followers engage in and collectively pursue.”

These are pillars of transformational leadership, although some critics believe that transformational leadership is unethical and manipulative. They disagree, indicating that “true transformational leaders identify the core values and unifying purposes of the organization and its members, liberate their human potential, and foster pluralistic leadership and effective, satisfied followers.”

Grounded in traditional leadership theory, this book raises questions about the nature of ethics related to leader roles and leadership dynamics. Nowhere, unfortunately, is the bias of modernism transcended with any more complex understanding of adult development in relation to values and worldviews and their implications for issues of ethics. These scholars are wonderfully informed and competent to pick up the mantle and move to a new level of sophistication in exploring issues of ethics. Let’s hope that one day they will.


Beginning with an heroic view of leadership in her introduction, Ciulla presents an essay on the responsibility of leaders in their use of power, their “special moral relationship” with followers, responsibility for the big picture, and “making” others care about something beyond themselves. She provides an overview of the material in this volume.

“Our focus is on the complex ethical relationships that are the core of leadership. The quest for moral leadership is both a personal quest that takes place in the hearts and minds of leaders as well as a quest by individuals, groups, organization, communities, and societies for leaders who are both ethical and effective.”
According to this construct we are constantly in search of heroes, moral heroes who help us get the job done. Yet these are individuals in relationship, relationships based not only on values, but on emotions. Citing Soloman, “Leaders don’t just show us how to act; they show us how to feel.” Further, according to the chapter by Douglas A. Hicks, even religion plays a role in how we think about leaders. And leaders’ use of religion in relation to followers is a two edged sword, sometimes building and sometimes destroying the moral relationship between them.

The second part of this book examines how leaders think about morality. Some of the same authors as in Ethics, cited above show up here. One chapter by Peter Temes discusses how sometimes leaders must do bad thing! Dirty hands and necessary sin—derived from difficult moral choices between conflicting values like not killing and acting in self-defense.

The third part of the book looks at leadership in organizations. Tom Tyler's work is focused not just on leader as individual, but on the web of variables and relationships while discussing the role of fairness in effective leadership. He states (noting his perspective as a psychologist),

“My approach points to a different reason for supporting ethical conduct by people is positions of leadership [I like this framing; it suggests both individuals and role—Russ]; the perception of the leader’s fairness has a strong influence on the behavior of followers...this psychological approach to ethics is highly congruent with the philosophical approach. The philosophical approach indicates that people should care about ethics, while the behavioral approach indicates that the people in organizations do care about experiencing an ethical climate within the organization to why they belong.”

Fair decision making processes in organizations is central to effective leadership.

S,D, Noam Cook models his chapter on Thoreau’s government is best which
governs least assertion. Accordingly, leaders are most effective when they intervene as little as possible to support ethical approaches in organizations. In human systems ethics is one of the regulators for developing structures and direction of activity. He concludes that notions of effective leadership should be replaced with ethical leadership.

The concluding chapter of the book, “Expanding the Horizons of leadership,” by Norman E. Bowie looks at leadership in business, that is the “good leader” in business. Here the responsibility of corporations and leaders is to sustainability, defined according to the European Union as

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.’ The three pillars of sustainability are measured by triple bottom-line accounting. The goal of the European Union is ‘to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion.”

Corporate social responsibility includes enlightened HR management, helping workers adapt to change, and nurturing of a healthy environment. Bowie argues that ethic leadership is a commitment to sustainability. Leaders of corporations have a responsibility to be ethical in all aspects of their lives, as well as committed to sustainability.

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Jin Kouzes opens this work with the comment, based on his work with Barry Posner: “Credibility is the foundation of leadership.” This means that leaders do what they say they will