An Integrative Process Model of Leadership

Examining Loci, Mechanisms, and Event Cycles

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Utilizing the locus (source) and mechanism (transmission) of leadership framework (Hernandez, Eberly, Avolio, & Johnson, 2011), we propose and examine the application of an integrative process model of leadership to help determine the psychological interactive processes that constitute leadership. In particular, we identify the various dynamics involved in generating leadership processes by modeling how the loci and mechanisms interact through a series of leadership event cycles. We discuss the major implications of this model for advancing an integrative understanding of what constitutes leadership and its current and future impact on the field of psychological theory, research, and practice.

Keywords: leadership, mechanism, locus, event cycle, interactions

History is replete with both inspirational and horrific stories about leaders who have exerted an extraordinary influence over individuals, organizations, and societies where the result of their leadership has resulted in the very best to the worst outcomes. Complicating matters in studying leadership, the past is not prologue to the future in that the concept of leadership itself is evolving away from being associated with a single leader role to informal leaders, where followers and groups exercise shared leadership to initiate transformative change (Avolio, 2011; Gronn, 2002).

Good and bad leadership permeates our lives through every group, organization, or community with which we interact. For example, a school principal's leadership can impact children and communities when the leader sets and reinforces a higher educational standard for the school system to achieve more desirable outcomes. Skilled airline pilots lead by maintaining calm and focus when turbulence endangers an aircraft and quick and accurate decisions need to be made to avoid a catastrophe. Police officers lead by modeling appropriate conduct with the general public when doing community policing, setting a positive or negative tone and culture within the neighborhoods they serve. Supervisors in business organizations lead by sustaining their employees' occupational health and mitigating job burnout, which in turn affects the reliability and quality of the services they provide to consumers. Lawyers, accountants, and psychologists lead their practices when growing new talent to assume partner roles, when setting standards for ethical conduct in their organizations, and when volunteering to do pro bono work for their communities. Leadership is a pervasive social influence process that pervades all aspects of one's life in- and outside of organizations (Yukl, 2010).

It is therefore not surprising that researching the dynamics of leadership has absorbed psychology, management, sociology, historical, and political science scholars for more than a century in trying to determine what constitutes leadership. Indeed, Terman (1904), who published one of the first comprehensive studies on the psychology and pedagogy of leadership, asserted, "There is room for many concrete studies in leadership, such as will concern the educator, the philosopher of religion, the historian and political scientist, as well as the psychologist" (p. 416). Over these past 100 years, we have seen that Terman's prognosis for the leadership field has been represented by the accumulation of leadership theories and research across a wide spectrum of disciplines that have both provided great insights into what constitutes good and bad leadership and produced numerous conflicting models and messages regarding leadership.

Looking back over the past 100 years, leadership theory and research have followed distinct pathways. For example, early leadership research grounded its work in personality theory, where researchers attempted to identify a set of traits that meaningfully distinguish leaders from nonleaders (e.g., Bowden, 1926; Gibb, 1947; Stogdill, 1948). Following this seminal stream of psychological research, the field of leadership studies branched off in many different directions while attempting to both theorize and test models associated with individual and in some instances group or collective leadership (Ayman & Korabik, 2010). As the field of leadership studies evolved, much more complexity was added to the study of leadership. Researchers began to incorporate situational factors and follower cognitions when they elaborated on the underlying psychological mechanisms that were required to explain the extraordinary influence some formal leaders possess (as either positive or negative forces).

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Due to these varied approaches, we have arrived at a point in time where there is a distinct lack of consensus about what actually constitutes this evolving concept of leadership (e.g., Ayman & Korabik, 2010; Bass, 1990). Most theorists agree that leadership captures a social influence process that occurs between individuals working toward a common goal (Yukl, 2002). But as Hackman and Wageman (2007, p. 43) pointedly concluded, "there are no generally accepted definitions of what leadership is, no dominant paradigms for studying it, and little agreement about the best strategies for developing and exercising it."

Due to the variation in approaches to modeling and testing leadership, a great deal of the empirical research shows that leadership predicts a wide variety of outcomes—such as performance, employee attitudes, and turnover—but usually accounts for less than 10% of the variance in these outcomes (Avolio, 2011; Bass & Bass, 2008). This conclusion—after more than a century of scientific advances—may be disheartening at first glance. Yet we regard what has been learned thus far as an opportunity to incorporate existing models into a more integrative, broadly explanatory model for examining the various forms of leadership.

We also suggest in this article that prior leadership theory and research have typically not included important loci and mechanisms to fully explain what constitutes leadership. For example, in the 2007 *American Psychologist* issue on leadership, Avolio (2007) described how the context had been underspecified in most leadership research, which may have resulted in less variance being accounted for by leadership with various outcomes. Supporting this claim, Schaubroeck and colleagues (2012) showed that by including multilevel assessments of both ethical leadership and ethical context/culture, they were able to account for a greater share of the variance in ethical transgressions.

We believe the field of leadership theory has arrived at a critical point and opportunity for integration where general principles can integrate the propositions from varying theoretical models into a more coherent whole, thus advancing both the science and practice of leadership. Consequently, we propose and describe in this article a meta-model of leadership to better explain how leadership works, while also holding the expectation that future research will be better able to account for an increasing share of the variance in performance outcomes.

In sum, the varied approaches or models prevalent in the leadership literature have received a great deal of support for their validity, and they have certainly been shown to be important to investigating leadership. We suggest that each model adds a unique perspective not captured by other models but that no single model captures leadership in its entirety, and we argue that this limits each theory's ability to predict the optimal amount of variance in outcomes. We do not advocate any specific leadership model over the others but rather offer an approach that situates prior theory within a theoretical space highlighting each theory's unique contributions to examining leadership. Specifically, we draw from the locus and mechanism leadership framework proposed by Hernandez, Eberly, Avolio, and Johnson (2011) to formulate an integrative process model that serves as a means for theoretical integration and development of future leadership models.

The Building Blocks for Our Proposed Model

The Locus–Mechanism Distinction

Based on a comprehensive review of the literature, Hernandez et al. (2011) identified two elements shared by all leadership theories, which they labeled the locus and the mechanism of leadership. The locus of leadership is the source from which leadership originates; this can be the leader, the followers, the leader–follower dyad, the larger collective (e.g., group of individuals, an entire organization), and/or the context (we adopt Mowday & Sutton's, 1993, p. 198, definition of context as "stimuli and phenomena that surround and thus exist in the environment external to the individual, most often at a different level of analysis"). The mechanism of leadership represents how leadership is transmitted and could be in the form of leadership behaviors in a direct transmission or through more indirect means such as affect and cognitions, the values promoted by a leader, or the traits exemplified by a leader.

In their analysis of the literature, which included a categorization of all major leadership theories by loci and mechanism, Hernandez et al. (2011) showed that the locus of leadership theory has traditionally been the formal or designated leader role. This follows a trend in the nonacademic world where people often implicitly think of leadership as resting within the individuals at the top of an organization's hierarchy (see Hackman & Wageman's, 2007, discussion of the leader attribution error). Thus, the field of leadership research has largely focused on examining the individual who serves in a formal leadership role

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and, as recently noted by Hiller, DeChurch, Murase, and Doty (2011), as that person is seen through the eyes of followers. Loci other than the leader have remained relatively understudied, which is problematic considering that leadership is no longer regarded as strictly hierarchical and nested within one person but is increasingly recognized as "a broader, mutual influence process that is independent of any formal role or hierarchical structure and diffused among the members of any given social system" (DeRue & Ashford, 2010, p. 627). For example, a group of teachers working collaboratively with the principal of the school may together generate and implement ideas to shape a new vision for the school. This broadening of loci echoes earlier comments by Katz and Kahn (1978, pp. 271–272) in their definition of leadership: "the exertion of influence on organizationally relevant matters by any member of the organization."

