

The decline of change management and the rise of change leadership

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Summary

Today, leadership rather than management is perceived as the key to effective performance and by association change leadership becomes the new change management. This conceptual paper revisits cultural, linguistic, historic and empirical characteristics of this perceived shift answering three academic questions. What were the cultural aspects of this shift from change management to change leadership? What were the perceived deficiencies with change management which resulted in its decline? What has been the historical path of the rise of leadership? Conclusions are drawn that the shift from management to leadership was culturally and socially constructed, rather than empirically informed and that privileging of change leadership over change management requires urgent and further critical questioning. Instead of 'either/or' dualisms such as management or leadership and stability or change, in the future we will embrace the complementarities of 'both/and' thinking.

Word Count: 6,988 (excluding end list of references)

Introduction

In recent decades, management and organization studies witnessed a shift from management towards leadership, 'leadership rather than management is currently advocated in the mainstream management literature and organizational policies as the key to effective organizational performance' (Ford and Harding, 2007: 475). An element of this shift, has involved leadership being privileged whilst management is disparaged, for example, Riggio (2011:120) writes about 'when the field of management began to make the shift from viewing those in positions of power and control as mere "managers" to viewing them as taking on higher-level "leadership" activities...' Grint (2005:15) sceptically acknowledged the role subordination implied within leadership and management differentiations, with an implication to '...get out of management and into leadership!' Gradually and imperceptibly the word 'leader' replaced the word 'manager' (Salaman, 2011). This perceived shift raises a raft of academic questions relating to the cultural nature of this shift, deficiencies perceived within management and the historical path of this shift and its empirical basis.

In understanding this shift it is informative to focus upon organizational change as a field of study where this shift was pronounced. In corporate America of the eighties and nineties transformation and change leaders began to be perceived as a heroic solution to America's economic malaise.

This book is about corporate leadership, America's scarcest natural resource. At a time when our economy, as well as that of the entire industrialized world, is in the midst of major upheaval and transformation, a new type of leadership at the middle and senior levels of our corporations is desperately needed. (Tichy and Devanna, 1986: viii)

The demand for change leaders already far exceeds the supply, and the continuing elimination of traditional middle management roles exacerbates this imbalance. (Katzenbach et al, 1996:332)

These enthusiastic exhortations raise an expectation that a convincing body of empirical evidence explaining how leaders/leadership influences organizational change exists. However, recent reviews (Parry, 2011; Ford and Ford, 2012 and Hughes, 2015a) have questioned the expected empirical evidence base. The rhetoric of leading change and transformation to date does not match the empirical reality. Instead of focusing upon forward looking aspirations of organizational change, we need to go back to the future '...to see how those futures are constructed by the very same decision-makers and consider the persuasive mechanisms that decision-makers use to make situations more tractable to their own preferred form of authority' (Grint, 2008:116). Pluralism is not just about choosing different research methods and theories; it is about valuing critical scholarship, as well as, valuing empiricism and engaging with the historic past, as well as, future aspirations. In critically evaluating a perceived shift from change management to change leadership three themes are explored providing the structure for this paper.

Firstly, what were the cultural aspects of shifting from change management to change leadership? In this context, culture refers to both national and organizational cultures and their interplay. Secondly, change leadership was promoted as a solution to change management's deficiencies, so what deficiencies were perceived within change management which resulted in its decline? Thirdly, what has been the historical path of the rise of leadership? The fixed and certain nature of history is critically questioned, through the concept of historiography informing discussion about historic publication milestones.

Conclusions couched in the past, present and future highlight the culturally and socially constructed nature of the shift from change management towards change leadership, with leadership increasingly privileged over management. Today there is an urgent and critical requirement to question the fashionable privileging of change leadership over change management. In the future, instead of 'either/or' dualisms such as management or leadership and stability or change, we will embrace the complementarities of 'both/and' thinking.

What were the cultural aspects of the shift from change management to change leadership?

The following discussion explores two closely interrelated aspects of this shift. Firstly, characteristics of American national culture which encouraged an emphasis upon leadership are highlighted. Change leadership was made in America; it would never have caught the public imagination in a similar way in Japan or Sweden. Secondly, managers and leaders within organizations act as significant cultural symbols ascribing meaning to organizational events.

