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Control in Organizational Life: The Contribution of Mary Parker Follett¹

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Mary Parker Follett's contribution to the conceptual management literature on control in organizations is examined. It is argued that her contribution to management thought has been somewhat neglected by subsequent writers and commentators. From the concepts that she explored, two models of control—behavioral and holistic—are constructed. The extent to which they reflect Follett's own life and philosophy also is considered. It is argued that her concepts of control anticipated behavioral and systems concepts of the 1960s and 1970s.

Mary Parker Follett (1868-1933) was a woman of many attributes whose contribution to the management literature has not always been accorded the recognition it deserves, particularly in view of her anticipation of more recent developments in management thought. As George has succinctly put it, she “was, in effect, a prophet in the management wilderness” (1972, p. 139). In the 1920s and 1930s, the theories of Frederick Taylor (1916, 1947a, 1947b), first published during the years 1903 and 1911, and Henri Fayol (1937, 1949), first published in the years 1916 and 1923, were gaining considerable attention and credence from businessmen (and the public). Taylor's work attracted attention on both sides of the Atlantic; Fayol's ideas attracted business and public attention initially in France and Europe. Fayol's work was first translated into English by the International Management Institute in Geneva in 1929, but his work was virtually ignored in the United States until it was published there in 1949 (George, 1968; Urwick & Brech, 1945/1951/1955). Follett's speeches and writings on administration, also appearing in the 1920s and 1930s, exhibited markedly different views and were heard by a much more restricted audience. This paper contends that she was an important pioneer of management thought who diverged from the classical management tradition

and anticipated conceptual developments in management thought on control in organizations—ideas that did not gather momentum until the 1960s and 1970s.

Although Follett (1937, 1973b) did present two papers directly on control (in 1927 and in 1932, respectively), the analysis of her conceptualization of control presented in this paper draws from a wider range of her writing between 1925 and 1932 as well as books published by her in 1918 and 1924. This broader scope of enquiry offers a deeper insight into the behavioral and holistic dimensions of her thinking on control. This paper constructs two control models based on the concepts that she expounded and points to their interrelatedness as indicated by Follett's own concern to consider control as an integrated whole in itself. The prescience of Follett's conceptual approach to control is acknowledged, with the argument that it predated behavioral and systems approaches to control in the management literature by several decades.

A Biographical Sketch

Mary Parker Follett's models of control reflected her life's interests and philosophy. In 1868 she was born into an old New England family in Quincy, near Boston, Massachusetts. When receiving her secondary education at Thayer Academy in Braintree she was influenced towards idealistic philosophical thinking and the work of the philosopher Johann Fichte (who advocated a nationalist system in which the

¹The advice and critical comments of C. G. Peirson, Department of Accounting and Finance, M. C. Knowles, Department of Administrative Studies, and K. Trace, Department of Economic History, Monash University, are gratefully acknowledged.

freedom of the individual was a subordinate component of group will) (Wren, 1979) and by a teacher, Anna Boynton Thompson. Subsequently, in 1888, she enrolled in Harvard's Annex for women, Radcliffe College, and was influenced by Albert Bushnell Hart (historian and political scientist), who specialized in historical fact and political analysis. Follett's six years at Radcliffe were interrupted by one year's study at Newnham College, Cambridge (England), from 1890-1891, during which she read law, history, and political science and developed an abiding interest in English life and working conditions. Returning to the United States and graduating from Radcliffe in 1898, Follett then undertook postgraduate study in Paris. In 1900 she returned to Boston and began work with the poor and disadvantaged in Roxbury. She remained vitally active in the work of providing social, recreational, and educational facilities for communities into the early 1920s. Indeed, she came to be regarded as the founder of (evening) centers for extended community use in Boston schools. From that work she was appointed in 1912 to the first Placement Bureau Committee for vocational guidance and identification of job opportunities. In 1917 she was elected vice president of the National Community Center Association. She also was a member of the Massachusetts Minimum Wage Board and met regularly with representatives of employers and employees (Fox & Urwick, 1973; Metcalf & Urwick, 1941).

