

WOMEN TEACHERS AND DISCOURSES OF LEADERSHIP

A Case Study of Job Sharing

Marian Court

Education Department
Massey University
Palmerston North, New Zealand

Abstract

This paper draws on a case study of a team leadership initiative developed during 1991 when a group of three women set up the sharing of the senior teacher responsibilities in their intermediate school syndicate area. All the staff involved agreed that this way of working enabled the pooling and development of the teaching and management strengths of a group of teachers. For the women in particular, it provided effective personal and career development. Despite these gains, and the transformative potential of this style of leadership, the original team was broken up. This paper discusses some of the difficulties encountered as a result of 'interrupting' dominant leadership discourses within bureaucratic and gendered school structures and practices.

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INTRODUCTION

When their senior teacher gained promotion to another school, three women teachers in a

New Zealand intermediate school decided 'We don't want a leader - we want to share the leadership ourselves'. The women agreed that their initiative enabled them to pool their collective teaching and management strengths. Individually, it was a valuable personal and career development experience that built their knowledge, confidence and skills. However, they did not challenge their principal when he broke up their senior teacher team by shifting one of them to lead another syndicate, replacing her with a male teacher. Why, after having set up an innovative strategy which was successfully empowering them in their work, did the women allow this to happen? Why did their potentially transformative leadership initiative not survive?

It has been pointed out that "the reproduction of gendered dominance as a set of power relations is a significant phenomenon" in educational organisations (Griffiths, 1979, cited in Blackmore 1989:114). The hegemonic association made in society between authority and masculinity is "a significant underpinning of the power structure of a school system where most administrators, principals and subject heads are male" (Connell 1985:153). I am interested in studying how such gendered sets of power relations, constituted within wider social and political discourses, can manifest themselves in subtle ways that counter efforts to improve the position of women. In particular, I am interested in looking at how different theories (or stories) can "contribute to or inhibit justice for traditionally oppressed groups" (Capper 1992:106) - in this case, women teachers.

To do this it is necessary to examine particular contexts to discover how gendered power differences are being legitimized (Davies 1990). In this paper I draw on a case study of the shared leadership to explore how shifting, but persisting hegemonic links between authority, leadership and masculinity (Connell 1985, 1987; Shakeshaft 1987, Blackmore 1989) and nurturance, teaching and femininity (Grumet 1988, Bullough and Knowles 1991) can work to maintain the marginalising of women in the field of educational administration.

The paper is structured as follows. After an introductory discussion of some of the issues surrounding women and leadership, my 'storytelling' approach to analysing a particular set of experiences is explained. I then give some background information about the original study - my reasons for undertaking it, the school and staff who were involved, the methodology used for the research. The next section of the paper outlines how the shared leadership worked before it was split up. Then four different 'stories' about why the women's team initiative foundered are discussed. The paper concludes by placing these accounts within wider discourses about leadership, masculinity and femininity.

Women in Educational Administration

Although research in the business world has shown how women can be talented and innovative leaders (see for example, Helgeson 1989) their potential contribution to educational administration remains largely untapped. This is not only the case in New Zealand; it is so worldwide (Shakeshaft 1987, Sampson 1987, Neville 1988, Al Khalifa 1989, Davies 1990, Sadker, Sadker and Klein 1991).

There is a requirement in New Zealand legislation (State Sector Act Amendment 1989) and the school charters which were developed during the 1989 administrative reforms, for schools to produce equal employment opportunities policies and programmes that should aim (among other objectives) to facilitate the promotion of women in primary, intermediate and secondary schools. However, despite some raised awareness about the lack of women in positions of educational leadership, there has been little change in the representation of women in these positions (Slyfield 1991).

A common focus of past studies in this area was to ask why women didn't apply for positions of responsibility. It became clear that there was a need to shift from this stance which implies a blaming of the victim (Acker 1983), to research factors that

limit and/or prevent women's participation in leadership and decision making (Strober and Tyack 1980, Wheatley 1981, Stockhard and Johnson 1981, Whitcombe and Fenwick 1982, Shakeshaft 1987, Neville 1988). Increasingly it is being argued that the very definitions and practices of leadership itself must be analysed, with the question being 'How did the management that women don't participate in come to be conceived?' (Shakeshaft 1987, Blackmore 1989, Davies 1990, Coombes 1991).

Examining Discourses of Leadership

Significant work has already been done here. Jill Blackmore has developed a convincing analysis of the ways 'masculine' characteristics continue to be associated with school leadership. She traces the social and historical construction of this connection from the broad definitions of management as incorporating notions of efficiency, skill, hierarchy and control, back through trait theories of leadership to their bases in the discourses of classical liberalism and bureaucratic government. These discourses have reinforced the idea that a leader is a (male) autonomous individual who rationally plans and directs the organisation's functioning.

Administration in schools came to be conceived as a neutral practice carried out by experts in a scientific and rational manner and decision making seen as a rationale linear procedure, not a matter of values and subjective opinions (Blackmore 1989:112).

Analyses of the masculinist character of educational administration (Connell 1985, Shakeshaft 1987, Blackmore 1989) have pointed out that in educational contexts in Western societies, the links between authority and masculinity have been reinforced by a research focus on those already in leadership positions - white, middle class men (see for example, the influential studies by Wolcott 1973, Mintzberg 1979). One consequence of that focus was that for a long time the qualities of 'great men' of those times, qualities such as forcefulness, vision and self-confidence, became accepted as the qualities that 'make' a good

leader. This research

focus and theorising is one way that women have been marginalised in educational administration theory and practice, as those discursive qualities of leadership are not the qualities commonly defined as 'feminine', nor those associated with women and the work done by women.

Within the bureaucratic and hierarchical structuring of schools, leadership has also become equated with management control, creating a dilemma for all who would prefer to work in more participatory, collaborative teams. Women may be particularly disadvantaged here.

Elizabeth Al Khalifa maintains that many women teachers resist moving into school management because they are distancing themselves from what they see as "repugnant or dis-functional" management practices that put:

...an emphasis on control rather than negotiation and collaboration, and the pursuit of competition rather than shared problem solving... Such resistance is grounded in a positive valuation of their own 'femininity' and alternative perspectives on valued and effective behaviours in school management (Al Khalifa 1989: 89).

Other critiques of traditional theories and forms of educational leadership have been developed (see for example Smyth 1989, Brandt et al 1992), with some writers now calling for a shift in the focus of analysis away from 'leadership' to examination of ways of enhancing teachers' professionalism through increasing their control over their own work (Sergiovanni 1992). Indeed, Lynn Davies argues that instead of investigating styles of leadership, we should be asking, 'Why do we want to be led?'

It is unfortunate that the term 'leadership' is still retained for the work of 'helping', 'enabling' and 'working' ... 'leadership' has been a counterproductive blind alley for school organisation, and we would be better off without it. It will always imply an authority, a sole organizer whose claims to knowledge, expertise and

rightness are ultimately superior to anyone else's (Davies 1990:204).

Do we really need to jettison the concept of leadership? Or do we need rather to transform those traditional formulations? These are questions which will be explored in this paper, along with a related issue. Davies further argues that if women's participation and 'stake' in educational institutions is to be increased:

... we will probably need a far more flexible, rotational, non-pyramidal style of school administration than is normally the case. Such structures should not of course be decided by men in the interests of women; they must be generated by the thoughts and decisions of the women themselves (1990:78).

