Deakin Research Online

This is the published version:


Available from Deakin Research Online:

http://hdl.handle.net/10536/DRO/DU:30001448

Every reasonable effort has been made to ensure that permission has been obtained for items included in Deakin Research Online. If you believe that your rights have been infringed by this repository, please contact drosupport@deakin.edu.au

Copyright : 2002, Technomic Pub
Leadership for Socially Just Schooling: More Substance and Less Style in High-Risk, Low-Trust Times?

ABSTRACT: This article argues that radical shifts in school governance arising from wider social, political, and economic relations toward what are described as high-risk and low-trust societies challenge past notions of leadership. I explore the tensions between the pluralism of postmodernist thinking and modernist notions of social justice that produce “predicaments” for school leaders through a series of paradoxes of educational management around centralized decentralization, markets and management, new educational professionalism, parental choice and community participation, and between the substance and style of leadership. The values underpinning the corporatization of public and private life most evident in education do not provide a satisfactory grounding for effective school leadership.

The last decades of the 20th century have been depicted as producing radical shifts in relationships among the state, communities, and individuals that signify the need for new understandings about the nature of democratic and institutional life. The rapidity, scope, and depth of the flows of people, ideas, images, goods, and money produced by globalization have had macro and micro repercussions. Late “fast” capitalist societies are often characterized as being high risk and low trust, a consequence of fluid institutional formations and relationships as there is a blurring between public and private (Beck, 1992; Gatens & McKinnon, 1998; Giddens, 1994). Life is now riskier in the sense that the economic, political, and social agendas of the postwar liberal democratic settlement are under threat, as is education as the source of social change and social reproduction. Trust, the social bond of communities and organizations, has historically...
provided some predictability and oiled the routines and habits of everyday life, facilitating "stability, co-operation and cohesion" (Troman, 2000, p. 335). The relations of trust are now changing in families as well as between friends and between colleagues due to severe stress of work intensification, social fragmentation, changing social relations of gender, and the emotional turmoil associated with rapid change. A new form of alienation from work is produced by the abstraction of systems into symbolic tokens and expert systems (Troman, 2000, p. 337). Families now have multiple forms, jobs and career paths are tenuous, while our understandings of government, community, and individualism have been reinvented by liberal market discourses of choice.

Education is increasingly perceived to be both the problem and the solution, both an individual cost and a benefit as a positional good, and both a public expense and source of income through its commodification. Educational reform has been central to various nation-states' responses to the above phenomena often collectively described as globalization (Burbules & Torres, 2000; Stromquist & Monkman, 2000). For liberal democratic communities, educational reform has given rise to concerns about state and individual, but also corporate, rights and responsibilities, with the erosion of civil society and new forms of political and institutional governance based on individual choice and contractual relations (Yeatman, 1998). While any state in a democratic society is concerned about balancing its legitimacy against economic welfare and collective identity, a democratic state needs to avoid the possibilities of economic rights curtailing other rights (for example, union rights) or overemphasizing collective identity at the cost of minorities and dissidents (Benhabib, 1993).

Despite the rhetoric about postmodern society being characterized by unpredictability, risk, fluidity, and a multiplicity of viewpoints (Beck, 1992; Giddens, 1994), there is a surprisingly instrumental and deterministic logic underpinning the globalization discourses circulating about the "new work order" and embedded in many education policy texts (Gee, Hull, & Lankshear, 1997). This new work order emerges out of global markets, new knowledge economies, the use of converging communication and information technologies, and increased cultural diversity and population mobility. The metanarrative associated with globalization is that change is seen to be the constant, all change is good, that we must respond to change, and that leaders are positioned as change agents. Yet as a historian, I see contradiction, paradox, and predicament as symptoms of rapid change. I see any change as benefiting some and not others, and that continuity of valued principles, ideas and practices, notions of social justice, for example, in a society or community, is something to be nourished.
In particular, I argue that the corporatization of public and private life, where the principles of the market and new managerialism have permeated all aspects of education, has produced a value shift in educational relationships (Gewirtz & Ball, 2000). Interestingly, these values are neither addressing key postmodern issues that educational institutions will confront in the next decade, such as the recognition of diversity and difference, nor old modernist concerns about redistribution for social justice (Fraser, 1997). To take up a value position means I stand in jeopardy in postmodern times of value heterogeneity being cast as resistant to change, positioned as referring to some "golden past," not being futuristic and definitely not postmodern. This is ironic for a feminist who in previous decades has been cast as wanting too much change (certainly of masculinist organizational cultures), too fast.

