Exploring Leadership Influence Behaviors in the Context of Behavior Settings

Chris Francovich
Gonzaga University

This paper discusses the concept of the behavior setting as applied to questions of structure and agency in coming to terms with the influence aspects of leadership. It suggests that the relationship between leader–follower behavior and the organizations in which they are embedded is similar to the paradoxical relationship of agency and structure in social theory. A brief discussion of agency/structure reveals that current theorizing in leadership studies may be missing a valuable opportunity for research by not including the eco-behavioral science of Roger Garlock Barker in its broader agenda. Behavior setting theory is offered as a possible framework for research in leadership studies that takes into account the nature of leadership or influence behaviors in complex environments but remains true to postmodern sensibilities related to observer relative claims about the ontological nature of reality. This is achieved by using the behavior setting as a unit of analysis that mediates the distinction between agent-inspired influence (leadership) and the effects of the surround on agency (leadership behavior). A brief case vignette taken from a medical clinic is offered to illustrate a possible approach to researching influence behavior using a behavior setting approach.

This leadership theory, like social theory in general (Barnes, 2000, 2001; Shotter, 1983), struggles with the relationship between agency and structure. This issue is especially acute in leadership studies as it concerns the fundamental nature of influence. Influence is commonly understood as an essential component of leadership with the idea that leaders influence followers (Northouse, 2004) and followers influence leaders (Collinson, 2006). The implied or assumed agency of leaders and followers is generally understood as the causal factor in the change implied in either the leading or following. Harter (2006), for example, suggested that all willed action is leadership. However, as argued here, it may also be the case that settings exert what could only be characterized as influence on setting inhabitants. A chief task of this paper is to describe how we can operationalize this setting influence such that it is empirically verifiable and theoretically satisfying. To make the case for this argument, we have to come to terms with agency and structure directly and then link its salience to leadership studies.

While Bourdieu (1980/1990), Gieryn (2002), Giddens (1991), and others have written extensively on the structuring of agency or behavior by built environments (as well as on how agents create structure), they have continued to struggle with exactly how structure and agency are related (Hatch, 2006) and what processes and mechanisms underlie their functioning (Holstein & Gubrium, 2000; Turner & Boyns, 2002). This paper reflects an effort to address this question in a novel way: first by conducting a brief analysis of key issues in the structure/agency discussion and then giving a general overview of Roger Barker's (1968; Schoggen, 1989) behavior setting theory and applying it to a leadership context in clinical medical education. This first strategy is necessary in order to both locate and relate to leadership studies the work of Barker and others in the proper epistemological context and to clarify key vocabulary used in the behavior setting theory.

Development of theory in leadership studies is important and needed (Harter, 2006; Yammarino, Dionne, Chun, & Dansereau, 2005). Linking leadership studies to the larger structure–agency issue active in the social sciences (Barnes, 2001) may help the development of robust theory. However, confusion[1] and controversy around the role of structure and agency in social science theorizing has made any consequent theorizing in leadership studies problematic. Because leadership studies is so invested in agency in particular, this question deserves attention. This paper will outline an approach to the structure–agency question that allows for empirical work in specific settings (structures) tied to fundamental claims related to the consciousness and intentionality of actors (agency) in settings.

Connecting Agency to Structure

Early in the 20th century, sociologists were discussing problems inherent in attributing or relating phenomena in the psychological domain (agency) to the institutional (structural) domain. Kantor (1922), for example, offered a theoretical foundation for both a synthesis and an empirical program of research that would make sense of these seemingly incommensurate units of analysis. Kantor's psychological perspective was an organismic one referring to "the psychological conception according to which the reactions of the person to specific stimuli supply the data, and not a mind or physiological activities" (p. 761). He was not interested in reifying the individual, but rather looking at the behavior of individuals in relation to social context. His treatment of the social surround or structuring context was similar to more recent approaches—treating dyads, families, groups, organizations, and institutions as sociologically distinct collectivities of individual reactions or responses to stimuli (Blau, 1995; Kelman, 2006). We see the psychological individual as an agent who is continuously interacting to a social surround that escalates into greater degrees of psychological influence. Sociological concepts such as power, freedom, and influence are rendered in terms of the responding individual.

