Our Future is in Our Minds and Hearts

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The title of this paper comes from a quote from Senator William Fulbright, sponsor of legislation that resulted in the American Fulbright Scholar program. The Fulbright Program is based upon a shared commitment by American leaders post World War II who believed everything possible should be done to prevent the horrific tragedy and destruction of that conflict [Fulbright, J.W. (1989, p. xi]. The purpose of the paper is to invite consideration by those who prepare future school leaders to seriously contemplate what future school leaders will need in order to successfully navigate what promises to be increasingly tumultuous conditions. School leaders of the future will need to be "aware of, and find ways of coping with new and often complexifying trends" (Gardner, 2011, p. 286). Future school leaders will need preparation that helps them develop their own minds to meet their futures.

Admiral Carlisle Trost, former chief of naval operations (who knows something about leadership) opined, "The first responsibility of a leader is to figure out what's going on…That is never easy to do because situations are rarely black or white, they are a pale shade of gray…they are seldom neatly packaged" (as cited in Bolman and Deal, p. 36, 2013). In the context of contemporary complexities of globalization, which includes widespread poverty, misuse of the environment and violent conflict, and so much more, societies at all levels need leaders who can think beyond current conditions to leadership that is grounded in moral principles or "behavior connected to something greater than ourselves that relates to human and social development" (Fullan, 2004). School leaders from around the world, including professors who prepare them, can benefit from developing greater capacities to successfully address the challenges of the future.

The purpose of this paper is to invite others who prepare future school leaders to seriously consider what future school leaders will need in order to successfully navigate what promises to be increasingly tumultuous conditions. School leaders of the future will need to be "aware of, and find ways of coping with new and often complexifying trends" (Gardner, 2011, p. 286). School leaders of the future will need vision grounded in firmly held ethical foundations (NELP standards, 2018).

The title of this paper comes from a quote from Senator William Fulbright (1905-1995), an American senator who represented Arkansas from 1945 til 1974. His comment refers to the Fulbright Scholar program that he sponsored which was created from a shared commitment by American leaders post World War II who believed everything possible should be done to prevent the horrific tragedy and destruction of that conflict. Fulbright said,

> Our future is not in the stars but in our own minds and hearts. Creative leadership and liberal education, which in fact go together, are the first requirements for a hopeful future for humankind. Fostering these--leadership, learning, and empathy between cultures--was and remains the purpose of the international scholarship program that I was privileged to sponsor in the U.S. Senate over forty years ago. It is a modest program with an immodest aim--the achievement in international affairs of a regime more civilized, rational and humane than the empty system of power of the past. I believed in that possibility when I began. I still do." [Fulbright, J.W. (1989*, p. xi*].

My interest in other cultures stems from many influences in my life, both early and recent. I have had the privilege and opportunity to represent my country twice through Fulbright Scholar grants in Ukraine (2012) and most recently in Lativa (spring 2018). I returned home both times with conflicting feelings of intense patriotic pride in my country and equally intense sense of discomfort that we as Americans should be doing more with the overwhelming advantages we receive over others to address issues both home and abroad.

The Latvian grant was a research (80%) teaching (20%) grant. My research project followed the International School Leaders Development Network (ISLDN) protocol to interview locally recognized social justice school leaders about their work. I interviewed three Latvian, 1 Lithuanian, and 1 Estonian school principal about their work. Each story was unique, but each person revealed powerful commitments to <u>all</u> their students. The transition from Soviet times to current day educational practices has not been simple. As one principal said, "We were totally isolated. We had no idea what the rest of the world was doing." Simane, personal communication, June 27, 2018). Principals who received glimpses of what education might be "post-Soviet" were left to deal with teachers and others who yearned for the comfort of "the way things used to be." The struggles have been and continue to be, significant. And yet each principal I talked to inspired and humbled me. They understood the contexts of their schools and worked within the formal laws and rules, but their

calling was to higher principles to serve <u>all</u> students. I can only hope that the graduates of our programs follow the same path.

The paper begins with the concept of globalization sharing wisdom from those who have considered global change and its effect upon humankind. From there I explain ways of thinking or habits of mind necessary to create a positive future for humankind. Finally I conclude with the invitation to all readers who prepare future school leaders to join in learning and acting intentionally in ways that demonstrate leadership, learning and empathy across all cultures and disciplines.