The expansion of loci over the past few decades has also resulted in greater attention being placed on the emergence of follower-centric (Brown, 2012) and context-centric theories of leadership (Avolio, 2007). These alternative loci are now beginning to drive how leadership is investigated, perceived, and enacted and how it influences performance. Characteristic of the more follower-centric view, Hackman and Wageman (2007) concluded, "one does not have to be in a leadership position to be in a position to provide leadership" (p. 46). Followers can be significant contributors to the leadership process by enacting leadership themselves (Shamir, 2007). Accordingly, follower-centric theories are defined by followers enacting leadership and are differentiated from studies of followership, which emphasize "what followers do when they follow" (Rost, 2008, p. 54).

Similar to the shift toward examining followership in the leadership dynamic, much greater attention is also being paid to understanding the context in which leadership emerges and is embedded. Avolio (2007) proposed a framework for analyzing the leadership context that was built on earlier work by Lord, Brown, Harvey, and Hall (2001), who argued that "leadership perceptions are grounded within a larger social, cultural, task and interpersonal environment" (p. 332). Indeed, how leadership works in an extreme situation versus a more stable, predictable situation is being examined to better understand how both the same and different orientations toward leadership work in these distinctly different contexts (Hannah, Uhl-Bien, Avolio, & Cabarretta, 2009). Take for example NASA's Apollo 13 mission after the explosion of an oxygen tank; leadership was renegotiated continuously to secure the safe return of U.S. astronauts (i.e., while the crew and flight director worked to determine the optimal trajectory of reentry from space, designers and engineers improvised an air supply system for the astronauts to survive until reentry, and a flight controller was tasked with determining an alternate power supply for the reentry process). Hence, standing in stark contrast to the earlier top-down and "within formal role" approaches are theories that define leadership as changing and iterative, based on an ongoing renegotiation of leader and follower roles across time and context.

This increased complexity is modeled by changes in the loci and mechanisms of leadership. This trend can be observed not only in the field as a whole but also at the specific leadership theory level, where certain ideas have evolved to include new loci and mechanisms. For instance, leader–member exchange (LMX) theory, a theory that traditionally emphasized the leader–follower relationship as the primary locus of leadership, recently expanded its boundaries to include the collective locus, arguing that it is the leader's as well as the followers' positions within their respective social networks and the reciprocal sharing of network links that determine leadership (e.g., Sparrowe & Liden, 2005). Summarizing this evolution in the locus of leadership, Hernandez et al. (2011) proposed that leadership theorists and practitioners should simultaneously examine individual leaders, individual followers, leader–follower dyads, collectives of leaders and/or followers, and varying types of context to better understand how leadership works.

Corresponding to the broadening list of relevant loci of leadership, the mechanisms of leadership being examined have also expanded in the last century. As noted above, personality psychologists began the scientific study of leadership by examining whether certain personality traits predispose individuals to emerge as leaders. When the search for such traits resulted in literally thousands of traits being associated with leadership, the field shifted to an examination of the behaviors leaders exhibited (Bass & Bass, 2008). As the field of leadership has evolved, it has included not just traits and behaviors but also emotions, cognitions, and physiological and neurological mechanisms of leadership (Yukl, 2010). These more complex leadership theories then turned to incorporating findings from cognitive psychology, social psychology, and the

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study of emotions to identify the internal psychological and physiological mechanisms of cognition and affect in the different loci of leadership. For example, transformational leadership theory proposes that leaders inspire followers and entire collectives by influencing their belief systems (cognitions) and emotions (affect) via the expression of a collective vision and positive emotions (Bass, 2007).

Authentic leadership theory has emphasized the need for effective leaders to process self-relevant information in an unbiased way (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005; Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005) in order to gain the trust and respect of followers. Thus, the effects of leadership may not be fully explained by merely examining leader's dispositions or behaviors—a meta-model of leadership must also incorporate the deeply rooted psychological mechanisms of cognition and affect.

At a minimum, one locus and one mechanism must be involved in initiating leadership, and the mechanisms and loci of leadership are intertwined such that a change in one element of the model could potentially influence all other elements. For example, consider a work team that previously shared leadership among its team members. If this team encounters a difficult situation, the expression of anger or the attribution of blame can cause leadership to be no longer shared, beliefs about effective leadership may change, and formal guidance by an appointed or even outside leader may be required to get the team back on track. In this way, the interactions among the integrative process model elements ultimately shape how the complex dynamics of leadership are enacted.

As Osborn, Hunt, and Jauch (2002, p. 805) suggested, "leadership is not something one does by itself. Its dimensions emerge from actions and interactions." Similarly, Hazy, Goldstein, and Lichtenstein (2007, p. 2) argued that
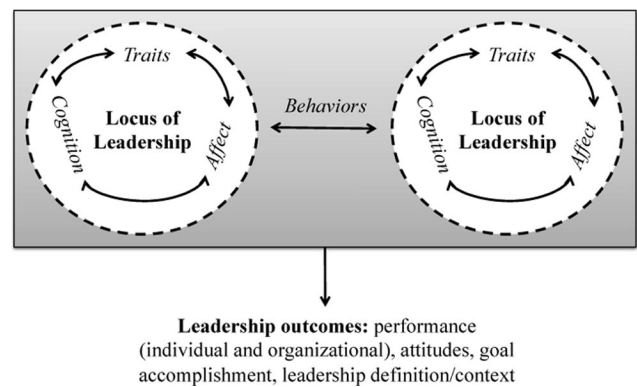
"leadership can be enacted through *any* interaction in an organization." We concur with these observations and posit that the interactions between the loci and mechanisms explain leadership within any given moment/episode.

Incorporating Event Cycles Into Explaining How Leadership Works

In describing how a collective structure emerges, Morgeson and Hofmann (1999) posited that individual actions do not occur in isolation but meet one another in time and space, creating an interpersonal interaction that they referred to as an *event*. This event then provides a frame of reference for future interactions, creating an *event cycle*. Events and event cycles represent "points of contact" or "encounters between ongoing individual processes" (Morgeson & Hofmann, 1999, p. 252). Event cycles are similar to what Weick (1979) referred to as the *double interact,* which is based on the notion that individual behaviors within organizations occur not in isolation but through interlocking encounters. For example, Person A initiates a behavior that influences Person B's behaviors; these in turn influence Person A's behavior (Allport, 1924). A series of event cycles (possibly extending to triple, quadruple, and higher numbers of interacts) elicits processes that give rise to organizations and networks; indeed, Morgeson and Hofmann (1999, p. 252) described the event cycle as "the basic building block upon which all larger collective structures are composed." Similarly, Weick (1996, p. 16) described the double interact as "the basic unit of analysis for social influence." Because influence is a component of leadership agreed upon by the majority of scholars (Vroom & Jago, 2007), the event cycle concept is particularly suitable for the study of leadership.

We posit that what gives rise to the phenomenon of leadership is a series of often simultaneous event cycles between multiple loci of leadership. Affecting multiple loci via multiple mechanisms, the event cycle explains the dynamic nature of leadership. Figure 1 illustrates the basic

Figure 1
The Basic Leadership Event Cycle Involving Two Loci of Leadership

Leadership outcomes: performance (individual and organizational), attitudes, goal accomplishment, leadership definition/context

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nature of the leadership event cycle between two loci of leadership. Consider, for example, a staff sports psychologist in a college football team who, based on his unique expertise and skill set, implements new motivational techniques to help the players cope with a series of losses. Via this leadership behavior, the head and assistant coaches of the team are influenced by the sports psychologist and subsequently change their own leadership style based on the new techniques. Here, a follower (the sports psychologist) via his knowledge (cognition) and implementation of this knowledge (behaviors) shapes the leadership of the entire team (coaches adapting their own leadership behaviors and changing their cognitions regarding their understanding of effective leadership in a crisis).

Similarly, one of us has seen a comparable leading-up process occur in a community mental health center. An associate director, mentored by a highly effective and respected leader from another organization, introduced a core idea to his director on how to better develop psychological ownership for client-centered care among staff. Taking this core concept and working to develop ownership among all staff resulted over time in more effective client engagement and lower burnout and turnover.