To what extent is it possible for women to generate, and then maintain, different structures within the persisting bureaucratic and hegemonic legitimising of male leadership and traditional leadership models in schools? To my mind, this question must be examined within research frameworks that analyse gendered power relations and shifting discourses of leadership.

As Connell has pointed out, power relations are not fixed or static.

Hegemony does not mean total cultural dominance, the obliteration of alternatives. It means ascendancy achieved within a balance of forces, that is, a state of play. Other patterns and groups are subordinated, not eliminated (Connell 1987:182).

In this paper I will focus on some particular 'states of play' in gender relations in a New Zealand school through discussions of the women's shared leadership initiative. Different 'stories' can be told about the establishment and splitting up of the women's team; through analysing these, I aim to illuminate how wider discourses of leadership and gender may be impacting on the marginalising of women in educational administration.

Analysing Through `Storytelling`.

I have developed this kind of critical approach out of my background in the study and teaching of literature and school administration, and my reading of life history approaches in educational research. Feminist post-structuralism has also contributed to my interest. Within that framework, in a recent article about non-traditional approaches in educational administration, Colleen Capper draws on Giroux (1991) and Witherell and Noddings (1991) to write:

Not to be confused with disrespect for scholarship, storytelling as a form of communication is a rich and valued tradition, especially in non-European cultures. It is especially useful here because stories convey multiple ways of giving meaning to the world, whether it is in the form of biographical narrative or in the form of "research" (1992:105).

In a sense, theories are stories about stories; they provide particular thematic frames for accounts of individuals' experiences, shaping these within `genres' that construct some aspects as having particular significance while other aspects are diminished. I have found it useful to think about different theoretical accounts in this way - each provides a `way of seeing' an episode or situation, a way of `telling the story', and some will be more helpful for building particular understandings than others. The four theoretical `stories' about the shared leadership and its demise that I have chosen to explore are ones that have interested me in my study of women and leadership: bureaucratic/managerial approaches, feminist perspectives that have posited sex role socialisation, the concept of hegemony and discourse analysis.

Before embarking on these analyses however, it is necessary to give some of the background to the case study and to describe how the shared leadership team worked and was split up.

A SUMMARY OF THE STUDY OF THE SHARED LEADERSHIP Job Sharing

I first became interested in job-sharing when I was investigating women's career development strategies, such as that of the 'internship' component of the ICES project run in the 1980s in Kansas. The internship placed women in administration positions for a year to gain new

experiences, to overcome system resistance to women in leadership positions and to provide the women with visibility. A personal and professional support component was a critical and vital part of the programme, from which eight of the thirteen interns gained administrative positions within one year (Strachan 1990:64). It seemed to me that job sharing a position of responsibility might be a useful way for women teachers to gain experience that would equip them for promotion.

More subversively perhaps, I wondered whether sharing a position of responsibility might also enable women to change hierarchical school structures in ways that could benefit all teachers, as well as facilitating the collaborative review and development of existing teaching and learning processes. In particular, job sharing positions of leadership seemed a step that a group of women could take towards breaking down the teaching/administration splits and hierarchies that have traditionally advantaged men over women in educational organisations.

When I found that three women were already working together in this way, sharing the senior teacher position in an intermediate school, I asked them whether I could research their initiative. They agreed to participate in a job share case study. An account of the New Zealand primary teachers' regulations about conditions of service which make the sharing of a position of responsibility possible is provided in the appendix.

The Case Study Methodology

Case studies can facilitate an examination of contradictions existing

within particular situations and events. Through examining a variety of sources of information, complexities within the interactions of factors, events and people can be identified for analysis (Nisbet and Watt 1984, Adelman, Jenkins and Kemmis 1984). In the original study, data was collected in several ways. I visited the school and observed the women in their classrooms. Various documents were examined - for example, the school syndicate's meeting minutes and planning sheets, the school's recent review report (Education Review Office 1991) and the New Zealand primary teachers' union collective contract and documents about job-sharing (NZEI 1991). The information from these documents supplemented the data from group and individual interviews with the seven staff involved.

The women senior teachers requested that they be interviewed as a group as this seemed the most appropriate way to discuss their team approach. Separate interviews were carried out with the other two teachers and the two principals who were involved in setting up the team leadership. It is worth noting that the women senior teachers' 'view from the inside' was reinforced by the other staff.

The semi-structured conversational interviews dealt with why and how the shared leadership was set up, what was valued in the team approach, the difficulties the staff encountered, and the recommendations they would make to others interested in trying their approach. As in another study of women in education (Court 1989) I analysed the interviews in a 'grounded theory' approach (Glaser and Straus 1967), adapting a method of colour coding the emergent themes (Middleton 1988a). My interpretations of the participants' descriptions and perceptions were checked by sending drafts of the report to them for comment. A few details were corrected as a result of this process.

The final report (Court, forthcoming) gives an account of why and how the shared leadership was set up, what the participants considered to be the advantages and

difficulties in this way of working and their recommendations to others wishing to try such a strategy. The next section of this paper summarises sections from that report to provide the context for the later analyses.

The school

The school in which the shared leadership was developed was a state intermediate organised into syndicate areas, each with four or five classes housed in separate classroom blocks. A recent Education Review Office report noted that: Area meetings are held weekly to discuss student and programme progress, area school policy, syllabus and resource use. Senior staff meetings are held and provide a forum to develop ideas discussed by areas, accept and action ideas from area meetings and share strategies for improving school management... Cooperative planning within "areas" allows teachers to develop a collegial, cooperative model of organisation (p.10) Some writers feel that this collegiality is enhanced by intermediate schools' "small range of classes (which) encourage a greater number of teachers to share their good ideas and best practice" (Stewart, 1991:20).

The school culture was in these ways conducive to establishing a shared leadership.

The Staff

At the time of this study, five staff were teaching in syndicate Area Y. The three women who developed the shared leadership, Cathy Mason, Helen King and Jennifer Austin (all the names used in the case study are pseudonyms), were in their mid thirties and forties. Each had six to eight years of full-time teaching experience and had taken time out for raising a family. During the 'break' stage of her career, Jennifer had trained as a playcentre supervisor, while Cathy and Helen had worked in responsible positions in business with their partners. Cathy had also been a teaching principal (G1) of a sole charge school.

Mary Watson, who taught the 'straight' form one class (the other four classes were composite form one and two), was nearing retirement. Philip Brown (also in his 30s)

had newly arrived
at the school at the beginning of the year having come from a position as
principal of a small
two teacher school.

Jim Carter, the principal who agreed to the women sharing the leadership,
left the school at
the end of 1990 and Barry Hall, who was previously the deputy principal and
acting principal,
was appointed in his place.

What was the catalyst for the job sharing initiative?

Cathy, Helen and Jennifer thought that several factors were important.
When they returned

to full time teaching after time out to raise their families, each had felt
some loss of
confidence in her ability to do the job (a factor found in other studies -
see Court 1989). I
was still needing lots of input - direction and ideas, Jennifer commented
and Helen said, If
you went to one of the others and said, 'I can't handle this', you didn't
feel you were going
to be put down. Jennifer and Cathy were 100% supportive. So they dropped
in and out of
each other's rooms to observe one another and to talk about their work. A
team teaching
approach developed: they met to plan their units, resources and teaching
strategies were
shared and they supported one another in their classroom management and
discipline as well
as covering for one another, for example at a meeting, if one had a sick
child and had to go
home early. They discovered they had shared philosophies and values -
about children,
learning environments, teaching practices and ways of developing positive
and constructive
discipline. Their team teaching approach provided them with many
opportunities to pool and
develop their individual strengths.