The American Dream contains powerful themes '...but at its heart lies a view of America as the land of opportunity in which any individual, through hard work and self-improvement, can be a success' (Guest, 1990: 390). The earliest articulation of the American Dream was the New Deal of the 1930s. Guest (1990) argued that the American Dream was not evident in the seventies, but re-emerged in the eighties encapsulated within Ronald Regan's political leadership invoking a frontier mentality similar to notions of how the west was won. Guest's (1990) interest was with human resource management (HRM) and he highlighted HRM fitting the American Dream, particularly in terms of leadership:

A reinforcement of the importance of strong leadership, a kind of rugged entrepreneurial individualism reflected in and reinforced by a strong organizational culture. (Guest, 1990:391)

A third feature of the American Dream is a belief that individualism and opportunity can be both reflected in industrial leadership and facilitated by enlightened leadership... These too are rugged individuals facing fearsome competitive odds but winning out through hard work and by seizing available opportunities. (Guest, 1990:392)

Guest (1990) citing Child (1969) regarded ideology as justifying management roles and prescribing behaviour with strong individualised and anti-bureaucratic leadership a manifestation of the ideology of the American Dream. The implication is that the origins of change leadership (as evident in the quotations in the introduction) were firmly rooted in the culture of the American Dream and a national cultural pre-disposition towards rugged entrepreneurial individualism. Organizational cultures, as well as, national cultures potentially inform shifts towards leadership.

Central organizational roles such as those of leader and manager '...represent wishes and fears shared by organizational collectives; they are symbols which help to ascribe meaning to organizational events' (Czarniawska-Joerges and Wolff, 1991:530). Over time there will be oscillations between leadership, management and entrepreneurship as organizational roles move in and out of fashion. Political unrest of the sixties, meant that by the seventies managers introducing order and rationality were favoured as symbolizing a return to stability.

In this era, interest in leadership declined as Harvard graduates associated the organizational role of leader with the dark face of power. Instead, the authority figure in-vogue was the unpretentious manager, although these associations were reversed in the neo-conservative eighties (Czarniawska-Joerges and Wolff, 1991). In differentiating between management, leadership and entrepreneurship, Czarniawska-Joerges and Wolff (1991) cited Schumpeter (1921) who regarded management as a function consisting of control, ensuring discipline and introducing order and requiring considerable daily bureaucratic work. Their paper suggested a never ending story ‘the fashion of the day elevates one role above the other and then abandons it again. Now we need order, next we need change, and then we need to control our fate’ (Czarniawska-Joerges and Wolff, 1991:541). This suggests that the shift from change management to change leadership may completely reverse with the ebb and flow of fashion. However, to date even the 2008 global financial recession has not diminished the current organizational and societal appetite for change leadership, if anything new anxieties arising out of recession further fuel this appetite for change leadership.

Leaders serve as symbols representing the personal causation of social events. Such personal attribution of causality is a confirmation of the feasibility to control events, one of the most important stakes in human beings' fight against destiny. (Czarniawska-Joerges and Wolff, 1991:535)

After the recession and now during the so-called ‘age of austerity’, change leaders play an important symbolic role. The enduring rise of change leaders is culturally explained as both a reaction to fears within societies and organizations arising out of recession and proactively as societal and organizational attempts to influence the future. Both Guest (1990) and Czarniawska-Joerges and Wolff (1991) highlighted reversals of cultural shifts, the implication is that when ‘fighting’ the recession is over, and fears diminish, there may be demand for change managers symbolizing a return to stability.

What perceived deficiencies within change management resulted in its decline?

In practitioner orientated organizational change literature, a belief is espoused that a ‘burning platform’ (Conner, 1998) and/or ‘a sense of urgency’ (Kotter, 1996) are required as catalysts for change to happen. So what was the catalyst beyond the cultural drivers featured in the previous section for shifting from change management to change leadership? Three explanations appear particularly pertinent; associating management with stability, leadership perceived as a more effective social defence than management and discourses of change management failing.

Management associated with stability Associating management with stability is partially grounded in national and organizational culture as previously discussed. However, given its centrality to a shift from change management towards change leadership it merits further investigation. Haslam et al (2011) remind us that we are told wonderful stories about the role of great leaders in making history and initiating change. We do not however, look back at managers in the same way. Grint (2005:105) explained management and leadership differentiations etymologically ‘...the English word ‘management’ derives from the Latin manus, the hand that controls, and ‘leadership’ from the Old German leader, to guide, to show the way...’ This etymology suggests that control and stability considerably pre-date more recent interest in leader/manager differentiations. Barker (1994: 49) traced leadership’s association with change back to feudal times ‘in feudal times, economic success was attained by conquest and by the acquisition of land, property, and power.’

Management creating stability and leadership creating change is a consequence of the different functions society and organizations associate with management and leadership (see also Barker, 1997).