Furthermore, we extend the nature of the event cycle beyond behaviors to include the remaining mechanisms of traits, affect, and cognition, all of which in combination and interactively drive individual or collective behavior. Thus, we propose that a full understanding of leadership must take event cycles into account: What one locus represents or does, thinks, and feels is reflected in the reactions via the traits, behaviors, cognition, and affect of the other loci to the initial locus. This is followed by the initiator's subsequent reactions to the other loci and their reactions. Figure 1 depicts how each locus's mechanisms exert recip-

rocal influence onto each other (e.g., affect influences cognition and vice versa) and the idea that two or more loci of leadership primarily interact via behaviors, which influence other loci's mechanisms.

Our model acknowledges the dynamic interplay of these various mechanisms within and between leaders, followers, dyads, and collectives and how they are embedded within the context. For example, a leader who generally is an optimistic person (leader trait), frequently experiences positive emotions (leader affect), believes that followers may reach certain performance levels (leader cognition), and communicates this expectation via the expression of positive emotions, encouragement, and the provision of resources (leader behaviors) can motivate followers to reach an ambitious target via influencing their affect and cognition. Followers can experience high levels of optimism (follower affect) and confidence in their own ability to achieve high goals (follower cognition), which fosters the achievement of goals and proactivity in engaging in their own leadership behaviors. For example, as an immediate outcome, followers may be more likely to mentor other individuals in their team in the same way they were mentored by their formal leader (follower behaviors). Similarly, they may communicate their own optimism and efficacy to peers and their followers, contributing in the long-term to the emergence of a culture where employees feel empowered and contribute to a leadership process that is shared between many members of a group. Multiple event cycles may occur simultaneously where multiple followers inspire others to feel empowered and leadership becomes a collective phenomenon.

Leadership event cycles such as these provide a new leadership context within which future interactions between the leadership loci are interpreted. Within this emerging context, for instance, leaders who do not support follower empowerment may not be perceived as effective. Hence, they would be less successful in delegating assignments to followers. Similarly, followers who are not willing to engage in leadership activities will be less likely to be promoted. The new context may give rise to new organizational structures and supporting policies and practices.

In Figure 2, we depict the expansion of the event cycle presented in Figure 1. Specifically, this particular leadership event cycle demonstrates how our basic process model can be applied to any leadership event cycle to expand beyond two loci. In Figure 2, we now depict the loci as including the self-confidence of multiple followers, how leadership can be distributed based on the context, and how it is characterized by positivity and empowerment. While the figure does not make a visual distinction between the different event cycles, some cycles take longer than others, and some event cycles occur sequentially and others simultaneously. For example, the bottom half of the figure depicts how an empowerment culture may emerge based on the collective enactment of leadership. This process is likely a function of multiple simultaneous event cycles permeating entire groups and takes a longer period of time than a single event cycle between a leader and follower.

Figure 2
Example of Leadership Event Cycle Involving Leaders, Followers, Collectives, and the Context
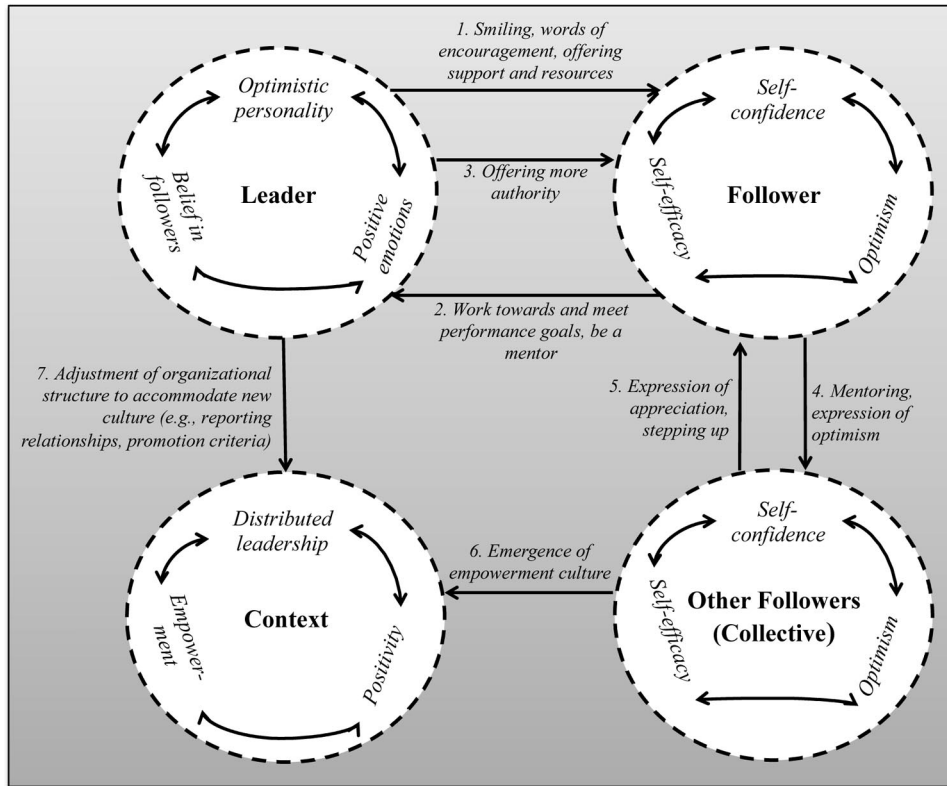
Galvin, Balkundi, and Waldman (2010) illustrated a complex leadership event cycle (in line with Figure 2) in their discussion of how surrogates of charismatic leaders—who could be indirect followers several levels away from charismatic leaders—can carry the message of the leader in the way they model that charismatic leader's message, mission, or vision. Surrogates' perceptions of the leader's charisma (follower cognition) and the quality of the relationships they have with the leader (dyad's traits, behaviors, cognition, and affect) directly influence whether they accept the leader and exhibit effective followership (follower behaviors) even when the context has not provided for direct interactions or where the leader and the indirect followers do not have shared experiences. For example, a clinical psychologist at a hospital who has never had any significant interaction with the head administrator may enthusiastically communicate the administrator's vision to her staff and her colleagues because she believes based on some attributions that the administrator has the energy and competence to successfully implement it. Thus, this event cycle integrates several previous models of leadership focusing on the leader, direct and indirect leadership, followership, and the context. Others (e.g., more distant followers) observe the surrogates' behaviors and consequently may also form positive or negative perceptions about the leader (cognitions). Hence, leadership can travel through a series of leadership event cycles, which, in combination, effectively extend the leader's reach in terms of how distant followers view (and perform for) that leader.

For simplicity's sake, Figures 1 and 2 present event cycles where we have purposely limited the number of leadership loci. We note, however, that in order to fully explain the phenomenon of leadership, one must examine all event cycles and how they operate when they include more than one leader, multiple followers, peers, groups of followers, entire organizations, and the context. To illustrate the dynamics of these event cycles, we draw from several theories of leadership to provide examples of how event cycles shape leadership over time. We have selected these theories for illustrative purposes and in part because they make up a collection of theories that have received the most recent attention in the leadership literature (Gardner, Lowe, Cogliser, Moss, & Mahoney, 2010).

Modeling the Evolving Complexity of Leadership

Event Cycles With Leaders and Followers

Early leadership theorists aspired to understand which leaders are effective by examining first their personality *traits*

and then their *behaviors*. For example, Kohs and Irle (1920) examined whether school marks and traits like intelligence could predict soldiers' progression through the leadership ranks of the U.S. military. Later, the University of Michigan and Ohio State University studies distinguished between task- and person-oriented leadership behaviors (Katz & Kahn, 1952; Stogdill & Coons, 1957). Task-oriented behaviors focus on helping individuals to get their job done, while person-oriented behaviors focus on encouraging collaboration and personal well-being. These early approaches to the study of leadership exemplified a simplistic view of the leadership process because the leader is not the only character in a holistic examination of leadership; as Bennis (2007, p. 3) so pointedly noted, "leaders do not exist in a vacuum." The line between leadership and followership becomes increasingly blurred, and some noted that "leaders also are followers, and followers also exhibit leadership" (Hackman & Wageman, 2007, p. 45).

