tions will deal with one another in a more culturally intelligent fashion.

REFERENCES


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Leadership seems to have tremendous staying power. It has been the subject of human fascination and study throughout history. Despite the voluminous attention it has received, there is still no consensus even on the most basic, fundamental issues. The very definition of leadership, for example, remains a matter of some controversy. What, then, are teachers to do in the classroom? There seems to be a never-ending supply of students who are eager to become leaders. But can leadership be taught? If so, which pedagogical techniques are most effective?

Sharon Parks’ book attempts to answer these questions. Parks argues that leadership can indeed be taught, and she touts the case-in-point (CIP) method—developed by Ronald Heifetz and his colleagues at Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government—as the ideal way to teach it. Leadership is not entirely a matter of having the right traits. It also involves doing things; it involves behaviors. And these behaviors, Parks argues, can be taught because they are activities that can be analyzed and translated into doable tasks.

These ideas, of course, are not new. The skills approach to leadership (described in Northouse, 2004) draws on the work of many, including Katz (1955) and Mumford, Zaccaro, Harding, Owen, and Fleishman (2000), to highlight the “teach-ability” of leadership. Where Parks’ book differs from the rather simplistic view of the skills approach is that it acknowledges the “messiness” of the process of leadership and emphasizes the importance of learning-by-doing through one’s own experience.

The book is an exposition of and a tribute to the CIP method for teaching leadership. Briefly, CIP is based broadly on a variety of well-established teaching techniques, such as seminars, simulations, lectures, readings, films, discussion and dialogue, clinical-therapeutic practice, coaching, and case studies. The CIP approach gets students to engage in a variety of small group activities (designed to simulate the real world), and it gets students to focus reflexively on their experiences in these activities as a basis for learning about leadership. According to conventional wisdom, students have to have real world experience before they can really profit from leadership courses. That’s not the way Parks sees it:

What goes on in the classroom itself is an occasion for learning and practicing leadership within a social group. The class is recognized as a social system inevitably made up of a number of different factions and acted on by multiple forces. The teacher has a set of ideas and frameworks to offer. But instead of presenting a lecture, or starting with a written case from another context that may or may not be relevant to the learning of the people in class, the teacher waits for a case to appear in the process of the class itself. Then the teacher works to use it to illustrate the theme, concept, or skill that he or she is trying to present (pp. 7–8).

The CIP method is anchored in a framework that makes four critical distinctions (pp. 9–11). First, it distinguishes between authority and leadership: the former is derived from formal
resources, such as the position of a person in an organization; the latter involves the mobilization of people to address tough problems. Second, it distinguishes between technical problems that can be solved with knowledge and processes already known versus adaptive challenges that require learning, innovation, and new patterns of behavior. Third, it distinguishes between power and progress; it measures leadership effectiveness in terms of progress made in addressing substantive issues rather than in the mere use of power and influence. And fourth, it distinguishes between personality and presence; it sees leadership as depending less on charisma or heroism than on skillful intervention in complex systems.

The book is divided into ten chapters. The first six describe the key features of the CIP method of teaching through narratives using actual sessions conducted by Ron Heifetz. In the seventh chapter Parks includes a conversation between Heifetz and herself that details the evolution of the CIP method. In the eighth chapter Parks seeks to address the issue of transferability of the pedagogy to other settings, academic levels, and teachers. The ninth chapter proposes a re-vamping of the way leadership has been studied and described so far in traditional literature, and it invites the reader to reframe leadership as “artistry” because this better captures the essence of the theory of adaptive leadership that the CIP method intends to teach. And, finally, in the tenth chapter Parks summarizes the strengths and weaknesses of the CIP approach.

This book has an easy and engaging style. It seems to be aimed at a broad audience of academics and business consultants. However, the extent to which this book is a useful addition to the vast number of books on the topic of leadership already in existence is unclear. Ron Heifetz has already written about the CIP method and the theory of adaptive leadership in various articles and books (e.g., Heifetz & Linsky, 2002).

An intended distinctive contribution of this book seems to be the assessment it offers of the effectiveness of CIP as a tool for teaching leadership in the classroom. This assessment seems to be based on evidence gathered from classroom observations, personal anecdotes, and conversations with past graduates of Heifetz’s leadership course. The book does mention a previously published survey assessment of the CIP method, conducted back in 1989, which found that about half of 165 students who had taken the CIP course believed the method to be “more useful” or “much more useful” than other Harvard courses, and “most useful” or “much more useful” than previous leadership or management training. But this evidence is neither systematic nor persuasive.