In this article I call upon feminist political theorists such as Fraser (1997), Phillips (1993), and Benhabib (1993) to explore the tensions between the pluralism of postmodernist thinking and modernist (universalistic) notions of social justice that produce particular "predicaments" for school leaders, and, in particular, dilemmas for feminist leadership. Predicaments are the problematic states of affairs that admit no easy solution; they may even have no solution at all, being by nature paradoxical; they characterize the teaching enterprise and range from the mundane necessities of dealing with misbehaving children to the philosophical demands for the meaning of it all. (Gotz, 1999, p. 516; see also Burbules & Hansen, 1997)

I argue in this reflective article about educational leadership and feminism in the context of high-risk, low-trust societies, that the principles of the market and new managerialism underpinning educational reform in Anglophone nation-states—the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand—do not provide us with any ethical ground upon which to base educational leadership for social justice (Clarke & Newman, 1997). My focus is initially on how the discourses about school leadership have been historically constituted so that in the late 1990s there are severe implications for social justice. I then consider some paradoxes confronting educational leaders arising out of these reforms (e.g., centralized decentralization, individual parent choice/community participation, system control/local flexibility, democratic/managed professionalism). I point to the predicaments that discourses about leadership and change have produced for feminist theorists, researchers, and practitioners in the above context.
Finally, I argue the need to develop principles informing leadership for socially just schooling. Social justice and equity are more important as globalization creates new, or exacerbates old, forms of inequality inflected by race, gender, class, and ethnicity (Gewirtz, 1998). For example, in Australia, a nation-state marginal to new regionalized economies such as NAFTA and the EU, over 2 million out of 20 million now live under the poverty line (an increase from 6 to 12% of population since the 1980s), the majority of them women and children; the gender gap in wages is increasing with deregulation of labor and financial markets; the educational achievement gap between working class and middle class, rural and urban, indigenous and nonindigenous students is increasing, and there is increased polarization between technology rich and technology poor, as techno-advantage breeds class and gender advantage. This patterned polarization of poverty is replicated in most Western postindustrial nation-states and in an even more extreme form in developing nation-states (Blackmore, 1999).

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND THE CORPORATIZATION OF PUBLIC LIFE

The focus on leadership in the late 1990s during a period of radical re-structuring of education emerges out of the crisis of uncertainty arising from modernist value systems being challenged by postmodernist high-risk cultures. This has generated a crisis of trust within personal relationships and toward institutions, as they release surplus labor in order to achieve flexibility (Castells, 1997). Schools are subject to increased risk in the context of the rise of education markets on the one hand, and increased regulation in the context of the new managerialism on the other. Leadership is now the linchpin in these reforms, particularly in self-managing schools in the United Kingdom, New Zealand, and some Australian states.

But the emphasis on leadership itself as the solution to a range of complex educational problems is a problem. The focus on formal positions of leadership (e.g., the principalship) tends to personalize and individualize wider social and moral issues shaped by specific contexts, structures, values, socioeconomic relations, and sociogeographical features (Blackmore, 1999). Individualizing leadership ignores the wider terrain upon which we collectively walk, a fast moving terrain reconfigured constantly by changing forms of political and educational governance; shifting social
relations of gender, race, culture, and class; rapid flows of people, ideas, images, and goods; and the multiple modalities of information and communication technologies.

Yet the field of educational administration has historically failed to address the core work of teaching and learning. Instead, educational administration has sought to become a distinct field of theory and practice by "entering into or repositioning . . . professional practice, within the academy" (Gunter, 2000, p. 626). This has been legitimated by high-status knowledge fields such as scientific management in the 1920s, science and psychology in the 1950s and 1960s, and now management and economics in the 1990s. There has been a denial of its origins in teaching as a racialized, classed, and gendered profession and of its core educational work of curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment. Teaching has provided social mobility for white working-class males and academically achieving middle- and working-class women. Indeed, it was only in the 1970s, with the political activism of feminist, postcolonial, environmental, and student movements that the hegemonic, middle-class, white masculinity embodied in the image of the "Man at the Principal's Desk" was challenged by alternatively more radical knowledge and ways of viewing the world.

