of the bravery and vulnerability necessary for substantive social change, meaningful personal transition, and groundbreaking policy initiatives in an increasingly uncertain world. Through brief research accounts, personal stories, and professional cases, the contributing scholars deftly capture the compassion and determination needed to continually refine one's allyship prowess. The ideas, tactics, and strategies collected here should be considered required reading for all aspiring allies, accomplices, change agents, advocates, and activists.'

Vivechkanand S. Chunoo, Assistant Professor of Agricultural Leadership, Education & Communications, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and coeditor of Changing the Narrative: Socially Just Leadership Education

'An array of turbulence in the twenty-first century dictates that strong, confident voices rise up and address the matters of the day – dominance, privilege, social justice, activism, allyship – and, without wavering, advocate for social change. The editors and authors in this brilliant collection, masterfully do just that. This is a must have, must read for scholars, practitioners, students, humanitarians, and others whose goal it is to protect our collective humanity by putting transformative leadership into action.'

Donnette J. Noble, Ph.D., Voss Distinguished Professor of Leadership Studies/ Director of Civic Learning and Engagement/Associate Professor of Leadership Studies – Fort Hays State University

'This timely book goes beyond transformational leadership as a conceptual framework to transformative leadership as a call to action that involves taking steps to elevate the human condition toward greater equity and justice. Well-documented, informative, personal, inclusive, and provocative, the authors offer a book aimed at helping students heed a call to action to make the world a better place.'

Barry Z Posner, Michael J. Accolti, S.J. Chair, Professor of Leadership, Leavey School of Business, Santa Clara University, and Co-Author, The Leadership Challenge

'This is an incredible resource for leaders and leadership educators in all contexts looking to engaging in complex conversations about transformative change.'

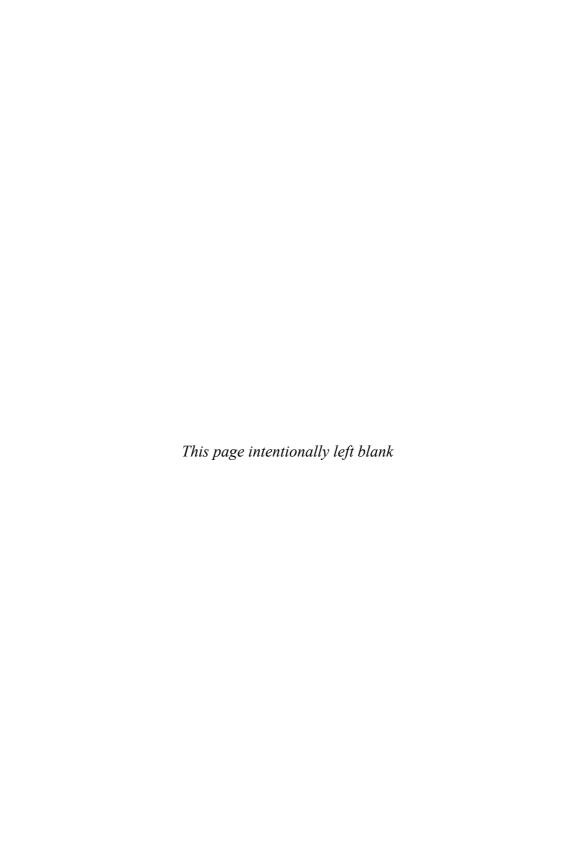
Kathy L. Guthrie, Associate Professor and Director of Leadership Learning Research Center, Florida State University, and co-editor of *Changing the Narrative: Socially Just Leadership Education*

'For those from privileged background who want to be authentic allies to liberation movements, *Transformative Leadership in Action* provide practical guidelines and examples of authentic allyship. This book adds to our understanding of social change leadership in both the university and the wider community.'

Drick Boyd, Professor Emeritus, Urban Studies, Eastern University

'Transformative Leadership in Action is a book of uncommon courage, depth, and gravity. In the wake of the unfulfilled promises of democratic nations, organizations, and groups of all forms, here we find an antidote, a curative effect helping us become more whole and more capable of answering the most difficult responsibilities of the present day. The leadership and practice involved in liberatory and transformative life comes to the fore, reshaping that which has failed to enliven the best in the human community, Transformative Leadership in Action reaches into the heart of humanity not only to strengthen our collective heart, but to lead us forward and upward into a new dawn in which we more closely embody the prophetic essence Martin Luther King Jr. spoke so deeply of: that the content of our character would make us capable of transcending the chaos of the times.'