Three premises that may at first appear simplistic, but on deeper consideration, have profound implications provide the foundation for this paper. First, <u>how and what we think</u> affects our actions. What is meant by this assertion goes much deeper than simple positive thinking to include the nature of cognitive activity of all sorts. "Cognitive perspectives remind us that what administrators do depends on what they think – their overt behaviors are the result of covert thought processes" (Leithwood & Steinbach, 1995, p.7). Second, the <u>past is over</u>, which may seem obvious, but when considering appropriate actions into the future, those advocates who claim we need to go back to what worked in the past fail to comprehend what will be needed for the future. The degree, rate, and unpredictability of change in societies worldwide will continue and very likely increase for the foreseeable future. We study the past not to discover our destiny but to master it, to gains hints and perspectives and insights on how we can improve upon the performance of our ancestors" (Fulbright, 1989, p. 228). The third premise is that all societies will be dependent upon <u>leaders of social institutions</u>, including schools, or perhaps, especially schools, for wisdom and cognitive capacities to create and implement conditions that successfully navigate globalization. Fulbright referred to what he termed the nuclear age, which of course, humanity can never escape, when he said, "The nuclear age calls for a different kind of leadership- a leadership of intellect, judgment, tolerance, and rationality, a leadership committed to human values, to world peace, and to the improvement of the human condition" (p. 232).

Globalization

While the truth conveyed in Fulbright's quote about our futures being in our hearts and minds remains, the reality is also that the world has changed dramatically since the end of World War II. Fulbright spoke of a time post World War II of unprecedented societal upheaval. More than seventy years later, contemporary societies face new global trends—economic, cultural, technological, and environmental shifts that are part of a rapid and uneven wave of globalization. Interdependence across cultures, governments, and business calls for a generation of individuals who can engage in effective global problem solving and participate simultaneously in local, national, and global civic life. Preparing students to participate fully in today and tomorrow's world demands conscious development of global competence as " the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance" *(*Mansilla & Jackson, 2011, p. xiii).

Gardner (2008), the American psychologist who revolutionized thinking about human intelligence, identified four unprecedented trends of globalization: (1) movement of capital and other market instrument around the globe, (2) movement of human beings across borders, (3) movement of information across cyberspace to anyone with access to a computer, and (4) movement of popular cultures. Gardner speculates that human beings are engaged in what may be the "ultimate, all-encompassing episode of globalization." (p.16).

Gardner contends that education worldwide prepares students more for the world of the past than for the potential worlds of the future. He identifies important obstacles to global ways of

thinking (Gardner foreward in Mansilla & Jackson, 2011). First, the vast majority of educators and policymakers concerned with education have not thought about the implications of education on global terms, nor have educators engaged in the necessary preparation for effective action. The second point Gardner makes is that a lack of deep motivation exists, whether individually or on a societal level, to understand how innovative education differs from past practice. At most, innovations are tolerated as long as they lead to adequate performance on traditional measures. Assessments are almost all geared for classical subject matter and rarely offer the means to assess the flexible, cooperative thinking required for interdisciplinary thought. Finally, Gardner identifies what he terms a "pernicious" and deep distrust towards education, particularly in the United States. "Cosmopolitanism, internationalism, and globalism are often considered dangerous concepts or even "fighting words" (p. x). "What is needed more than ever is a laser-like focus on the kinds of human beings that we are raising and the kinds of societies—indeed, in a global era, the kind of world society— that we are fashioning" (p. xi).

Put another way, many educational and policy leaders are "stuck" in mindsets of the past that do little to allow for effective engagement for the future. Educators and policy makers engaged in school leadership preparation/development, should seriously consider ways to rethink the purpose and end product of future programs and delivery. Gardner poses a powerful question, "What kinds of school leaders do schools throughout the world need?" (as cited in Mansilla & Jackson, 2011, p. xi). The answer will require simultaneous local and global consideration of conditions likely to be faced by future school leaders.