Example of event cycles with leaders and followers. Followers play significant roles in shaping interactions that create leadership. They observe and respond to leaders based on the traits, behaviors, cognitions, and affect that have been shaped by their encounters with their current and past leaders. For example, when a new school principal replaces a charismatic and effective principal, teachers and school staff may experience negative affect (such as disappointment about their principal leaving) based on a strong identification and emotional attachment to that principal as a leader (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1994). Such negative emotions can bleed into perceptions (cognitions) of the new principal, resulting in different reactions than if the new principal had followed a noninspirational predecessor (e.g., affect infusion; Forgas, 1995). Based on a variety of different factors (including the leader's and other followers' cognition, affect, traits, and behaviors), these negative reactions may be short lived (e.g., followers may quickly realize the positive changes the new leader brings) or they may be long lived (e.g., negative stereotypes are reinforced and penetrate the entire school).

Teachers and the school staff can also see a former principal as a prototypical leader (a leader that represents ideal attributes of leadership) and therefore have implicit theories of what effective leaders should be like (Lord, 1977; Lord, Binning, Rush, & Thomas, 1978). This could lead them to judge their new principal primarily based on his similarity to the previous principal. Only when they observe cues that match their prior principal's behaviors will they accept the new principal as a leader. In this case, followers' cognition (their beliefs about what a good leader constitutes) can then impact how effective the new leader is in influencing members of the school system. This perception of the new principal may also affect how the teachers lead students in the classroom, based on whether the teachers accept the principal's leadership.

Event Cycles With the Dyad

Beyond their independent effects on event cycles, leaders and followers can jointly influence the creation and main-

tenance of a distinct dyad. Theoretical support for this notion comes from vertical dyad linkage and LMX theories (e.g., Dienesch & Liden, 1986; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), which suggest that the phenomenon of leadership cannot be reduced to characteristics of the individuals involved. Rather, high-quality LMX relationships result from positive social exchanges between leaders and followers. Van Vugt, Hogan, and Kaiser (2008) specifically highlighted the importance of the dyad in their evolutionary analysis of leadership, positing that the emergence and effectiveness of leadership are a function of goal convergence between leaders and followers. For instance, when both agree on the goal, the relationship and resulting leadership actions are clear. When they do not agree on the goal, the relationship is ambivalent, and leadership represents a more complex interaction between leaders and followers that impacts communication, trust, and ultimately performance.

Transformational leadership theory argues that leaders who heighten their followers' self-awareness, instill a sense of purpose in followers, and align followers with their own goals are better able to increase their followers' self-esteem, sense of empowerment, and performance and ultimately transform followers into leaders themselves (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993). Transformational leaders and followers are regarded as partners within a relationship, which as an entity does or does not function effectively. For example, whether the relationship between a transformational/charismatic leader and follower leads to possibly unhealthy follower behaviors such as blind obedience depends not only on the leader but also on follower traits and behaviors (e.g., Howell & Shamir, 2005).

Authentic leadership emphasizes that being an effective leader entails high self-awareness and demonstrating consistency between one's values and actions. Similar to transformational leadership theory, it discusses the importance of the leader–follower dyad in enacting leadership by highlighting a reciprocal identification process where leaders and followers both identify with each other to pave the way to an authentic relationship (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004). Authentic leadership theory argues that leaders and followers in their relationship with each other need to achieve a level of relational transparency such that both partners are completely aware of each other's preferences, values, and emotions. With such high levels of transparency, each is more capable of sharing relevant information that can improve a broad range of outcomes.

Example of leadership event cycle within the dyad. Substantial evidence shows that the level of safety observed in health care settings is linked to the quality of the nurse–physician relationship (Boyle & Kochinda, 2004; Manojlovich & DeCicco, 2007). For example, Manojlovich and DeCicco (2007) reported that the quality of nurse–physician communication was predictive of medication errors. Boyle and Kochinda (2004) reported that their field intervention to enhance collaboration in intensive care units resulted in more effective communication, greater satisfaction among nurses, lower stress, and

better unit outcomes. Prior health care research has shown that most nurses have greater situational awareness with regard to the patients on their floor as nurses spend considerably more contact time with the patient. In turn, the physician who works at building a more transparent and safe relationship to share information is more likely to gather the necessary intelligence from nurses that then results in higher quality patient care (Rosenstein & O'Daniel, 2008).

Another example of an event cycle involving the leader–follower dyad is in situations where there is significant variation in the quality of LMX relationships within a given group. Consider the interactions that occur within a support group, for instance; while some individuals may get along well with the counselor running the group, others may have difficulty connecting with him. Galvin et al. (2010) explained how this variation can impede how effectively a leader's message is transmitted to others in the organization. Specifically, they examined how follower commitment to the leader results in varying levels of commitment to transmitting the leader's message to others not in direct contact with that leader. When some followers do not enjoy strong, positive relationships with the leader, they may transmit mixed messages about the leader's effectiveness and impede a unified endorsement of the leader throughout the organization. For example, within a military setting, the extent to which the company officer's vision influences individual soldiers depends on their individual relationships with the platoon and squad leaders who most directly communicate with the soldiers. Platoon leaders who have positive relationships with their company officers are more likely to spread and endorse the officer's intent and therefore contribute to the reach of the officer's leadership. If the company officer enjoys positive relationships with all of his platoon officers, leadership can quickly elevate to the collective locus, but this process would take much longer if dyadic relationships vary significantly.

Event Cycles With the Collective

Transformational leadership theory does not view the locus of leadership as occurring only within a dyad but argues that eventually the leader–follower dynamic transforms entire groups and organizations, elevating the leadership locus to the collective. For example, Avolio and Bass (1995) discussed how over time the individualized consideration component of transformational leadership can supersede the dyad and become institutionalized as a cultural norm. Here, effective leadership starts with an individual leader and then rises to the dyad and entire collective, ultimately determining the context within which leadership occurs.

Individual leaders can create the conditions for collective leadership to emerge, but collectives can also independently exert leadership by, for instance, inspiring others to take action and influencing individuals to step into leadership roles. One such example is the Kony 2012 movement, where a relatively small group of people attempted to inspire people around the world to increase their awareness about a Ugandan warlord, with the ultimate goal of convincing the U.S. government to increase its military presence in the region to arrest him (Preston, 2012).

Example of leadership event cycle with the collective. With collectives, multiple leaders and followers interact with the other loci, which then determine how leadership develops. The context may also interact with the group/collective to redefine leadership. For example, where the environmental context demands a change in organizational cultural norms (e.g., the need to adopt a culture of sustainability), prototypes of effective leadership can change to accommodate these nascent norms. The social identity model of leadership argues that whoever is perceived as a leader depends on the unique identity of the group (Hogg, 2001; Hogg & Terry, 2000). The person who is the best representation (prototype) of the group (e.g., frequently in terms of personality, attitude, values, or even demographics) often is more quickly ascribed the status of leader in the group where a formal leader role is not appointed. However, as the context shifts in terms of norms/expectations, the group prototypes may also then shift, redefining what constitutes leadership within a given group (in our example above, the group may begin to equate leadership with proactivity in terms of supporting and promoting sustainability efforts).

As another example, the revolutionary Arab Spring movement of the early 2010s has begun to significantly change the context within which leadership is exercised in North Africa and the Middle East. Collectives in one country, oftentimes without a specific leader, have successfully exerted influence by forcing rulers from power. These movements have also begun to change the leadership context for collectives of followers in other countries (similar to the Figure 2 event cycle), motivating them to band together to usurp the authoritarian leaders in their respective countries. Of course, we also realize that this is a very complex and long-term process that still remains in flux, with the next set of leadership outcomes not yet determined.