Nonetheless, there has been a general trend that has conceived of social entities (either individuals or collectives) as more substantive than relational (Emirbayer, 1997), tending to

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[1] While it is not the place here for presenting a definitive commentary on agency and structure or even defining them absolutely, it is important to note that the distinction has its roots in the Cartesian divide between mind and body and the great epistemological revolution of the Enlightenment period. For purposes of this paper, agency is defined as the psychological perspective and structure as the sociological perspective of the collective. This latter term is especially tricky in that it includes both the phenomenally and dynamic activity of the collective as well as its enduring historical artifacts (including linguistic ones).

isolate phenomena to units of analysis based on the idea of ontological separateness as opposed to what Dewey and Bentley (1949) saw as merely conceptually distinct. While this may, on the one hand, afford a more accessible analytical mapping of findings to hypotheses it also serves to reduce the overall validity of analysis due to its assumptions that simplify the complex and seemingly paradoxical phenomena of human activity understood as not separate from the overall surround. It is argued here that much of this thinking has affected dialogue and discussion in leadership studies (Chemers, 1997). Confusion between trait, contingent, and exchange theories can be understood as confusion over the unit of analysis, over where the individual ends and the group begins or, for purposes of this paper, between agency and structure.

More recent efforts at understanding the intersection of the individual and the collective have centered on narrative and the process of making sense of the world through stories (Bakhtin, 1986; Bruner, 1991). The idea of world making through language utilizes the scope and enduring aspects of institutions with the linguistic ability of individuals to creatively weave narratives that fix both their identities and their conceptions of the world they live in. Understanding the context of narratives is achieved through analysis of situations or going concerns (Holstein & Gubrium, 2000). Relating the utterance to both the context and the individual identity emerging in the context is thought to establish the dynamic nature of both the surround (structure) and the identity (agency).

This more relational (Uhl-Bien, 2006) and narrative (Fleming, 2001) approach is a welcome addition to leadership studies. However, there remains a difficulty in applying theory from leadership studies or social and psychological interpretations of agency and structure to actual situations and real settings. What the ideas discussed here offer is an initial way into complex everyday contexts that exert obvious and important influence on individuals in those contexts. These ideas may serve to help locate narrative, relational, and transformative aspects of leadership theory to people in relatively stable group and institutional settings.

Roger Garlock Barker and Behavior Settings

Over a period of 25 years, Roger Barker, his family, and a team of researchers from the University of Kansas lived and worked in the small town of Oskaloosa, Kansas (population 700) and exhaustively observed and catalogued the behavior of virtually all the inhabitants of the town. Their work stands as one of the most ambitious and comprehensive efforts to understanding the full range of a community's behaviors in the history of psychology (Heft, 2001). It was from this experience that Barker and his colleagues developed the theory of eco-behavioral science and behavior settings.

Barker (1968) observed that psychology is charged with making sense of both the psychological and the ecological environment. He also understood that the distinction between the psychology of the individual and the ecological environment was problematic. In order to reduce the complexity of his task and in recognition of the different laws operating at the micro scale of neurons and metabolism and the macro scale of observable social behavior and artifacts, Barker bracketed phenomenological and intrapersonal aspects of psychology from his work and instead focused on molar (perceived as wholes as opposed to parts) human behavior. For example, he interpreted the act of buying a stamp as an entire unified behavior not broken down into microacts that followed the stamp buyer through the myriad of smaller components of the total act (Schoggen, 1989).

Barker (1968) defined the ecological environment as existing outside one's skin, that to which molar actions are coupled, and functioning according to laws incommensurate with those governing human molar behavior. Implicit in the first of the conditions is an ontological claim about reality (i.e., structures exist independent of human experience) characterized from a philosophical perspective as a neutral monism (see Heft, 2001, pp. 69-70). This situates Barker's thinking within the context of William James' radical empiricism (Heft; James, 1996) and holds that one's experience of the world includes the experience of relations (as opposed to *thought about* relations) and through this experience the structure of the world can be known (Heft).