Throughout her life, Follett was an active writer and speaker. Her book, *The Speaker of the House of Representatives*, published in 1896, was developed primarily from her Radcliffe days. Her book, *The New State*, appeared in 1918 as a result of her community center work, and her subsequent book *Creative Experience* (1924/1951) reflected her experiences with employers and employees on the Placement Bureau and the Minimum Wages Board. As a result, she became recognized as a leading political scientist and a growing authority on business administration. This reputation she enhanced through her lectures at Metcalf's Bureau of Personnel Administration in the city of New York during the years 1925 to 1932 and through speeches at the Rowntree Lecture Conferences (Oxford) and at the National Institute of Industrial Psychology in the United Kingdom. From 1929 to 1933 she resided in England and studied English industrial conditions. Her

final lectures were given in January-February 1933 for the newly formed Department of Business Administration at the London School of Economics. On her return to the United States to attend to personal affairs, she died on December 18, 1933 (Fox & Urwick, 1973; Metcalf & Urwick, 1941).

Reflecting a Personal Philosophy

Follett's concepts of control clearly reflected her lifelong interests and philosophy. She is said to have been skilled at engaging in discussions with people from all walks of life and at all social and educational levels. She had an abiding interest in every individual's experiences and mentally absorbed them as cumulative case histories. She also read widely in philosophy, politics, jurisprudence, sociology, and psychology. This background provided ample foundation for her humanistic and holistic-based writing. Her enthusiasm for group-based control arose from her years of work with community groups at all levels in Roxbury, and it was first reflected in *The New State* (1918). In this book she advocated the replacement of hierarchical institutional and governing devices with a network of groups, and she appealed to those who were disenchanted with corruption and manipulation that was present in supposedly democratic frameworks. Follett's work at the Boston Placement Bureau and the Minimum Wages Board shifted her interest from political and social issues to industrial relations, particularly through her direct involvement with employer and employee representatives and through her visits to the Dennison Manufacturing Company in Massachusetts; Filene's department store in Boston; Rowntree and Co. Ltd., in York, England; and the League of Nations in Geneva (Fox & Urwick, 1973; Metcalf & Urwick, 1941). In these cases Follett observed the effects of enlightened personnel policies and coordination of international relations policies, so that what politicians were attempting to apply to the world (e.g., power sharing and democracy) in general, she sought to apply in a business context. Thus was spawned her concept of integrating opposing points of view for overall control of the whole situation, power-sharing control at the group and individual level, and control as being affected by the organization's environment.

Throughout her work Follett had been concerned more with philosophical and psychological foundations of management than with specific management

techniques (Metcalf & Urwick, 1941), turning away from the classical management model of control that relied to a great degree on hierarchical direction to advocate the cultivation of cooperation (Fox & Urwick, 1973). She constructed her theories (and in essence her control models) on the basis of her reading and social and business experiences and observations, but she was distinctly and deliberately normative in her approach. Yet much of her work has been confirmed subsequently by empirical studies of the 1960s and 1970s. From a psychological and holistic perspective she became dissatisfied with conventional means for resolving social issues (Fox & Urwick, 1973). She saw human relations as fundamental to the effective management of organizations (Metcalf & Urwick, 1941) and advocated a psychological approach to industrial problems (Follett, 1918). To her, matters of power, authority, and indeed control were psychological issues, critical to the search for a better ordered society and a fuller individual life (Metcalf & Urwick, 1941). To this end the motivations of individuals and groups were her focal point for organizational analysis. She believed that the individual should learn to exercise self-control (Metcalf & Urwick, 1941) but that such freedom and self-control must come through the activities of the group (Wren, 1979).

Mary Parker Follett was an important contributor to the management tradition. She was, arguably, one of the earliest management thinkers to break with the classical management school and to adopt alternative perspectives of organizational activity. She contributed to the founding of two schools of thought about organizations—the behavioral and holistic (later to become systems). Indeed, she anticipated their development by some considerable period of time. In addition, she was one of the first writers to perceive interrelationships between behavioral and holistic perspectives of organizational activity. In spite of this, Follett stands as one of the more neglected management thinkers of her day.