Management was infused with rationality, stability and control in its earliest expositions. Taylor's (1911) *Principles of Scientific Management*, encouraged a science of work, with scientific selection and development of workers delivering greater efficiency, however these principles have been critically regarded as increasing management control (Braverman, 1974). In *General and Industrial Management*, Fayol's (1949) association of management with control was more explicit with management defined in terms of five elements; forecast and plan, organize, command, coordinate and control. Management's association with stability is equally informed through it being contrasted with leadership's association with change. As Ladkin et al (2010:127) noted '...leaders 'make change happen' is a belief core to many assumptions about how organizational change works.' These beliefs are predicated upon a belief that change and transformation are preferable to continuity and stability.

Burns (1978) differentiation between transformational leaders and transactional leaders gave impetus to transformational leadership (Bass, 1985) and was cited by Kotter (1990) as informing his differentiation between leadership and management. *Leadership* (Burns, 1978) is a weighty classic leadership text, in which Burns (1978) speaks to societal/cultural interest in change and stability. He acknowledged that assumptions relating to change were culture bound and acknowledged that stability and conservation, rather than change were the norm in developing most major civilizations. Burns (1978:416) offered an insight which appears to have been overlooked in breathless translations into forward looking transformational leadership 'the vast proportion of the decisions of decision makers, high and low, is readjustment that maintains the equilibrium of the social structure.'

It isn't just leadership which is privileged over management, change is privileged over stability. Consequently, it is important to critically question culturally bounded assumptions that there is inherent good within changes, just because they are changes (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2008). In the context of strategic change, De Wit and Meyer (2004) acknowledged the value of continuity with strategists just as likely to be involved in evolutionary change as revolutionary organisational change, despite the rhetoric which emphasises the latter (see also Burke, 2014; Johnson et al, 2008). Pettigrew (2003) offered an insightful comparison between nine interrelated strategic change aspects featured in *Managing Change for Competitive Success* (Pettigrew and Whipp, 1991) and Kotter's (1995/1996) eight steps for leading change. He acknowledged some satisfaction in prefiguring Kotter with only one item not replicated in Kotter's work 'balancing continuity and change.' Pettigrew (2003:318) offered the following explanation for this omission '...because of the infectious American enthusiasm for the future and the belief that it will be better than the past, the emphasis is often on revolutionary change, and change and continuity are implicitly seen as dichotomous opposites.'

Management and leadership as social defences Krantz and Gilmore (1990) offered a neglected, yet wonderfully disturbing psychodynamic account of the splitting of leadership and management. They were writing at the tipping point when America was switching its allegiance from management to leadership and in this way offer their own contextualised account of what was happening at this time. They acknowledge that just as individuals experience difficulties dealing with new situations and often sabotage their own development, this is equally applicable to organizations.

America was facing significant challenges as highlighted previously ‘...it is hard to imagine how current demands for innovation being made on our own organizations and the concurrent demands for change and reorientation made on their members could fail to elicit deep, primitive, and painful anxieties’ (Krantz and Gilmore, 1990: 201). The social defence that interested Krantz and Gilmore (1990) had two variants the cult of managerialism which emphasised mastery over tools and techniques and the cult of heroism which emphasised the cult of the charismatic leader.

Managerialism, as a defense enables people to evade those anxieties by creating an experience of technical mastery in a delimited area. Heroism, in contrast, binds anxiety with the comforting image of the person or the idea that will magically deliver the organization to the future without its having to grapple with the real complexities that surround it. (Krantz and Gilmore, 1990: 201)

In their provocative paper, Krantz and Gilmore (1990) questioned the utility of both managerialism and heroism, however their overarching concern was that splitting them or the dramatic ascendancy of one over the other would create a dangerous situation, and put organizations at risk. In revisiting this paper, twenty five years later they appear to have feared the ascendancy of leadership over management and their fears proved to be well founded.

Change management isn’t working! A set of discourses emerged in the nineties asserting that change management was not working, couched in terms of change failure (Kotter, 1995; Beer and Nohria, 2000), subsequently there were even claims that change had died (see Blanchard et al, 2009; Hughes, 2015b). Harvard professors claimed that transformation efforts were failing (Kotter, 1995) and that the ‘the brutal fact is that about 70% of all change initiatives fail’ (Beer and Nohria, 2000:133). This reporting and misrepresentation of available evidence was questioned (Hughes, 2011), but the norm of associating change management with failure had been established. These milestones in organizational change studies (Kotter, 1995; Beer and Nohria, 2000) played a far more subtle discursive role in encouraging the shift from management to leadership as they depicted specifically managers as failing.

