

The possibility of a post-masculinist politics of educational administration in post-modern times?.

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Paper presented to Australian Association of Research in Education Conference, University of Newcastle, November 27-1 Dec. 1994

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Much has been made in the restructuring of work both locally and globally about the need for new forms of leadership and administration to meet the demands of a postmodern society. In education, as in the public sectors generally in most Western capitalist democracies and increasingly many 'third world' countries, devolved systems of governance are seen to be a better way of meeting the individual needs of citizen/clients in a period of transition from 'the modern' to 'the postmodern'. While much of the literature on educational leadership appeals to postmodernist discourses to rationalise radical educational restructuring, few address the ways in which particular discursive regimes, global, national and local work to frame and constrain certain possibilities for action within schools despite the democratic and equity claims of the reform rhetoric.

In this paper, I will consider from a feminist post structuralist perspective the contradictions arising from educational restructuring in the context of the modern/ postmodern with regard to what may constitute 'good' leadership and administrative practices, about how new femininities and masculinities are being constructed in the context of educational re-formation, and, illustrated by vignettes from my research, about the ways in which particular discourses work in specific contexts and hegemonic cultures constrain more democratic forms of educational practice in schools. Finally, I consider the possibilities of a post-masculinist politics of administration in this period of transition from the modern to the postmodern.

Modern/postmodern schools

The modern era emerges out of the Enlightenment and its notions of rationality, science and the capacity of man to control his environment (Lloyd, 1984). It is generally characterised as a period of incremental change and linear progressivism, a time when social systems developed in an integrated and coherent manner, in which there was a network of stable relationships around common understandings of nationhood, family, community and the state, into which individuals were socialised. There is an assumed cultural consensus and homogeneity, a faith in science to resolve human problems and in the state to provide basic welfare needs. Strong, increasingly pervasive bureaucracies actively intervened to deliver state services in health education and welfare to produce greater equality, while at the same time the public domain of paid work was separated from the private unpaid work of the home. Modernisation is also associated with industrialisation and mass production techniques (Fordism) which presumed a universal, homogeneous and infinite market. Organisations tended to be seen as functioning in rational and instrumental ways, necessarily hierarchical with linear career paths based upon seniority. Authority and initiatives for change rested with formal roles. Motivation was conceptualised in behaviourist terms of reward and punishment. Productivity was seen to arise purely from workers self interest and desire for monetary gain. Management sought to control all stages of production through supervision, surveillance, and Tayloristic fragmentation of jobs and extreme specialisation. While there was a high level of regulation of the individual, there is also a sense of security and certainty.

Postmodernity is generally depicted as the set of economic, political and social conditions emerging out of rise of new information technologies and media forms and the globalisation of markets. Time / space relations have collapsed and there is the blurring of the global and local. Chaos theory and quantum physics have led to a loss of faith in the laws of science to resolve social problems, and recognition of the irrationality of how systems and humans relate.

Social change is seen to be an unpredictable, nonlinear process, better described as chaotic and messy. Now states in a deregulated market system selectively mediate relationships between the global and the local. Post Fordist ways of work organisation focus upon team work, flat organisations, finite niche markets and decentralised decisionmaking to facilitate the flexibility of workers and organisations to respond quickly to diverse market needs of clients. More indirect forms of organisational control are played out through systems of self governance as individuals internalise organisational goals through performance management, a process reinforced by the peer pressure built into team work, quality assurance and accountability technologies. Social relationships are increasingly framed by market and contractual arrangements. Shared notions of nationality and citizenship, state, family and community are disrupted. The emphasis is on constantly forming and reforming networks, diversity, cultural pluralism, heterogeneity, and shifting notions of nationhood and citizenship. While there is a sense of capacity for personal empowerment in this free flowing context, it is also anxiety ridden and fraught with interpersonal tensions. Indeed, identity formation itself is seen to be fragmented, contradictory and partial. Education can no longer fulfil its promise of economic reward as full lifetime employment is replaced by part time work, unpaid labour and retraining.

The above historical caricatures, while not capturing the complexity of the debates about modernity/ postmodernity, still represent particular

arguments called upon to justify the radical restructuring of education since the late 1980s. Advocates of the second wave of devolution have argued that we need new schools for new post modern times and a more highly skilled workforce (Caldwell & Spinks, 1992) Indeed, the self managing school with its 'centralised decentralisation' would appear to typify both the modern and postmodern organisation with its modernist tendencies for top down, executive mode of decisionmaking and line management, and increased differentiation of tasks and rewards as well as the demarcation between policy and implementation; and its postmodern claims to decentralise, encourage diversity, community ownership, local discretion, professional autonomy and flexibility on the ground (Blackmore, 1993).