A Case of Neglect

The limited recognition paid to Follett in the management literature may be attributed partly to the difficulty that can be experienced in attempting to classify her work. She simply did not fit neatly into any one school of thought. Indeed she appears as somewhat of an enigma. Urwick and Brech (1945/1951/1955; 1946/1957) classified her as a member

of the scientific management school, and in some respects she exhibited such characteristics: she still attempted to derive principles of management; she attempted to depersonalize control (Child, 1969; Follett, 1941a; Wren, 1979); but for the most part, she did not belong. Subsequent commentators have concentrated on her psychological approach to management and have classified her as part of the human relations school (Child, 1969). As Wren has noted,

Chronologically, Follett belonged to the scientific management era; philosophically and intellectually, she was a member of the social man era (1979, p. 325).

The above efforts at classification have their difficulties. Follett was in part a scientific management writer, in part a behavioralist, and in part she anticipated systems theory. She stood apart from her time and anticipated much that was to come in the management literature on control.

Fox and Urwick (1973) also have suggested that attention may have been diverted from her “humanistic” work to the struggle for survival in the Great Depression. Metcalf and Urwick reported that in the United Kingdom “her teaching roused but little enthusiasm outside of a small circle” (1941, p. 17). In the 1930s, there was little discussion of personnel behavior in management circles; and, indeed, Follett was misinterpreted by some as suggesting a means of management manipulation of subordinates and as only proposing a management technique (Child, 1969). Child (1969) has argued that in the United Kingdom the late 1940s and 1950s witnessed a degree of renewed interest in Follett’s writings as the work of Mayo and the human relations movement attracted management attention. Nevertheless, she has remained as probably one of the most neglected of the major early management writers. This neglect would not be so significant except that many of her control concepts are consistent with the development in behavioral and systems concepts of control after 1960 (Krupp, 1961; Massie, 1965). It also is possible that with the comparatively recent acceptance of women in management in the United States and the United Kingdom, some writers may have ignored or discounted Follett’s contributions to management thought simply because of her sex. Even if her ideas were accepted, they may not necessarily have been attributed to her.

The 1960s saw a belated recognition of Follett’s contribution to management theory by some writers.

For instance, Krupp noted that:

Miss Follett reveals an organicism and harmony orientation that is still predominant in her more methodologically sophisticated and empirically grounded contemporaries (1961, pp. 75-76).

He contended that although Follett was normative (customary for her day) as compared with the generally positivistic approach of more recent, particularly behavioral, theorists, their final products were not very different. For instance, he argued that Follett, Chester Barnard, and Herbert Simon all shared a common perceptual framework in their treatment of organizations. He recognized Follett's concern with organizational processes and systems and defined her work as "rooted in organicism." Savitt (1962) acknowledged Follett's notion of (an organization's) "functional relating" that could create a unity with value beyond the mere addition of its parts. Out of this "dynamic management" concept he saw control appearing as a major aspect. Savitt considered that recent management thought was beginning to emphasize voluntary human action in the Follett mode, rather than coercive control.

Some further direct references to Follett's work appeared in the mid-1960s. Livingstone (1965) acknowledged Follett's "law of the situation" for taking orders from the requirements of the specific situation rather than simply from the organization's hierarchy of authority, and for expanding feedback beyond just a downward flow of information through the organizational hierarchy. Massie (1965) saw Follett's view of management as significantly different from the views of Fayol, Mooney, and Sheldon. Indeed, he too believed that her ideas had been the most neglected of any of the early management theorists. He saw Follett's orientation as having been primarily in the areas of psychology and sociology and her ideas as having been far ahead of her time.

Some arguments mounted by post-1960 management theorists indirectly reflected a Follett view without acknowledging the connection (possibly because the author was unaware of this). For instance, Litterer stated at the very outset of a chapter on control processes and systems that "the essence here is on directivity and integration of effort, required accomplishment of an end" (1965, p. 233). Even the terminology was reminiscent of Follett. McGregor advocated a systems-based "organic approach to control systems":

An organic system itself is a social invention developed out of an analysis of a particular situation, which itself

evolves out of the needs of individuals and subsystems affected by the data and gathered and transmitted to the relevant systems under conditions of trust and openness (1967, p. 131).

This again, for all intents and purposes, corresponded with Follett's "law of the situation," at least to a degree.