It is hard to avoid the feeling that the author stacked the evidence in favor of her arguments. When limitations of the method are discussed, they are explained away by arguing that the method, after all, is difficult to adopt completely. The book seems to avoid dealing with published criticisms of the CIP method, such as this one offered by Andrew Leigh of the John F. Kennedy School of Government:

The greatest problem with the theory of adaptive leadership is that it presumes that each problematic reality has its own right answer, which will become clear to all participants if only they focus on the underlying issues. Heifetz and Linsky appear to believe that all problems have an inherent truth—the challenge is to search for it. Missing almost entirely is the recognition that many problems have no “right” answer—and are themselves the product of differing sets of values . . . . What happens when adaptive leadership confronts relativism? What if we believe that individuals’ criteria for judgment can vary with time, circumstance, and culture? (Leigh, 2003: 348).

In conclusion, although this book provides an engaging introduction to the theory of adaptive leadership and the CIP method, it seems to offer little in the way of new theoretical, empirical, or pedagogical insights. The book would have been stronger had support for the theory of adaptive leadership and the CIP method been developed more fully and examined more rigorously. There is more work here to be done, and perhaps this book will provoke someone into doing it.

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Entrepreneurial activity is growing at a feverish rate around the globe (Acs, Arenius, Hay, & Minniti, 2005); it has even taken root in the traditionally inhospitable soil of such communist nations as China (Dickson, 2003). Scholarly interest in entrepreneurship has also been growing, as evidenced by the increasing number of entrepreneurship articles being published in “top-tier” journals such as the Academy of Management Journal (Ireland, Reutzel, & Webb, 2005). This growth in entrepreneurship research has led to an interest in how the field got its start and how it has evolved over the years. Landström’s Pioneers in Entrepreneurship and Small Business Research represents a first step toward a fuller understanding of the field’s origin and development. Its central aim is to “provide a historical-doctrinal [i.e., a body of teachings] review of the development of entrepreneurship and small business research as well as presenting some of the researchers who created and shaped the field—the pioneers of entrepreneurship and small business research” (p. xi).

This book attempts “to reflect on the knowledge acquired through research in order to establish a basis for further development” (p. xi). What is noteworthy is the ease with which the author creates order in a body of research that is often characterized as suffering from “the awkwardness of adolescence” (Low, 2001: 23). The book also addresses the persistent criticism that “much of the research [in entrepreneurship] has either lacked clarity of purpose or the specified purpose was of little consequence” (Low & MacMillan, 1988: 141). It is, therefore, likely to draw wide interest.

The book is formally organized into four major parts: A History of Entrepreneurship and Small Business Research, Pioneers—Macro-Level Analysis, Pioneers—Micro-Level Analysis, and Epilogue. Consistent with the primary (historical-doctrinal) aim, in the first part of the book Landström concentrates on key conceptual issues and debates that have historically characterized and confronted entrepreneurship and small business researchers. Therefore, these chapters are most likely to be of interest to anyone who would like to gain a sense of the current central debates in the field and the field’s ongoing evolution over time.

One such debate has to do with a definition of the field itself. Various conceptual definitions have been proposed over the years. Landström’s position on this long-standing definitional debate is that entrepreneurship is inherently complex, vague, and changeable, and it is rooted in many different disciplines. He therefore argues that “it is reasonable to expect that our definitions of the concept will also be ambiguous and changeable,” and he questions “whether or not it is reasonable to sustain the dream of a unified science” (p. 21). While such a pluralistic position inherently is subject to the criticism that it does little to foster paradigm development, it does fit nicely with the central purpose of the book. More important, it provides Landström a mechanism for discussing the concepts, ideas, and theories from which readers can draw to challenge conventional assumptions and to develop critical insights.

In Chapter 2 Landström describes the central theoretical roots of entrepreneurship and small business research. The chapter begins with a discussion of how individuals in the economic sciences (e.g., Richard Cantillon) initially attempted to “endow the concept of entrepreneurship with greater scientific meaning” as they “focused on the function of the entrepreneur” (p. 28). After describing the transition, around the end of the nineteenth century, in the focus of economic science from macroeconomic considerations to microeconomic ones, Chapter 2 goes on to provide a rich and informative discussion about the contributions of influential economists from the Austrian tradition (e.g., Carl Menger, Joseph Schumpeter, and Israel Kirzner)—contributions that provide the foundation for much contemporary entrepreneurship research.

It is at this point in the book that one develops a full appreciation for how far the field has come, despite the “struggles” that “have had a