In Kotter’s (1995) infamous tirade *Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail*, the focus was very much upon the role of managers, despite the paper’s title referring to leading. For example, ‘a paralyzed senior management often comes from having too many managers and not enough leaders’ (Kotter, 1995:60), ‘...management had a sense of direction, but it was too complicated or blurry to be useful’ (Kotter, 1995:63), ‘...tedious quarterly management meetings...’ (Kotter, 1995: 64) and ‘a 60-year-old plant manager who has spent precious little time over 40 years thinking about customers’(Kotter, 1995:64). Confidence in change management was rhetorically undermined at a time when managers introducing order and rationality were losing favour within organizations and amongst graduates favouring leadership (Czarniawska-Joerges and Wolff, 1991).

In Beer and Nohria’s (2000:133) influential *Harvard Business Review* article there was again a subtle critique of managers and management. For example, ‘...few companies manage the process as well as they would like’ (Beer and Nohria, 2000:133), ‘...managers end up immersing themselves in an alphabet soup of initiatives’ (Beer and Nohria, 2000:133) and ‘...too often, managers try to apply theories E and O in tandem without resolving the inherent tensions between them’ (Beer and Nohria, 2000:134).

However, tellingly, Beer and Nohria (2000:133) referred to the role of leaders when they offered their solution, writing that ‘leaders need to crack the code of change’, which would deliver successful organizational change. Both Kotter (1995) and Beer and Nohria’s (2000) language whilst mirroring American cultural values of the day, consciously or unconsciously contributed to the decline of change management. The extra-ordinization of leadership highlights a perceived need to depict leadership as ‘...very significant and something quite special’ (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2003:1435), change leadership becomes significant and special, because as much as anything it is not change management.

What historical path has the rise of leadership taken?

In the following discussion, the theme of historiography as related to organizational change is introduced informing subsequent discussion of the historical path of the rise of leadership.

Organizational change historiography Burke (2014) a respected organizational change scholar in his chapter *A Brief History of Organizational Change* informatively mapped important forerunners to the modern study of organizational change. Histories such as Burke’s (2014) appear fixed and solid, in contrast to accounts of history as more fluid and contested. In this way the writings of Zaleznik (1977, 1989) and Kotter (1988 and 1990) tend to be invoked as irrefutable historic milestones which are now fixed in time, beyond critique. However, the concept of historiography disrupts such certainties. Cooke (1999) illustrated how the writings of Kurt Lewin, John Collier and Edgar Schein were depicted in a particular way in order to reflect dominant managerialist accounts of history. For Cooke (1999:81) ‘change management’s very construction has been a political process which had written the left out, and shaped an understanding of the field as technocratic and ideologically neutral.’ In a manner similar to Cooke (1999), Burnes (2004) questioned how Lewin was historically represented (misrepresented). There is never a singular or exclusive history of a field and historiography offers another explanation for the shift from change management to change leadership. Cooke’s (1999) account of change management warns about the historiographical nature of how approaches to change can be depicted, in Grint (2008) terms we need to go back to the future. In the next sub-section, the historical advance of manager/leader differentiations feature with the selective historiography of leader/manager differentiations evident.

The key publication milestones informing the rise of leadership The following discussion revisits that literature (Zaleznik, 1977, 1989 and Kotter, 1988 and 1990) frequently cited in support of differentiating and privileging leadership over management, as well as, Kotter’s (1995 and 1996) encouragement to lead change, rather than manage change. It was *Managers and Leaders: Are They Different?* (Zaleznik, 1977) published in *Harvard Business Review* (HBR) which initiated the debate featured here. The significance of this practitioner magazine article in shaping today’s debate should not be underestimated. This article was cited by Tichy and Devanna (1986: ix) as informing their thinking, as well as, Kotter (1988 and 1990) as informing his thinking about leader/manager differentiations.

Zaleznik (1977:68) as a Professor of the Social Psychology of Management at Harvard Business School differentiated managers from leaders for not being heroic ‘it takes neither genius nor heroism to be a manager, but rather persistence, tough-mindedness, hard work, intelligence, analytical ability and, perhaps most important, tolerance and goodwill.’ Subsequently, Zaleznik discussed the psychodynamics of leadership even asking if the mystique of leadership might relate to a longing for heroic parents. In his individualistic and

traits based approach, leaders and managers were differentiated in terms of their orientations towards; their goals, their work, their human relations and their selves. Zaleznik (1977:78) concluded his article thoughtfully acknowledging a need for leaders to be open to being challenged, 'I am constantly surprised at the frequency with which chief executives feel threatened by open challenges to their ideas, as though the source of their authority, rather than their specific ideas, were at issue'. It is informative that both practitioners and academics enthusiastically adopt Zaleznik's (1977) leader/manager differentiation, yet neglected Zaleznik's encouragement for leaders to engage in a dialogue with subordinates being open to challenge. Even Zaleznik (1989:245) subsequently shifted his position recommending 'ordinarily, leaders should not socialize with subordinates.' Zaleznik cited American billionaire J.D. Rockefeller in support of his reasoning with Rockefeller (1973) believing that organizations were impeded by the weight of tradition and inertia and that the deck was stacked in favour of tried and proven ways of doing things, working against taking risks and striking out in new directions.