A post modernist educational organisation, it could be expected, should address issues arising from a culturally pluralist and heterogeneous society and an increased diversity of student needs in order to effect significant change in educational outcomes, (Capper, 1994; Reyes, Velz, Pena, 1994). One would expect post-modern schools to address how diverse interests could be better represented in school decisionmaking and on how decisions with regard to different claims on resource allocation are informed by a sense of equity and justice. If post modern organisations are seen to be constituted of freely operating,

relatively autonomous, multiskilled teams addressing specific needs, the role of the principal is necessarily redefined, if not made redundant. Central themes in recent leadership literature about 'best management practice' talk of shared, transformational and visionary leadership (Maxcy, 1994), about recognition and respect for cultural diversity and pluralism (Capper, 1994), about teacher collegiality and professionalism (Hargreaves, 1994), about valuing democratic relationships and about caring environments (Noddings, 1993; Beck, 1993). Likewise, change theorists speak about tolerance for uncertainty, the unpredictability of change, its messiness and contradictions. They see policy and structures as not mandating change but as the products of cultural change (Fullan, 1993; Kenway et al, 1994). In education, empirical studies of the types of educational change which effect student outcomes focus upon teachers as change agents and the necessity for favourable material and cultural conditions for change (Hill, 1993). Principals are portrayed as the facilitators, enablers and providers of such conditions (McLaughlin & Talbert, 1994). The role of the leaders in the postmodern 'learning organisation' is seen as facilitating not prescribing what others do.

Paradoxically, in the global shift from centralised to devolved systems of education, there has been an increased focus upon the leadership role of the principal through policies, structures, accountability processes, and role descriptions of line management. In a devolved system, the principal is expected to mediate contradictory political, economic and social relationships between schools and their communities with the more powerful role of local school councils; between the principal and the teacher with increased powers of the principal; and between the principal and the centre through performance management and appraisal of both schools and individuals. As Peter Watkins (1993) points out, the centralising tendencies of policy and accountability frameworks in most instances are more powerful than the decentralising. The second wave of devolution in the 1990s in most Western liberal capitalist democracies has largely been a top down state initiative, coercive in effect, often replacing, as in Victoria, consensual arrangements which marked the historical 'partnerships' between teachers, parents and state in schoolbased decisionmaking since the 1970s (Blackmore, 1986; Gordon 1991; Ball, 1990). Indeed, the second wave of restructuring in most Australian states is significantly different than earlier forms with the 'severing of educational means

and ends, a shift towards measured output, and a dramatic reorganising and tightening of accountability structures for schools' (Robertson, 1993, p. 117). There is less 'real possibility for substantial inputs by representatives of teacher, citizen and community groups' in policymaking at the centre, their involvement largely being confined to school level (Ryan, 1993, p. 191). Government policies have reduced the notion of community to exchange relations ie. parental choice of school. Parental involvement is 'limited to little else than

pressuring schools and teachers to improve student achievement in student competencies' through threat of withdrawal (Ryan, 1993, p. 192). Where parental involvement does occur on school councils and boards, it is limited to financial not educational issues as principals are able to 'capture' decisionmaking processes. Such bodies are invariably dominated by white, middle class professional males (Deem, 1992; Middleton, 199)

The notion of difference embedded in such policies in post-Mabo times is still that of cultural assimilation of pluralist interests 'in the national interest'. This assimilationist perspective is underlaid by an instrumental economic rationalism and a shift away from communitarian notions of the civic and education as an investment in and production of a public good, towards individualistic notions of the economic and education as a form of private consumption. Although the claim is made that diversity and equity will be better achieved by devolving decisionmaking because those at the workplace can better address specific and diverse local needs if given the flexibility and capacity to prioritise, many school based interventions tend to be limited to a more concentrated focus upon narrowly outcomes based foci rather than diversity and breadth (Ryan, 1993, p. 193). The New Zealand experience indicates how, because equity demands a wider redistribution of already scarce resources, equity is quickly dropped off local agendas (Middleton, 1992).

Finally, devolved schools in all Australian states, as in England and New Zealand , now operate within an increasingly marketised state system of education, competing not only with state subsidised 'private' schools for a contracting student population but also neighbourhood state schools. The key element in the restructuring discourse which calls upon new forms of schooling and new leadership to meet postmodern needs is the market. The market is the mechanism by which individual choice is exercised to address issues of diversity and difference. Indeed, schools in an unregulated system tend to select students (Edwards & Whitty, 1992) and the differences between schools on the basis of class, race and ethnicity are exacerbated (Glen, 1993; Scheurich & Imber, 1992 ; Hannaway and Carnoy, 1992; Lieberman et al , 1991). The reality is more reduced autonomy, constraint and uniformity. Restraint, because devolution has in most instances been accompanied with reduced educational expenditure, intensification of work and controlling accountability measures and system wide support services such as professional development are 'downsourced' to schools and 'outsourced' to consultants. Uniformity because schools are increasingly being judged on the basis of market image (as measured by community satisfaction surveys¹). Market status and position is maintained by conforming to the dominant image of a good school as being well uniformed, well disciplined and academically successful (as measured by standardised test scores). This requires schools to be highly selective and narrow in orientation, as a diversity of clientele makes maintaining that image, particularly with constrained funds,

difficult and non-marketable (Kenway, et al. 1993). In many instances, therefore, educational restructuring has exacerbated inequality in certain education systems (e.g. England, New Zealand) on the grounds of class, ethnicity and race for students(Edwards and Whitty, 1992).