Shann Ray Ferch, PhD, Gonzaga University, USA



TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

Allyship, Advocacy & Activism

Edited by

Jacklyn A. Bruce North Carolina State University, USA

Katherine E. McKee North Carolina State University, USA



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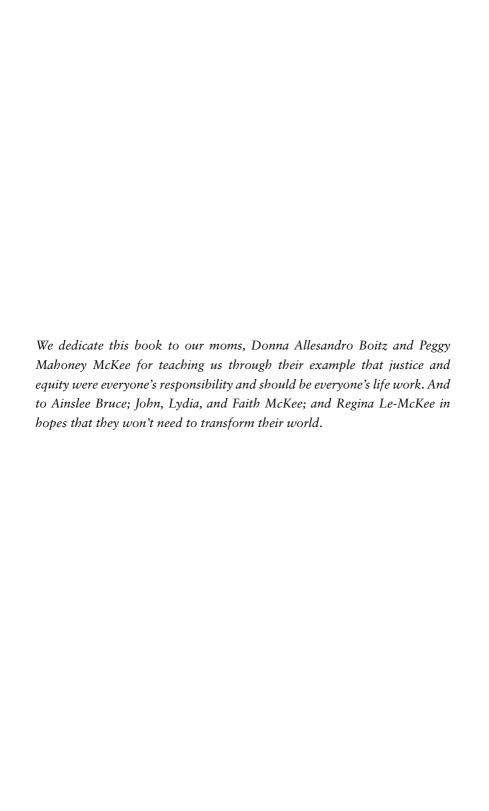
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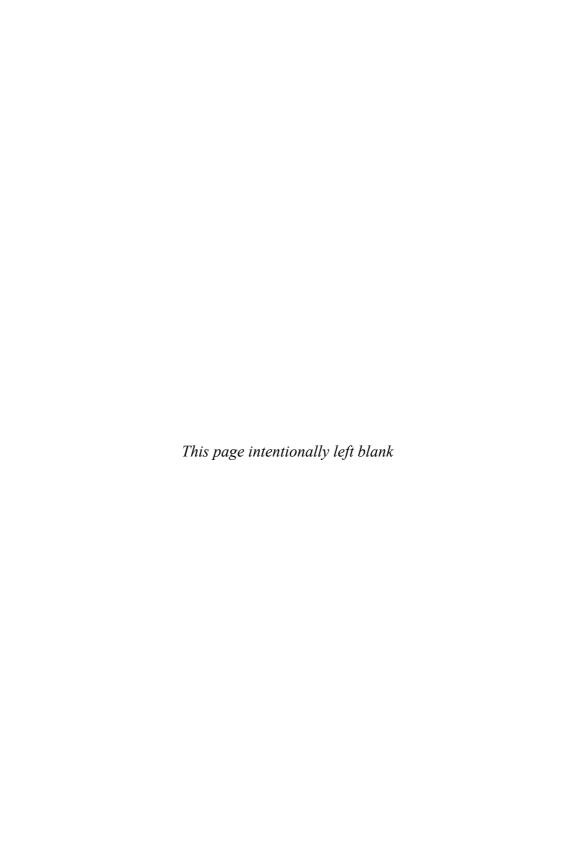


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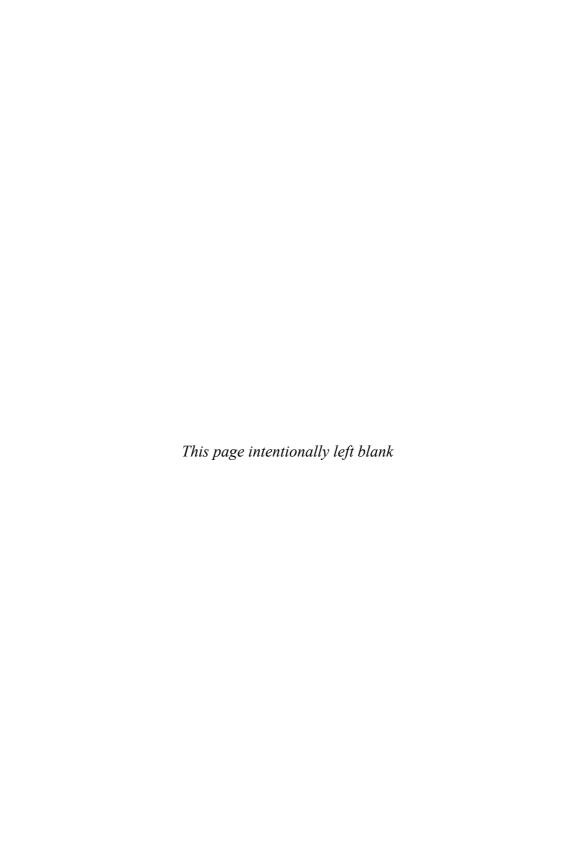
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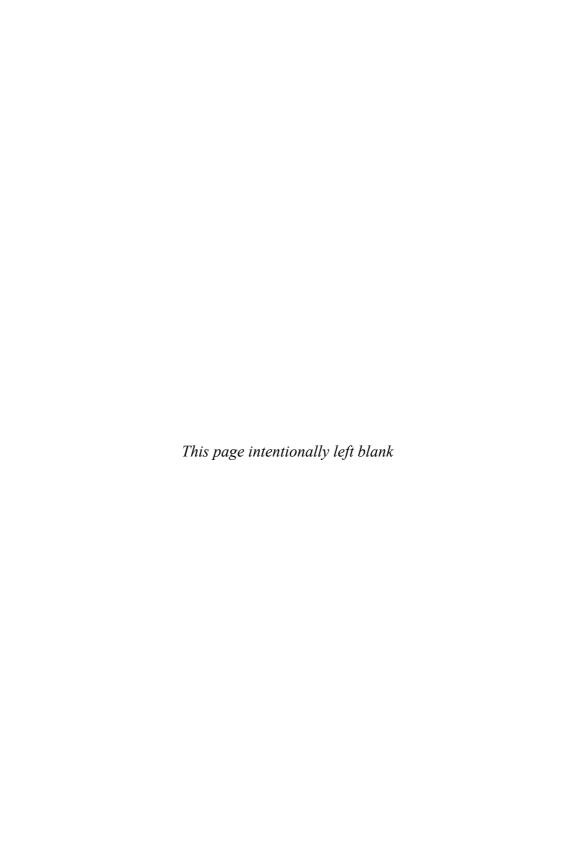
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ABOUT THE EDITORS