The Managerial Mystique (Zaleznik, 1989) received far fewer citations than the HBR article, yet as a far more detailed exposition of Zaleznik's thinking merits consideration. The four major sections of the book; argument, analysis, consequences and the cure: leadership, convey the book's thesis. In many ways it was a detailed history (historiography) of American business/political leaders, businesses and the corresponding development of management studies over the past century. Approaches of Taylorism (Taylor, 1911) and Human Relations (Mayo, 1933) were revisited in detail. Taylorism was presented favourably as being '...founded on a love of manufacturing and a humane desire to do things better' (Zaleznik, 1989:75). Whereas, Zaleznik was sceptical about Elton Mayo (1933) and to a lesser extent Kurt Lewin's (1947) promotion of workplace cooperation, which for Zaleznik (1989:84) encouraged the resulting managerial mystique 'the appeal for cooperation, whether couched in psychology or political theory, evades certain economic and political realities in America. Pragmatism and individuality are values deeply ingrained in the American character.' In essence, Zaleznik (1989) regarded the shift from Taylorism towards cooperative human relations as detrimental for America and American businesses. Zaleznik's (1989:235) favoured leadership solution looked back fondly on early American corporate leaders 'modern management represents a sharp divergence from the early forms of corporate leadership in which a patriarchal figure, such as Andrew Carnegie or John D Rockefeller, constructed large enterprises'.

It is telling that Zaleznik (1977) who suggested that the mystique of leadership may relate to a longing for heroic parents now offered America patriarchal figures as leadership role models. If leadership has a tendency to go forward to the past (Grint, 2008), Zaleznik's promotion of earlier forms of corporate leadership is illustrative of such a tendency. However, the danger with going forward to the past is that the healthy developments of societies, such as greater equality and justice within organizations and societies may be lost. For example, Zaleznik (1989:25) in going forward to the past was critical of managers who '...tend to fear aggression as a force leading to chaos.' Whereas, he believed 'leaders comfortable with aggression often create a climate of ferment that intensifies individual motivation' (Zaleznik, 1989:26). As Zaleznik (1989:123) later lamented 'the corporate world, however, has a long way to go to understand the uses of anger in human relationships.' Rost (1993:74) was troubled by Zaleznik's (1989) book regarding it as symptomatic of business and management orientated leadership books of the 1980s '... filled with hundreds of paragraphs reflecting the view that leadership is doing what the leader wishes.' A potential darker side of the leader/manager differentiation surfaces as management lacking aggression is replaced with leadership benefitting from the use of aggression as a

means to intensify individual motivation. More recently, O'Reilly and Reed (2010) detected leaderism replacing managerialism. The pejorative leader/manager dualism is evident in the following quotation.

Leaders work from high-risk positions, indeed often are temperamentally disposed to seek out risk and danger, especially where opportunity and reward appear high...Managers prefer to work with people; they avoid solitary activity because it makes them anxious. (Zaleznik, 1977:72)

Today, generalising about leaders as people who seek out 'risk and danger' and managers as avoiding solitary activity because it makes them 'anxious', whilst very amusing is stereotyped and perverse given how frequently this paper is mechanistically cited as evidence supporting differentiating and privileging leaders over managers. Zaleznik's (1977) stereotyped opinions were not supported by empirical evidence, instead it was the title of the article which framed the debate about manager/leader differentiations. Recently, Spector (2014) in revisiting Lee Iacocca as the personification and embodiment of transformational leadership offered his own historical perspective upon leader and manager differentiations. Spector acknowledged how difficult the seventies were for America with a lack of leadership believed to be behind this malaise. As Spector (2014: 364) observed referring back to the Zaleznik (1977) article '...a new hypothesis had emerged: American industry was suffering from an overabundance of managers and a paucity of leaders.' He acknowledged that the mandate to develop more leaders and fewer managers was picked up and popularized through Kotter's (1988, 1990) writings.

Kotter (1988, 1990, 1995 and 1996) has been the most influential contributor to debates around leader and manager differentiations. *The Leadership Factor* (1988) and *A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs from Management* (1990) generically emphasised differences between leaders and managers, whilst *Leading Change* (Kotter, 1996) emphasised change leadership. In *The Leadership Factor* (1988:20) management was defined simplistically as being comprised of the processes of; planning, budgeting, organizing and controlling. Whereas effective leadership in senior management jobs within complex business settings required; industry and organizational knowledge, relationships in the firm and industry, reputation and track record, abilities and skills, personal values and motivation (Kotter, 1988). Kotter (1988:1) cited American billionaire H. Ross Perot on his first page.