Modeling Follett's Behavioral View of Control

From Follett's writings on society and business administration, elements of a behavioral model of control clearly emerge. She recognized that in dealing with personnel the human and technical problems could never be completely separated and that an organization's standards must be allowed much more elasticity than Taylor's system had allowed (Follett, 1941b). Furthermore, Follett (1918) recognized that a worker was a complex person so that even at work one could still be a father, a mother, a citizen, a religious believer, an artisan, and a businessperson. Thus, one should not be dealt with solely as an employee but as a whole person with other interests, abilities, and persuasions. Unlike Taylor, who had focused on management's need to control the individual worker, Follett perceived the ability of groups of workers to control themselves.

In Follett's view, "Our political life is stagnating, capital and labor are virtually at war, the nations of Europe are at one another's throats because we have not yet learned how to live together" (1918, p. 3). The remedy she prescribed for politics, international order, and industry was group organization. This she saw as the method for self-government. The collective will was to evolve through the group process of members' acting and reacting, the interweaving of ideas, and reciprocity of action. Thus differences would be brought out and integrated into unity. Within the group the continuous exchange of ideas and views would provide the group with self-created ideals and norms, rather than individuals having norms imposed on them by outsiders (as in the Taylor system) (Follett, 1918). Furthermore, the strength of a group, in her view, did not rely on the strength of individual members, but on the strength of the bond between them (Follett, 1918).

From group processes, therefore, came Follett's concept of democracy (Follett, 1918) indeed, she argued that:

Collectively to discover and follow certain principles of action makes for *individual* freedom. Continuous

machinery for this purpose is an essential factor in the only kind of control we can contemplate (1941a, p. 304).

The Follett behavioral model of control therefore began with the group. The group constituted both its source and its object. This notion of group control was consistent with Follett's view of authority—responsibility and control in organization as being cumulative and pluralistic rather than resting ultimately and finally with an organization head (Follett, 1941c). Within this group context Follett elaborated even further on her notion of control: "Control might be defined as power exercised as means toward a specific end" (1941d, p. 99). She was quick to point out, however, that although the term "power" was often used to mean "power-over," it was possible to construct a concept of "power" as being "power-with." Thus power would become a jointly developed, coactive concept rather than a coercive concept (Follett, 1941d). Follett (1941d) argued that "power-over" could be reduced by:

- (a) integrating views and ideas of various organizational members
- (b) personnel submitting to the "law of the situation" rather than to each other
- (c) making the business a functional unit.

When control was defined as the exercising by groups and group members of power *with* one another, Follett (1924/1951) argued that "together we will control *ourselves*." The more power that a group (or individual) had over itself, the more able it was to join successfully with another group (or individual) in developing power within the new combined unit.

Through her recognition of group processes and her notion of a "power-with" concept, Follett had arrived at concepts of self-control and shared control. As a social process, self-control allowed the exercising of free will. The individual was not to be dominated by others because "A" did not control "B," nor did "B" control "A." Instead, they intermingled and exchanged views and ideas in a continuing social process in order to produce the collective thought and the collective will (Follett, 1918). The group-oriented process of shared self-control therefore constituted the major aspect of the Follett behavioral model of control. In addition to her sociological and psychological bases, Follett developed her notion of self-control through holistic theory.

Modelling Follett's Holistic View of Control

Rather than treating control as a static function, Follett chose to treat control as a dynamic continuous

process, which she called interweaving. In more general terms she saw executive decisions as a moment in a process (Follett, 1973a). Similarly, to her, an order or command was but "a step in a process, a moment in the movement of interweaving experience" (Follett, 1941c, p. 149). Control, then, was a process of continuous adjustment (Follett, 1937) and continuous coordination (Follett, 1937, 1973a). In concentrating on control as a process (Collis, 1949; Cruft, 1949; Krupp, 1961; Massie, 1965; Savitt, 1962) rather than as a function, Follett had anticipated the systems theory approach of dealing with connections and links between elements or functions rather than the traditional approach of focusing on only the elements or functions themselves.