Secondly, Barker (1968) posited the case that seemingly separate organized selves exist in the world and are necessarily coupled to their environments. Dewey and Bentley (1949) observed that human individuality and environmental containment are but aspects of a larger "common system" (p. 123). The coupling of individuals to the molar ecological surround is a complex process of biological and behavioral phenomena that can become a theoretical difficulty (Barnes, 2001). However, this is precisely why Barker is important to us; his work has provided a method for understanding the complicated coupling of individuals to the ecological environment.

The third claim that there are two (or more) sets of laws that govern the operation of the selves and the environments within which they are embedded and interacting reflects distinctions made from criteria specific to observed behavior of organisms as opposed to criteria specific to the larger dynamic medium of what we know as the external world. It is here that the distinction between structure and agency is most acute. From Barker's (1968) perspective, it was reasonable to use statistical correlations of molar behaviors with both dynamic and invariant aspects of the ecological surround but not reasonable to use that methodology when coming to grips with intermental or subjective human experience. Molar psychological behavior is a mesolevel construct mediating between the mentalist psychologies privileging agency and the objective events of the structural and physical world (Barker).

Molar psychological behavior was defined by Barker (1968) as the actions people take that are available to scrutiny by an observer. He was interested in the correlation of molar psychological behavior with the ecological environment. How is our observable behavior consistent or at odds with the environmental surround? He was specifically interested in how this type of analysis revealed aspects of the ecological environment and how the ecological environment revealed certain molar behaviors.

Ecological Units

The interface of the ecological environment and molar behavior creates what Barker (1968) called ecological units. According to Schoggen (1989), these units arise simultaneously in the physical, social, psychological, and behavioral realms and share three common attributes:

1. They are self-generated as opposed to resulting from the observer's or researcher's interest or manipulation.
2. They have a time/space locus.
3. They have a boundary separating the internal pattern of the unit from the external pattern of the surround.

Ecological units are a composite of an environment piece and a behavior piece. They are hybrid artifacts that exist as quasi-objective entities (see Searle, 1995). An example that Barker used is a road: a road consists of a track (physical feature) which in turn is used for travel or carrying goods (expression of molar behavior). It is important to note that Barker's is not a systems perspective relying on a reified whole exhibiting relational parts but an ecology of dynamic affordances (Reed, 1988) both structuring and being structured by activity. He took the environment as is and looked at the interface between the differing dynamical elements of human behavior and human environments respectively.

The coupling of a molar behavior to an environmental feature via the ecological unit is the mechanism through which Barker (1968) argued that the disjoint levels of human behavior and environmental phenomena are coupled. The ecological unit is the foundation for the concept of the behavior setting.

Behavior Settings

A behavior setting is a pattern of ecological units and consists of what Barker (1968) called "standing patterns of behavior" (p. 18). The standing pattern is the stable and always negotiated quasi-object that serves as the central concept or structure of the behavior setting. Barker described the standing patterns as a milieu, circumjacent, and synomorphic or fitting to the behavior (Schoggen, 1989). The behavior is happening in a milieu, and the milieu matches the behavior.[2] For example, in a dentist's office, patients have their cavities filled (this is the standing pattern, the behavior/milieu synomorph) because (a) they are in the office (the milieu surrounds them, i.e., is circumjacent) and (b) the pieces of the milieu fit the standing pattern (the drill is meant to fit in my mouth and drill my tooth, i.e., synomorphic with the behavior). Using this concept, we are able to describe and observe both the distinct and the nested relationships that ecological units, standing patterns, and behavior settings suggest.

To count as a behavior setting, these standing patterns must have a specific degree of interdependence that is greater than their interdependence with other parts of other settings. In Barker's (1968) work, this index of interdependence was calculated (correlated) using an exhaustive inductive ethnographic cataloging of tens of thousands of observed molar behaviors in settings over a period of months and years. Out of this data emerged a quantitative representation of the observed patterns that had been characterized qualitatively through immersion in the setting (see Schoggen, 1989, pp. 48-73).