Event Cycles With the Context

Context has been described as one of the primary determinants of how leadership is perceived. For example, Meindl's *romance of leadership* theory suggests that individuals will be perceived as poor leaders if their groups perform poorly, regardless of the leader's actual ability or impact on the group's performance (Meindl, Ehrlich, & Dukerich, 1985). This is where the group attributes to the leader cause and effect with respect to the quality of performance—frequently without appropriate justification. Similarly, context can be the locus assigning leadership by setting goals and providing immediate guidance, rendering unnecessary the notion of the leader as the locus of leadership (Kerr & Jermier, 1978). This may occur where a group performs highly standardized tasks and that group may not require its leader to set goals, provide task guidance, and then offer feedback to the group. In this case, the context would substitute as the locus of leadership. Indeed, if a leader were to engage in such behaviors when substitutes for leadership were present, followers might even

become resentful and consider this form of leadership redundant or in conflict with existing group dynamic processes. Imagine researchers who are administering a study in accordance with state regulations and institutional review board rules; if the principal investigator were to impose constraints additional to those already in place, his efforts might be perceived as micromanagement and counterproductive by his coinvestigators.

Context can also determine where leadership originates and how it is transmitted, through both proximal and distal influences. In a proximal role, the organizational context directly influences what is construed as effective leadership. In a stable environment, a leader's focus on increasing efficiency may be appropriate, while in a dynamic or asymmetric environment, it may be seen as hazardous or as stifling creativity. In a distal role, context can have an indirect influence on how leadership is interpreted. The cultural composition of leaders and followers, for example, could influence the effectiveness of various leadership orientations (Ayman & Korabik, 2010). A political leader who is a risk taker may not be perceived as being a good leader in a culture that is high in uncertainty avoidance (where lack of structure associated with taking risks is not well tolerated; Javidan, Dorfman, Sully de Luque, & House, 2006). Similarly, if a political leader's individualistic value orientation emphasizes personal accomplishments and rewards, he or she may have difficulty motivating more collectivistic-oriented citizens who value group cohesion and rewards over individual performance (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004).

Example of leadership event cycle with the context. In the past 2 decades, we suggest that leadership has changed as a function of contextual changes such as increased globalization and technological change. Work teams are increasingly geographically dispersed, requiring leaders to balance multiple time zones, communication styles, and cultural preferences. The effective use of communication tools such as videoconferencing, online chat, and blogging is now a skill that leaders need to acquire to gain and retain credibility, legitimacy, and efficiency. The broader societal context continuously dictates what effective leadership entails and who can emerge as a leader (Avolio, 2007). As a result of these changes in context, prototypes of what is perceived as effective leadership within and across cultures have changed as well, guiding who emerges as leaders in teams, organizations, and communities.

At the same time, the changes in technology have allowed seemingly powerless collectives to emerge as leaders of social movements advocating for civil rights or demonstrating against corporate practices. Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign, for example, is a powerful illustration of how leadership was not only a function of the presidential candidate himself but also a function of groups of followers who—supported by the changed technological context—initiated grass-roots movements to aid his campaign for the presidency. Indeed, leadership can now travel via boundaryless virtual networks (a new global cybercon-

text) while bringing together individuals who otherwise would not have interacted with each other.

Additionally, context can shape leadership by redefining the social and task-oriented interactions among individuals. For example, Barley (1990) observed the transformations that occurred following changes in two hospital radiology departments. He found that new medical imaging technology changed nonrelational aspects of certain jobs (radiologists, administrators, technologists), which in turn changed the way employees interacted. The environmental change triggered by technological advancement influenced the organizational context within which the employees operated. Though Barley's work did not explicitly address leadership, it may be reasonably inferred that the radiology employees' relationships to their leaders also changed as a consequence of the new technology equipment that was installed. In this example, context shaped leadership through a direct influence on the mechanisms (e.g., the supervisor's confidence in the radiologists, followers' cognitions of what a leader should look like) and loci (e.g., quality of the dyad relationship) of leadership. In turn, this new view of leadership ultimately changed the context again, shaping what leadership encompassed in this particular organization (e.g., effective leaders had to have knowledge of the new technology and how to deploy it).

Implications of the Integrative Process Model for Leadership Inquiry

Our description of the intricacies of our model illustrates that leadership is not solely a function of one or two loci and one or two mechanisms but typically involves all five loci and all four mechanisms (as depicted in Figure 2). The model therefore parallels the evolution of leadership theory by systematically adding nine key elements needed to fully explain what constitutes leadership across the various independent theories. The differentiation across these theories can now be appropriately integrated by showing how all of the loci and mechanisms are important in explaining the entire leadership phenomenon.

As noted, each leader, follower, and dyad is interlocked with the others' behaviors through event cycles, determining leader and follower behaviors while influencing the dyad, group, and context in which they are embedded. None of the five loci of leadership are independent but instead influence each other in a series of event cycles through the various proposed mechanisms. Thus, building on the notion that the loci and mechanisms are the fundamental building blocks of leadership, we posit that in order to fully depict and explain the complexity of the leadership process, leadership theories should conceptualize the variety of leadership event cycles that are associated with specific loci via various mechanisms.

If, as we argue, leadership is a series of event cycles between the various loci and enacted through the various mechanisms, how does this advance our understanding of leadership and the development of leadership theory? We see the major contribution of our process model being its ability to explain the leadership dynamic in a comprehen-

sive yet parsimonious way. The model's foundational elements (loci, mechanisms, and event cycles) provide a simple and meaningful way to carve out one's theoretical focus and point to ways to include other loci and mechanisms. More broadly, the model offers the opportunity to identify points of contact between seemingly disparate leadership theories and ways to integrate them so that leadership theories may inform each other, rather than being seen as presenting conflicting or unrelated viewpoints.

Hernandez et al.'s (2011) categorization of existing leadership theories, for example, helps demonstrate the utility of our process model. According to their framework, ethical leadership—as one of the value-driven emerging theories of leadership—has yet to incorporate the affective mechanism of leadership and the loci of followers, the leader–follower dyad, the collective, and the context. To increase the theoretical reach and predictive validity of ethical leadership theory, our model points to the need to integrate the ethical leadership event cycles between, for example, the leader and collectives of followers. Doing so would enable scholars and practitioners alike to better understand not just how ethical behaviors on the part of the leader affect followers but also how the behaviors of followers (and consequent group norms) can affect the ethical behavior of the leader.

In this section, we offer two main implications of our integrative process model, which highlight its potential in delineating the interactions involved in generating, maintaining, and changing leadership: (a) Context influences leadership at any given instant due to its influential role in creating and shaping the interactions between loci, and (b) leadership emerges from an interactive process between the intra- and interpersonal mechanisms of leadership.

Implication One: Context Influences Leadership at Any Given Moment

The role of context has generally been of secondary concern to psychologists in general and to leadership researchers in particular. A recent review of the leadership literature revealed that only 16% of leadership articles published between 1990 and 2005 placed moderate to strong emphasis on the importance of organizational context (Porter & McLaughlin, 2006). This is somewhat surprising considering the numerous calls to incorporate context into leadership theory and research (e.g., Osborn et al., 2002; Uhl-Bien, Marion, & McKelvey, 2007). Porter and McLaughlin (2006, p. 571) concluded that in a majority of studies, organizational context was not the central variable of interest but "appear[ed] almost as an afterthought." Among the articles that did include context, most focused on the influence of organizational context on certain types of leaders, without assigning context an active role in shaping leadership itself.

Other scholars have acknowledged that leadership can change as a direct function of context. Osborn and colleagues (2002, p. 802) proposed that "a change in the context changes leaders, leadership and leadership effectiveness," further suggesting that the line between context and leadership can become blurry, especially in times

of crisis. We concur but would elevate the importance of context by suggesting that it is an *essential* element of leadership. Context actively shapes leadership, independently as well as in conjunction with the other loci. We emphasize here that our definition of context goes beyond the direct organizational context as often emphasized by organizational scientists. We are here referring to any external stimuli that may impact the nature of leadership; this includes stimuli only present for some members within a given group (e.g., having children represents a context only for parents, one's educational and work history represents a context for each individual separately).