However, these alternative counterhegemonic leadership discourses have been too readily co-opted, appropriated, and subverted by the mainstream (Blackmore, 1996). As the focus of educational administration moved from issues of access in the 1960s and 1970s, participation in the 1980s, and then to outcomes in the 1990s, feminist demands, largely framed by liberal individualism and merit, have focused primarily on recognition and the "remediation" of women's and girls' disadvantage through access to, and increased representation in, the ranks of formal institutionalized leadership dominated by men. Cultural feminism during the 1980s pushed for increased inclusiveness in curriculum and the cultures of schooling and recognition of difference—a humanist moment when leadership was described as transformational, instructional, emancipatory, feminist, ethical, caring, and even democratic (Grace, 1995; Noddings, 1992). But this discourse was readily appropriated by postmodern "new management" discourses, focusing on people and communication skills, without recognition of its value base in feminism as a movement for social change. Even instructional leadership's focus on curriculum was undermined by management's focus on accountability through standardized assessment.
During the 1990s, the radical restructuring of education to make it an arm of state economic policy in globalized economies has promoted managerial, entrepreneurial, strategic, and visionary leadership (Ball, 1998; Mant, 1997). In this riskier environment, many school systems have moved toward self-managing, site-based, or self-governing schools in market- or client-driven systems based on the principles of parental choice (e.g., charter schools in the United States, self-governing schools in the United Kingdom and New Zealand, and self-managing schools in Australia [Whitty, Halpin, & Power, 1998]). In client-driven systems, the reputation of a school hinges upon the reputation of the principal, who in turn identifies with the perceived success or failure of "their school" (Thomson, 2001). In quasi-market systems, principals increasingly focus schools' resources and energy toward "performativity" exercises. Performativity in the marketplace requires image management, self-promotion, and overt displays of success in order to attract parents, as well as addressing managerialist accountabilities based on a limited range of academic outcomes of education (e.g., standardized literacy tests). Principals' work can therefore become more about "fabrication," as such requirements often have little to do with, and can even detract from, the core work of teaching and learning (Blackmore & Sachs, 1990).

The focus on entrepreneurial leadership also signifies a distinct shift from the paternalistic welfare state of the 20th century, which sought to protect individuals from the market, to the postwelfare performative state (Gewirtz, 1998). Now the interests of the market are seen to be the interests of the corporate state, and the civil and the civic spheres are increasingly distanced. Both right and left governments have increasingly abrogated the state's responsibility for social justice or produced new politics around notions of inclusion/exclusion (United Kingdom) and diversity (United States) that deny the exacerbation of inequality (Gewirtz, 1998). The corporatization of the state and education through the twin strategies of marketization and managerialism has seen a value shift based on client provider and contractual relations, significantly altering the parameters, relationships, and contexts in which school leaders work (Gewirtz & Ball, 2000). Students have become customers; parents have become clients. The individualizing and often self-serving discourses of parental choice and customer satisfaction, failing and successful schools, effectively mask increased patterns of educational inequality and a shift in the nature of relationships between the public and private, civic and civil society, producing a number of paradoxes for school leaders (Clarke & Newman, 1997; Hearn, 1998).
PARADOXICAL RELATIONS

DECENTRALIZATION AND RECENTRALIZATION

Despite the rhetoric of localized action, self-management, and flexibility that dominated 1990s structural reforms, school leaders express concern that most reform is externally imposed. School leaders and schools are thus positioned reactively not proactively. Teachers have been excluded from shaping education reform under managed change from above (Blackmore, Bigum, Hodgens, & Laskey, 1996). While structural reforms have shifted responsibility for decisions over limited resources down to principals, other financial, curriculum, and accountability mechanisms have increased central control with little scope for discretionary leadership. Whereas in the 1970s in Australia, curriculum and assessment were the contested issues at the level of the school and the center undertook the administrative work, in the year 2001, schools now do the administrative work, and curriculum and assessment are increasingly controlled from the center. The state takes greater control of education through policy, funding those programs and priorities they seek to target, but opts out of responsibility for funding education adequately or supporting schools to focus on more equitable outcomes. School leaders face considerable constraints and imposed demands as the state steers education from afar through strong policy and accountability frameworks.