In the above context, issues of social justice generally, and gender equity in particular, have become more complex, particularly with respect to women in leadership. As I have argued, leadership in the selfmanaging school cannot be decontextualised from the shift to self governance and the marketisation of education. Contradictory, overlapping discourses exist: discourses of managerialism/ entrepreneurialism compete with and draw from discourses of educational leadership/ professionalism, positioning educational leaders in contradictory ways as they confront the 'dilemmas of management' (Bowe & Ball, 1992). In turn , particular discursive regimes have material effects. Dominant managerialist discourses actively inhibit practices which could produce autonomy, flexibility and diversity. Particular images of leadership are privileged by discourses about efficiency and effectiveness, images most readily equated with masculinity : good financial management, entrepreneurship, decision maker, high public relations profile. Marian Court speaks of the New Zealand schools where 'there are culturally produced links between masculinity and authority grounded in skills of numeracy, technical logic and business competitiveness that can be seen to equip men as the people best suited to running schools as business enterprises' (Court, 1994, p. 36).

On the other hand, there is another weaker discourse emerging in this context of restructuring. 'Women's ways of leading' are held up in some educational systems as models of 'best management practice' because women's 'skills' as facilitators, communicators and in interpersonal relations are seen to be a desirable attributes for educational managers in these complex and chaotic times. Women's 'propensity' for more democratic modes of decision making, their emotional management skills derived out of their familial and pedagogical experiences, and their emphasis on curriculum and student welfare is therefore an exploitable resource in schools (Shakeshaft, 1987; Adler et al., 1993; Ozga, 1993; Court; Weiner, 1993). Women leaders have been portrayed as good change agents (Yeatman, 1994; Blackmore, 1994). Women in leadership positions simultaneously have insider status as part of formal decisionmaking structures, but also have outsider status as a female in male dominated workplaces. In being marginal, female managers can 'see the fault lines within the dominant cultures' of management (Gosetti & Rusch, 1994). Recent research indicates that women principals are better able to deal with change than their male counterparts (Caldwell, 1994).

But again such discourses must be contextualised. In particular the

significant shift towards self governance at the level of the individual as well as schools signifies different relationships. As Stephen Waring(1990) points out, Drucker, the management guru whose work is highly influential in the shift towards the devolved organisation (eg. Caldwell & Spinks, 1992) was highly aware that management requires to maintain control of intellectual workers but at the same time relies upon their creativity for productive outcomes. Direct bureaucratic intervention, now unacceptable within a discourse of self management, is supplanted by a system of self governance and new, more subtle technologies of control (e.g. performance management , bonus payments, principal and teacher appraisal, performance indicators, curriculum guidelines and standardised testing). These technologies of control recognise that in appealing to their professionalism and sense of care for students, individuals will internalise demands for quality, and in so doing become complicit, in their own control. Total Quality Management or Quality Assurance emphasise team work for this same end (Watkins, 1994). While the quality management discourse calls upon collegiality and professionalism, new organisational structures and

differential reward systems are premised upon competitive individualism and increased differentiation between teachers, and between teachers and principals. The emphasis is on teams and professional collegiality, but it is individuals who are rewarded on narrowly defined quantifiable performance measures which emphasise outcome, not process.

This is the context into which women are being encouraged to become the new leaders for new times.

Furthermore, whilst women are being instituted as change agents at the organisational level, the ascendancy of the discourse of managerialism has led to new social orderings in schools which undermine the capacity of women to practice more democratic modes of leadership. Senior management teams often supplant more representative elected decision making bodies and exclude teachers from everyday decisionmaking processes which impact on their professional lives. Martain Mac An Ghail, in a case study looking at the construction of masculinity in English schools, relates the powerful role of school principal in a self governing school.

'He could be located within the project post-Fordist era with its emphasis on small scale, flat hierarchies and flexible team work in a differentiated marketplace, in which new school systems are helping to shape new teaching cultures. He is representative of a new 'masculine' authoritarianism in which overt forms of technologies power are being supplanted by forms of technical bureaucratic knowledge'.

The head saw this new masculine leadership 'in terms of being a fusion of public and private sector 'man'' (Mac An Ghail, 1994, p. 22). Lyn Davies similarly comments that the competitive point scoring, sporting career version of masculinity ' articulates well with the overall

themes of schooling, of hierarchy and individuation. It lends itself to divide and rule, and is the breeding ground for the fragmentation of teaching staff which is necessary if teachers are not to become a political force' (Davies, 1992, p. 128).

Masculinity, modernism and management

Christine Sleeter points out in the preface of *Educational Administration for Cultural Pluralism* that in postmodern times, where leadership for change is critical, What is ironic is that the principalship is the one role in the school that is most likely to be occupied by a member of multiple status positions (white, male, well educated) that benefit from existing social arrangements. The principal is more likely than any other role group in the building to be male, at least as likely to be white, and usually earns the highest salary. While these facts certainly do not condemn administrators in general and principals in particular, they do position administrators in a particular way : to take for granted much of the institutional structure of schools and their context, and justifications for why things are as they are' (Sleeter, 1994, p. ix; my italics)

