New Directions in Leadership Studies: Exploring The Critical Turn

In 2015 the International Studying Leadership Conference returns to Lancaster University Management School. Having hosted the Conference in 2003 & 2005, as well as having launched the Leadership journal in 2005, Lancaster provides an ideal setting for debates and discussions about important new directions for leadership and leadership development.

Within the burgeoning literature on leadership, there is an increasing recognition that mainstream leader-centred assumptions, functionalist theories and positivist methodologies carry significant limitations. Yet, there is much less agreement about what an alternative approach to studying, teaching, developing and enacting leadership might look like. This major international conference provides a timely opportunity for participants to explore the potential of the diverse but increasingly influential perspectives that have come to be known as ‘critical leadership studies’.

Paper submissions are particularly encouraged that address the significance of critical approaches for the wider domain of leadership studies, identifying their main contours, and indicating emerging challenges. The conference organisers welcome conceptual and empirical contributions that draw on critical frameworks to examine key global leadership issues from power, identity and inequality, to emotions, resistance and conformity. The aim of the conference is to encourage a re-thinking of leadership studies from a more global and critical perspective and to interrogate what ‘being critical’ might mean for contemporary theory and practice.

This might also involve using alternative ontologies and epistemologies. In line with the Leadership journal’s policy of inclusivity, papers exploring alternative new directions are also welcomed.

In the first instance abstracts (maximum 1000 words) should be submitted by September 1st, 2015. A conference website and dedicated email address will be created early in 2015. It is envisaged that at least one special issue will be published in Leadership comprising papers delivered at the Lancaster conference. Anyone wishing to discuss a possible submission should contact Professor David Collinson (d.collinson@lancaster.ac.uk).

Keynote Speakers so far:
- Professor David Collinson, Chair of Leadership & Organisation, Lancaster University Management School.
- Professor Alison Pullen, Chair of Management and Organization Studies, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia.
- Professor Mark Stein, Chair of Leadership and Management, The University of Leicester School of Management.
- Professor Dennis Tourish, Chair of Leadership and Organization Studies, Royal Holloway, University of London.
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