Mr Perot is also a man of strong convictions. Central among them is a belief that effective leadership is an enormously important factor in the world today, and yet a factor that is all too often missing. Commenting on the U.S. economic situation recently, he framed that conviction in the following way: "Our country cries out for leadership at the business level and the political level. Lack of leadership is the biggest problem we have in making this nation competitive."

Again management is the problem responsible for America's malaise and leadership the favoured solution, the scale of this problem gives legitimacy to strong/heroic leadership required for the greater good of America. The wishes of billionaires (Rockefeller and Perot) were enthusiastically championed by Harvard Business School cheer leaders (Zaleznik and Kotter) all wrapped up in discourses grounded in the rugged entrepreneurial individualism of the American Dream (Guest, 1990). *The Leadership Factor* benefitted from Kotter's extensive research with senior executives, with named leaders and named case study organizations. However, the book's deficiencies require honest acknowledgement as the

book has been erroneously perceived as empirical support for leader/manager differentiations.

As research, the book falls short because terms are not defined or operationalized and self-reports are limited to senior executives. Since research is not Kotter's main concern, the research weaknesses are not critical to the importance of the book, although managers and management students reading it should be aware that the empirical evidence does not necessarily support Kotter's position. (Tucker, 1989:301)

It is troubling how much management and leadership writing rests upon shaky foundations of leaders self-reporting upon themselves as leaders, paraphrased as when we asked leaders if leadership was important they agreed that they were! *The Leadership Factor* (Kotter, 1988) was really an aperitif for Kotter's (1990) main dish *A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs from Management*. Kotter refers to other leadership studies, describing the book in the preface as part of a research programme going back to his doctoral studies and with supporting references to earlier research projects. He cites named case studies throughout the book. In leadership studies, it is a milestone study and it is still heavily cited to this day. However, because it has erroneously been regarded as empirical support for the leadership/management differentiation, it is necessary to critically revisit Kotter's (1990) research methods. The Appendix provides a candid exposition of the research undertaken. The research was in two phases; firstly a questionnaire survey of 200 senior executives and the second phase documenting a dozen case studies of highly effective leadership in business. The questionnaire required senior executives to identify a random sample of ten people with whom they work and then compare and contrast their contributions to the leadership and management of their company. The concerns here are that a highly respected Professor of Leadership in a cultural climate emphasising leadership (see earlier discussion) asked senior executives to compare and contrast the value of leadership with the value of management. Even, Kirchner (1990:655) (Vice Chairman Personnel Decisions, Inc) in his favourable book review highlighted the false dichotomy Kotter encouraged. Management was depicted as sterile and somewhat artificial concerned with defending the status quo, whereas leadership processes...

...on the other hand, then become the bright shining star of producing constructive and beneficial change all the while moving ahead. It apparently involves the new, the different, the future, and so forth. Shucks, who wouldn't want to be a leader?

Kirchner, speaks to the fundamental methodological flaw in Kotter's reliance upon leaders reporting upon their own perceptions of themselves as leaders. In terms of the second phase of Kotter's (1990:163) research he includes the solicitation letter sent to prospective case study leaders, it opens 'as part of my ongoing research on the subject of managerial behaviour, I am in the process of looking for situations that exemplify extraordinarily effective leadership.' This research did not embrace the reflexivity we take for granted today, or even more objective insights into leadership which collaborators/followers or other stakeholders could provide. Kotter (1990:164) also shared the interview guide comprised of six questions for the leadership stories.

5. How large a role did "effective leadership" play in this story? If interviewee feels effective leadership was central to the story ask: who helped provide the leadership? What exactly did they do that constituted effective leadership?

It is harsh to critically evaluate this pioneering research with the benefit of twenty five years hindsight. However, the dilemma is that these self-report descriptions of leadership are

misconstrued as valid empirical evidence. This research certainly described how senior executives of American companies perceived themselves as leaders at this time, but the anticipated critical thinking/investigation is missing. For example, at the same time that this leadership beauty parade was happening, American corporations such as Enron, Arthur Anderson and WorldCom were beginning to unravel (see Tourish, 2013 for discussion of this darker side of transformational leadership). Perversely, Kotter (1990: xi) recommended a reader ‘...who prefers seeing detailed conclusions...’ read his Postscript, yet his Postscript contained only summaries in boxes of each chapter. In going back to the original source, and in fairness to Kotter’s (1990: ix) original words, he never denigrated management as being inferior to leadership:

- a) Leadership and management are both very important processes, and the notion that leadership is “good” and “management” is bad is most certainly wrong,
- b) despite differences that can create conflict, the two processes can work together very successfully, and furthermore some people can be very effective leaders and managers,
- c) for a variety of reasons, many firms today lack sufficient leadership, a deficiency which is increasingly costly, yet often correctable.