Jacklyn A. Bruce is an Associate Professor, the Director of Graduate Programs, and a Co-Director of The Oaks Leadership Scholars at North Carolina State University. When asked who she is, however, she will tell you that she is an Educator. It may only be one word, but there is a lot packed into that word. To her educator = leadership scholar, teacher of organizational behavior, fighter for justice and equity, believer in the power of policy, nurturer of educative environments, advisor of students, colleague of leadership practitioners, mentor of qualitative researchers, editor of a journal, relentless reader, and most importantly Mother of an awesome kid.

Katherine E. McKee is an Assistant Professor in Leadership at North Carolina State University where she is a Co-Director of The Oaks Leadership Scholars, a transformative leadership program. Her passion for leadership education grew out of her involvement in movements for voting rights, health-care access, and LGBTQ+ equality. She believes that a strong understanding of theory can support the essential work of practitioners for justice and equity. She is a tireless advocate for students inside and outside of the classroom and gives a mean motivational speech that includes references to dinosaurs, baseball, and believing in yourself.



ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Mac Benavides is a Graduate Research Assistant in the Staley School of Leadership Studies at Kansas State University (KSU). He encourages his undergraduate students to explore topics of power and privilege in leadership activity at the personal and systemic levels. In addition, he coordinates a community-engaged federal work study opportunity connecting current university students with community youth. He has an MA in Educational Administration from the University of Nebraska and is currently a doctoral student in Leadership Communication at KSU. His research and practice centers around intercultural leadership, leadership education, and creating inclusive and equitable learning environments in higher education.

Kathy Bishop is a woman of Scottish and European descent, Academic Supervisor, Associate Professor, and MA Leadership Program Head at Royal Roads University (RRU); living, learning, and working on the traditional lands of the Xwsepsum (Esquimalt) and Lekwungen (Songhees) families. She is a passionate scholar-practitioner who utilizes a variety of experiential, participatory, and transformative learning and leadership methods. She has published on topics such as creativity, collaborative leadership, ethics, and action-oriented research. She holds a PhD from the University of Victoria. She contends that engaging collectively through different ways of doing, being, knowing, and relating can lead to innovative solutions.

Carol Burbank is a Scholar, Writing Coach, Researcher, and Teacher exploring the narratives and fundamental paradigms that shape our identities, experiences, expectations, performances, and roles. Her work examines healthy change from individual to organizational shifts and social change movements. She currently teaches in the MA in Engaged Humanities at Pacifica Graduate Institute. Her writing includes "Shapeshifter Leadership: Responding Creatively to the Challenges of a Complex World" (Jossey-Bass, 2012),

"Malala Yousafzai: The Power and Paradox of Global Celebrity" (Berrett-Koehler, 2014), and "Revolution from Within: Leadership Narratives" (Berret-Koheler, 2015). She is a Leadership Columnist for *Science of Mind Magazine*.

William Clark is the Author of "Introducing Strategic Thinking into a Non-profit Organization to Develop Alternative Income Streams," which was published in the Journal of Practical Consulting. He teaches leadership and organizational development at the University of Maryland Global Campus. He holds degrees in Leadership Development and Information Technology from Penn State University and a doctorate degree in Strategic Leadership from Regent University. He is the author of Leverage: Taking Advantage of Your Right-Now to Build Your Tomorrow; Grant Writing 101: Developing a Culture of Resource Development for Your Nonprofit; and Sustainable: Developing a Sustainable Faith-Based or Nonprofit Organization.

Erika Cohen Derr, DLS, is the Assistant Vice President in Student Affairs at Georgetown University. Her background in student engagement and leadership focuses on helping college students identify their personal gifts and talents, pursue their passions, and develop skills for lifelong learning.

Aysha Dos (she, her, hers) serves as the Director for the Center for Student Engagement at Georgetown University in Washington, District of Columbia, USA, where she serves as an Educator through leadership development, student governance, transition programs, and student advocacy. She is also a doctoral student in the College of Education of the University of Georgia, earned a Master of Science in Higher Education: Student Affairs from Florida State University and a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology from the University of Florida.

Sharon Gramby-Sobukwe is an Associate Professor, Program Director of Political Science, and Executive Director of the Campolo Institute for Applied Research in Social Justice at Eastern University. She currently teaches undergraduate political science courses but has previously taught and directed Organizational Leadership in master's and doctoral programs. She continues to advise doctoral candidates completing their dissertations. Her research and publications focus on African politics, leadership, and community development as well as women's politics, and church and politics.

About the Contributors xvii

Josephine Hauer is a Research Fellow at the University of Phoenix. The views expressed here are those of the author and do not represent views of the federal government or the University of Phoenix. The author currently works for the Administration for Children and Families as a Regional Specialist for Innovation and Strategy. She continues to work on the leadership team of the Whole Family Approach to Jobs initiative.