These processes of recentralization sit uncomfortably against postmodern discourses about flexible local management. For principals, school-based decision making has meant more power over teachers, but it is a system that emphasizes managed change from above and not school-based change initiatives, a system that often constrains principals' capacities to work for social justice.

MANAGERIALISM AND MARKET DEMAND

School leaders are caught between the unpredictable demands of both top-down management and external market forces. Policy production is increasingly in the hands of politicians and policy execution in the hands of educators. School leaders merely implement policy decided elsewhere. Yet the market discourse is that leaders are expected to be innovative, to take risks, and to respond to local needs. Management demands long-term planning, yet markets intensify risk. Schools are now reliant on per capita funding, producing uncertainty in planning and an increased focus by leaders
on marketing their schools in order to capture and retain particular types of students. Paradoxically, markets are normalizing, promoting limited market images of what constitutes good schools and good students—being well-groomed, well-behaved, high academic achievers in well-manicured high-tech facilities. School leaders in schools with many high-risk students and a greater social mix (gender, race, class, and ethnicity) lack the capacity to mobilize a positive market reputation. Such schools, while actually adding value, quickly become susceptible to "failing school" discourses (Myers & Goldstein, 1997). The paradox is that in market systems, popular schools tend to "choose" students or encourage students who do not "fit their profile" to "opt or self select out" through a range of techniques (marketing, images, curriculum, assessment, selection procedures) (Fine, 1995; Stoll & Fink, 1997).

PARENTAL CHOICE AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Principals and teachers also have to negotiate the pressures of policy discourses invoking both parental choice and parent/community involvement. Parents are ambiguously positioned in many instances in relation to principals and to teachers—as consumers, clients, and even as employers—particularly in local self-managing schools. Parental choice is a seductive discourse, as are discourses about local or site-based management that promise to empower school communities in policymaking and practice. Yet, paradoxically, the state has steadily withdrawn support and shifted responsibility for even essential education onto individuals, families, and schools through user-pay schemes and the increased need for locally raised funds. But the state has not, in most instances, included parents in policymaking. Instead, the discourse of parental choice and local management mobilizes self-interest and a survival mentality that ignores systemic responsibilities (e.g., at-risk students), producing a polarization between schools and fragmented neighborhoods, while failing to assist those schools, communities, and students with greatest need (Woods, Levacic, & Hardman, 1998). Thus, some "public school systems have resisted taking a more active role in expanding menus of choice options to their various publics" (Freeman, 1990).

Localization is not necessarily more democratic. Women principals in small rural schools can testify to that, as can indigenous groups. Nor can community be simplistically equated to parental choice. Is a school community merely the aggregate of choices made by self-maximizing individuals? Is a school community simply equated to the members of the elected school council or board, decision makers who implement policies? What
are the implications for a sense of "the public" if some schools opt out, as some principals argue they will do anything to help their school survive no matter the impact on other schools? This mentality has little regard for "the public" provision of education in the long term. Yet there is little empirical evidence to indicate that local management improves student learning, promotes teacher professionalism, or democratic community practice.

**SYSTEM CONTROL AND LOCAL FLEXIBILITY**

The focus on formal leadership and the principalship in particular has meant that reward systems and organizational structures work against improving teaching and learning. The trend toward principals' separate industrial awards, different performance management regimes, and increased control over teachers' leave, promotion, pay, and recruitment has led to a reassertion of hierarchy that has reduced opportunities for collegiality among teachers, intensified their labor, and increased class sizes (Louis, 1998). Yet new management discourses refer to flatter organizational structures, reduced hierarchies, teamwork, and professional autonomy. Furthermore, school effectiveness and school effects research point to the centrality of good teacher-student interaction, professional collegial peer relations, and inclusive school cultures, as accounting for the most improvement in student outcomes (Myers & Goldstein, 1997; Slee & Weiner, 1998; Thrupp, 1999). There is no evidence of a direct correlation between school leadership and improvement of school outcomes. Principals have an indirect effect by providing the conditions that promote good learning for both teachers and students.