So, a behavior setting is an externally referenced (i.e., we can interact with it or join it) and internally interdependent quasi-object that consists of one or more standing patterns of behavior. Behavior settings are not abstractions in the sense that the term organization is or the notion of the institution. Behavior settings are more granular. Just as the standing pattern reflects the synomorphic relations with the artifacts in the milieu, so are standing patterns synomorphic with other standing patterns in the behavior setting. We see in Barker's conception an elegant and stable view of the fittingness or nested reciprocities (Wagman & Miller, 2003) that exist within common experience. The pieces fit and, in their fitting, we see the larger structure-in-a-

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[2] Barker's (1968) work is quite detailed, and the vocabulary and conceptual framework is complex. I have reiterated a general sense of his definitions and descriptions here, but it is in no way exhaustive. I highly recommend the original sources as well as Schoggen (1989) and other commentaries on the theory.

context that is necessary for making claims about the development, causality, or purpose of social forms or structures.

Behavior settings can serve as a general explanatory framework for a wide variety of social arrangements. Schoggen (1989) reported on authority systems, behavior setting autonomy, and action patterns in particular settings. Authority systems refer to the control one behavior setting may or may not exert on other settings (e.g., a corporate board on a corporation). This is a particularly important aspect of the theory for application to leadership studies. How do we characterize and differentiate leadership or influence behaviors in, for example, a board room setting as opposed to similar behaviors exhibited in a hallway or other setting?

Behavior setting autonomy measures a particular setting's independence from other settings in its habitat. How different is one setting from the next in a complex environment? Medical environments, for example, exhibit some striking differences. From the antiseptic and orderly environment of the operating theater to the noisy and often unkempt walk-in clinic waiting rooms, we see that very different sets of rules and traditions govern molar behaviors.

Finally, action patterns describe activities that correlate with standing patterns of behavior that fundamentally define the setting. For example, one action pattern in a hospital environment could be called wellness, defined as helping people get well, and is a behavior that can be calibrated to a greater or lesser extent to the standing patterns of all the behavior settings in the organization. Action patterns characterize aspects of settings and habitats that help to discriminate between and among the variety of institutions and organizations with whom we interact.

Much as Zucker (1977) described the relationship between "personal influence" and "institutionalization" (p. 728), behavior setting theory seeks to understand the relationship between the autonomous behavior of an individual and the structuring force of the surround. However, unlike Zucker's (1977) argument evaluating the relative strengths of each dimension in terms of persistence, Barker (1968) was interested in predicting the molar behaviors of everyday life and relating them to the broader theoretical questions of how and why such a phenomena has come to be. It may be somewhere in the intersection of these ideas that the role of leadership becomes more clear. In the discussion here, it is clear that the definition of behavior setting is similar to the definition of institution as "some sort of establishment of relative permanence of a distinctly social sort" (Hughes, as cited in Zucker, 1977, p. 726) and used as a general category in Zucker's (1977, 1987) thinking about institutions. However, Barker's work with behavior settings was developed from a psychological and biological perspective and did not take up the larger sociological questions asked by institutionalization theorists.

Barker (1968) succeeded in describing and defining phenomena that helped him better understand molar behavior in environments. However, this did not explain why these phenomena occur. How is it that these stable structures arise and are sustained in the first place? What is the relationship between these patterns and other patterns that we study in physics, chemistry, and biology? These questions were important to Barker and his colleagues for the same reasons they are (or should be) important to scholars in leadership studies. We need to both integrate social science theorizing with the natural sciences and legitimize our joint claims using the shared criteria of an interdisciplinary discourse. To answer these questions, Barker developed a general theory of behavior settings (Schoggen, 1989).

The theoretical basis for Barker's (1968) work drew substantially on the thinking of Fritz Heider (1926) in his essay "Thing and Medium." This theoretical discussion has been important

in developing a framework that is responsive to current discussions of relational, emergent, and transformational theories of leadership behavior. Discussions of postmodern ontologies (ideas about what is real) often ignore or marginalize realist ontologies by not taking up the challenge of defining processes and structures that bridge the physical world with the linguistically/socially mediated world of human experience (Kuhn, 2007).

Heider's (1926) interests were with the problems of organism–environment relations, particularly the problem of visual perception. At that time, the Cartesian views of Helmholtz were the basis for mainstream interpretations of perception but were being challenged by the Gestalt movement (Heft, 2001; Reed, 1988, 1998). Psychologists were in conflict over the issue. The view suggested by Helmholtz (and significantly retained in mainstream psychology today) is that the surface of the eye is stimulated by light rays that have bounced off an object (a thing) and have been reflected through space (the medium) to the surface of the eye in differing wave lengths. The eye then transmits the stimulus pattern of wave lengths (understood as a digital signal) to the brain for processing. The resulting image is the product of the brain's learned habit of translating digital stimulus into coherent images. The relevant aspects of perception are thought to happen internally, beginning with the proximal stimulus on the surface of the eye.