Tess Hobson is a Graduate Research Assistant in the Staley School of Leadership Studies at Kansas State University (KSU). She teaches a course about inclusive leadership called Culture and Context in Leadership and coordinates the Edgerley-Franklin Leadership Scholarship Program, which seeks to shape the next generation of social justice leaders. She received a master's degree in College Student Development and a graduate certificate in Social Justice Education from KSU and is now pursuing a PhD in Student Affairs and Higher Education. Her research interests revolve around the power of storytelling as a pedagogy in developing students' capacity to practice inclusive leadership.

Kristine F. Hoover is an Associate Professor in the Master of Arts in Organizational Leadership program facilitating the Change Leadership concentration and is the Director for the Institute of Hate Studies at Gonzaga University. The Institute of Hate Studies bridges the academy with community engagement, through research, teaching, and partnerships with students, faculty, and community members. She is concerned with questions regarding how organizations and communities shape inclusion and cultures of dignity. Her most recent publication is *Countering Hate: Cases of Change*. She is a former Chair of the Washington Legislative Ethics Board and former SHRM trainer.

Elizabeth Indermaur is a recent Graduate from North Carolina State University. She aspires to establish a career in plant sciences and will soon be attending graduate school to realize this objective. In recognizing the complex present and hopefully moving toward a more forward-thinking future, she intends to apply transformative leadership and change agent-thinking to her own work in agriculture and beyond. She aims to catalyze the recognition that each of us has the capacity to develop ourselves as learners and allies, regardless of career or field. She practices and aims to encourage this in others, particularly through principled action and reflection.

Adanna J. Johnson serves as an Associate Vice President for Student Equity and Inclusion at Georgetown University. She holds a PhD in Counseling Psychology and was a tenured professor of psychology at Loyola Maryland for over 10 years before coming to Georgetown. She is a licensed psychologist and trained to treat children and families of color.

Kyle Jordan is a Graduate of The Ohio State University's Entomology program and is currently a Global Product Development Manager for BASF's Professional & Specialty Solutions Division (professional pest control products) for North America, Australia, and Asia. He served as the Chair for the local LGBTQA+ employee resource group at BASF, has been on the Advisory Board for the Cultivating Change Foundation's annual summit (LGBTQA+ in agriculture), founded a research project to gather national data on minorities in agriculture, and is currently the Chair for the D&I Committee for the Entomological Society of America.

Chance Lee is an Assistant Professor in the Staley School of Leadership Studies at Kansas State University. He directs the Nonprofit Leadership Focus of the Leadership minor, overseeing advising, internships, professional development events, and curriculum for the program. His research interests include cross-cultural and global leadership, nonprofit leadership, and university immersive programs, both abroad and domestic.

Lauryn Mascareñaz has 10+ years experience as an elementary classroom Teacher, Literacy Instructional Coach, and Culturally Responsive Trainer. She was formerly a Teaching and Learning Specialist with Teaching Tolerance, a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center. She has a master's of education in culturally responsive teaching from the University of Colorado and is working on her doctorate in Leadership and Organizational Systems at Vanderbilt University. She is particularly interested in educating teachers on engagement strategies and closing the opportunity gap for young males of color. She is the Director of Equity for Wake County Public Schools in North Carolina.

Glenn W. "Max" McGee is recognized as a dynamic leader on critical issues concerning leadership, student mental health, and racial equity. His passions lie in developing the potential of historically underrepresented youth and

leading school districts through turbulent times. Since 1972, he has held positions ranging from Substitute Teacher to the State Superintendent. He has coauthored two books, several articles, and served on numerous boards. His cover story, "Confronting Student Suicide" for *School Administrator* magazine received wide acclaim as have his "community conversations" series and wellness workshops. He is a monthly contributor to *School Administrator*'s Ethical Educator column.

Danielle Mitchell is mixed (Indigenous and Settler-roots) Cree and Métis from communities in Treaty 6 Territory. She was born, raised, and continues to be a grateful guest on the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-waututh Nations. She is a Senior Director within the health and social services sector working to address anti-Indigenous racism and discrimination and advance Indigenous Cultural Safety. She holds a Master of Arts in Leadership from Royal Roads University in Victoria, Canada, and is passionate about Indigenous leadership and the dismantling and creating of equitable, anti-racist organizations and systems.

James Mohr serves as the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs at Washington State University Health Sciences Spokane. His work focuses on issues related to hate, othering, leadership, and inclusion. He has interviewed former members of white supremacist organizations to learn about their leave-taking process. He has also served on nonprofit boards related to social justice such as the Gonzaga University Institute of Hate Studies, NAACP Spokane, Spokane County Human Rights Task Force, and many others.

Anna Patton (she/her/hers) serves as the Director of the Impact Leadership Village in Bowen Hall. She completed her PhD in Educational Studies & Cultural Foundations from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and her MEd in College Student Affairs Administration from the University of Georgia. She has published in *The Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, The South Atlantic Philosophy of Education Society 2016 Yearbook, and The Journal of Critical Scholarship on Higher Education and Student Affairs. As a social justice educator, she is passionate about developing equitable environments where students are encouraged to interrogate hegemonic narratives of college life and education.