Follett also anticipated the systems approach to control in her recognition of the importance of the environment to the management of organizations. Indeed Wren (1979) has noted her advocacy of recognizing the relationship of the firm to its environment of creditors, stockholders, customers, competitors, suppliers, and the community. This constituted a larger than traditional view of the firm and its environment. Consistent with the post-1960 open systems approach Follett argued:

Not only have self and environment acted and re-acted upon each other, but the action and re-action go on every moment: both self and environment are always in the making. The individual who has been affected by his environment acts on an environment which has been affected by individuals (1918, p. 98).

The individual, then, responded not to a static, rigid environment, but to a changing environment, which itself changed (in part) in response to the activity of the individual. Thus a process of mutual responses, continually being modified, was set in train (Follett, 1924/1951). These expositions further explain the nature of the control process in Follett's eyes. Control was not a static function or role, but was embodied in a continuous chain of actions, reactions, and interactions between individuals and groups and their environment. The process became a dynamic pattern of action response and mutual adjustment between parties. "Control" (or, indeed, "control-with") was available to all participants in that process.

The goal of Follett's dynamic control process was unity. She was concerned to integrate organizational activities into a whole, and she drew her notion of "wholeness" from Gestalt psychology. For her, bio-

logical, personal, and social development required the study of the whole or total situation and not merely its constituent parts (Follett, 1924/1951):

Philosophers, biologists and physiologists tell us that the essential nature of a unity is discovered not alone by a study of its separate elements, but also by observing how these elements interact (Follett, 1937, p. 163).

In emphasizing the need to integrate activities of the whole organization, Follett (1924/1951) directly referred to the biological study of organisms and the psychobiological study of whole personalities as her reference point. Under this approach the "whole" was more than just a sum of its parts, and therefore integration of opposing or differing ideas and activities were intended to achieve more than compromise. Compromise involved both parties "giving up" something and the continuance of an amended form of the "old" way. Integration allowed the contribution and "addition" of both parties' viewpoints and the embarking on a "new" way of operating (Follett, 1924/1951). For example, Follett (1973b) argued that those responsible for settling a dispute and achieving progress should try to include the values of both sides in order to gain a total value to the organization that would be greater than the value of the two sides added together. Thus she maintained that sacrifice was not a prerequisite for achieving unity. Instead, although she recognized that a departmental view had to be reconciled with all other points of view in the organization, she argued that it should not be abandoned. Through this approach Follett stressed the dynamic characteristic of both the organizational unity that she sought and of the integrating process designed to achieve it.

Most obviously, an organic whole has a spatial and temporal individuality of its own, and it is composed of parts each with its individuality yet which could not exist apart from the whole. An organism means unity, each one in his own place, everyone dependent upon everyone else.

Next, this unity, this interrelating of parts, is the essential characteristic. It is always in unstable equilibrium, always shifting, varying, and thereby changing the individual at every moment (Follett, 1918, pp. 75-76).

This focus on "the whole" in organizational analysis led Follett (1973b) to see the two fundamental problems of business management as:

1. defining the essential nature of the total situation
2. discovering how to pass from one total situation to another.

Both concerns reflected a holistic perspective in their

focus on the whole and on interrelationships among its constituent parts (Cruft, 1949). Unified activity, in Follett's (1973a) view depended not on the constituents alone but on their interrelatedness.

For Follett (1937), unity itself constituted control. To that end integration was intended to provide criteria and processes for conflict resolution, so that organizational unity could be achieved without the sacrifice of subunits' goals but through the self-regulation of organization members (Krupp, 1961; Wren, 1979). In her view, coordinated control was more than a mere addition of specific controls (Follett, 1973a). Although unity was "achieved control," in Follett's scheme of things integration was the method for securing it. Integration concentrated on the interrelationship of organizational parts. Follett (1937) explained, for example, that although prevailing credit conditions, customer demand, output facilities, and workers' attitudes constituted a given "situation," they did so, not just by their separate existence, but through their interrelatedness. A change in one factor could lead to a series of changes in the others. Therefore, effective control required "the co-functioning of organic inter-activities" (Follett, 1937, p. 130), the interweaving of controls (Follett, 1937, p. 129), and the enlistment of cooperation of the personnel involved. She concluded that coordination *provided* control, but interacting *was* control (Follett, 1973b).