While gender has become a significant category of analysis in considering power /knowledge relations in schools, masculinity has not been put under scrutiny. Gender has been perceived as an issue for feminists, just as race has been for Aboriginal people and ethnicity for those of non-English speaking background. This is in part because dominant cultural expressions view difference as other, and do not treat white, male or middle class as problematic. Overt displays of 'macho' masculinity and violence, as racism, are therefore depicted as 'discipline' and 'authority' problems of students not issues of

particular power relations in schools generally(Mac An Ghail, 1994; Court, 1994; Rizvi, 1994). What is ignored with respect to gender is any analysis of the organisational culture which is conducive to sexist behaviours, and the role particular adult masculinities play in constructing and maintaining a masculinist1 culture. In part it is because of the genderblindness of organisational theory (Acker, 1990; 1992). In part it is because the early development of the sociology of gender was saturated with an unproblematic view of modernisation, the characteristic blindness to power and the theoretical incoherence of sex role theory to fully explain resistance and agency (Carrigan et al (1987). And in part it is because 'one of the cultural supports of men's power is the failure to ask questions about masculinity' (Connell, 1993, p. 191).

Increasingly, research from a cultural studies perspective is focusing upon how different masculinities and femininities are constructed in

relation to each other, of how particular masculinities become 'hegemonic' in particular contexts (Connell, 1987; Blackmore, 1993). Given multiple masculinities and feminities, particular forms of masculinity are sustained, reproduced and privileged in certain management practices in way which render other forms of masculinity (e.g. homosexuality) and all forms of femininity as lesser (Connell, 1987; Kerfoot and Knights, 1993) . This hegemony has to be continually worked at and worked over, as new forms of masculinity arise in order to maintain their dominant position.

For example, Burrell and Hearn (1990) argue that the modernist project linked modernism, productivity and big science in a linear fashion in ways which either excludes gender altogether as relevant or includes gender in the sense that the above triad increased control over emotion (Burrell & Hearn, 1990). Modernist views of organisation treated rationality and emotion as mutually exclusive and as male and female attributes specifically. Kathleen Jones argues that 'the dichotomy between compassion and authority contributes to the association of the authoritative with a male voice. Then the implication is that the segregation of women and the feminine from authority is internally connected to the concept of authority itself' (Jones, 1993, p. 120). The discourse of authority is one 'constructed on the basis of a conceptual myopia' which 'normalises authority by opposing it to emotive connectedness or compassion'. 'Authority orders existence through rules...Authority's rules distance us from the person. Compassion pulls us into face-to-face encounter with another'(Jones , 1993, p. 121).The association between masculinity and rationality has been clearly researched by feminists. What is also not mentioned is the extent to which this association is embodied. The following example from research project on leadership funded the ARC is illustrative of how a certain mode of masculinity embodies authority, in this particular instance in the role of the vice-principal, and how this form of masculinity was privileged and maintained by the cultural context.

A female was appointed as deputy principal in a secondary college, previously a technical school, which had a majority of boys. This deputy principal had significant experience as a regional consultant but not in-school experience. She came to the position as a consequence of the devolution of support services to schools. She described her approach to the job:

My preferred style is to be able to discuss things and to listen to a range of opinions, questions and concerns. In dealing with students and parents there's less time to do that and what would see as part of my style that I had wanted at the beginning of the year was to model a

more gentle culture, a more caring culture, a more concerned culture within the school, away from the macho heavies. Now I think that is

happening, feedback that we've had from the community has been that it seems to be less violent here this year and that was one of the good to hear.

Not only did she not have the time to establish the social relationships that she felt were central in her role as VP, but she entered a position which had no clear job description. The position had been vacated by a legendary male figure. Many of the male staff, particularly the level co-ordinators, had modelled themselves upon this VP, whose physical presence alone was, we were told by most staff, able to quell even the most disruptive male students. His authority was clearly associated with physicality, rationality, unemotional, hardness and masculinity. Most staff saw him as strict with students, but more sympathetic behind closed doors. The association between masculinity and authority as encapsulated in the VP's role echoed the mindset of a conservative rural community and many of the staff.

After the appointment of the VP. staff spoke about how many parents would query 'how are you coping since the male VP left? I hear discipline's gone out the window'. This comment was, according to most staff, inaccurate. Instead, it was common knowledge within the school that many discipline issues were 'manufactured' as certain 'male staff tried the female VP out a bit'. by 'setting up discipline problems'. This according to one female staff member was 'especially because she is a female and a known female in the community. as prominent, confident and determined to get her own way' (Interview, with female teacher). Here staff were actively working against the desired educational objectives of the school, and utilising students to undermine the professional position of a colleague.

The VP on her arrival in the position also saw discipline as the central issue. She instigated developing a new disciplinary policy, through collaborative discussions with coordinators and relevant staff.

Discipline was to become the responsibility of class teachers, then pastoral teachers, level coordinator and ultimately the VP, a system not uncommon in most schools. But in seeking such change, no matter how collaboratively, she was threatening both the dominant culture in which discipline had been enforced in the school through fear rather than discussion and self control. Her approach threatened many male teachers who had used fear as a measure of student control. She also was prepared to use the authority of the her position to enforce the new policy. After a few months an actively subversive discourse was evident in the school about how discipline was carried out by the male level co-ordinators because they had to 'prop up' the female vice principal. But as another male teacher observed, this was the result of the success of the new system and not her failure. Many female teachers saw the reliance on the previous VP for all discipline had been comforting for staff but was essentially an abrogation of professional responsibility by both individual teachers and level co-ordinators. All female staff expressed a preference for the new

disciplinary approach as one which they personally operated on even under the previous VP. Despite this, the dominant discourse was about the failure of discipline and the weakness of the VP. Evidence for her 'being a pushover' was provided by male staff in that that students visited her office because she was prepared to talk and listen. One boasted that when he was acting VP that there were 'no kids lining up to talk to me'.