There is increasing recognition that leadership is diffuse and dispersed, occurring in a variety of ways and in numerous contexts. Significant evidence supports the view that teacher-student interaction is the most significant direct factor in improving student learning. Yet, recent policies and career structures focus on the principal as change agent and fail to recognize teacher leadership as agency for change (Bascia & Hargreaves, 2000). Teachers have been positioned in the blame and shame discourses as failures. There is much evidence that teachers feel under stress (with overtime), under pressure (to perform), and under threat (of job security) (Truman, 2000). Much reform has been dependent on teacher goodwill, and many teachers are exhausted. Much of the passion teachers brought to their work has dissipated. This paradox has significant implications for principals, as they are confronted with the core management dilemma of encouraging teachers' enthusiasm and professional agency and managing...
schools in directions prescribed by government. Getting pleasure back into teaching as well as into learning is critical.

**DEMOCRATIC AND MANAGED PROFESSIONALISM**

Discourses about the new work order tell us that we need flexible, multiskilled, and autonomous teachers to educate new types of citizen-workers. Yet teachers are themselves being reconstructed as both "dependent" on the state for innovation and not to be trusted. Governments have become more prescriptive over curriculum and pedagogy, increased surveillance, and increased control over what is taught and how it is taught through regimes of standardized testing and outcomes-based assessment. Paradoxically, teacher deprofessionalization is occurring at a time when a "knowledge society" requires a highly professional, independent, self-regulating, and informed teaching workforce (Ozga, 1998). At a time when there is a dissipation of the theory/practice divide in a more problem-focused approach to knowledge production, teacher professional judgment is under challenge.

Teachers are caught in the paradox of being told to be innovative and creative and professional when systems have the tendency to encourage compliance, increased accountability, and increased risk of censure for mistakes, leading to defensive teaching or what Howard Gardner (1991) calls "correct answer compromises." Managed professionalism produces cultures of compliance premised upon reward and punishment, top-down rather than bottom-up initiated change. This discourages teachers from taking the risks needed to produce genuine change, which benefits students. Yet change theorists argue that the above approaches are a recipe for failure. Hargreaves and Fullan (1998, p. 2) argue that "schools work where teachers have a high level of efficacy and self-belief and are weakest where teachers work in isolation, with lack of support and recognition, and experience feelings of powerlessness and alienation." If genuine change is actually to come about, it may be necessary not to impose change (Gardner, 1996). Democratic professionalism is more about the individual's pursuit of professional, culturally grounded autonomy and less about regulatory devices that expect teachers to conform to standardized administrative and accounting procedures, a mode of excellence that is culturally empty.

Thus the postmodern tension in education in high-risk low-trust times is between self-interest and private notions of freedom on the one hand and civic engagement and mutual responsibility on the other (Freeman, 1999). Is education a private or public good? Is the solution privatization
and the mobilization of individual choice? I would argue that there is now sufficient evidence in the United Kingdom, United States, New Zealand, and Australia to indicate that such a solution exacerbates social, and therefore educational, inequality, with severe implications for the public good.

For school leaders, the advantages of reform are discourses about change agency, student (client?) focused learning organizations, professionalism, autonomy, flexibility, flatter structures, teamwork, and people-centered management. But the downside is the focus on performativity and financial management and the shift from citizenship to market values predicated upon competitive individualism, producing fundamental changes in social relationships and value systems in schools premised upon the new contractualism (Blackmore, 2001). This has produced a dissonance between the values many principals espouse as professionals and the practices expected of them by systems. It has also meant that leadership has become more about risk management than risk taking. Issues of equity and social justice are high-risk areas. Recognizing and valuing difference, inclusive images, and democratic practices are not as marketable as the dominant norms of academic success or well-groomed students.

There is a different type of crisis in school leadership looming in the next decade. School systems are finding that there are fewer applicants for the more demanding positions of leadership, whether in Australia, New Zealand, England, the United States, or Canada (Brooking, 2000; Moller, 2001). With the mass exodus of teachers as 50% retire in the next 5 years, what does teaching offer to attract the new mobile, autonomous, multitasked, professional worker? The lack of applicants for school leadership is part of a wider crisis regarding women in leadership, given that in most systems women constitute the majority of teachers and are still underrepresented in leadership. For example, in Australian government schools, women constitute 70% of the teachers and 40% of the principal class, most being assistant principals. Younger women teachers now express ambivalence about seeking to become leaders in formal positions, citing not only the intensification of their work and juggling the demands of home and school, but also a rejection of dominant value systems and images of leadership. The common concern of many potential women principals is that they do not want to “become like that” or have to make decisions “antithetical” to their professional and personal beliefs (Blackmore, 1999). They see leadership in schools as about business management and image management, not about teaching and learning. Their responses tell us something about the
importance of values, commitment, and professionalism when it comes to school leadership.