However, when the senior teacher position became vacant in their syndicate,
although their
principal, Jim Carter, suggested to each of the women individually that she
should apply, none
of them felt confident enough to do so. This was despite their previous
experiences in
responsible positions. They recognised each others' strengths though, and

they came to realise that they could apply the same principle to the senior teacher position as they were applying in their teaching: they could work together, drawing on their collective strengths. It wouldn't have happened if we hadn't had an A1 working relationship before the senior teacher opportunity came along, said Jennifer.

When they told the principal they wanted to share the position, it was decided that the women would split the senior teacher allowance between them. They were made acting or relieving senior teachers until the position could be advertised. (At that stage they intended to apply together if the sharing worked out well).

How did the shared leadership work? What were the advantages?

From its spontaneous inception, this job share 'model' developed fairly informally, with the women building on the cooperative base they had already established. Although no specific job descriptions were formulated for the shared position, there was general agreement with Barry Hall's statement that the senior teacher role entailed a responsibility for ...instructional leadership, not only in academic things, but also in the administration of the area and in providing counselling skills. Senior teachers play a very vital role here - they are the cogs.

Previous studies have found that women educational leaders place instructional leadership high on their priorities (Shakeshaft 1987, Neville 1988, Court 1992). These women certainly stressed instructional aspects of their responsibilities, working as instructional leaders through a widening of their team teaching approach. They drew Philip into their team planning and trialling of programmes and they involved Mary as fully as she would allow. Mary was a fairly independent person, preferring to get on with her teaching in her own way most of the time. There was a mutual respect between these teachers though, and the recognition of a need to compromise. The senior teachers realised that a formalised programme was important for Mary - once maths time was slotted in, you didn't interfere with that - and Mary ensured

that her class joined in the area activities such as the folk dancing and the poetry festival.

It was the perception of all those I interviewed that the learning environments for children improved. How much of this was due to the skills of individual teachers (the principals said they were all strong teachers) and how much to the team leadership approach could not be verified within the limits of this study. However, the teachers said that as a result of the increased sharing of ideas and strengths, they were able to incorporate a wider range of resources and teaching and learning techniques into their programmes and into the activities they arranged for the whole syndicate area. Because of consensus decisions and cooperative planning sessions they said there was also an increased unity in the area. Barry Hall said that the children saw this and the teachers' sharing of the leadership responsibilities. He thought that This consensus and continuity must add to the children's security.

All those I interviewed said that there are many advantages in sharing positions of responsibility, for both the children in their area and for the teachers. The 'helping and enabling' aspects of leadership advocated by Davies (1990) can be seen in the staff's comments. Barry Hall thought the team leadership had provided excellent support and professional development for the teachers: The team work brings people together. They share their problems, their highs and their lows. Sharing of responsibility means a leader doesn't have to take it all on board - and there is less stress in a job where there are a lot of demands. Cathy said, The beauty of the shared thing was when a particular responsibility became too much I said, Hey - I need help here. In Philip's words, You learn from your mistakes when you can discuss it. It's much better than being on your own and thinking, gee, I've got this problem again - how am I going to deal with it? Helen said: We didn't get stale. I had to keep on my toes to keep up with you two! During the interviews she said to Jennifer, I admired your organisational skills, and I can remember leaning

my nose up
against Cathy's window and thinking, how does she relate so well to the
kids? How does she
create that totally caring atmosphere? I needed those skills. And Cathy
replied to Helen,
It was like an energy source to me, you coming back. You are so
enthusiastic - and you sort
of initiated things. We'd all be talking about it, and you'd be handing
things out! As they
compared and shared their ideas and resources, they were energised and they
fed their ideas
into each other's class programmes.

Cathy stated that: There was no power play between us, no competitiveness.
This was not
strictly true. There was a certain amount of competition; but their main
aim was to build
group cohesion to achieve their shared goal of improving the learning
environment for
children. We wanted the kids, our syndicate and the school to go ahead,
said Helen. This
view echoes that expressed by the women in an earlier study of women's
management
philosophies: affiliation with others was emphasised for the benefit of the
group as a whole
(Court 1991, 1992).

The group wanted their area meetings to be forums where each teacher was an
equal and all
ideas were listened to with respect. They stressed the building of
consensus through
discussion and shared decision making. Barry Hall said that he was
impressed with their
ability to communicate with one another. He described their decision
making as:

...more like the Japanese systemThe Japanese system employs principles
originally developed by Mary Parker Follett.
Her contribution is commented upon on page 13.. They seem to sit down and
discuss an issue until

they come to a situation where everybody feels comfortable with it.
Everybody has
their say and they all have different ideas, but they come to a compromise
very well.
That's because of the way they work together. Everyone who says anything
is valued
for what they say. I suppose there is a lot of respect. There's also a
lot of laughter,
and a lot of work gets done.

I was interested to know how the women had shared the administrative work inherent in the senior teacher responsibilities. They said that early on they had held a meeting to divide those tasks up. But by August when I talked with them, they had difficulty remembering how they had originally split the tasks. In practice, they were able to share most of this work. Cathy said: You did what you felt comfortable with. Jennifer added, As managers, our jobs overlap and as needs arise and depending on the situation, we swap roles. We'd wait to see who could go to senior staff meeting for example - and now two go to those meetings. (This representation at the senior decision making body became one of the difficulties for the group, as will be discussed later).

How did the strategy help the women?

Cathy, Helen and Jennifer described particular dimensions of support that benefitted them both personally and professionally.

* Dual home and school responsibilities can act to keep women from applying for positions that they see as increasing their responsibilities and workload. Being able to undertake some, but not carry all the senior teacher responsibilities provided the women in this study with a welcomed and manageable challenge and opportunity to extend their skills, careers and future choices.

* The women developed confidence in their own ability and ways of working in a management position. They found out that they 'could do it', they could do it their way, and that working as senior teachers was, in Jennifer's words, no different really to what we were already doing. They had each thought that they didn't want promotion or extra responsibility, but as a result of this experience they reconsidered their careers, and realised that they did enjoy the responsibilities they had undertaken.

* The women reported satisfaction in being able to share their feelings with each other in their work situations. In Helen's view, from her experience of working in

private business,
Most managers divorce themselves from feelings. You stay divorced from the situation,
maintain your cool and discuss nothing personal. You keep home and work separate. That's
exactly the opposite of what we have done. To be able to find two others who I can talk to
about how I feel about both the job and how things are at home has been really great.

* Being able to ask one another for help when a home or community situation made
demands on their time and energy was an important factor for the women. They did not feel
they had to make splits between their private and their public worlds.

* And lastly, although each of the women felt that they had good communication skills, they
agreed that these had been 'honed' by the experience of job sharing, and for them this was
a 'big plus'.