Kerry Priest, PhD, is an Associate Professor in the Staley School of Leadership Studies Minor Program and Leadership Communication Doctoral Program at Kansas State University. Her interdisciplinary scholarship addresses questions of leadership identity, leadership educator professional development, critical pedagogies for leadership learning and development, and community-engaged research approaches that support the advancement of relational, collective, adaptive, and socially just leadership.

Carmelin Rivera is a Law Enforcement Supervisor, Educator, Practitioner, and Leadership Researcher with over 20 years of experience in building and delivering innovative learning programs in leadership, human relations, cultural diversity, and professional development. He is also a doctoral student at the University of San Diego's PhD in Leadership Studies program. His interest in advocacy and activism is rooted in his Latino upbringing in a strong matriarchal environment, working with survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, and his research interest on destructive (toxic) leadership in organizations, intersectionality, and the role (his) toxic masculinity plays in contributing to workplace toxicity.

Rebecca Schisler earned her doctorate in School Psychology in 2008 from The Ohio State University and is now the Founder and Executive Director of The Coalition for Cultural Compassion (The CCC), a Charlotte, NC-based nonprofit. The mother of a biological daughter and an adopted Black son, her vision for The CCC grew out of concern for the lack of support and opportunities available for having open and honest discussions about racial justice and learning about different cultures in her community. She is passionate about dismantling white supremacy and fostering meaningful relationships across racially and culturally diverse groups.

Aliah Mestrovich Seay is a Licensed Clinical Marriage and Family Therapist and works as an Instructor at the Staley School of Leadership Studies at Kansas State University, where she is a doctoral candidate. She holds a BS in Clinical Psychology in French from the Université de Caen, France, and an MA in Counseling Psychology, Marriage and Family Therapy from Argosy University in California. With over 20 years of experience, her professional and research interests involve intercultural coaching and training techniques that focus on cultural identity development, mindfulness, and finding innovative ways to engage with difference differently.

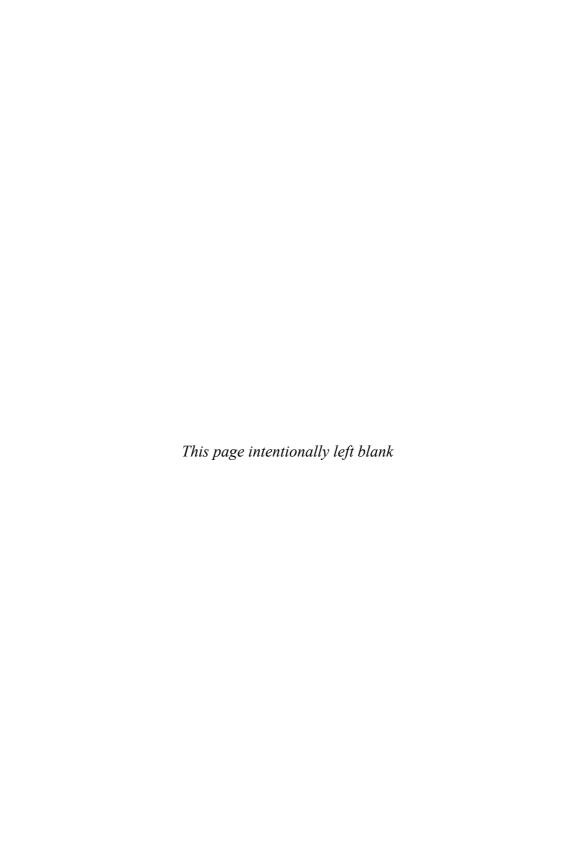
About the Contributors xxi

Carolyn M. Shields taught high school for 19 years before completing her doctorate at the University of Saskatchewan, Canada. Since then, at four different universities, she has taught classes and conducted research intended to focus on how leaders can create inclusive, equitable, excellent, and socially just learning environments. Her recent work focuses on the operationalization of the theory of *transformative leadership* and includes 12 books, over 100 articles and chapters, and numerous keynote addresses in Europe, Asia, Australia, New Zealand, and North America. An award-winning teacher, she is a Professor of educational leadership at Wayne State University in urban Detroit.

Coleman Simpson is a Graduate Student in Agricultural Leadership at North Carolina State University. He has a BS in Agricultural Science and a BA in Political Science from NC State. He is the Program Coordinator for the Oaks Leadership Scholars Program at NC State and is an NC State GLBT Center Advocate.

Jennifer Tilghman-Havens is a Teacher, Writer, Speaker, Facilitator, and Spiritual Director who serves as the Director of the Center for Jesuit Education at Seattle University. Her doctoral work in interdisciplinary Leadership Studies at Gonzaga University has inspired her to publish on servant-leadership, diversity and equity, transformative pedagogy, and environmental sustainability. She has a Master's in Pastoral Ministry and Social Work from Boston College and a Master's in Business Administration with a focus on social responsibility and organizational change. Previously, she served as the Director of the Women's Center at Boston College and as an Oncology Social Worker at Massachusetts General Hospital.

Renee Wells serves as the Director of education for equity and inclusion at Middlebury College. She develops and facilitates workshops for faculty, staff, and students on topics such as recognizing and responding to microaggressions, facilitating difficult dialogues, inclusive design for learning, hiring for cultural competence, cross-cultural engagement, power and privilege, and interrupting our role in interpersonal and institutional oppression. In addition, she works with academic departments and campus administrators to advocate for inclusive policies and practices, provides one-on-one and departmental consulting related to classroom and workplace inclusion, and facilitates small-and large-group dialogues in response to campus climate concerns.