**FEMINIST PREDICAMENTS**

The paradoxes of educational change and self-management give rise to a particular set of predicaments for women in leadership, for feminists in terms of policy and practice, and for feminist research on educational leadership. The current leadership crisis cannot merely be explained away by the failure of gender equity policies, the resistance of male-dominated executive management cultures, or the reluctance of individual women.

First, feminist discourses on leadership have been consumed during the 1990s by discussions about leadership styles. The focus has been on processes rather than on educationally substantive issues of fair distribution of resources, values, and desired educational outcomes. Much research has focused on descriptions and explanations of how women “cope” in leadership under difficult circumstances but has not drawn from wider feminist debates in philosophy and political theory about social justice issues (Fraser, 1997; Hekman, 2000; Young, 1990). Equity policies, working largely within a liberal individualistic framework that focuses on procedural justice, have promoted as the desired outcome “getting more women in educational leadership” on the assumption that a critical mass of women in leadership would produce a shift in values toward social justice. The focus on getting into, and surviving, leadership has not produced alternative conceptualizations of leadership.

Instead, these approaches have encouraged new essentializing tendencies. Whereas first-wave feminism sought equal access on the basis of equality, only to find that citizenship was itself a masculine concept excluding women (Hekman, 2000), second-wave feminism argued for representation on the basis of some shared female identity. This position, arising out of the identity politics of the 1980s, emphasized the differences between men and women and thus, by implication, implied that there was a universal category of woman that is inherently different. Hence, the dominance of cultural feminist discourses about women’s styles of leadership, promoting women as being more democratically inclined, good people managers and communicators. Certainly empirical evidence confirms that many women leaders do prefer democratic approaches, a focus on teaching and learning, collaborative work, and so forth, but these are learned and not inherent dispositions, skills, values, and preferences, developed in the various communities of practice in which women have worked as
mothers, daughters, parents, volunteer workers, as well as subordinates in public institutions and workplaces. The social relations of gender encourage in women relational concerns about listening to and caring for others.

But the caring and sharing language that derives from nonformal communitarian and collaborative communities of practice, when taken into more formal roles of public institutions, communities of practice where men have largely dominated and learned particular language and behaviors, is not equally valued. Perpetuating male/female dualisms that suggest that all male leaders are macho and all female leaders are caring and sharing merely encourages a complementarity between these "naturalized" positions rather than an engagement around power inequalities embedded in the social relations of gender, class, and race. The essentializing discourses about all women being caring and sharing also incorrectly assumes that all women are feminists, seek social justice, and share political agendas. Just being female does not mean that one is feminist—many women in leadership do little for other women and care little for equity (Blackmore, 1999).

At the same time, many second-wave feminists sought leadership positions during the 1970s in the hope that leadership would empower them to undertake equity work. Once in leadership, they found their energies consumed with market and management matters and reform agendas imposed from above. They also were positioned on the one hand, by feminist discourses about leadership as being not caring and sharing enough, and on the other hand, by dominant managerialist discourses as being too caring and sharing (Blackmore, 1999). Women's styles of leadership discourses fail to undermine dominant hegemonic notions of leadership, as they can be too readily reduced to complementarity, that is, women's skills and capacities complement, but do not challenge or replace, dominant masculinist views of leadership based on rational decision making.

In the corporate context, entrepreneurial leadership is still modeled on particular hegemonic masculinist images of being strong, able to make the hard decisions, independent, taking unilateral action. This dominant hegemonic masculinity excludes alternative approaches and images as being weak. But not all men are macho, hard-nosed, hyperrational, and claiming to represent the universal interest. Indeed, there is evidence that the very masculinist nature of the macho management cultures that entrepreneurship exacerbates institutionalizes particular modes of masculinity and creates a type of "masculine subjectivity" that can be taken up by men or women. This macho hegemonic masculinity actually reduces the options available to men, positioning other forms of masculinity as weaker and lesser (e.g., gay or indigenous masculinities) as well as most modes of fem-
ininity (Kerfoot & Whitehead, 2000). The aims, therefore, are to broaden notions of masculinity and femininity beyond macho white-male leadership and to encourage and accept a wider repertoire of leadership images, practices, and worldviews.