But the links between masculinity and authority have accorded men a measure of cultural capital, building in them in others an expectation of their 'natural' ability and right to lead

organisations' (Court, 1994, p. 36). None of their male colleagues were prepared to publically challenge this behaviour, although they agreed in private that it was unprofessional. Indeed, it was in their interests not to speak out, even though many were excluded by the dominant macho masculinity, in that it reinforced the ideologies of masculinism ie. of male domination.

What was most significant is how, when speaking of her 'weakness as VP' reference was made to her physical presence and femaleness, her smallness in stature, and her soft voice and style. There was frequent comment about her 'invisibility' in terms of actual physical presence patrolling the yard and corridors. At the same time, one male teacher's authority and hence his personal and professional identity was threatened by the disciplinary changes. Unable to deal with this, he became increasingly violent, verbally then physically, to students, and had to be warned by the VP about the inappropriateness of this intimidatory behaviour. In this instance as in others where she exerted her formal authority, she was seen to be aggressive, conflictual and hard. As Weedon suggests 'the way in which discourse constitutes the minds and bodies of individuals is always part of a wider network of power relations, often with institutional bases' (Weedon, 1987, p. 108).

Despite this, it was evident that most staff saw the transition to the new mode of discipline as desirable and preferable. Even one of the 'subversive' males expressed surprise that the students did not 'take advantage more of the VP's weakness' and that students were 'handling the new mode of operation well'. This comment signified more the discomfort of the male teacher with the new disciplinary policy than the students incapacity to deal with change or difference modes of discipline. Later the VP found out when she was talking to students in one of the more difficult boys classes which she took on voluntarily:

they said to me: 'he (the co ordinator) doesn't dare do the things he did last year, this year... ever since you arrived'. They must have perceived things that I just never expected them too.

What this vignette indicates is how masculinity has to be 'achieved,

worked at and accomplished moment by moment in the drive to attain a secure masculine identity as part of that what it means to be a 'real' man. (Kerfoot & Knoghts, 1993, p. 663) It shows how particular institutional discourses can, by constructing different masculinities and femininities, position individuals as failures or successes by virtue of their gender and of how this articulates with the dominant culture of a school. Martin Mac An Ghail speaks of how teachers construct their personal and professional identities in selective responses to contradictory workplace demands.

Dominant state and professional discourses circumscribed the 'gendering' of these different work practices...A highly salient feature within the context of a widening cultural gap between secondary school management and teaching was the promotion of a new gender-specific hierarchies of domination and subordination...The female teachers were contesting the masculinization of the administrative functions that had come to dominate school life. High status was being ascribed to the emerging 'hard masculine' functions of: the accountant, the Key Stage tester, the curriculum coordinator and the information technology expert. At the same time, female teachers were associated with and directed into the 'soft feminine' functions of profiling and counselling. In short the remasculinisation of teaching was taking place within conventional cultural forms of splitting the rational and the emotional (Mac An Ghill, 1994, p,. 34)

But to consider this instance separate from the context of devolution and marketing education is to fail to understand how such discourses work locally and globally , and in turn how these have material effects. While the discourse of marketisation and devolution claim to address issues of diversity and choice, market status is maintained by conforming to dominant images of 'good schools' as being well disciplined, well groomed and academically successful. The discourse of macho masculinity which associated discipline with male leadership had wider implications for a school which had built its reputation upon strong discipline and increasingly relied upon student enrolments for its image and survival. Despite their support of her policies and management, many teachers believed that her presence did impact on how parents viewed the school and therefore effected school enrolments, a critical issue in a time when schools are dependent on per capita funding.

In the next section, I want to indicate how particular dominant institutional and system wide discourses position women in leadership differently to men, and of the constraints and possibilities which exist for more democratic approaches to leadership in a devolved system of education. The discussion will be informed by the empirical data derived from research projects in state educational bureaucracies and schools.

Strategic masculinity, postmodernist organisation and discourses of constraint and possibility

Connell sees hegemonic masculinities constantly being reworked, 'reconstituting themselves in new forms which both build upon and transform early forms of masculinity, to maintain dominance (Connell, 1987). Kerfoot and Knights(1993) speak of how there has been a shift away from the paternalistic masculinity of the modernist era to strategic / competitive masculinity in the post Fordist workplace. The discourses of masculinism have now incorporated the notion of the 'new age man', who can be publically sensitive, caring and family minded without being seen to be 'unmasculine', but who is able, without any redistribution of either institutional power or domestic labour, to colonise and appropriate the better aspects of childcaring. In this way many men so prepared to change earn 'brownie points' and advantage over those males who continue to treat public and private as separate. Whereas emotion was excluded from organisational life, now emotion is seen to reflect a high level of commitment and passion is equated to vision. 'So competitive masculinity can lead to an individual being self driven for no discernible reason other than being seen to be competent, committed and engaged in their work'(Kerfoot & Knights, 1993, pp. 664, 672). There is a desire to control all aspects of work life, and an investment in maintaining an 'image of success', often more image than substance. So masculinity has changed, seemingly inclusive of a range of 'feminine' behaviours.