Heider (1926), on the other hand, believed that it was in the nature of the medium itself to pick up the coherent stimulus pattern conditioned by the object or thing and make it available with minimal loss of information to the actively engaged (as opposed to passive) perceiver. His interest was in the distal stimulus and patterns in the ecological surround. In Heider's view, the phenomena of perception can happen because the medium contains a multiplicity of elements that are able to take on the 'causal texture' of the singular thing reflected and make available to the perceiver a coherent image or experience of the thing perceived.

A metaphor for understanding the use of Heider's (1926) thinking in Barker's (1968) work is to imagine a starfish (thing) making an impression in the sand (the medium). The multiplicity of elements in the medium (sand) is able to translate the unitary nature or structure of the thing (starfish) into a coherent image of the thing. This insight is central to Barker's ideas about how a behavior setting (the thing) is translated or manifested in the behavior of people (the medium). As Schoggen (1989) put it, "People, en masse, are remarkably compliant to the forces of behavior settings; in this respect the relations between people and settings is like that between medium and thing in Heider's sense" (p. 174).

The behavior setting is seen as the unitary element in the environment and the members of the setting as parts of the composite element (Heider, 1926). Much as the sand in the starfish example adapted itself uniquely to the variegated aspects of the starfish, members of behavior settings are adapted to the variegated aspects of the setting.

We see in the phenomena of the behavior setting the recapitulation of our basic orientation as organisms to the environment. For example, think of the human hand (medium) in the using of a rock (thing) as a tool. The hand is able to use its multiple digits to surround, enfold, and conform to the rock [see also Wertsch (1998) for a more extended discussion on mediational means (tools) and their relationship to agency]. What Barker (1968) suggested is that we have as a species, through language and history, created an eco-behavioral world along the same lines that we inhabit the physical world. Our habits and patterns in social settings are built from the same eco-behavioral structures that our habits and patterns of living were adapted to prior to language and the advent of human sociality.

Leadership in Behavior Settings

Much as the forces of things on the texture of the medium and the forces of the medium on the texture of things characterize our observations of the physical world, Barker (1968) maintained, settings interact with people. In other words, settings exert force or influence on people, and people exert force, influence, or resistance on settings (and on other people). The behavior setting is a dynamic process of opposing forces or patterns of influence, a field or context of appropriation and resistance. A key insight is that the setting typically exerts a stronger and more unitary force on inhabitants than inhabitants exert on the setting. This accounts for the stability and enduring nature of settings and the often unproblematic use of settings by inhabitants. How the structure of the setting is propagated and affects inhabitants has significant implications for how we both characterize and understand leadership and organizational behavior as well as the fundamental relationship between structure and agency.[3]

As indicated, the influence or forces of settings on people may be a fruitful area of inquiry for leadership studies. Leadership studies has deep roots in social psychology (House & Aditya, 1997) with a consequent focus on both the phenomenological and intersubjective experience of leadership as well as the sociological abstracted notion of leadership in terms of larger social aggregates. Here we see leadership studies spanning the agency/structure divide with focus on the leader as person (agency) or on the leader as social icon (structural interpretation). What we lack in some degree is the way that 'influence' is negotiated along that divide. We have a rich literature in leadership studies of people (leaders) exerting force or influence on other people (followers) and people exerting force on the physical environment (Burns, 1978; Northouse, 2004; Rost, 1993) using a host of theoretical perspectives. However, we lack an equally granular discussion for describing the influence of micro settings on the people living and working in those settings. The organizational and leadership literature on attribution of causality in organizations suggests that macro settings (organizations and the larger environment) have a role in how human actors attribute leadership efficacy to organizational change (Meindl, Ehrlich, & Dukerich, 1985). However, behavior setting analysis focuses on a smaller unit of analysis and a more distilled interpretation of leadership (i.e., influence). This confusion may be partly responsible for what Pfeffer (1977) deemed the ambiguity of leadership. Behavior setting analysis can be a useful area for further study to continue the conversation about the romance of leadership as articulated by Meindl and others (Meindl & Ehrlich, 1987; Meindl et al.) and the lack of satisfying definitions of leadership in general.