In her influential account of women in educational administration, Charol Shakeshaft (1987)
has argued that five factors might conceptualise their work: teaching and learning are their
major foci; relationships with others are central; building of community is an essential part
of their style; the line separating the public and the private worlds blurs for them and
marginality overlays their daily work as a result of their token status and sexist attitudes
towards them (1987:195-198). It is interesting to note how in the accounts of the women
senior teachers' work and experiences, all of the first four elements identified by Shakeshaft
emerge as significant. Could the splitting up of their team be seen as a result of factors that
contribute to a wider marginality of women in educational administration?
I turn now to a
discussion of this area.

The team is broken up.

About the end of term one, in a discussion with the principal it was made clear to Helen that
she was to be moved to a different area of the school where, Barry told her, her strengths

were needed. Although she didn't want to go, she said that she was not really given an option; Barry told her that she could either go as an assistant teacher, or she could accept the senior teacher position. He said that Philip would act as senior teacher in her place in the shared leadership position.

Consultation and information sharing was not carried out with the senior teachers as a team about either of these decisions. Jennifer said: Cathy came to me and said, 'Philip's taking over Helen's role in the leadership.' I thought, though I never said anything, oh - they've gone ahead and organised that by themselves without involving me. But it wasn't that at all. Barry had only just told Cathy that Philip would be doing it. Cathy said she had been told ...out of the blue, and she had mentioned it to Jennifer waiting for her reaction - which didn't come. Helen had thought that Barry had discussed the situation with the other two. She had been very upset about the whole thing, but felt rather trapped and powerless to change anything.

When I had begun the case study research, at the time of the first group interview (about halfway through term two of 1991) I did not realise that the women's team had been split up. These facts only emerged during the second group interview. Then, as I listened, it became clear to me that the women had not fully discussed together what had happened. The group interviews proved to be a catalyst for this discussion to occur and the research became in itself an empowering experience for the women as they clarified for themselves what had happened and discussed what action they could take to improve their changed situations. By the time I carried out a second interview with the principal, they had discussed the situation with him and he had realised some of the implications of his lack of consultation with the women in making his decision to split up their team. The action was not reversed though. (The leadership team of Cathy, Jennifer and Philip split up at the end of the year when Philip won promotion to another school and Jennifer took a year's study leave.)

After completing the original case study report, I became increasingly interested in why the women hadn't as a group challenged Barry's decision. Why did they not resist his move on the grounds that it was breaking up their agreed team leadership? In particular, I began to think about how different theoretical approaches could either illuminate or obscure the

influence of gender factors in accounts about women in educational administration. It was about this time that I read Colleen Capper's article, and I decided to 'reconstruct' the women's experiences through analysing some different 'storylines'.

In this situation, the following four approaches are significant - either for what they obscure, or what they open up for analysis. Firstly, because they remain commonly accepted ways of interpreting the experiences of those who work in schools, I look at what could be termed bureaucratic/managerial explanations. As these frameworks do not focus on the gender issues lying beneath the surface, I then examine some feminist perspectives that have posited sex role socialisation. The limitations of socialisation theory will be discussed by drawing on the concept of hegemony. Finally, I will explore the potential of broadening this interpretation into one based in discourse analysis.

A Tale of Bureaucracy: Issues of Control and Communication?

Although Weber's theory of the 'ideal type' of organisation has been consistently criticised, Rosemary Pringle argues that:

Weber's version retains enormous ideological power. People's views of how organisations actually do work, and how they 'ought' to work are still filtered through Weber and the theory becomes in some sense, a self-fulfilling prophecy...Weber still sets the terms of the dominant discourse on power and control in organisations (Pringle 1989:160).

This theory of bureaucracy emphasises the achievement of efficiency and fairness in the workplace through an impersonal and rational implementing of rules,

specialisation of tasks and hierarchy of authority and control. Although within education there has been an historical shift away from "heavy handed bureaucracy" (Connell 1985:143) to a less visible, more diffused control, as Jill Blackmore points out, generally "Principals are seen to be effective only when they are 'in charge' or 'in control'" (1989:118).

In my experience as a teacher and reviewer As a result of the administrative reforms in New Zealand, a new education agency was set up, the Education Review Office. Its responsibility was to review schools' development of policies and practices that would implement the objectives of the school charters. I worked for a time as an equal opportunity (later termed 'personnel') reviewer. in New Zealand primary and secondary schools in the central North Island, although it is clear that some principals are working through more consultative and team management structures, in other schools authority is being retained by principals who work within the traditional bureaucratic pyramid of control. Within that kind of school culture, both teachers and principals could have difficulty dealing with the changes involved when a leadership team is established at the lower levels of the hierarchy. A team leadership can be empowering for teachers and as such it has the potential to seriously disrupt already established decision making chains and relations of control. Having a team of three strong senior teachers to deal with in a disagreement could be difficult for a principal who thinks that s/he should retain the overall decision making authority.

Within this framework, there seem to be some obvious reasons for the foundering of the women's shared leadership. Although they developed a broad base for decision making within their own syndicate, they were working in a school structured on a traditional pyramid of control, where, as they said, the principal is the boss. Barry, constructing himself and his work within a model of the rational autonomous impartial leader, took it as his responsibility to be the chief decision maker planning for the good of the school as a whole. When there was a change in some staffing, he decided to move Helen to a syndicate area

where he thought her particular skills were needed. I told Helen that I had to think of the whole school, and I was fairly firm with her. I told her "I need to have you in this other area Helen." In doing this, he was acting out of the power invested in his position as principal. The women did not challenge this authority; as they said, he was the boss. Thus it seems that both the principal and the teachers accepted the bureaucratic management model which invests ultimate power in the position of the leader - and Barry's word went.

A different set of points can be made by drawing on wider interpretations of bureaucratic theory. In Weber's model, rules governing the delegating of tasks to specific roles and positions and formal 'lines' of control that link those at the 'base' of the organisation through to the top of the management hierarchy, are essential elements for the rational functioning of an organisation. However, Mary Parker Follett (1868-1933) "believed that the fundamental problem in all organisations was in developing and maintaining dynamic and harmonious relationships" (Hoy and Miskell 1982:5). She was a theorist who early on understood the importance of human relationships in organisations and how informal processes necessarily exist alongside the formal structures and practices 'to make things work' (Pringle 1989:162). In school administration, talk does the work and talk is the work (Gronn 1982). And in a shared leadership situation, communication is particularly important to keep everyone in touch. Thus it could be argued that difficulties in organising communication caused the demise of the women's team leadership.

Informal networking played an integral and vital part in Cathy, Helen and Jennifer's sharing of the senior teacher responsibilities. Their developing of ideas, problem solving and sorting out of the day to day 'housework' of administration and teaching could occur as they walked over to the staff room for morning tea or through their friendly dropping in on each other as they were teaching. They consulted each other regularly, particularly when they were

involved in decision making with others in the school, as they wanted to ensure that they were representing a consensus opinion. Barry said: If the third party is not present at a meeting, they will say, 'Hang on a minute, we'll get back to you on that after we've talked to so and so'.

Their consulting of one another could not always happen though. Cathy summed up what she saw as a major difficulty the three women had encountered throughout the time they had shared the leadership when she said: People didn't recognise us as being three people doing one job and they would often tend to look to one person and expect an immediate answer. Helen added, They didn't seem to realise that for each of us we were only a third of the team.