However, unfortunately the culturally grounded belief of corporate America in leaders and leadership at the expense of managers and management was subsequently mimicked by other countries in the West with leadership even offered as the panacea for cash-strapped public services. And with such cultural shifts, management was denigrated, but as Kotter himself observed this idea was ‘most certainly wrong’.

Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail (Kotter, 1995) restated that American corporate transformations were failing due to a lack of appropriate leadership, a view publically and explicitly encouraged by American billionaires J.D. Rockefeller and Ross Perot. Leadership was subsequently offered as a panacea within *Leading Change* (Kotter, 1996) through taking eight steps towards successful transformation. Kotter (1996) regarded the book as a logical extension of his earlier works. Another edition of this book was published with a revised preface in which Kotter (2012: vii) claimed his book was ‘...not only still relevant now, sixteen years after it was published, but I believe it is more relevant, and for one reason the speed of change continues to increase’ (see Hughes, 2015c for a critique of *Leading Change*).

Conclusions

In the present it is difficult to know what is fleeting, what is idiosyncratic and what is more permanent and systemic (Eccles and Nohria, 1992). In this sense it has been informative in this conceptual paper to critically revisit a perceived shift from change management towards change leadership. This specific shift was underpinned by an almost taken for granted generic shift from management towards leadership, which has also had to be revisited. It was necessary to understand how change management; was perceived as deficient, problematically associated with stability, regarded as an inadequate social defence and socially constructed as failing. Finally, it was necessary to consider the historiography of how leadership studies advanced, critically revisiting publications apparently supporting differentiating and privileging leadership over management. The findings reported here now

allow three conclusions to be drawn differentiated in terms of the past, present and future. These conclusions are succinctly stated before being elaborated upon:

- A culturally and socially constructed shift from management to leadership informs the rise of change leadership, rather than empirical evidence.
- Today's emphasis upon privileging change leadership over change management requires urgent and further critical questioning.
- In the future, instead of 'either/or' dualisms such as management or leadership and stability or change, we will embrace the complementarities of 'both/and' thinking

A culturally and socially constructed shift from management to leadership informs the rise of change leadership, rather than empirical evidence The shift from management to leadership with its major proponents based in America can be explained in terms of the American Dream (Guest, 1990; Pettigrew, 2003) and cultural oscillations between management and leadership (Czarniawska-Joerges and Wolff, 1991). The economic difficulties America experienced in the seventies were explained culturally as a lack of leadership (Spector, 2014). The roles of leader and manager reflected wishes and fears within organizations symbolically ascribing meaning to organizational events (Czarniawska-Joerges and Wolff, 1991). In a cultural sense the shift away from management towards leadership (Zaleznik, 1977; Kotter, 1988 and 1990) was an inevitable response to societies, organizations and individuals anxieties. Initially managerialism and subsequently heroism were used as social defences against anxieties America was experiencing (Krantz and Gilmore, 1990).

The cultural shift from leadership to management influenced organizational change as a field of study as illustrated by citations in this paper (Tichy and Devanna, 1986; Kotter, 1995; Kotter, 1996; Katzenbach et al, 1996). However, the shift to change leadership was also a reaction to perceived change management deficiencies with management increasingly associated with stability and leadership with change (Barker, 1994 and 1997). More tangibly change management was depicted as failing (Kotter, 1995; Beer and Nohria, 2000) and even death was claimed (Blanchard et al, 2009). However, beneath these headlines, Beer and Nohria (2000) and Kotter's (1995) language, subtly associated failure specifically with managers and associated the solution with leaders.

History is written and rewritten, in this spirit the fixed history of the rise of leadership has been disrupted, along with belief in a rational linear, research informed, evidence based movement from change management towards change leadership. In revisiting publication milestones informing differentiations between management and leadership, despite Zaleznik (1977) and Kotter (1988 and 1990) being cited in support of such differentiations between leaders and managers, each primarily expressed an informed opinion. Zaleznik (1977) offered a provocative thought piece, it was the right message at the right time, but timing does not equate to evidence. Kotter (1988 and 1990) was the closest to offering empirical evidence. Superficially, *The Leadership Factor* (Kotter, 1988) appeared to be promising, but as Tucker (1989) warned in his review, the book falls short as empirical evidence in support of Kotter's position. Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003:379) whilst not citing Kotter highlighted the dilemma with Kotter's quest for leadership 'there are perhaps too many studies assuming and producing leadership through designs with inbuilt "proofs" of leadership, carried out by researchers ideologically and commonsensically committed to this idea'. *A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs from Management* (Kotter, 1990) again includes citations and reports upon original research, but the focus upon culturally embedded senior executives self-reporting upon themselves as leaders, is methodologically problematic. Senior