Leaders by definition, see reality in ways that others, for whatever reason, do not. Looking specifically at performance and environment in top companies, Collins and Hansen (2011) conclude, "We cannot predict the future. But we can create it" (p.1). Collins and Hansen (2011) elaborate further,

> The best leaders we studied did not have visionary ability to predict the future. They observed what worked, figured out *why* it worked, and built upon proven foundations. They were not more risk taking, more bold, more visionary, and more creative than the comparisons. They were more disciplined, more empirical, and more (productively) paranoid (p.9).

As the world changes, leadership must also change. Flowers states, "In a world of global institutional networks, we face issues for which hierarchical leadership is inherently inadequate…. For networks of (shared) leadership to work with real awareness, many people will need to be deeply committed to cultivating their capacity to serve what's seeking to emerge" (Senge et al, 2004, p.186).

Friedman & Mandelbaum (2012) explain "the merger of globalization and the Information Technology (IT) revolution that coincided with the transition from the twentieth to the twenty-first century is changing everything- every job, every industry, every service, every hierarchical institution….this merger has raised the level of skill a person needs to obtain and retain any good job, while at the same time increasing the global competition for every one of those jobs" (p. 121). Their prediction is as relevant for schools, school leadership preparation/development, and universities as it is for other segments of society. Figuring out effects upon a particular profession, in this case school leadership preparation/development, require understanding the fundamental restructuring that is occurring in global economies, communication, the environment, and so on.

Apple (2011) explains education's role in internationalization this way:

> It has become ever more clear that education cannot be understood without recognizing that nearly all educational policies and practices are strongly influenced by an increasingly integrated international economy that is subject to severe crisis..... all of

these social and ideological dynamics and many more are now fundamentally restructuring what education does, how it is controlled, and who benefits from it throughout the world. (pp. 222-223)

Minds and Hearts for the Future

So what do school leaders who have "figured out what's going on" to use Trost's terminology, look like? Surely they have a hunch that American preoccupation with test scores and frantic searches for the next big silver bullet in the form of new initiatives does little if anything to prepare students for the future. Howard Gardner writes, " The world will not be saved by high test scores" (Gardner in Mansilla, V. & Jackson, A. (2011, p. xi), which seems only more obvious when stated so simply. School leaders needed by societies worldwide have figured this out. Knowing what not to do is a start, but certainly nothing more. "The organizations (and their leaders) that best adapt to change a changing world first and foremost know what should *not* change. They have a fixed anchor of guiding principles around which they can more easily change everything else. They know the difference between what is truly sacred and what is not, between what should never change and what should be always open for change, between what we stand for" and how we do things" (Collins in Hesselbein, 2002, p. xv).

Gardner (2008) identifies five minds or ways of thinking necessary to thrive in the future: (1) the Disciplined Mind, becoming an expert in an individual area of expertise – educational leadership is the discipline considered in this paper, (2) the Synthesizing Mind, the ability to put together different sources of information in ways that make sense to the synthesizer and others, (3) the Creative Mind, having capacity for new ideas and ways of doing, (4) the Respectful Mind which notes and appreciates differences between humans, and (5) the Ethical Mind which considers the nature of one's work and in the context of the needs and desires of society in which one lives. "With these 'minds,' as I refer to them, a person will be well equipped to deal with what is expected, as well as what cannot be anticipated. Without these minds, a person will be at the mercy or forces that he or she can't understand, much less control" (Gardner, *2008,* p.2).

Daniel Pink (2005) offers another framework on habits of mind necessary for the future. "We are moving from an economy and society built on the logical, linear, computer like capabilities of the Information Age to an economy and a society built on the inventive, empathic, big-picture capabilities of what's rising in its place, the Conceptual Age" (p. 2). Pink organizes his ideas into what he calls the six senses: (1) design, meaning that creations must go beyond function to be beautiful, whimsical, or emotionally engaging, (2) story, explaining that the essence of persuasion, communication, and self-understanding is embraced in the ability to fashion a compelling narrative, (3) symphony, seeing the big picture, crossing boundaries, and being able to combine disparate pieces into an arresting new whole, (4) empathy, understanding what makes others tick, to forging relationships and care for others, (5) play, appreciating the benefits of laughter, games and humor, and (6) meaning, the human desires for purpose, transcendence, and spiritual fulfillment (p. 65-67).