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[3] An important aspect of this discussion not addressed here is the role of language and symbols in populating the environmental surround. Many, if not most, of the properties of behavior settings are produced by and through language. However, for the naïve inhabitant, these features are often assumed to be as real as the natural environment and are subsumed under the general rubrics of setting. Clearly, there is more work to do in articulating and working with the symbolic and linguistic properties of behavior settings. However, this is beyond the scope of this article.

Leadership and Directed Connections

The power or influence of relationships between people and their settings has been described by Barker (as cited in Schoggen, 1989) as "directed connections" (p. 176) that "may convey energy, information or order of events, and they may involve many kinds of phenomena: mechanical, physiological, electrical, perceptual, thermal, social, and so on" (p. 176).

For example, Barker (1968) described numerous permutations of influence between thing and medium (e.g., T imposes on M, T induces pattern in M, M communicates with T, etc.). These directed connections suggest patterns of influence that are familiar to us in interpreting organizational life or in leader–follower relationships. We can see the opportunity to structure our inquiry into the influence or leadership aspects of specific settings at a very granular level. So, for example, borrowing from this, we could begin to ask a number of interesting research questions: How does a particular setting determine or impose the molar behaviors of the setting inhabitants? Which parts of this directed connection or influence relationship is mediated by standing patterns in the setting or by direct intervention of a person? How can the authority systems, behavior setting autonomy, and the action patterns of Schoggen (1989) be utilized in framing research into behavior directly aimed at influencing others? More specifically, how do specific behavior settings transmit or communicate the maintenance and operations functions and influence inhabitants?

These questions suggest the possibility of framing research into leadership behavior that both takes into account the complexity of settings (the structure and form of our environments) but also holds central our commitments to agency, to the ideas of democracy, freedom, and the dignity of the human person. To do this, we may have to reframe some of our most basic assumptions about motivation, purpose, and authority. The following examples reflect only the minimal criteria for leadership as influence but indicate that this type of thinking can be operationalized in many other types of settings.

Case Vignette

An environment rich with implications for behavior setting analysis is a medical resident training clinic. In this context, physicians, staff, and patients assume, resist, and let go of influence roles in an ongoing and complex fashion. However, all participants are immersed in a complex of relatively fixed standing patterns of behavior. Many tasks have to be done in a certain way and in a certain sequence with obvious directed connections. How participants negotiate these patterns is interesting. While one may imagine that physicians wield the greatest power and influence in the setting, we also see them conforming to the most mundane of practices. The following excerpts are taken from ethnographic field notes for a project in which the author participated (Smith, Morris, Francovich, Hill, & Gieselman, 2004). All names are pseudonyms.

> Dan (a resident or physician in training) comes back out of his clinic room, carrying the PAP smear tray. He addresses the nurses, "Where does this go?" Grace (a nurse) says, "Just put it in there (points to treatment room), and I'll take care of it." Dan says, "OK, I'll put it in the treatment room." As he comes out, he addresses Grace, "We should have them put a tray together with all this stuff in it." Grace, "Well, we do have one, but Mary (a physician's assistant) came and got it, and took it down the hall. I had no idea she'd be

doing that!" Dan returned to his clinic room, and came back out with more soiled equipment and put it in the treatment room.

In this example, we see the attention of both the nurse and the physician go to the missing tray that the physician did not know existed but wanted to invent. His on-the-fly innovation was stopped short by the nurse when she said, "Well, we do have one . . . ." In the course of his training, Dan will come to find that often the setting offers what he wants, but he has to learn to either look for it or ask for it. His ability to influence the environment ("We should have them put a tray together") is constrained ("Well, we do have one . . ."). There is a complex history of directed connections mediated and controlled by staff that appear to contravene the obvious hierarchy of the clinic.

In another vignette, we see how the physician's note embedded in the computerized patient record exerts itself on the participants in a typical patient interaction.