executives are unlikely to report critically in any way that undermines their own identity as leaders. As one book reviewer, Kirchner (1990:655) also a senior executive observed – ‘Shucks, who wouldn’t want to be a leader?’ In many ways Kotter’s research or lack of research was noise. Kotter (1990: ix) unequivocally stated ‘leadership and management are both very important processes, and the notion that leadership is “good” and “management” is bad is most certainly wrong.’ There is no support here for privileging leadership over management as highlighted in the introduction to this paper.

Today’s emphasis upon privileging change leadership over change management requires urgent and further critical questioning Leader/manager differentiations have previously been gently questioned (Storey, 2011; Bolden et al, 2011; Knights and Willmott, 2014; Spector, 2014). However, the analysis reported here goes further, in asserting that this privileging is culturally and socially constructed. This does not necessarily negate contemporary interest in change leadership, but does suggest that an emphasis upon change leadership may be more appropriate in America and culturally compatible countries, given associations between leadership and the rugged entrepreneurial individualism of the American Dream (Guest, 1990). The analysis reported here highlights that this shift was ideologically grounded and encouraged by the business interests of corporate America. Successful business leadership exemplars of Andrew Carnegie and John D Rockefeller were offered, and both Zaleznik (1977) and Kotter (1990) openly cited Perot and Rockefeller’s encouragement to shift from management to leadership. Zaleznik (1977, 1989) and Kotter (1988, 1990) as Harvard Business School Professors were interested in and focussed upon serving American corporations and their leadership solution as prescribed may have been the most effective means to maximise profits.

However, in the UK the writings of Zaleznik (1977, 1989) and Kotter (1988, 1990) offer no more support for an increasing emphasis upon change leadership in voluntary and public sectors, than other cultural artefacts such as Superman, X-Men or Captain America comics. Academics (O’Reilly and Reed, 2010; Tomlinson et al, 2013; Martin et al, 2015) have increasingly been troubled by a problematic emphasis upon leadership within UK public services. Tomlinson et al (2013) even employed Bourdieusian conceptual tools to highlight public service leadership as ‘symbolic violence’. Certainly, Zaleznik (1989) as one of the most cited advocates of leadership, regarded leadership as a means to use aggression to intensify individual motivation and even fantasized about the corporate world, understanding ‘...the uses of anger in human relationships’ (Zaleznik, 1989:123). Today, however rather than clever Bourdieusian analyses, we require a willingness to challenge those (including university academics) who peddle myths about leaders as some kind of superior race. We require the collective courage to challenge the sacred leadership texts which now govern public and voluntary services, where politically motivated funding cuts are impacting upon the most vulnerable in our societies. Where strong leadership has been sold as the solution to systemic problems in health and education, academics have a moral obligation to finally concede that - the king is naked.

In the future, instead of ‘either/or’ dualisms such as management or leadership and stability or change, we will need to embrace the complementarities of ‘both/and’ thinking ‘Either/or’ change management and change leadership thinking, is less useful to theory and practice than ‘both/and’ thinking. In this paper, a polarised shift from change management to change leadership has deliberately featured in order to aid exposition with change management increasingly associated with stability and inertia and change leadership associated with change (Barker, 1994 and 1997). However, dualistic ‘either/or’ thinking tends to mask subtleties of what is happening and more importantly what needs to happen.

Effective change leadership means appreciating how dualistic forces can shape and enable change. By adopting a dualities aware perspective, leaders can come to terms with the intuitive desire to resolve contradiction by instead managing the complementarities within contradictory forces. (Sutherland and Smith, 2013: 220)

Popular dualisms of change or stability, leader or manager as false dichotomies misrepresent what is happening, instead leaders deal with continuities and stability, as well as change. Even Kotter (1990: ix) used as the poster boy for leader-manager differentiations appreciated that ‘leadership and management are both very important processes, and the notion that leadership is “good” and “management” is bad is most certainly wrong.’ Instead of thinking in terms of the decline of change management and the rise of change leadership, it is informative to embrace their complementarities. However, the weight of culture, significant business investment and the preservation of university income streams, means that sadly this is unlikely to ever happen. As Calas and Smircich (1991:568) highlighted in their review of leadership studies ‘...the more things change, the more they remain the same.’

Acknowledgement

I thank the anonymous OTCD track reviewers for their helpful feedback, which informed the development of this paper and encouraged me to critically go further with this ...

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