Other discourses have also emerged with work restructuring and the 'leadership' crises. 'Women's ways of leading' are held up in business and some educational systems as models of 'best management practice'. Women's 'skills' as facilitators, communicators and in interpersonal relations are seen to be a desirable attributes for educational managers in these complex and chaotic times. There is a rapidly growing literature in educational administration asserting the need to 'reclaim' a feminist ethics of care as central to administrative practice (Beck, 1992; Noddings, 1993). Women's 'propensity' for more democratic modes of decision making, their emotional management skills derived out of their familial and pedagogical experiences, and their

emphasis on curriculum and student welfare is therefore an exploitable resource for new 'styles' of leadership(Shakeshaft, 1987; Adler et al., 1993; Ozga, 1993; Court; 1994). Women leaders have been portrayed as good change agents, having insider status as part of formal decisionmaking structures and outsider status in male dominated cultures, thus able to see the 'fault lines' to spark change (Yeatman, 1994).

While masculinity may have changed, asymmetrical power relations based on gender have not. This is most clear in how the system level

discourses, imbued with notions of strategic masculinity, shape the daily practices of those in schools. In particular, the trend in devolved systems is that women's 'special contribution' to leadership is limited to the level of the school in a new division of labour. Studies in Israel and Victoria (Australia) indicate a tendency for polarisation between the re-masculination at the 'hard core' of the financial and policy centre of newly devolved systems, and the feminisation and de-professionalisation of teaching and middle management at the 'soft edges' close to the chalkface. In Israel, there is a form of homo-social reproduction occurring, with male teachers congregating in schools with male principals, and the feminisation of schools with female principals. The 'political, professional and bureaucratic power structures continue to be male dominated. Consequently, meaningful changes are not forthcoming and the gender segregation, at different levels of the hierarchy, perseveres' (Goldring & Chen, 1993, p.175). This gender segmentation further reinforces the hard/soft; rational/emotional; administration/teaching dualisms upon which modernist educational systems have been historically constructed (Blackmore, 1989, 1993; Shakeshaft, 1987; Blount, 1994). Feminist leadership is also constructed in mainstream/malestream literature as 'just a matter of style' or skill and not based upon substantively different value positions. So, in Victoria, where a conservative government claims to have made a significant difference in the number of women in the Principal Class since 1992 due to a focused Women and leadership program, it must be viewed in the context of the feminisation of the profession and the re-masculinisation of upper management, a legacy of modernity. What does this contextualisation mean for women principals?

In one case study school, a female principal was selected as a 'change agent' by the local selection process initiated by the School Council to instigate an amalgamation with the neighbouring school which had been blocked by previous male principals. Despite initial expressions by many of the male staff and parents that 'she wouldn't be able to do a good job', she was highly regarded after a few months at the school by staff, students and parents. The staff concurred with this principal's impression of her leadership, and referred to her 'exemplary' leadership practice with her good interpersonal relations, capacity to listen and to communicate ideas, preparedness to change her mind when convinced, sense of humour, focus on students, broad knowledge of the system and school but capacity to delegate, desire to consult when possible but still able to make the difficult decisions and explain why. This principal concentrated on the personal aspects rather than paperwork. She was accessible to staff and students, undertaking a reciprocal letter writing exercise with Year 8 English students in the first months of her appointment. She sought to minimise uncertainty over staffing by communicating quickly with all staff what had happened and why. The staff in return felt that they could trust her to listen to their point of view and then be fair in her judgement in those decisions she alone ultimately had to make. In turn, she had clear and

well informed views about leadership and management, gained from reading widely.

You can be a good manager but not necessarily a good leader. In a school you have to be both, because you have that total role. Managers are people who shift bits of paper, organisation and budgets. Leaders are people who interact with other people, communicate with them, take interest in people, get people to accept a shared culture, philosophy and vision and get them on-side. Good leadership is about enthusiasm, initiative, lateral thinking, hard work, fairly good interpersonal relationships and someone with a wide ranging background experience.

These findings are consistent with research on women in leadership which indicates that they work against formal hierarchy, more collaboratively and with a focus on students and curriculum. Financial management is seen to be means to an end (Adler, 1993; Ozga, 1993; Shakeshaft, 1987). It also confirms research in self governing schools in New Zealand, which indicate that 'women tended to be more open minded than men' (Ramsey, 1991) and in Victoria in Schools of the Future, that women principals indicated higher levels of work satisfaction and were dealing with change better than their male counterparts (Caldwell, 1994).