This was definitely a factor in the way Barry made and communicated his decision to shift

Helen. With the benefit of hindsight, during the research interviews he said:

I only told Helen and I didn't say it to the other two. I was splitting up that team.

I was weighing up things for the good of the whole school, but I hadn't consulted

them and said, "These are the reasons why I'm doing this. What do you think of it?"

At the level of formal decision making there were wider problems. For example, some of the other teachers thought it was inappropriate for all three women to attend the senior staff

meetings where matters of school policy and organisation were decided.

Cathy, Jennifer and

Helen thought that their team leadership was viewed with suspicion here.

We were getting

too much voice, as Helen put it. Underlying the matter of representation at the senior staff

meeting there are issues to do with power and politics, and these issues did not get resolved

before Barry shifted Helen out of the shared leadership. How much was his move influenced

by those potentially disruptive rumblings? Unfortunately, at the time of the study, I did not

explore this question, so there can only be conjecture here. It is clear though that there were

problems in regard to the team's position and functioning within the

authority structures in the school as a whole. These aspects were not formalised, communication channels between the group and the other school staff and the principal were not clearly delineated and decision making processes were not altered.

Could we not therefore explain the foundering of the team leadership in these terms? If the team leadership was to survive and function well within the school, at the levels of both the formal structures and the informal processes of decision making and communication there needed to be changes made to ensure that all three women were fully involved and taken account of as a team.

Although it offers some useful explanations and valid points, this kind of a bureaucratic organisational 'story' is not very satisfactory as it does not adequately address gender issues and inequalities of power that underpin 'poor communication processes'. It should be noted that the decision to split up the women's team was not reversed, despite their dissatisfaction and Helen's considerable disappointment about being shifted being communicated to Barry later.. It ignores the fact that the women said that the team leadership had 'honed' their already good communication skills and that Barry said their syndicate communication and decision making skills were excellent. It begs the question of why the women did not talk to each other about the decision to shift Helen to another syndicate when they had talked together regularly about other matters. Why, when each of them wondered about the reasons for and justice of his decision, did they not discuss it together?

To explore these kinds of questions I turn now to theories that have investigated the significance of gender in social relations.

Sex Role Socialisation

Bronwyn Davies has stated that:

...socialisation theory is generally accepted as a common sense way of theorising about gender, and researchers and teachers and parents alike are influenced in

their thinking
and their action by this model (1989a:4).

In New Zealand education, ideas about sex role socialisation tend to hold sway when there

are discussions about strategies to improve the position of women and girls. For example, in the charter equity goals, schools are required to develop role model policies and programmes that will ensure that there are women and girls in positions of authority and leadership and men and boys in caring and nurturing roles. Studies of the marginalising of women in educational administration in this country (for example, Malcolm 1978, Whitcombe and Fenwick 1982, Neville 1988) have been grounded in liberal and radical feminist critiques of sex role theory and their analyses of socialisation processes.

However, it has been argued that rather than contributing to solving gender inequalities, socialisation theory is "part of the problem" (Davies 1989a:3). In the light of this concern, let us examine the development of feminist use of sex role socialisation theory and reflect on how useful this 'story' is in helping us understand the women's experience and the demise of their team.

In her analysis of the 'feminine mystique', Betty Friedan (1963) showed how what was being described during the 1960s as housewives' 'suburban neurosis', was for many women the result of trying to fit what was widely accepted as the 'normal female roles' of full-time housewife and caregiver. Her conclusion (one that was to be very influential in the development of liberal feminist thought and strategies for change) was that women needed to change their expectations and develop their full potential. She stated that they should do this through equal participation with men in the public world, rather than remaining in the private world of the home.

We could 'read' the shared leadership story within this framework. Cathy, Jennifer and Helen had each moved back into the public world of teaching after having time out

at home to raise their own children. They had begun to participate more fully in the work of leadership, building their confidence through their sharing of the senior teacher responsibilities. However, they had not had enough training in those 'different roles' to develop the ability to challenge Barry when he split up their team. The women themselves tended to view their experience within this kind of framework. During the second group interview, after they had talked about what had happened they said that they hadn't been assertive enough to challenge Barry when he told Helen he was shifting her. Jennifer said, We should have been with you at the beginning Helen and explained to Barry why it was not on.

Liberal feminists have pointed out that some women may need assertiveness training to help them develop the confidence and skills to speak and take action in situations where they are disadvantaged. If you accept a theory of sex role socialisation as the explanation for women's subordination, then this is an obvious strategy. It has become part of many 'affirmative action' programmes for women. Despite the caveat that such interventions and equal opportunity programmes can only benefit certain individuals, some feminists such as Sandra Acker (1987) argue that these need to continue, as they are the most acceptable (feminist) strategies within the present climate. However, if we are looking for longterm and far reaching change in the definitions and practices of leadership and in the structural factors which contribute to the under-representation of women in educational administration, there is a major difficulty and

limitation in this approach. It is based in a deficit model that treats women as 'other' to a male 'norm'. In effect it 'blames the victim' (Acker 1983). It is individual women who are seen as the problem, and women who have to change. Organisations and cultures, and in this case the dominant discourses of leadership, can remain largely unaffected, expecting women to adjust so that they can 'fit in' - once they have 'got their act together'.

The liberal feminist use of sex role socialisation theory and its change strategies also play down "the economic, domestic and political power that men exercise over women" (Connell 1987:50). It was within radical feminist accounts that this issue of male power was first included in critiques of sex role theory. Kate Millet (1970) built on the work of Friedan and earlier sociological and social psychological research into gender formation, to distinguish conceptually between sex (biology) and gender (socially constructed characteristics of attitudes, expectations and behaviours). She argued that in the commonly accepted notion of sex roles, sets of rigid expectations (particularly oppressive towards women) have been assigned to culturally developed categories of masculinity and femininity. In her view, women have been socialised to accept their subordinate status as 'normal', as part of their 'feminine nature' in relation to what is seen as a 'naturally' authoritative and dominant masculinity. In this way, Millet drew attention to how acceptance of different sex roles contributes to the development of power inequalities between men and women within patriarchal social formations.

This analysis can be related to historical processes in the (sexist) bureaucratisation of schools. During the nineteenth century, American school boards structured a sexual division of labour into the work of teaching by using sex-role stereotypes to develop rules and regulations that governed women teachers' behaviour and conditions of work, as well as what they should teach (Strober and Tyack 1980, Apple 1986, Herbst 1989, Warren 1989). It was argued that:

...the very characteristics that made women good mothers - their nurturance, patience and understanding of children - made them better teachers than men...(who had a) presumed ability to manage women (Strober and Tyack 1980:496,500).

Recent work reveals how stereotypes of femininity, teaching, mothering and nurturing remain linked in teacher's self metaphors (Bullough and Knowles 1991) and in wider commonsense perceptions. Kath Aspinall and Mary Jane Drummond report:

During an in-service course, the staff of a nursery school compiled lists of the attributes of a 'good teacher' and a 'good mother'; only four of the 22 of the qualities listed for the mother did not appear on the 'good nursery teacher' list (1989:18).

They state that this blurring of the distinctions between mothering and teaching is "hardly surprising" when:

The working world of the primary world is riddled with events and equipment, demands and daily disasters, that seem designed to force female teachers straight into the stereotyped role of the effortlessly caring mother figure, however sincerely they may wish to resist (ibid).