While context can be seen as a broad phenomenon that influences members of a group or community, it is also a dynamic force that interacts with group members and as such both provides *and* receives influence. In their seminal article on the importance of organizational context, Mowday and Sutton (1993) emphasized how individuals and groups can influence context, especially when they are powerful (e.g., leaders) or operate as a collective (e.g., in the way that employees' aggregate feelings determine organizational culture or voters' attitudes determine a country's political climate). They suggested that individual interactions with context offer unique explanations for organizational phenomena. Our model underscores those perspectives by stressing that it is the context's interactions with other loci that can help to explain what constitutes leadership inside and outside of formal organizations.

Social science research suggests that as individuals interact with each other, they collaboratively create emergent group-level effects that are not reducible to individual action (Sawyer, 2001). The collective personality of a work group, for instance, emerges as individuals work together and develop shared expectations and group norms (Hofmann & Jones, 2005). A group of clinical psychologists who together run a clinical practice, for example, may develop a collective personality based on routines, norms, and habits that become established over time. As the group identifies strategies for its practice, breaks them down into goals, and establishes a system for keeping track of and evaluating goal accomplishment, the group may collectively be defined as being goal oriented and conscientious independent of the conscientiousness of the individual psychologists. The established norms in turn create a contextual influence on the individual members.

Similarly, in the aftermath of acts of terrorism and natural disasters in the United States, we have learned of numerous groups who have come together to volunteer to support the communities devastated by these events. One group called the Graybeards is composed of individuals who come from similar backgrounds in health care, police, and firefighting services, who still have a passion for service as part of their individual and collective identity/personality after retirement. The group arrives where disaster strikes and with little formal organization does its job to help others (NBC Nightly News, 2012).

Moreover, a contextual shift can take place when a leader successfully influences her followers to share leadership across group members. The Boys and Girls Clubs of

America, for example, are based on the notion that a community's efforts can facilitate the positive upbringing of its youngest members. Through sports and mentorship programs, the parenting responsibilities of guardians are in part shared by community volunteers. In this case, if the community endorses the shift to a collective to look after the upbringing of its youth, the relational structure among its members to support this direction may change and ultimately influence the community context. A new context based on shared leadership would then become part of the loci and current context in which community leadership would be interpreted.

An important consideration regarding the context is the extent to which the different loci of leadership are exposed to the same environmental stimuli. Each leader, follower, dyad, and collective offers a unique context that others may or may not have been exposed to. Some contextual elements (e.g., an organization's culture) may be common for many, while other elements (e.g., education, industry experience) can vary across individuals within the same group. Some leader–follower dyads may throughout their lifetime have been exposed to many similar stimuli (e.g., the leader and follower are from the same functional background and attended the same university), while others may have had limited common exposure (e.g., leader and follower attended schools in different countries). This analysis may also apply at a collective level. For example, some collectives and/or units in organizations operate within a strong context of financial policies and regulations, while other collectives are more directly influenced by changing consumer needs and preferences.

The extent to which common exposure among the different loci of leadership takes place can affect the emergence and evolution of leadership. For instance, by examining fraternal and identical twins, behavioral geneticists have a long research tradition of focusing on the extent to which individuals have common environmental experiences (Fancher, 2009). Similarly, cultural psychologists examine the extent to which exposure to the same cultural traditions, belief systems, and values systematically influences humans' psyche (Cohen, 2009). The assumption is that individuals who share a common environment can more easily communicate and connect with each other. We believe a similar approach to leadership can greatly inform the evolution of leadership over time. For example, research on the similarity-attraction phenomenon (e.g., Byrne, 1971) demonstrates that people generally are attracted to people who are similar to them. This suggests that a leader and a follower who share significant common background would be more likely to develop a high-quality relationship based on liking and respect. Having common environmental stimuli can positively influence the level of coordination and communication within and across dyads and groups because it elicits shared understanding.

A leader and a follower who have worked closely together at another organization can have a common understanding of what their relationship at the new organization will be like based on their joint cognitions, shared mental models, and so forth. A teacher might be able to quickly establish credibility and respect when she shares the same cultural background with a troubled student. A shared upbringing could also facilitate her ability to connect by relating how she similarly struggled as a teenager. This sort of (implicit) understanding minimizes initial transition friction, which may be encountered between the leader and his or her other followers. This phenomenon is common in business and politics, where leaders sometimes bring their teams with them to new assignments. This phenomenon is similarly critical in positions where leaders frequently interact with new people such as clients. Hinds and Mortensen (2005, p. 293) suggested that the exposure to common context in teams "provides the grounding necessary to better understand and make sense of [team member] behaviors, potentially mitigating harsh attributions and, in turn, reducing interpersonal conflict." Thus, the extent to which the loci of leadership are exposed to the same context can influence how leadership is conceptualized and transmitted. Under some circumstances, this common exposure to similar contexts can also determine the extent to which leadership is effective, when coordination and alignment are important.

Implication Two: Leadership Is a Process With Both Intra- and Interpersonal Mechanisms

The second main implication of our integrative process model refers to the distinction between intrapersonal and interpersonal mechanisms of leadership. We have identified traits, behaviors, affect, and cognition as primary mechanisms through which leadership is enacted. These mechanisms are not entirely independent but influence each other in meaningful and predictable ways (as depicted by the reciprocal arrows in Figures 1 and 2). For example, how individuals feel systematically affects their thought processes and behaviors (Zajonc, 1998). Similarly, personality traits determine fairly stable patterns in behaviors, thoughts, and emotions. As a result, we propose that leadership cannot be fully understood unless all four mechanisms are simultaneously considered and their dynamic interrelationships modeled.

Expanding our discussion of the role played by the four mechanisms, we posit that *behaviors* represent the basis for the event cycles, without which the loci of leadership may not meaningfully interact. While traits, affect, and cognition are intrapersonal and not immediately visible to others, behaviors can be observed by others and therefore often function as an interpersonal cue that allows others to observe and reflect on a person's traits, affect, and cognition. For instance, if a leader shouts at a follower while pounding on his desk (behavior), one could determine that the supervisor is emotionally unstable (trait inference), or angry (affect inference), or believes the follower did something wrong (cognition inference). Without observing this behavior, such inferences would be more difficult to make.

Continuing the example above, being yelled at likely influences the follower's affect and cognition such that she becomes angry or embarrassed and becomes less effica-

cious about her abilities and skills, which in turn may lead the follower to be less proactive in solving problems, hence distancing herself from leadership activities. Similar to Shoda, LeeTiernan, and Mischel's (2002) dyadic personality system, the behaviors of one locus of leadership can activate intrapersonal mechanisms in another locus of leadership and therefore indirectly impact the other locus's leadership behaviors. Stated differently, behaviors are the primary carrier of leadership between the loci and therefore drive interactions that shape leadership. Within Figures 1 and 2, behaviors are therefore represented as the connectors between the various loci. This implies that a meaningful examination of leadership needs to focus on behaviors and their role in shaping causal interpretations of the other three mechanisms within and between event cycles. Although this distinction may seem obvious, leadership theory has surprisingly neglected to fully examine the interplay between intrapersonal and interpersonal mechanisms.

Psychological research on these mechanisms may guide leadership inquiry here. Self-regulation theory highlights the reciprocal influence of intra- and interpersonal processes on motivation. Intrapersonal self-regulatory processes systematically influence interpersonal functioning (Weinstein, Hodgins, & Ostvik-White, 2011), while interpersonal phenomena (i.e., other people's behaviors) in turn can influence intrapersonal processes like goal pursuit and self-efficacy (Fitzsimons & Finkel, 2010). As another example, affective science has made great strides in understanding the intrapersonal effects of emotions (e.g., positive emotions broaden people's mind-sets) and is now increasingly examining interpersonal effects and their interactions (Van Kleef, 2010). The expression of emotion (interpersonal) can serve as an input into the observer's cognitive and affective processing (intrapersonal) and systematically determine observers' behavioral reactions (interpersonal) such as their own emotional expression (Van Kleef, 2009). Absent the intrapersonal mechanisms, we cannot fully understand the behaviors.