While Gardner's "minds" and Pink's "senses" have some similarities (creative mind and design, synthesis and symphony, empathy and respect), there are aspects where one framework touches on concepts the other does not. A comparison of these two broad concept ideas for the future should begin with their backgrounds. Gardner born in 1943, the Hobbs Professor of Cognition and Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, is the developmental psychologist who is most well known for his groundbreaking work on multiple intelligences. Pink born in 1964, graduated from law school at Yale, but then decided not to practice law. Pink worked in several

positions in politics and economic policy. Each author's ideas must be considered in the context of their professional training and also their age. Both are prolific authors, but of course, Gardner has 19 years' head start on Pink. Both frameworks have merit and expand upon Fulbright's contention that our future is in our hearts and minds. In a comparison of their books, <u>Five New Minds for the Future</u> and <u>A Whole New Mind</u>, Rao (2007) concludes that both authors think with complex concepts, employ conceptual metaphor and narratives. Gardner is more comfortable with taxonomies and he has a knack for rules and aphorisms. Gardner has an instinct for theories and meta-theories. Rao gives Pink more credit for evolved aesthetic sensibilities and design instincts. Gardner writes to influence policy (Sawyer, 2008) and Pink's audience is aimed at business (Conrad, 2008). Each enriches understanding of how leaders can expand repertoires of thinking.

Returning to Fulbright's original contention that our future lies within our minds and hearts, Gardner and Pink both address relationships that can be applied globally. Gardner's Respectful and Ethical Minds and Pink's sense of empathy capture leadership qualities of the heart necessary for the future. Noddings (2005) terms a <u>global citizen</u> as one "who can live and work effectively anywhere in the world. A global way of life would both describe and support the functioning of global citizenship" (p. 2-3). Mansilla and Jackson (2011) define <u>global competence</u> as "the capacity and disposition to understand and act on issues of global significance" (p. xii). Global citizens display affection, respect, care, curiosity, and concern with the well being of <u>all</u> human kind (McIntosh, 2005). Each attribute (affection, respect, care, curiosity, and concern) relates to the other concepts. Leaders who display respect develop capacities to understand human tendencies to identify with and value members of their own group while simultaneously accepting and living with differences, and most importantly valuing those from other socio-economic, racial, ethnic, groups (Gardner, 2008). Leaders for the future recognize that respect is not passive (Issacs, 1999) and caring is being in relation with others, not a set of specific behaviors (Noddings, 1992). Goleman, Boyatzis &McKee (2004) describe leaders with empathy as capable of attuning to a wide range of emotional signals, allowing them to sense the emotions of a person or group. Such leaders listen attentively in order to grasp the perspectives of others. Empathy enables leaders to get along well with people of diverse backgrounds and cultures.

Universal well-being, or progress towards it, includes the elimination of poverty, concern for the environment, and world peace (Noddings, 2005). Other conceptions of global competency include the ability to work effectively in international settings; awareness and adaptability to diverse cultures, perceptions, and approaches; familiarity with the major currents of global change and the issues they raise; and capacity for effective communication across cultural and linguistic boundaries (Brustein, 2007). School leaders need to grasp the importance of creating learning cultures designed to help students understand the worldwide circulation of ideas, products, fashions, media, ideologies, and human beings on a much deeper level than is currently included in most curriculums worldwide. These phenomena are real, powerful, and ubiquitous. School leaders coming up through the ranks today need preparation to tackle a range of pervasive problems from human conflict, climate change, poverty, the spread of disease, and the control of nuclear energy (Altbach & Knight, 2007).

In order to think and act differently, individuals and societies must come to grips with the attitudes, perceptions, and cultures that may inhibit learning. Hunter, White, & Godbey (2007) caution that while there may be some similarities in the definitions or conceptions of global competence, there is limited commonality and, in almost all cases, these definitions are American derived. Walker, Bridges, & Chan, 1996 (as cited in Crow et al., 2010) contend that preparation and development of educational leaders be constructed and delivered within knowledge and

understanding that embrace both local and global considerations. Americans in general are not as familiar with other cultures and so have a need to intentionally develop more globally focused perspectives. College-bound students in other countries know far more about the wider world, including the United States, than American students. Stearns (2009) commented, "Our parochial gap is not only striking, but dangerous, depriving us (Americans) of the knowledge we should have to operate effectively" (p. 9). Americans may tend to assume other professionals eagerly await opportunities to learn from our practices, when indeed, that may not be the case. Americans who are open to learning practices from other cultures will in many cases gain far more knowledge and understanding than they impart.