Arguing within a radical feminist interpretation then, we could say that when Barry split up

the women's leadership team, Cathy, Jennifer and Helen behaved as could be expected: within patriarchal school structures and socialising practices they acted as compliant women teachers working under the direction of a male principal. They acquiesced to male authority and focused on their work as teachers giving their energy and attention to the children, rather than using it to resist the principal.

There are also problems in this stance though. Radical feminist explanations of male patriarchal power imply that all men dominate all women in rather fixed, deterministic and universal patterns. When this framework is put alongside a sex-role socialisation model where the individual is a "passive recipient" of socialisation, being "pressed into a relatively fixed form" (Davies 1989b:6), there is little, or no space for a woman to develop any other expectations, behaviours or identities than those of compliance to patriarchy and male power, which have presumably been 'taught' to her from an early age. If we follow this kind of interpretation, how do we explain the original move by the women when they told the

principal they wanted to set up their own leadership team? Socialisation theory cannot explain this.

The fact of women teachers do resist stereotyped expectations is just one of several difficulties in sex role socialisation theory. Connell points out that this theory "dissolves structure into agency", (for example, why do individuals choose to socialise other individuals into restrictive roles?) and it "has no way of grasping change as a dialectic arising within gender relations themselves" (Connell 1987:53). A consideration of Gramsci's theory of hegemony is a more promising approach here, both to advance an analysis of the factors involved in Jennifer, Helen and Cathy's experiences and to further examinations of how women continue to be marginalised within the gendered hierarchies of educational administration.

Male Hegemony and Leadership

Boggs defines Gramsci's concept like this:

By hegemony, Gramsci meant the permeation throughout civil society of a whole range of structures and activities like trade unions, schools, beliefs, morality, etc, that is in one way or another supportive of the established order and the class interests that dominate it. Hegemony can be defined as an 'organizing principle' (or combination of world views) that is diffused by agencies of ideological control and socialisation into every area of social life (Boggs 1976:39).

When exploring the links and contradictions between individual agency and social structures to try to explain women's "apparent acquiescence to male domination" (Jaggar 1983:151), how useful is this theory of hegemony? Madeleine Arnot (1982) has employed it in her analysis of gender and class relations in schooling. She uses the term 'male hegemony' to suggest that within a male dominated culture, individual women become "colonised", with the result that they can collude in their own subordination. She argues that through a series of

separate experiences and situations they come to either consciously or unconsciously consent to their subordination to men and men's values, beliefs and ways of doing things, which become seen as the normal way for everyone to 'do things'. "Man's position of power...assures his standards become generated as generically human standards that are to

govern the behaviour of men and women alike" (Simmel 1911). If we in turn apply this analysis to school administration, it can be argued that a male principal's authority over female teachers is not only grounded in the status and 'legality' of his bureaucratic position; it draws on the links between socially constructed notions of authority and hegemonic forms of masculinity.

Hegemonic masculinity is an idea of masculinity (as well as something practised by some men)...it refers to those generalisations that make all men not only superior in terms of strength and power to women, but also opposite to women (Davies 1989:14).

Culturally constructed stereotypes can thus reinforce a 'commonsense' acceptance that men are the most appropriate people for leadership in schools, while most women are more suited (as a consequence of what is seen as their nurturant feminine natures) to work as teachers, or as support staff. In some applications of the theory though, there is a simplifying of the concept of hegemony to a formulation that reduces it to a one way process of domination through the creation of sets of ideas. Parts of Boggs' definition, for example, can be seen to come close to socialisation theory. In another definition, hegemony refers to the "process whereby a group struggles for and maintains 'political, moral and intellectual leadership'" (Ryan 1988:207 - my emphasis). Gramsci's theory insists that there can be no domination without the consent of those who are subordinated; but just as important is the idea of:

...the power of individuals to contest hegemonic control, and the resultant need for

dominant classes to struggle to reimpose hegemony in constant danger of being resisted and contested by subordinate classes (Weiler 1988:14).

This "closer reading" of Gramsci highlights the complexities and contradictions that can arise as an elite group becomes involved in continually 'winning over' individuals to their ways of viewing and experiencing the world, to accept that these are not just particular cultural patterns, but the way things 'are'. Resistance and struggle are important concepts in Gramsci's explanation of how "other patterns and groups are subordinated, but not eliminated" (Connell 1987:182). This reading can help us to understand how Cathy, Jennifer and Helen could resist the idea that men are the most appropriate and 'natural' leaders and suggest that they themselves could share the leadership. Their team teaching experience had empowered them to reject the commonsense nature of those dominant (but often unconscious) ideas by helping them to realise that if they could learn from one another and share each others strengths as teachers, then those strategies could be used in the sharing of the senior teacher responsibilities.

However, in this analysis, there still remains the difficulty that they did not resist once again, when Barry decided to move Helen out into another syndicate. Perhaps we could accept here the argument that hegemonic processes are complex and often contradictory, particularly so within the field of gender relations. Connell, for example, states that forms of femininity vary; while some seem straightforwardly compliant others are "defined by complex strategic combinations of compliance, resistance and co-operation" (1987:184). He further argues that all forms of femininity are constructed within institutionalised gender relations that concentrate power in the hands of men.

If we follow this line of argument, we could perhaps accept that culturally developed

expectations about what is 'natural' within (gendered) decision making and control behaviours

and structures might have silenced the women's questions when the new principal asserted his 'principal' power and shifted Helen without consulting the team as a whole. And there was the women's lack of experience in management at a school wide level. During the interviews for the case study, the women became aware of this factor. Helen said, We were new at this game, and we didn't talk about it together early enough to stop it. As a result, in Jennifer's words, the change in personnel just sort of slipped in without us really being aware what was happening. This last comment supports the interpretation that the women's team leadership was split up because Barry was acting within the dominant values, beliefs and practices of school leadership and the women went along with these without fully realising the implications. Despite the proven worth of the shared leadership, old habits and patterns about 'the way we do things around here' reestablished themselves.

Although this is quite a convincing explanation for both the demise of the shared leadership and some of the factors that contribute to the wider marginalising of women in educational administration, for me it is an unsatisfying end to the story. It has a pessimistic circularity: 'You might resist, but hegemony will win in the end. So why bother resisting?' In its rather abstract quality, hegemony seems also to be a slippery concept, a bit like quicksilver. Its explanatory power lies in the palm of my hand until I try to examine it closely and then it slides away. Why do people seem so easily to go along with decisions, situations that act to disadvantage them? How is power 'working'?

It is here that I think Foucault's concept of discourses and discursive fields can provide a more grounded way of thinking about power relations. In the next section of this paper, I want to explore the potential of 'reading' the women's story within an approach that combines an analysis of hegemony and discourses.

Discourses of Gender, Teaching and Administration

Many of us will have experienced the feeling of 'wearing different hats' in different situations

- the feeling of 'who we are' shifting depending on where we are, what we are doing and who we are with. In poststructuralist terms, our sense of our own identity is fragmentary and changing. In her discussion of a feminist poststructuralism, Chris Weedon argues that an individual constructs her subjectivity - "the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding her relation to the world" (1987:32) - through language and discourses. She further maintains that:

Through a concept of discourse, which is seen as a structuring principle of society, in social institutions, modes of thought and individual subjectivity, a feminist poststructuralism is able, in detailed historically specific analysis, to explain the workings of power on behalf of specific interests and to analyse the opportunities for resistance to it (1987:41).