The distinction between intra- and interpersonal mechanisms becomes particularly important and intriguing when these two types do not align. Over the past decade, various leadership theories have emphasized the importance of positive emotions in the leadership process. Leaders are encouraged to express emotions such as optimism and enthusiasm to inspire, motivate, and engage followers (Rajah, Song, & Arvey, 2011). Feeling optimistic and enthusiastic, however, can be quite challenging for leaders, especially during tough times when uncertainty, anxiety, and stress are prevalent. But it is exactly during those times when expressing positivity is critical to inducing hope and optimism in followers (Humphrey, Pollack, & Hawver, 2008). In these situations, leaders may therefore express inauthentic emotions (emotions that are actually not felt), placing the intrapersonal mechanism of affect in misalignment with the interpersonal mechanism of behavioral expression. This is just one of many examples illustrating that leadership behaviors may not always follow directly from intrapersonal mechanisms of affect, cognition, and traits.

Indeed, some leaders may manipulate the transmission of interpersonal mechanisms to gain the effects they desire with others (Bass, 1985; Conger & Kanungo, 1987, 1998).

Although there is some preliminary work linking interpersonal and intrapersonal mechanisms (mostly in the charismatic leadership literature), not much is known about a possible misalignment between these mechanisms and how this may influence interactions with other loci of leadership. However, research on emotional sincerity has shown that individuals are often able to detect whether an emotion is authentic or inauthentic (Gross & John, 2003) and that the judged levels of authenticity affect the favorableness of observer responses (Frank, Ekman, & Friesen, 1993). Authentic leadership research has demonstrated that acting in line with one's deeply rooted beliefs and values (behaviors and cognition are aligned) generally benefits leaders and follower outcomes (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008).

Furthermore, differentiating between intra- and interpersonal mechanisms is critical when stimuli outside one's awareness impact intrapersonal functioning. The loci of leadership may in fact act without being accurately aware of the reasons for doing so. Bargh and Chartrand (1999, p. 462) summarized this phenomenon quite well by noting that "most of a person's everyday life is determined not by their conscious intentions and deliberate choices but by mental processes that are put into motion by features of the environment and that operate outside of conscious awareness and guidance." For example, followers may blindly follow a charismatic leader being guided by a sense of mission and identification, and they may not consciously consider their actions (Conger & Kanungo, 1987, 1998). This may also be true of individuals who follow a transformational leader, who is so energizing that followers simply believe that whatever direction the leader chooses is the right direction (Bass & Riggio, 2006). This may also explain why individuals are willing to save another individual such as a soldier or firefighter in trouble, given the deep sense of ethos that is engrained in them by their leader.

Finally, leadership research should acknowledge the reciprocal influence between intra- and interpersonal mechanisms. So far, we have focused on how one's traits, affect, and cognitions can influence one's behavior, but the opposite is true as well. For example, emotional contagion research has shown that followers often catch their leaders' emotions via facial mimicry (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1994) and associated afferent feedback (Buck, 1980). A forensic psychologist working on a homicide investigation team may be particularly attuned to and catch the lead investigator's emotions (such as anxiety in a high-profile case or anger when the investigation is not progressing quickly enough). Here, the automatic mimicry of the leader's emotion (behaviors) ultimately leads to the follower feeling the same emotion (affect), which may then further refine the follower's behavior (i.e., talking about his emotion to other followers).

Discussion

Based on Hernandez et al.'s (2011) two-dimensional framework of locus and mechanism of leadership and the concept of the event cycle, we have developed a comprehensive process model of leadership in hopes that it will aid in producing a more integrative view of leadership theory that can help guide future research and practice. Our highest expectation going forward is that this theory-driven process model can be used for further integration as new leadership theories are developed while promoting and sustaining a sufficient level of creative tension to advance the field of leadership studies in new directions. We hope the model will stimulate new theories and creative empirical research regarding the interplay of the loci and mechanisms of leadership and the evolution of leadership event cycles. Thus, while imposing a flexible structure on what is known today about leadership from a scientific perspective, the model can foster creativity and scientific progress. As leadership research progresses and continues to move into yet un- or underexplored areas, we believe our model is flexible enough to integrate new theories and possibly even new loci and mechanisms.

Furthermore, we hope our process model can inform the development of a common leadership definition. Based on our own analysis of the leadership phenomenon and Yukl's (2010) foundational definition of viewing leadership as social influence, we define leadership as the exertion of social influence between and among multiple loci of leadership (leader, follower, leader–follower dyad, collective, and context) working toward a common goal, via the leadership mechanisms of traits, behaviors, affect, and cognition, through a series of event cycles that may or may not include the same mechanisms and/or loci. The definition is complex (which it should be, considering the complexity of leadership), but we hope that at the very least, it can guide scholars toward modeling the dynamic multifaceted leadership patterns we observe every day in organizations, as well as outside of any organizational setting.

One specific opportunity for our process model to contribute to leadership theory advancement is the systematic examination of the element of time. The event cycle concept necessarily implicates an element of time; various loci interact with each other via the mechanisms across time to produce leadership. We expect the time necessary to produce leadership to be longer for more complex dynamics of leadership (e.g., involving more loci, mechanisms, and event cycles). Shamir (2011) provided a critical call to leadership researchers to more systematically incorporate time elements into leadership theory. We believe our model can help in constructing the inductive research necessary to develop temporal leadership theories. Shamir posited that temporally grounded theories may be generated by observing, following, and describing leadership phenomena. Our model may guide this kind of process by pointing to the necessary elements observed and followed over time (i.e., all leadership loci and mechanisms).

The loci–mechanisms event cycle framework has served as the building block to developing a process model of leadership that not only is descriptive but also could be used for prediction. Based on Morgeson and Hofmann's (1999) event cycle concept, we can predict how mechanisms and loci interact within a larger network of event cycles (leader–followers, followers–other followers, collectives–leaders, etc.). To fully understand leadership, scholars can now hypothesize and test the interactive effects among the five loci and four mechanisms of leadership. Thus, how one follower perceives her leader's behaviors is not only informed by her iterative exchanges with the leader but by interactions with other followers (e.g., how they perceive the behavior), other leaders (e.g., whether this behavior is normal for a leader), other collectives (e.g., if other collectives expect their leader to exhibit the same behavior), and the context in which they are embedded (e.g., whether the behavior is appropriate within one's national culture).

While the two-dimensional framework describes the leadership aspects emphasized by each theory, our process model provides guidance for integrating various theories, allowing for a range of unique predictions. That is, although two theories may appear to differ in terms of loci and mechanism dimensions, the model can clarify links that, when combined, will offer predictions previously unexplored or tested in leadership research. We encourage future researchers to incorporate the dynamic aspects of this process model in order to examine the full range of complexities associated with the leadership phenomenon.

To illustrate how the proposed process model can be used for prediction, consider combining two previously mentioned major leadership theories: LMX theory and implicit leadership theory. Leadership as defined within LMX theory arises from the leader–follower relationship and is transmitted through behaviors, whereas some implicit leadership theories have solely focused on followers' cognitions and the leader prototypes they maintain. These prototypes comprise categories of attributes that followers invoke when trying to interpret whether a behavior constitutes leadership or whether an individual is considered a leader or not. By combining the two approaches, one could posit that followers are forming implicit theories about a prototypical leader–follower *relationship*. In this case, implicit leadership theory and the attributes it associates with such relationships can function as an antecedent to the development of high- or low-LMX relationships.

As our process model indicates, behaviors are the transmitter of thoughts, feelings, and traits. Thus, if a follower receives cues from a leader that confirm her leader–follower relationship prototype, the follower may change her behaviors to remain cognitively consistent with her prototypical abstractions of leadership (e.g., provide more frequent reports about the progress of an important project, ask the leader for feedback, etc.). Choosing such behaviors can lead to the development of a high-LMX relationship characterized by trust, respect, and communication. In this way, the process model can facilitate leadership research by integrating seemingly unrelated theories and empirical findings while providing a more integrative

explanation of leadership phenomena including more loci and mechanisms.