Finally, affirmative action policies encouraging women to move up into leadership have benefited individual women but not the collective of women. Given the unequal social relations of gender, race, and class that operate in organizations, gender relations work differently, depending upon where individuals are in relation to an organization, as well as how individuals relate to the corporate culture of the organization, culture itself being a highly contested notion (Harlow & Hearn, 1995; Prichard & Deem, 1999). Women moving into formal leadership do provide another way of viewing organizational life, as outsiders inside institutional positions of power. But women in management are also privileged relative to other women, as members of the new managerial professional class. Women in leadership have highly paid jobs relative to most women in the labor market, but their position is based on their silence with regard to the structured inequalities of that labor market, the implicit contractual relationship of formal leadership. Women are often appointed in recognition, and indeed as representatives, of their gender and yet are constrained by corporate cultures that fail to address diversity within management structures and cultures. In that sense they are co-opted or "incorporated."

In the long term, the leadership crisis is part of a wider crisis in the professions. Feminists have sought to effectively mobilize discourses of professionalism to improve the position of women teachers. Discourses of professionalism have been mobilized against teacher unionists. Brint (1994) suggests that there has been a recent shift from the advocacy and service model of the professional of the 20th century to one of technical expertise and competence that can be sold to any buyer. That is, there is a shift toward self-maximizing and self-managing individuals of corporate times, what Casey (1995) calls "designer employees." If leadership is reduced to technical expertise and not to substantive positions of value, if leadership is reduced in a market-based system to looking after one’s own school without concern for education in the wider sense and educational equality, then leadership (and indeed the profession) will become self-serving and inward.

The next section explores principles that inform leadership practice that is premised upon substantive issues and understandings about socially just schooling. It seeks to address the issues raised in the previous sections, arguing that social justice can be the touchstone for the core work of teaching and learning, generating teachers creativity and agency and systemic responsibility.
LEADERSHIP FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE IN HIGH-RISK POSTMODERN TIMES?

The postmodern emphasis on leadership style needs to be replaced by a focus on substantive issues: leading for whom and for what. That is, a strong, moral, and passionate leadership that will educate the public about human rights and obligations toward fellow human beings and not leadership that gives over responsibility to the market. Democratic notions of professionalism promote loyalty to, and concern about, more than one’s classroom, one’s school, or even one’s system, and a broader commitment to a set of professional standards and ideals and education as a field of practice. Managerialist professionalism is premised upon being able to display a particular set of competencies, to adhere to standards set elsewhere outside the profession, to be publicly accountable, and to be a technical expert within the field of education (Brennan, 1996). As a historical moment, it is critical for the profession of teaching to self-determine which track teacher professionalism will take.

The issue is whether the notion of professionalism, a term that has been used both for and against teachers and principals as a means for renewal and for control, has the capacity to do the work of social justice. Sachs (1999) advocates activist professionalism, which is rooted in orthodox notions of professionalism: expertise (technical knowledge over specific field of practice), altruism (ethical concern for clients), and autonomy (need to exercise control over entry into and practice of profession). Activist professionalism draws on notions of active trust and generative politics, which share values and principles built on strategic alliances between groups, in a wider educational alliance for collective action—to “improve at the macro level all aspects of education and at the micro level student learning outcomes and teacher status” (Sachs, 1999, p. 6). A generative politics, while a defense of the politics of the public domain, does not situate itself in the old opposition between state and market (Sachs, 1999). It asks whose issues are brought on the agenda, how do these issues become public, who provides the moral and intellectual leadership, who is inclusively promoted, how can trust and collaboration overcome traditional suspicions and reservations, how can alternative forms be established to promote a socially just education.