Rob (a physician's assistant) is reading the physician's note in the computer. "Let's see, she said in her last note to see you in 4-5 months. It's only been three. (Pause). But that's O.K. You see the vampire (the phlebotomist)?" Ted (a patient) says he did. Rob says, "Besides the blood pressure, is there anything else you want to talk about before I get into my agenda?" Ann (Ted's wife) says, "He still gets dizzy." Ted says, "It seems to be getting worse." Rob says, "It looks like she (the physician) did a lot of tests to check that out. You still wearing the stockings?" Ann says, "He did, but he didn't like them, so he quit. It seems like he's no worse with them off."

In this interaction, we see the physician's assistant going through a process that is spurred by reading the physician's note. Each prompt from the note results in a response from Rob and a statement. First, he okayed the timing of the visit. Then, he checked for compliance with the phlebotomist directive. When he gets to the blood pressure, the concern of both Ted and Ann over "getting dizzy" is handled by referring to the physician's doing "a lot of tests." Rob appeared to let the concern of the patients rest on the stability of the previous tests as managed by the physician. Then, they moved to the discussion of the stockings where Ann told Rob that Ted stopped wearing the stockings (against the physician's obvious order). In this small interaction, we see the ebb and flow of influence and autonomy alternating between the structure (the physician's computerized note and the standing patterns of behavior it rests on) and agency (the dynamic behavior of both Rob and Dan and Ann). Certainly, it would be an interesting project to observe and analyze interactions in the context of political, management, or military leadership situations according to behavior setting criteria. We might usefully distinguish structural from agentive leadership actions and thereby offer practitioners useful recommendations for both training and assessment based on sound theory and empirical observations.

For example, if it is possible to distinguish between influence relationships in organizations as setting generated or person generated, we might better craft leadership development programs. Being able to better understand what elements in the daily life of a setting are within your purview as a leader to influence and those that are not could be quite helpful. In the first vignette, it may have been helpful for the resident to know upon entering the residency program that he would encounter numerous situations where others of lesser status control key elements of the work. An example like this could be used in an orientation.

Another example might be related to a leader's perceived ineffectiveness in the face of noncompliant or resistant colleagues or employees. To understand that it is not *you* that is being

resisted or obstructed, but your efforts to alter an existing powerful influence structure may help both the confidence and the strategic thinking of the leader. This type of analysis could make strategic change initiatives more effective in better identifying important constraints to novel behaviors.

The major implication of using behavior setting theory as an adjunct to various leadership theories is that it may consistently link structural and agentive elements of leadership together. For example, the seemingly intangible characteristics of servant leadership or transformative leadership can be anchored in empirical settings. On the other hand, the more institutional theories related to various transactional approaches can be firmly tied to the psychologically molar behaviors of individuals. In all cases, research would include at a minimum some sort of behavior setting audit with accompanying behavioral observations. These connections could then be either applied or further interrogated depending on the study methodology.

Barker's (1968) ideas have offered a framework and methodology for opening up ordinary situations and tracing the dynamic interaction patterns that make up influence situations. His theory penetrates the agency/structure issue through the development of frameworks that are accessible to both language and the observation of molar behaviors in specific settings. The ecological unit suggests, for example, that motivation does not exist in the organism or in the environment but in the quasi-object of the behavior setting. The type of setting will suggest either the familiar or the strange. It will pull us into the performance of expected behavior or send us searching for something else, something missing, something new.

These ideas may serve as the basis for connecting the seemingly incommensurate frameworks of a realist ontology with the symbolic or semiotic ontologies of late modernism and postmodernism. Barker's (1968) behavior settings begin to develop a vocabulary that helps us with the paradox of language in a material world. The theory of behavior settings within the context of ecological psychology and Barker's eco-behavioral science may offer a fruitful avenue of inquiry for the emerging field of leadership studies.

About the Author

Chris Francovich, Ed.D. is chair and assistant professor in the doctoral program in leadership studies at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Wash. Dr. Francovich teaches courses in leadership and organizational theory, systemic organizational change, leadership and complexity, and the art and practice of dialogue. He is a senior researcher for the Northwest Regional Faculty Development Center in Boise, Idaho, researching learning and teaching in postgraduate medical education, and also works with the Reina Trust Building Institute of Stowe, Vt., researching the development of trust in organizations.
Email: francovich@gonzaga.edu

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