PRFFACE

As we put final edits on this text, people around the world are joining the call for transformative change in policing. As we write this preface, 14 of the 15 paperback nonfiction best sellers are about white supremacy, racism, and anti-racism. People are feeling the mandate for deep equitable change and they are heeding the call for moral courage. They are taking to the streets in protest, developing policy asks that call for radical change in policing or defunding of the police, organizing phone banks and email campaigns, reading, listening to, and promoting the work of experts in anti-racism, and calling on their friends and family to join them. For generations, these transformative leadership skills have been taught in ally, advocate, and activist communities – in places of worship, at organizer camps, in field offices, across kitchen tables, and in classrooms.

Transformative Leadership in Action is a text for the teaching of transformative leadership. As such, it incorporates the theoretical framework for transformative leadership, pedagogy for teaching transformative leadership as learner, ally, advocate, and activist identities, tales from the field to serve as examples, and case studies for students to analyze. Leadership educators and students can use this text to explore what it means to be a transformative leader and the necessary competencies and behaviors to enact transformative leadership.

This text begins with Dr Carolyn Shields' Leading to Transform Our World to explain what transformative leadership is and then proceeds to Dr Jennifer Tilghman-Havens' Disrupting Dominance: Privilege, Positionality, and Possibilities for Shared Power to position transformative leadership as essential to leadership education. We then delve into a program designed to develop transformative leaders and follow that with pedagogy and activities to support the development of identities within transformative leadership – learners, allies, advocates, and activists.

xxiv Preface

It is our hope that the readers of this book will find it to be useful in a few ways. First, that the theoretical chapters provide you with solid groundwork from which to start (or continue) your leadership journey. Next, that the pedagogy chapters provide a roadmap to guide your journey. Lastly, that the case studies challenge you and that the tales from the field inspire you, wherever you are, to transform your communities. Finally, know that your commitment to transformative leadership gives us hope. Because of you dear reader, the world is on its way to a better place.

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From Jacklyn

Being able to thank the people who made this book possible brings into stark focus what an embarrassment of riches surrounds me. To our Department Chair Dr Carolyn Dunn, thank you for giving me the space to grow as an educator and practitioner of leadership and justice. Much of my work is possible because of your consistent championing, mentorship, and support. A particular debt of gratitude to Dr Byron Green. Your bravery put me on the very first step of this journey. I will be forever grateful to you. To the Oaks Leadership Scholars past and present, you inspired all of this! You give me hope that a brighter day is coming because you're working for it! To my husband Danny & daughter Ainslee, I love you so much. Thank you for your patience and grace as deadlines loomed and I asked for "just a few more minutes" at the laptop, for listening to ideas (good and bad) and inspiring me to make change. And finally, to my co-editor/co-author, who knew a terrible diversity training experience would one day lead to this? Grateful for your friendship, your support, your insight, and your wit. Thanks for pushing me to be a better educator. You're the best!

From Katherine

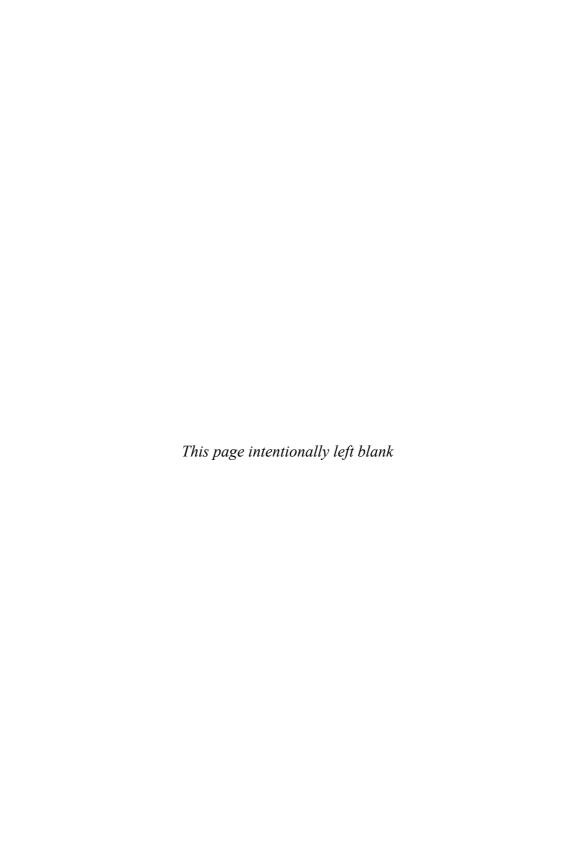
I am lucky to have so many people to thank for their support on this book and the work that shaped it. To my **co-editor/co-author**, for inviting me to a coffee/tea chat in the middle of a hurricane and then sponsoring me into a career as a leadership educator. I'm thankful for your friendship, your

guidance, your support, and your 1990s sing-along skills. You rock! Speaking of amazing women who lift other women, thank you to our department head and mentor, **Dr Carolyn Dunn**, for the opportunities and support you provide for me to have and pursue big ideas and for your example of leadership. 'Tis grand. To our **Oaks Leadership Scholars past and present**, I'm excited to live in the world you are building.