It should be recognized that although decades later Burns and Stalker (1961) classified organizational systems as mechanistic or organic, Follett had already exhibited a marked organic orientation of her analysis. She envisaged control as being a horizontal rather than vertical process (Follett, 1941a; 1973a). Her idea of central control was that of coordinating the many controls through the organization (Follett, 1937) with control being exercised by cross-relations between department heads rather than vertically down the line through the chief executive. Krupp (1961) recognized her work as being "rooted in organicism" and Massie (1965), too, noted her definition of authority (and control) as being pluralistic rather than simply flowing down from the top of the organization.

Just as the Follett behavioral model of control incorporated self-control as one of its constituents, so the Follett holistic model of control also incorporated self-control. Because she had adopted the biologists' concept of the control system as an organism, she

accepted the need for self-direction and self-regulation that an organism had by virtue of the way in which its parts interacted (Follett, 1973a). Thus, for her, control became the *self-directing* power of a unity. From the biological perspective, she (Follett, 1973b) considered that every living process was subject to its own internal control and that social control was generated by the process of interaction itself. Because control arose from within this unifying process, she deduced that the greater the degree of integrated unity required in an organization, the more that self-control must predominate. This tendency for an organization, in its parts and as a whole, to move towards self-control implied for Follett (1937) some quite specific control strategies. Executives should join in a process of managing *with* their colleagues; a group of executives should self-adjust through direct contact; managers and workers should share in joint organizational control; and the aim of organizations should be collective self-control.

The Models Interrelated

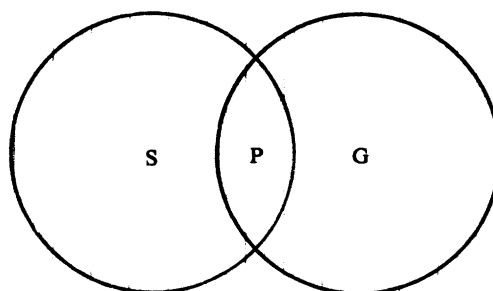
Consistent with her philosophy of focusing on interrelationships among parts of the whole, the behavioral and holistic models of control that can be constructed on the basis of Follett's conceptual work appear to have been interrelated to a considerable degree. The behavioral model, its component concepts, and their hypothesized relationships are outlined in Figure 1. Control was group-sponsored and group-oriented, with self-control (*S*) being exercised by individuals and by groups (*G*). The coordination of this spectrum of control loci was to be achieved through a power "with" or power-sharing control (*P*). It allowed for the recognition of the real dispersal of control throughout all levels of the organization, in contrast to the classical management's control model, which assumed that control was centralized at the top of the management hierarchy. The link between *G* and *S* resulted from Follett's perception that groups of workers could control their own activities. This link took place via *P*, because Follett argued that group members exercised control *with* one another (rather than *over* one another).

Similarly, the Follett holistic model of control has been constructed and is shown in Figure 2. Here, the organization is seen as consisting of innumerable cells (both group and individual) of self-control (*S*), which generate control not just through their own existence

but also through their interaction with each other (*I*) and through their interaction with the environment ($S \leftrightarrow E$). It is important to note that Figure 2 does not attempt to represent Follett's concept of unified control specifically (for instance, of the whole organization). Although conceivably it might be represented by the external boundaries of the *S* sets, Follett argued that total control of the whole entity was more than just the sum of its components.