All school leaders including those who prepare them in graduate school must become more fully aware of the need to develop capacities of understanding and acting in ways that value and respect other cultures and societies. This is as true for the school leader of an isolated rural homogeneous school community in any country as it is for a school whose students represent languages and cultures from around the world. The school leader whose heart looks into the future will cultivate the practice of developing capacities within themselves as well as others, for respect for difference and in particular for those who hold opposite points of view (Gardner, 2008; Gardner, Csikszentmihalyi, Damon, 2002; Issacs, 1999; Noddings, 2005).

There is no corollary of Gardner's Disciplined Mind in Pink's senses. Gardner's Creative Mind and Pink's Design Sense overlap as do Gardner's Synthesizing Mind and Pink's Symphony Sense. One clear distinction between the Information Age of the past (when knowledge workers employed information in specialized ways) and the Conceptual Age (where creators and empathizers' distinctive ability is to recognize patterns and seek meaning) (Pink, 2005, p. 49) is the necessity to shift from discrete bodies of knowledge or information to capacities that organize, prioritize, create, and empathize. "Today facts are ubiquitous, nearly free, and available at the speed of light" (Pink, 2005, p.102).

Gardner's Disciplined Mind involves the cultivation, over time (at least ten years) of a distinctive way of thinking in line with a scholarly field or professional realm. For instance, a physicist not only knows and understands physical properties, but also comes to see the world and behave in a way that reflects the guiding principles of this science. While development of a Disciplined Mind requires diligence and perseverance that results in steady improvement over time, Gardner's definition extends beyond this idea of a dedicated work ethic to include an actual framework, or lens, through which a scholar and/or professional approaches decision-making and problem-solving.

A Disciplined Mind is necessary to effectively improve and innovate in any field. Gardner (2008) argues that the pool of expertise that becomes accessible through a collective cultivation of a Disciplined Mind will be necessary to meet challenges that are currently unforeseen. A Disciplined Mind holds the capacity to generate new information, both by delving deeper into a given area of research and by making horizontal connections between other fields of thought in ways that first requires advanced knowledge and skill in one's field of focus. Shifting into Gardner's description of the Ethical Mind, which he along with his colleagues, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and William Damon, term the Good Worker, one whose work incorporates excellence in the technical sense, engaging, and ethical in that it serves the greater good, even or perhaps especially when decisions go against the immediate best interests of the worker (Gardner, Csikszentmihaly & Damon, 2002).

The cultivation of a Disciplined Mind requires investment of the time and attention necessary to develop this depth of knowledge and experience. Developed over a lifetime, a Disciplined Mind

continues to learn by both deepening knowledge and expanding toward interdisciplinary treatment of real-life applications. Falling short of a Disciplined Mind is one that mechanically follows the rules of his/her field without the wisdom to discern possibilities for change, creativity, or an amended approach. Likewise, the acquisition of knowledge and skills in one's field, but inability to apply this expertise in complex problem-solving that spans multiple disciplines, falls short of the Disciplined Mind as described by Gardner (2000, 2008). In the specific case of school leadership, "Pedagogically centered leadership is a performance based requirement that clearly communicates to the education profession, business community, parents, and professors of educational leadership that leadership requires a fundamental understanding and knowledge of teaching and learning" (English, Papa, Mullen & Creighton, 2012, p. 15).

Gardner's Synthesizing Mind and Pink's Symphony Sense bring us to consideration of the next way of thinking. While there are differences in the two authors' conceptions, Pink (2005) captures them both, "Symphony, as I call this aptitude, is the ability to put together the pieces. It is the capacity to synthesize rather than to analyze; to see relationships between seemingly unrelated fields; to detect broad patterns rather than to deliver specific answers; and to invent something new by combining elements nobody else thought to pair" (p.130). Gardner's definition is more succinct "The ability to knot together information from disparate sources into a coherent whole" (p. 46).