This principal exemplified 'feminist' leadership. She was committed to democratic practice and sought to develop productive professional and supportive collegial relationships through learning groups. Uncomfortable with the notion of being seen to be powerful, she redefined herself as being powerful through others, not over others. But while seeking to work proactively to provide a conducive environment for learning for staff and students, she was constantly confronted with uncertainty, anxiety and lack of or mis-information. The discourses of management reform positioned her at one moment as powerless and reactive because of top down demands for quick solutions for complex issues and the next as powerful in making decisions which effected teachers' futures. The teacher union representative talked about how

It is a very difficult time for collaborative leadership to take place, given that centrally there are a fairly large set of expectations being put on leaders within schools not to be collaborative, and to in fact adopt line management and very authoritarian models of leadership and decisionmaking.

Other studies of principal's in devolved systems indicate how much of the discretionary power is more symbolic than real as devolution has been accompanied by significant financial cutbacks, intensification of labour and increased central control through accountability technologies such as performance appraisal. This was not unique to

Victoria. One Queensland principal, quoted in Distant (1993), indicated her feelings of lack of control and being pressured by central directives under devolution:

Its all very well to say the school's responsible for decisionmaking but we don't really have control over it. It's a sort of backhanded kind of responsibility. There are so many mandatory things coming down from this department..you must do this, you must do that, and you will do this and have them all implemented by the end of the year. It leaves little room for decisions about what the schools will do because there is little time.

As in the case study school, even though the principal sought to develop more democratic processes and strategies through participative decisionmaking, team work and strategic planning, teachers felt strategic planning enforced and regulated their involvement in whole

school planning and became cynical because their participation had little effect as outcomes were largely predetermined due to time, budgetary or policy constraints.

For principals, as teachers, the line between the professional and personal were increasingly blurred due to the emotional demands of the job and invasion of personal time and space (Strachan, 1994). This principal realised the need to emphasise the interpersonal work in a system in crisis management, seeing rapid deepseated change producing stages of grief - denial, despair, anger and acceptance- worked through individually and collectively. In particular, the study indicated how female principals felt particularly isolated, not merely because they were principals, but because of their exclusion by 'the boys club atmosphere' of the principals' associations. The study indicated that most women principal's looked to their own women's social networks for the emotional and professional support required to sustain their energy and commitment levels. Principal collegiate groups, one principal in a School of the Future, saw as 'contrived collegiality'(Hargreaves, 1994) not professional or personal support (Interview with author). So while their practice demanded attention to the personal and social relationships so important to educational contexts, the discourse of management with its unidimensional and functionalist notion of leadership and emphasis on finance and outcomes, positioned principals as being task oriented not relationship or educationally oriented. Furthermore, principals are further alienated from collaborative relationships as senior management teams increasingly supplant more representative elected decision making bodies and exclude teachers from everyday decisionmaking processes which impact on their professional lives. There is increased differentiation and new sets of power relations which undercut professional collegiality between staff and the principal who now has responsibility for teacher appraisal, job allocation and performance

payments. Ultimately, the possibilities for democratic action are constrained because devolution has in most instances been accompanied with reduced educational expenditure, intensification of work and increased surveillance through accountability measures.

This is the context in which female leaders are being constituted as change agents at the organisational level, a time when the ascendancy of the discourse of managerialism has led to new social orderings in schools which are antipathetic to more democratic ways of working. Feminist leadership is therefore being positioned as powerless within a new gender order which is no less 'masculinist' than the 'paternalism' of the dominant management discourses of modernity. While discourses call upon new forms of leadership for post modern times talk about professional collegiality and team work, dominant management practice encourages competition and rewards individuals. Indeed, the appropriation of the strategies of feminist leadership by dominant malestream management discourses is an important aspect of the building of consent required to maintain hegemony of particular masculinities, to the exclusion of others (Connell from Gramsci, 1987).

The possibilities of a feminist post-masculinist educational politics.

So what then are the possibilities for a post-masculinist politics in educational administration? I want to rehearse some ideas here. First, these vignettes of two women's experiences in leadership indicate the embodiment of particular male images of leadership which continue to be associated with authority. Furthermore, that the ways in which education systems are being restructured are establishing contexts which are more enabling for women. Second, the masculinist politics of modernity has rendered gender as invisible or as 'other' through the

naturalising discourses of dualistic thought, thus either totally ignoring gender/ power knowledge relations or making femininity 'the problem'. A masculinist politics claims that one set of interests, usually white middle class heterosexual males, can represent universal interests and portrays all other interests as the 'other', 'particularist' and self interested. Masculinist politics portrays universalism and interest as mutually exclusive options. This means 'politics has to be about either ethics or interest. Thus opposition is quietened as the universal interest of 'the school' is set up in opposition to the specific interests of a group. For example, local school boards in newly devolved systems globally are generally dominated or chaired by white, professional males, who are able to claim to represent the universal interests of a homogeneous parent constituency, the clients, and 'the school'(Deem, 1990; Middleton, 1992; Blackmore, 1994). Given that social justice is largely about how specific interests are addressed, the issue of social justice slips of the agenda. Post modernism and feminism have challenged myths of consensus and coherence around a universal interest. Feminism argues

against abstract universal truths, recognises difference and calls for a context-specific relational morality which considers who makes what decisions about whom, by whom, in what context.