This example suggests that in order to fully comprehend the dynamics of leadership in a group or organization, one must merge various theories of leadership into a more integrative, coherent system. Using the locus, mechanism, and event cycle as building blocks, theorists and practitioners can more fully explain the psychological phenomenon of leadership and explore how it may be developed more effectively. For instance, starting a developmental intervention by fully explicating what constitutes follower implicit theories of leadership would be helpful in developing leader and follower dyadic relationships. Extending this logic, the development of leadership can likely be accelerated by understanding how the various loci interact to form what constitutes a leader's and follower's views about leadership.

By focusing on context as a locus of leadership, we hope future research can shed light on aspects of leadership, organizations, and cultures that have been understudied within the leadership literature. We have also posited that examining the extent to which the loci of leadership are exposed to a common context may be a meaningful research endeavor. While many leaders and followers will start interacting based on distinct contexts, the degree to which a common context is beneficial or detrimental for leadership remains unclear. On the one hand, a common and positively experienced context can facilitate the formation of high-quality LMX relationships and coordination within groups. On the other hand, exposure to too many of the same experiences may inhibit creativity and innovation by limiting the scope of knowledge exchanged between loci. Future research should seek to untangle the role of context by examining the interactive effects of common and uncommon contexts on the loci of leadership.

Our leadership process model can also aid in addressing the current blind spots in the literature. Hernandez et al. (2011) indicated, for example, that their review pointed to the need for further theoretical development of followers and the collective as loci of leadership and affect as a mechanism of leadership. The multiple process model of leadership proposed here can aid in guiding such theoretical development by modeling how followers enact leadership via their interactions with the other four loci. Thus, our model suggests that an investigation of followers as a locus of leadership would benefit from the inclusion of all four mechanisms and from considering the event cycles with the other four loci. This perspective could prompt research questions such as the following: How do a leader's positive affectivity (trait) and transformational leadership style (behaviors) influence the extent to which followers enact leadership in contexts that are high versus low risk? How do followers challenge their leader's assumptions (cognition) and engage in taking charge behaviors, and do these explain the likelihood of some followers emerging as leaders? Are followers who share a common context with their leaders and other followers more likely to enact leadership? Using our integrative process model, we can begin to examine these integrative types of questions.

Similarly, a theoretical examination of affect as a mechanism of leadership may not be complete until at least understanding how the various loci transmit affect (e.g., leader and follower emotional dispositions, group affective tone, affective norms of an organizational or community culture). Currently, no overarching theory offers a coherent understanding of the influence of affect on the leadership process, including how affect influences the transmission of leadership. Our integrative process model provides a platform from which to develop such a theory, by investigating, among others, the following questions: How can follower emotions, individually as well as collectively, give rise to leadership? How can leader emotions be influenced by affect expressed by the other loci? How does affect as a mechanism of leadership change as a function of time (e.g., are negative emotions more acceptable when leaders and followers develop high-quality relationships)? How does the context determine the affective nature of leadership? By using the dynamic process model proposed here, we can expand the lens through which prior leadership research was conceived and answer these and other interesting questions.

Practical Implications

On the practical side, a more integrative view of leadership offers a model for addressing the assessment and development of leadership in a way that may also help us break past the typical 10% ceiling in terms of what leadership accounts for in performance outcomes (Avolio, 2011). Simply evaluating the style of leadership exhibited by an individual may account for neither the full locus of leadership nor for all of the mechanisms at work in any given situation.

To the degree that one views leadership through the lens of event cycles, a more dynamic approach is needed to assess how the loci and mechanisms of leadership can be evaluated at any point in time, as well as over time and across situations. For example, a scientist who would like to understand his effectiveness as a leader in his research lab needs to focus on more than just his personality, behaviors, affect, and cognition. His effectiveness will depend on his interactions with the other loci (e.g., the quality of the mentoring relationships he is able to build with his assistants) as well as the other loci's interactions with each other (e.g., the assistants' support for each other and sharing of information beneficial to the lab's goals, the assistants' prototypes of leadership, etc.). An assessment of leadership effectiveness therefore needs to include all other loci, and the scientist may ask himself questions such as "Have I created a context where assistants feel empowered to voice concerns?", "Does everyone involved in the lab communicate with each other and feel safe to do so?", and "Whose expertise and skills am I dependent on, and have I done enough to fully take advantage of everyone's skill set?"

Extending this logic, organizations may be able to accelerate the development of leadership by understanding how the various loci interact to form what constitutes leaders' and followers' views of leadership as they emerge

through different planned and unplanned event cycles. Organizations that invest resources into executive leadership development may be particularly interested in how to pinpoint areas for growth in the transmission of various mechanisms across loci in a planned event such as a merger. A company's leadership coach, for example, could help an executive who has struggled with his tendencies to express negative affect prepare for a change process that will require optimism and enthusiasm. By helping the executive understand how to temper his expression of negative affect (thus avoiding a negative contagion effect), the leadership coach can help support a positive tone for the executive's work unit. Additionally, the coach could help the executive analyze how different loci (in particular, followers and collectives) from the two merging organizations will need to interact in order to perform new assignments. Understanding how the new context is both shared and unshared could also prove valuable to the integration process.

Moreover, in terms of leadership development, one could start by examining the readiness of the context in which the leader and follower dynamic is embedded versus the leader's or the follower's readiness (Avolio & Hannah, 2008). Developers might consider the level of common context within a leader–follower relationship as a useful place to assess the developmental readiness of each actor and the current context's readiness to facilitate the building of a more effective leadership relationship. The loci and mechanisms proposed in this article could offer leadership developers unique starting points, midway milestones, and final objectives, depending on which loci and mechanisms are examined at any point in time, ranging from what constitutes the focal leader's self-awareness to awareness of the other leadership loci.

Empirical Testing

There is no doubt that the complexity of the process model demands sophisticated data collection and analysis tools to test the ideas proposed here. One analytical tool that may be particularly suited for testing the evolution of event cycles across multiple loci is social network analysis (SNA). Mehra, Smith, Dixon, and Robertson (2006), for example, recommended the use of SNA as a method for measuring the emergence of shared leadership in teams, and some leadership studies have successfully implemented it (e.g., Hoppe & Reinelt, 2010; Zohar & Tenne-Gazit, 2008). SNA can map out the flow of leadership within entire collectives and, if data are collected over multiple time periods, may point to changes in leadership. That is, researchers could ask all members within a given group or organization to complete a questionnaire assessing toward whom they are exerting leadership and from whom they receive leadership. Collecting these data over multiple time periods and in real time (e.g., using experience-sampling methodologies) and then comparing leadership networks/maps across these different time periods can identify leadership event cycles (such as leadership shifting downward in the hierarchy).

Such quantitative analysis should then be complemented with qualitative data analysis, where individuals reflect on their leadership activities via, for example, interviews or diaries using both strategies perhaps blended in a mixed methods study (see Creswell & Clark, 2010). A grounded theory approach can identify specific trends that explain why a change in leadership occurred, and event study analysis may add explanatory power by identifying events in the environment that triggered leadership change. Leadership simulations (preferably over several weeks) may also be a useful tool to analyze event cycles in a more structured environment where trigger events can be manipulated (e.g., a change in top-level leadership).

Conclusion

In the 2007 *American Psychologist* special issue on leadership, Bennis (2007) noted that "one quality of a genuine discipline of leadership studies—once such an animal exists—will be its inclusiveness" (p. 2). We hope to have contributed to this critical mission of inclusiveness by developing an integrative process model of leadership linking loci and mechanisms with leadership event cycles. In so doing, we have developed a comprehensive model that captures the dynamic multifaceted and reciprocal nature of what constitutes leadership at any given time. As such, it captures the foundational elements of leadership as posited by the leadership theories of the past century. For a field that has differentiated its components to the point of fragmentation, the prospect of a coherent story— the beginnings of a leadership metamodel—could well comprise the next punctuation in the evolution of leadership inquiry.

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