To my friends, who have taken their time and energy to teach me and others, I know those are acts of love and I promise to keep learning. To my parents, Peggy and Rich, for their lifelong example of standing up for what they believe and for raising me to be brave. And finally, to my husband, Jonathan, for his tireless support of my work and snacking and his endless patience.

Chapter 1

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS



LEADING TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD

CAROLYN M. SHIELDS

Traditional leadership theories are inadequate for meeting the present challenge. Of the commonly discussed theories, only the concept of transformative leadership appears to provide an appropriate direction. (Quantz, Rogers, & Dantley, 1991, p. 96)

* * *

Transformative leadership is characterized by its activist agenda and its over-riding commitment to social justice, equality, and a democratic society. (van Oord, 2013, p. 422)

* * *

For over 30 years, as the above quotations suggest, some leadership scholars have asserted a belief in the potential of transformative leadership to create equitable change; yet in this century, its potential is still unrealized. Perhaps, this is because the theory is comprehensive and complex. Its focus on advocacy and activism for justice and equity require practitioners to act with moral courage, recognizing the potential for both push-back and considerable rewards as they work to transform workplaces and communities.

This chapter will briefly explain the origins of the theory, clarify its fundamental characteristics, and offer some insight into its potential as a vehicle for social change. It will demonstrate that transformative leadership theory (TLT) responds to the current sense of alienation, marginalization, or even oppression expressed by so many people throughout the world by offering a vision of hope and solidarity for an interdependent world. This chapter will begin with a very brief overview of some of today's challenges and the need for socially just, activist-oriented leadership that will not only improve organizations but, as argued above, successfully meet today's challenges.

NEEDED: A NEW APPROACH

More than 30 years ago, Maxine Green expressed the need to teach

to the end of arousing a consciousness of membership, active and participant membership in a society of unfulfilled promises – teaching for what Paulo Freire used to call "conscientization" (1970), heightened social consciousness, a wide-awakeness that might make injustice unendurable. (1988, p. xxx)

Yet, I was surprised to find, when I used this quotation at a major leadership conference, that people were confused. One attendee actually interrupted the presentation asking, "What do you mean by unfulfilled promise?" It had seemed so obvious. America was founded on the principle of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all; yet, wealth and income gaps have been increasing annually not only in the United States, but in many developed countries; urgent cries of "Black lives matter" reflect the still disproportionate arrests and incarceration of people of color; terrorist incidents occur with frightening regularity; new diseases and their antidotes have raised the cost of prescription drugs beyond the reach of many who need them; thousands are homeless and others are faced with urban blight or rural displacement. And these are only a few of the many concerns that reflect the unfulfilled promises of a world in which too many still cannot live in safety, peace, and economic security.

The world in which most of our food was produced by family farms, in which manual labor was valued, and in which "community" implied a homogeneous ethnic background, language, and religious belief, seems like a long-ago fairy tale. Nevertheless, in reality, it was also a world of slavery, of classism, of industrialization in which many were exploited, devalued, and excluded, and in which some were advantaged while others were marginalized, unable to fully participate in the goods and benefits of a democratic society. Today's world may look more diverse, but inequitable outcomes persist. Almost 70% of us do not know our neighbors who may look unlike us, speak a different language, or practice a different religion from ourselves (Matthews, 2018). We are often filled with fear – fear of the those who have been displaced by conflict, fear about jobs being moved overseas; fear about the rapid destruction of agricultural lands and rain forests, decline in the size of glaciers, and impending extinction of many plants and animal species.

We are concerned about a world in which more people feel isolated than ever before, in which hate groups abound (SPLC, 2019), in which civility seems elusive, and in which selfishness and individualism still protect privilege at the expense of both the environment and groups of people who, for historic reasons relating to identity markers, cannot access power and hence cannot fully participate in democratic life.

The need for change is great and often seems overwhelming. Yet, after centuries and decades of attempts at reform, thousands of books and theories about what characterizes good leadership or offering "seven steps" to being a good leader, society is still marked by uncertainty, volatility, and disparity. How have we reached this point and what can we do about it?

A Brief Trajectory of Leadership Theories

Scholars often trace the beginning of thinking about leadership to the stratagem of military leaders such as Sun Tzu, Napoleon, or Alexander the Great. Some suggest that Plato's discussion of what makes a good leader and how to educate him marks the beginning of leadership studies. Yet, despite the fact that thinking about and studying leadership is centuries old, for our purposes, formal studies of administration may be said to have begun with the management studies of the early twentieth century. These early conceptions drew heavily on ideas from scientific management theories as well as transactional approaches to leadership which tended to emphasize exchange, division of labor between workers and "bosses," time and motion studies, and the notion of a scalar chain as the appropriate structure for meaningful organizational communication. In these approaches, administrators did the thinking and the workers performed what was often manual or heavy labor (Fayol, [1916]1997; Taylor, [1912]1990). Although widely critiqued, the influence of these approaches still persists in business and industry, in governmental and nonprofit organizations, as well as in educational institutions and may be seen in top-down managerial approaches aimed at exercising control over an organization or a group of people.