In Foucault's conception, a discourse is a "system of statements which cohere around common meanings and values...that are a product of social factors, of powers and practices, rather than an individual's set of ideas (Hollway 1983:231). Discourses are grounded in and shape institutions such as 'the family' and 'the school' in particular ways in particular times and places. Thus discourses are multiple. They may also be contradictory: within shifting

discursive fields they offer changing and "competing ways of giving meaning to the world and of organising social institutions and processes" (Weedon 1987:35).

Rather than explaining individual behaviour as being a consequence of socialisation into particular social 'moulds', the point is here that a society "provides, through its structures, its language and its interactive forms, possible ways of being, of thinking, of seeing" (Davies 1989a:14). There are constituted various 'subject positions' which individuals can 'take up' (Weedon 1987, Davies 1989a, 1989b). In specific historical moments, some of these will seem more obvious, or 'natural' than others, depending on the

institutionally based power or widespread acceptance of particular discourses. For example, during the heady days of the women's liberation movement, the position of feminist teacher could have seemed more possible for some women than it does now in a time of increased backlash (Faludi 1992). Thus, although to some extent we may be able to choose from a range of subject positions, the language and practices of discourses that are embodied in social institutions constrain these choices. (Our choices are further constrained by factors of ethnicity, class and gender).

This feminist poststructuralist approach can provide a helpful way of looking at the contradictions in the women's responses, through focusing on their 'taking up' of different subject positions at different times. I want first to highlight the ways the women seemed to be constructing their sense of themselves as teachers, while functioning in a team leadership. I will then consider the significance of gendered distinctions in the subject positions of 'teacher' and 'leader/manager', placing these in the contexts of wider neo-liberal discourses to illustrate some of the contradictions that have existed, and continue to exist, for women who aspire to leadership.

Gendered discourses of teaching and leading During their group interviews with me, the women talked about themselves and their work in terms of being teachers. Most of the time they did not distinguish between teaching and management and leadership; they saw these as aspects of the same thing. Jennifer said in answer to a question about how they had set up their team leadership: It was almost as if it had always been that way. It wasn't as if we had to work at establishing or setting anything up. It was only in answer to a specific question from me about how they saw their work as managers, that Jennifer used that word. She said: As managers, our jobs overlap and as needs arise and depending on the situation, we swap roles. They did not talk about themselves as managers or leaders in the ways that these terms are understood within the literature of school administration, but stressed all the time their

work as educators. Thus they were not seeing themselves as the principal's leadership partners, working as equals with him in a wider school team leadership. Rather, in their constructions of their identities, they were a team of three teachers who also happened to be carrying out the leadership work in their own syndicate.

Research on women working in educational management or leadership positions has found that many of those studied have a holistic view of their work, seeing and experiencing the tasks involved in the management of classroom learning and in school management as similar and part of the same field of endeavour (Shakeshaft 1987, Neville 1988, Blackmore 1989, Court 1992). It is interesting to note that Philip (the male teacher in the syndicate) had a different opinion here. He distinguished between teaching and management, seeing these as different and separate jobs. This difference of perception reflects the findings of some other studies of educators working in positions which include administration tasks. For example,

in her American study, Pitner (1981) found that more men than women educational supervisors viewed their work from managerial perspectives, and that men gain more satisfaction from administration than from instructional supervision tasks.

As pointed out earlier, there is a clear sexual division of labour in schools. These are both horizontal and vertical divisions. For example, horizontal divisions exist in curriculum subject areas where more men than women take responsibility for subjects such as woodwork, outdoor education and the so-called 'hard' sciences of physics and chemistry (in secondary schools), while women are concentrated in areas such as cooking, health and the 'soft' sciences - biology and social studies (O'Neill 1990). Vertical divisions are clear where many more men than women are concentrated in the 'top' administrative positions controlling the work of teachers, and in the 'top' teaching positions in the sense of teaching older students.. In particular, a gendered split between teaching and administration persists. Although there may be subtle

shifts in the nuances of its forms, femininity, nurturance, mothering and teaching are still being constructed in a 'commonsense', 'natural' and 'complementary' opposition to dominant versions of masculinity, authority and leadership. Some have argued that these oppositions have become embedded in, while simultaneously contributing to, the wider discursive constructions of gendered subject positions and practices (Davies 1989a).

Within liberal egalitarianism in New Zealand there has existed a common belief in equal educational and employment opportunities, with an emphasis being placed on 'girls (especially middle class pakeha girls) can do anything'. However, this belief has existed alongside a belief that women are also 'naturally' suited to being wives and mothers, with the latter being seen as their primary roles. In contrast men have been seen as possessing qualities which fit them for positions of authority and responsibility (the positions of status and privilege) in the public sphere (Novitz 1987, Briar et al 1992).

The commonly accepted subject position of a 'woman' in New Zealand's 'gendered culture' (James and Saviile-Smith 1989) has included qualities linked with domesticity and dependence on a male 'head of the house and breadwinner'. Although most women now work in some form of paid employment outside the home, discourses that place 'feminine' women as dependent, as homemakers and nurturers, and as supporters and followers of men, persist. Many women teachers' career aspirations, opportunities and choices have been, and still are, constrained by the allocation of caring, nurturing responsibilities to them, in both paid and unpaid work (Middleton 1988b, 1990; Court 1992, O'Neill 1992). The marginality of women in educational administration and leadership is in these ways closely inter-related with cultural assumptions and discourses about 'natural' qualities of masculinity and femininity and 'appropriate' spheres for men and women.

If we consider Cathy, Jennifer and Helen's acceptance of Barry's splitting up of their team in the light of these discourses, their actions can be seen to be consistent with their

constructing of themselves (or their taking up of subject positions) as female, supportive, teachers deferring to a male principal's authority. That was the most obvious subject position available within the fairly traditional bureaucratic leadership discourses that existed in the school at that time and within the wider gender and leadership discourses I have just

described. In those discursive fields, Cathy, Jennifer and Helen would be unlikely to see themselves as having the right to challenge his decision.

But what about their earlier initiative of suggesting that they could set up a team leadership?

A feminist poststructuralist explanation of this contradiction can be given through a discussion

of the ways different individual subject positions are made available within changing,

competing and sometimes contradictory discourses. As pointed out earlier, each discursive

framework provides some "ways of being, of thinking, of seeing" (Davies 1989a:14) while

obscuring other possibilities, rendering women sometimes powerful, sometimes powerless

(Walkerline 1987:166). I want therefore to discuss some of the possibilities and

contradictions offered to these women within coexisting and competing discourses. In

particular I focus on what has been termed the 'liberal-left', that is social democratic or

egalitarian discourses, and a 'liberal-right' discourse, or market liberalism (Middleton 1990:68,

Jones et al 1990:94). How might these discourses have impacted on the women and their

perceptions of the viability of their shared leadership?

Collaboration or conspiracy? A liberal egalitarian (or social democratic) discourse of

leadership as collaboration, shared decision making and teamwork, had existed in the school

when the women first suggested their initiative. (This seems clear in the Education Review

Office Report statement). Within this kind of discourse, subject positions as members of a

team leadership were made possible and were taken up by Cathy, Jennifer and Helen in a way

that empowered each of them.