At the same time masculinist politics has been as 'essentialist' politics which reduces difference to fixed, immutable, 'parallel' categories of gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality. Feminism, on the other hand, has been forced theoretically and politically to address the complexity of the nature of difference amongst women on the basis of race, class, ethnicity and sexuality. By considering social relations from the standpoint of women, 'working inside a discourse not of our making' we see the 'fault' lines or points of ruptures which exist between socially organised practice and our everyday lives (Smith, 1987, p,). Beginning with the experience of women does not exclude men, but uncovers how certain masculinities remain dominant in ways which effect men as well as women. Feminists have successfully illuminated how the 'othering' of women and minority groups in essentialising categories has, by setting up such interests in competition, maintained certain hegemonic masculinities in educational administration (Blount,1994; Blackmore, 1993; Capper, 1994). But an essentialist politics premised upon male/ female dualisms will not disappear with just the substitution of feminist values for masculinist values. Women are no more 'fully human' than men as there is no ungendered experience, only experiences of men and women of different sexuality, race and ethnicity. Ultimately, such dualisms maintain unequal power relations. For example, the management discourse's appropriation of the feminist 'women's contribution to leadership' perspective re-positions women as possessing complementary capacities to men, but does not challenge the privileging by dominant discourses of 'masculine' attributes of 'hard nosed decisionmaking' and aggression over 'feminine' capacities for care (as different from 'mothering') and interdependence (as different from dependence).

A feminist post-masculinist politics, because of its emphasis on gaining equity through change, would first, seek to 'represent' diversity and difference in ways other than mere numerical representation of specific categories in decisionmaking. Representation is about how particular groups interests are constructed through image, language and practice, whether their interests are equally valued, their voices heard and acted upon. Diversity is not achieved by appointing another white middle class woman in an already white middle class organisation or when notions of leadership do not incorporate a wide range of behaviours. All decisions have both an ethical and interest component, as all decisions impact on individuals and groups

differentially. The ways difference is represented must go beyond the token women and be legitimised and effected if equity is integrated throughout the policy process as a principle of decisionmaking, not just an afterthought. Such principles require ongoing questioning about

what interests are legitimate when making policy and resource decisions, who will this benefit, how and why?

Second, a feminist post-masculinist politics would seek to build a new sense of inclusivity and democracy which does not equate consensual politics in educational communities with one privileged position. In general, the notion of diversity embedded in devolutionary policies is that of liberal multiculturalism based on numerical representation with some exceptions such as New Zealand. It is essentially cultural assimilation of the various pluralist interests 'in the national interest'. Yet research in England and New Zealand indicates that the market exacerbates differences between schools on the basis of class, race and ethnicity, and encourages conformity not diversity in image, clientele, organisation, curriculum or pedagogy. Postmodern educational leaders need to provide space for a multiplicity of voices and to recognise a diversity of experiences, skills and expertise as benefiting and creating an educative community. Educational leaders need to ask: Is their student population, school administration or school council 'representative' of its constituency? If not, why not?

Third, a feminist post-masculinist politics would consider how to produce social change based on equity principles in a deregulated self governing system. The management approach focuses upon technologies of control through self governance. Equity is treated as an outcome measure of performance appraisal not a basic principle. But equity demands a wider redistribution of already scarce resources and does not readily satisfy outcome-based measures (Capper, 1994). So equity is quickly dropped off individual or school agendas (Middleton, 1992; Capper, 1993). The issue for feminist educational leadership is how to impart legitimacy in schools to discourses of fairness and justice in a system premised upon self governance without the paternalistic authority of the state. Feminism has relied upon a paternalistic state for at least symbolic commitment of organisations to EO policies. But it has not actively engaged with men's considerable investment in existing relations (Cockburn, 1992). A feminist approach needs to address difference within masculinity in ways which allow new alliances based on substantive educational and social justice issues with those groups and men equally excluded and marginalised by dominant forms of masculinity.

Finally, working strategically in new alliances requires understanding the politics of privilege as well as of disadvantage. EO policy has tended to focus upon the deficiencies of women and not how particular cultures and systemic practices privilege certain forms of masculinity. Viewing educational administration through the lens of privilege means deconstructing concepts such as merit, seeing it as a social construct which favours those already in power, largely white middle class males, and not a neutral standard against which all can be fairly measured (Burton, 1993). Exclusive notions of merit and leadership deny access to those whose experiences and skills do not conform to a

dominant view, an issue to be recognised in the allocation of positions and rewards. The lens of privilege likewise requires women in leadership to consider their position, to better understand why and how they came to be in that position, and how they can use that position to challenge and transform exclusive images of leadership into more inclusive ways.

Feminism has struggled with postmodernism in order to understand that

difference and equity are not mutually exclusive. While postmodernity is associated with fragmentation, plurality, chaos, arbitrariness and change, it is still a system because it still produces systematic difference. How one judges the effects of any change largely is about seeing how patterns of difference at the level of the system, institution, classroom and student, and indeed the categories of difference themselves, change over time.

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1 In Victoria, there will be one form for community satisfaction surveys, written in middle class English. Schools and principals will judged by responses which fail to allow for the fact that up to 80% of students in some schools come from Non-English Speaking Background families.

1 Brittain provides a useful distinction between masculinity as features of male behaviour which change, masculinism as the ideology which naturalises and justifies male domination over women, and patriarchy as the structure of unequal power relations which result (Brittain, 1989,p. 3-5)