Administration, management, and leadership were seen as synonyms, with the desired outcomes, regardless of the term used, being efficiency, effectiveness, and profit, often with little regard to the disparate and lived experiences of workers or participants and without consideration of how power and privilege perpetuate the status quo. Nevertheless, with management theorists like Mary Parker Follett ([1940]1973) and others, values and more collaborative and participatory approaches simmered under the surface.

By 1978, when James McGregor Burns wrote his seminal book, *Leadership*, there was recognition that a new approach was needed. He first described the heavy reliance on transactions and then introduced a new approach he called *transforming leadership*, an approach he believed responded to the need for a revolution – "a complete and pervasive transformation of an entire social system" (p. 202) and "*real change* – that is, a transformation to the marked degree in the attitudes, norms, institutions, and behaviors that structure our daily lives" (1978, p. 414, italics in original).

In the next decade, Foster, too, recognized the futility of overemphasizing managerial functions and argued that

The idea of leadership as a transforming practice, as an empowerment of followers, and as a vehicle for social change has been taken, adapted, and co-opted by managerial writers so that now leadership appears as a way of improving organizations, not of transforming our world. (1989, p. 45)

Leadership, he believed, needed to be "fundamentally addressed to social change and human emancipation" (1986, p. 48), to be "critically educative," and to not "only look at the conditions in which we live" but decide how to change them (p. 185).

Twenty years later, Oakes and Rogers picked up Foster's critique of managerial approaches and decried what they saw as the continued overemphasis on rational and technical reform. They called for more activist and more community-based approaches to leadership and change and argued that:

Technical changes by themselves, even in the hands of committed and skillful "change agents" or backed by court orders, are too weak to interrupt the intergenerational transmission of racial inequality. At root, the cultural norms of meritocracy and the politics of privilege are impervious to so puny attack. (2006, pp. 21–22)

Although the above statement highlights racial inequality, the premise holds for other kinds of inequality including social class, religion, language, culture, as well as environmental, social, and economic sustainability. Oakes and Rogers go on to argue that

when educators step in and speak and act for less powerful communities, they do nothing to build the local community power necessary to change the cultural and political asymmetries that sustain the very [...] inequities they seek to disrupt. (2006, p. 31)

Oakes and Rogers argue that the work of John Dewey can provide some guidance for moving forward, in that Dewey calls for a "revitalized public" and "an agenda of activist, educative politics" that could build a new social order. They argue that Dewey's participative social inquiry requires engaging those most affected by inequality, ensuring access to knowledge and its construction, adopting a critical stance, and developing a transformative goal (pp. 39–41). With them, I posit that an activist reform strategy, including a new approach to leadership, is necessary to dislodge the inequities firmly entrenched by a long history of overt discrimination combined with often unacknowledged implicit bias and privilege. This is exactly what *TLT*, emerging from Burns' (1978) *transforming leadership* is intended to do.

An Overview of Transformative Leadership

Based on the writing and interpretations of numerous scholars in countries throughout the globe, transformative leadership

Begins with critical reflection and analysis and moves though enlightened understanding to action – action to redress wrongs and to ensure that all members of an organization are provided with as level a playing field as possible – not only with respect to access but also with regard to academic, social, and civic outcomes. (Shields, 2010, p. 572)

TLT as it has more recently been articulated is a comprehensive approach to leadership based on two fundamental premises or hypotheses and eight specific tenets. Although sometimes articulated in educational terms for leaders of schools and formal educational organizations (Shields, 2020), the premises may be broadly stated as followed:

1. The first premise is that whenever participants in an organization feel disrespected, excluded, or marginalized, are worried about how they will be treated, or what failure might mean for their social or cultural group,

- they will be unable to work to their full potential, to fully participate, and hence, their individual achievement will be limited.
- 2. The second premise is that when people are both encouraged and enabled to participate fully in the deliberative processes and actions of an institution or organization, capacity and civic participation are developed, and our very democratic society is strengthened.

To achieve these two outcomes, the following eight tenets help leaders to work toward desirable socially just, inclusive, equitable, and excellent outcomes for their organization as well as for more global transformation:

- the mandate to effect deep and equitable change;
- the need to deconstruct knowledge frameworks that perpetuate inequity and injustice and to reconstruct them in equitable ways;
- the need to address the inequitable distribution of power;
- an emphasis on both private and public (individual and collective) good;
- a focus on democracy, emancipation, equity, and justice;
- an emphasis on interconnectedness, interdependence, and global awareness;
- the necessity of balancing critique with promise; and
- the call to exhibit moral courage. (Shields, 2016)

Taken together, the tenets offer guidance for leaders wanting to effect change. They are not, however, a series of sequential steps or prescriptions. They do not prescribe either what to do, or how to do it, but ask leaders to ground their practices in a desire for the kind of revolution that Burns called for – revolution he argued later that responds "to the billions of the world's people in the direst want" (2003, p. 2). Nevertheless, it is important to begin with the first two tenets and then to determine how to proceed. As a whole, TLT asks leaders to work *with* others, to build capacity, to develop other leaders (not followers) to achieve a desired and equitable outcome. Transformative leaders are not only those who hold formal positions of leadership but also those who exercise leadership through their influence in multiple, informal spheres. Moreover, TLT requires leaders to engage in ongoing deep and critical reflection, thoughtful and respectful dialogue, sometimes courageous confrontation, and consistent action.