However, during the year, it seems that the discourses of leadership shifted back to a more centralised model in which the new principal asserted decision making power without consultation. That a more 'liberal-right' or individualistic view of leadership was re-establishing itself within the school is evidenced in the fact that the women's team was not accorded full support by the other senior teachers. For example, only one member was wanted at senior teacher meetings. When the three women requested that they all should be allowed to attend those meetings, this was resisted. Was this because they might then have been able to dominate the school's policy making and procedures in a way that could limit others opportunities and choices?

Within the wider social and political contexts where there is an accelerating ascendancy of the new right form of liberalism which interprets equality and fairness in an ethos of competition based in individual merit, the women's team leadership could have been seen as an 'interest group' which could capture undue power. Team leadership subject positions become less viable and obvious possibilities within these kinds of discourses. If we ask the question of why the women did not challenge Barry's decision to split them up within this 'storyline', we can read an answer that perhaps Jennifer, Cathy and Helen were each sensing that it was now less appropriate to be working together. Their lack of a group reaction was perhaps influenced by unstated implications that there was some sort of 'unfairness' in their group solidarity: We were getting too much voice, Jennifer said during the research interviews.

These subtle kinds of power issues were evident in some other ways. In a Weberian image of the organisation, the personal private lives of individuals are excluded from the public workplace. Here, perhaps Cathy, Helen and Jennifer could have been seen by their peers to

be breaking all the 'rules' and gaining considerable personal support and power through being

in a closeknit group that could be seen to be giving them increased flexibility and `perks'. For example, they were able to cover for one another at meetings if one of their children was sick. This could be interpreted by others as giving them an unfair advantage, while Barry's move to split up the team could have been seen as one which would be in the best interests of all the individual teachers.

If the shared leadership had been practised under the form of welfare liberalism that is encapsulated in the wording of the New Zealand school charter equity and equal employment opportunity goals Within Equity Goal A is the statement that the school should ensure that "any disadvantage experienced at the school ...by staff members because of gender" (or other factors) "is acknowledged and addressed" (Ministry of Education 1990, p. 10). Goal C's objective is "To enhance learning by providing role models, such as girls, women and people from different ethnic groups in positions of leadership and authority, and men and boys as caregivers, so that children can understand the meaning of equity in behaviour they can observe from day to day." (ibid. p.11). Goal F, equal employment opportunity, states: "To provide equal access, consideration and equal encouragement in areas of recruitment, selection, promotion, conditions of employment and career development" (ibid. p.14)., there may well have been a different outcome. In that discourse, the job share leadership strategy could have been supported by the school and judged as worthwhile for what it could achieve in improving the career opportunities of a disadvantaged group - women teachers. If this discourse had maintained ascendancy, the benefits of collaboration could have been judged as worthwhile enough to concede some changes to the wider school structures.

However, as I have already suggested, within a market view of liberalism, collaboration can also be seen as conspiracy, a move by an interest group to `take over' and limit others rights and choices. Within this discourse, equality rhetoric has shifted back from concerns with disadvantaged groups In the early months of 1990, the new National

government Education Minister announced that the equity goals of the school charters were not obligatory. ; there has been a return to individualism and a championing of competition. The discussion in this paper would support Codd's (1992) view that such cultures can be "not only undemocratic, but wasteful of human initiative and capacity".

CONCLUSION

I originally undertook the study of the team leadership in the hope that women teachers who had not previously considered applying for a management position might find in this strategy a congenial way of experiencing the work of school administration and leadership while enhancing their own skills and abilities. The study illustrated how women working together can support and develop each other's personal and professional skills and confidence. Both Cathy and Helen are now senior teachers and Jennifer was accepted into a course of advanced study that will develop her career into a specialised area.

I was also originally interested to investigate the transformative potential of such a strategy to find out what impact sharing leadership would have within the wider school environment. The study documented how collaborative team work did, for a time, break down some aspects of bureaucratic hierarchy to involve a wider group of people in the control of their work. However, although the team initiative fitted Davies' suggestions (1990:78) - it was generated by women and it was a facilitatory enabling model - the model did not become established within new school structure's and decision making practices. This echoes the findings of Strachan's school-based intervention to empower women for leadership:

The school's commitment to the programme was minimal. The women financed it themselves, they took each others' classes and they did their training in their own time. Commitment and support, outside of the group of women, came from a few individuals who went out of their way to help. The structure of the school remained, on the whole, untouched...Schools need to do some serious self-reviewing so they can monitor their practices for inequality (Strachan 1990:161-162).

Women working for change in school gender relations face many constraints. It is clear that dominant discourses can influence their strategies in ways that are not always immediately apparent. When considering initiatives to increase women's participation in educational administration this needs to be taken into account. Perhaps here discourse analysis is a method that could assist the planning and implementing of interventions to ensure that their transformative potential is not lost. In this respect, case studies can be 'a step to action'. They:

...begin in a world of action and contribute to it. Their insights may be directly

interpreted and put to use; for staff or individual self-development; for within-institutional feedback; for formative evaluation; and in educational policy making (Adelman, Jenkins and Kemmis 1984:101).

Cathy, Jennifer and Helen commented that the interviewing had in itself been a most useful experience, giving them a rare opportunity to stand back and reflect together upon their work and their own aspirations. From the reflections of all those involved, I have constructed in this paper a set of theoretical 'stories' about what happened. These are, of course, only some of the many ways this particular episode could be 'read'. I have written them though, with the aim of further enlarging the ways in which administration and organisations can be viewed. As Capper puts it:

Not only is it important to acknowledge those other stories, but those involved in educational administration preparation perhaps have a moral obligation to ensure that a variety of stories are told in publications, in course material and in the conduct of research (Capper 1992:123).

APPENDIX

Job Sharing Regulations for Primary and Intermediate Schools

The basic conditions of appointment and employment of teachers in a job sharing position are detailed in the Primary Teachers' Collective Employment Contract 1992-94. The contract notes the salary and working conditions requirements as:

a) On the joint application of two holders of positions of the same grade, an employer may designate one of the positions as a shared position and appoint the two applicants without advertising the vacancy to this. If one of the two joint holders resigns or retires, the other has the right to assume full-time responsibility for the position.

b) Any two teachers may jointly apply for appointment to a position which has been designated as shareable and they will be assessed as one applicant (NZEI 1992).

The job sharing agreement applied originally to teaching positions. The women in this study extended the concept to a sharing of the senior teacher responsibilities.

Senior Teachers and the Senior Responsibilities Scheme

In primary and intermediate schools in New Zealand although the senior teacher job is structured in different ways in different schools, it usually entails instructional leadership of a particular area, with support for staff in their teaching and classroom management, some management of resources and timetabling of programmes and activities, and some responsibility for discipline and pastoral care of students. From 1 July 1990 the allowance paid to a senior teacher was \$2,279.

During 1988 the Senior Responsibilities Scheme was initiated. This meant that a senior teacher vacancy could be filled as a basic scale position and an allowance (presently \$3,190 p.a.) is allocated to the school to "remunerate basic scale teachers who successfully undertake specified tasks of value to the work of the school" (NZEI 1992). Consequently, two or more teachers can share the responsibility for leadership in a syndicate and share the salary allowance between them.

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