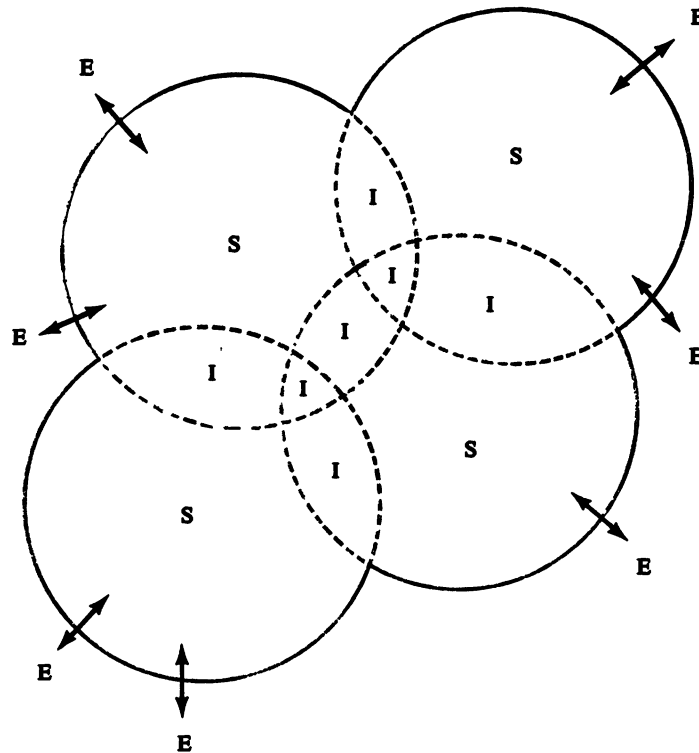
The two models represented in Figures 1 and 2 are interrelated in both appearance and source. Central to both is the concept of self-control (*S*) and the concept of interrelatedness or sharing (*P* and *I*). In addition, Follett (1924/1951) saw her ideas as springing from an eclectic source of politics, economics, sociology, law, biology, psychology, psychobiology, and philosophy. Although her focus on interrelationships and evolving situations anticipated a systems model of control to a large degree, she also related its origins to social psychology. Similarly, though power formed a key constituent of her behavioral model of control, she also viewed it in a holistic sense when she defined power as an organism. Thus Follett clearly saw her view of control as an integrated whole in itself, having been influenced by the combination of a variety of disciplines. However, for the purposes of this paper, it has been necessary to identify clearly the way in which she predated the subsequent development of *two* models of control in the management literature, behavioral control and systems control.

Figure 1
The Follett Behavioral Model of Control^a



^aS = self-control; P = power-sharing control; G = group control.

Figure 2
The Follett Holistic Model of Control^a



^a S = self-control; I = interactive/integrative control; E = environment.

Bridging Control Over Time

In moving out of step with her era, Mary Parker Follett effectively built a bridge between the classical management model of control and the later behavioral and systems models of control. Although her views shared some characteristics in common with her classical peers, much of her work represented a clear departure from the conventional wisdom of the period. As Cruft (1949) has observed, Follett did not attempt to create an authoritative doctrine to be interpreted rigidly. Indeed, she admitted that she and many of her colleagues were still trying to state the problem of control (Follett, 1973b). This flexible, open-ended approach to her conceptual formulation of control was in marked contrast to classical writers such as Fayol and Urwick, who were intent on producing a conception of control that could be defined simply and in terms of authoritative and rigid

principles. The bridge that Follett built spanned decades of control model development.

In advance of post-1960 behavioral concepts of control, she accepted the need for organisms to exercise self-control and hence advocated that executives should manage *with* their fellow workers, should be allowed to self-adjust, and that organizations should allow collective, self-control. In addition, she saw the organization as being pluralistic (rather than stressing authoritarian, hierarchical control) and stressed two-way feedback of information as well as both lateral and vertical coordination of controls. Finally, her argument that the unity could have a value greater than the sum of its parts in some respects covered ground that Tannenbaum (1964, 1968) and others would tackle later with respect to the distribution of control in an organization.

Follett anticipated a number of aspects of systems-based concepts of control articulated in the 1960s and

1970s. She recognized control as a continuous process rather than as a static function, and she emphasized her belief in focusing primarily on the operation of the whole system (e.g., the organization) rather than on its parts in isolation from one another. Furthermore, she stressed the interaction of individuals and groups with their environment (as open systems theory later also was to confirm).

On the strength of the available evidence, this paper argues that the number of common elements between her concepts of control and the concepts ap-

pearing in the 1960s and 1970s are too many and too significant to be dismissed as mere parallelism. Many of the control concepts normally identified with the post-1960 literature could justifiably be nominated as *reappearances* of Follett's conceptualizations. Her influence on the present-day concepts of control, both direct and indirect, acknowledged and ignored, conscious and unconscious, has been uncontestedly significant, and it rivals the longstanding influence of such giants as Taylor and Fayol.

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