Gardner (2008), in explaining the Synthesizing Mind, crosses over into Pink's Storytelling Sense, when he states "Those individuals who can generate several representations of the same idea or concept are far more likely to come up with potent syntheses than those who are limited to a single, often attenuated representation of that idea" (p. 69). "We live in a time where our most talented minds know more and more about increasingly narrow spheres" (Gardner, p. 74). Pink (2005) explains, "Stories are easier to remember- because in many ways, stories are *how* we remember" (p.101). The critical capacity is to place facts in context and to deliver them with emotional impact (Pink, 2005).

Creativity is highly valued in the Conceptual Age. Both Gardner (2008) and Pink (2005) address these capacities, although Gardner sets creativity apart from his other minds while creativity is more of a thread throughout Pink's (2005) Design, Symphony, and to some extent Play Senses. Miahly Csikszentmihalyi (1997), the psychologist who termed the state of being he called "flow," a state of consciousness when "what we feel, what we wish, and what we think are in harmony" (p. 29). Creativity, according to Csikszentmihalyi (1996) is never simply the accomplishment of an individual, or even a small group.

Gardner and Pink provide valuable insights into how effective leaders of the future can conceptualize their own thinking and ways of approaching their work. Neither is absolutely correct for future school leaders but the comparison between them offers glimpses of consideration beyond even the most recent batch of standards (NELP, 2018).

Conclusions

Returning to quotations about leadership, let's consider the implications of ways of thinking related to educational leaders. Admiral Trost stated, " The first responsibility of a leader is to figure out what's going on…", Gardner asked, "What kinds of school leaders do schools throughout the world need?" and Fulbright entreated cultures to join in learning and acting intentionally in ways that demonstrate leadership, learning and empathy across all cultures and disciplines. (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 36; Gardner in Mansilla & Jackson,2011, p. xi; Fulbright, 1989*, p. xi*).

Responding to Admiral Trost's statement about the first responsibility of a leader to figure out what is going on, as societies worldwide shift from the Information Age to the Conceptual Age, educational leaders must consider the extent to which we are preparing students for a world that no longer exists. Traditional subject matter, delivered in familiar ways will not prepare today's students for the futures ahead for them. The reality is that education around the world is solidly bureaucratic and resistant to change. In the United States and elsewhere, the political process will continue to impose trends in the form of initiatives and reforms. That's what's going on.

Gardner asked societies to seriously consider what kinds of leaders are needed to navigate existing conditions. School leaders prepared for the future, which is already upon us, consciously expand their abilities as global citizens to develop capacities of understanding and acting in ways that value and respect other cultures and societies. They are masters of their discipline (teaching and learning) and continue to learn by both deepening knowledge and expanding toward interdisciplinary treatment of real-life applications. School leaders prepared for the Conceptual Age are creators and empathizers' whose distinctive ability is to recognize patterns and seek meaning and understand the necessity to shift from discrete bodies of knowledge or information to capacities that organize, prioritize, create, and empathize (Gardner, 2008; Pink, 2005).

After the global tragedies of World War II, Fulbright was looking into the future in hopes of preventing the horrors of the recent past when he talked about "creative leadership and liberal education" as "the first requirements for a hopeful future for humankind." His concept of leadership, learning, and empathy between cultures seems fitting. Fulbright is as correct in 2019 as he was in 1948. All societies need leaders focused on preparing others in their corners of the world to create hopeful futures for mankind.

How we think makes all the difference. Educators whose minds and hearts are focused ahead can anticipate that effective schools for the future will abandon preoccupation with test scores that purport to improve schools, but actually measure classical subject matter. Effective or innovative schools of the future will turn instead to focus on the flexible, interdisciplinary thinking that global societies so desperately need. At a very basic level, then it is incumbent upon American school leadership preparation faculty to understand in different ways what is going on in rapidly changing environments. We can choose to wait for the next round of standards and mandates or we can decide to figure out how future school leaders need to think in order to more adequately prepare future school leaders for the roles they will accept upon completing our programs. The choice lies before us.

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