Yeatman (1998, p. 17) argues that the capacity for activism by marginalized groups in a period when social life is increasingly subjected to policy interventions is made more or less possible “depending on whether the government of the day favors an executive approach to policy or a participative approach.” That is, value systems underpinning school governance as well
Leadership for Socially Just Schooling

as policy production, dissemination, and implementation, have particular normative dimensions that are either more or less democratic. In turn, systems promote executive or partnership models of accountability—the former tends to be more closed and narrow, the latter more open to questions about socially just outcomes. A more critical policy approach based on social justice principles would ask: To what extent do education policies support, disrupt, or subvert within and beyond the educational system:

- exploitative relationships;
- processes of marginalization and exclusion;
- processes based on recognition, respect, care, and mutuality;
- practices of cultural imperialism;
- violent practices (Gewirtz, 1998)?

Leadership is a social practice, not just an intellectual matter, and as a social practice it is also a moral and emotional matter. Good leaders address the moral dimension of change, seek to develop high levels of trust and openness, and display a capacity to make sound ethical judgments, but not from a position of superior moral judgment. Authority has to be earned because trust is different from authoritarianism—authority derives from the capacity to achieve the shared purpose. Leadership is also about passion, changing hearts as well as changing minds, for rationality without compassion is irrational. Leadership is not just about good ideas or vision but also giving intuition and emotion a respected role in the change process (Blackmore, 1999). Leadership is about learning: learning to focus on the particular while keeping the context in mind; learning to listen; learning to recognize significant cultural shifts; and learning to understand the emotional and moral economies of change (Hopfl & Linsted, 1993).

Leadership is also about being able to read the global and relate it to the local. The task focus required of school leadership is to know what to do; the context aspect of educational leadership is to know why (Mant, 1997). To promote practices of an ethical (Haynes, 1998) and inclusive school (Slee, 2000) requires leadership informed by research and professional judgment and not just data-driven policy. It will be about principals being able to undertake short-term strategic and practical advances that deal with circumstances now, while keeping the more altruistic long-term view of social justice in mind by asking questions of policy and its implications not just for their students but for all students (Blackmore, 1999).

There is now an emerging trend, after a decade of reform in schooling moving toward self-managing institutions, to reinventing school support systems, as it is recognized that schools, as individuals, cannot do it alone (Wong, 1999). This trend recognizes that the quality of the educational
experience of the future will be dependent on the relations between systems, communities, and groups; the values that imbue those relations; and the social and structural networks that underpin them, rather than on individual schools. This also requires a more interventionist state, strong not weak democracies in a high-risk environment, because individual schools need support to do their work of vocational and citizenship formation.

Education is about identity formation and about the social. In recent times, with emphasis on the immediate, vocational, practical, and useful, this has largely been forgotten. We can prepare students by providing them with the metaskills and capacity to learn new skills as well as with the motivation to continue to learn for changing workplaces. But we also need to educate students in more enduring values—for example, to respect others, to recognize and value difference, to develop a capacity to work with others. These are more than skills of team building, they are substantive beliefs about how individuals relate to their wider group, community, and society.

SOCIALLY JUST SYSTEMS OF EDUCATION: THE THREE “Rs”

In a network society, rather than focusing on discrete learning organizations, we need to refocus leadership to look also outside to networks, to develop relationships based upon the principles of socially just learning systems, networks, and partnerships. Changing structures does not necessarily change cultures, that is, the practices, values, or relationships that inform how systems work. The basics or three “Rs” of socially just learning systems, networks, alliances, or partnerships would be responsibility, recognition, and reciprocity.

RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility encompasses the following dimensions.

- Responsibility of governments for systemwide equity and support of schools and teachers.
- Responsibility of all schools for all kids.
- Responsibility of all teachers for professional renewal.
- Responsibility of all partners for learning outcomes.

This requires us to think about reinventing the public in ways that deal with substantive issues of social justice and care as the basis of a truly civil
society. Nel Noddings (1992) talks about an ethic of care, which is about a sense of public responsibility of professional educators, not just one exercised for a particular school or particular students. It is this collective impulse that distinguishes schools from the workplace and other communitarian impulses in the home and locally.

RECOGNITION

Recognizing difference pedagogically means recognizing difference instead of naturalizing difference. For example, we need to note how assessment practices and pedagogies are infused with cultural understandings. Recognizing difference culturally is about equally valuing difference but within a negotiated understanding as to what are shared values. This is not the same as recognizing difference structurally, such as a multiplicity of self-managing schools that institutionalizes inclusion and exclusion on the basis of social, cultural, economic, and religious difference within society. For example, as Freeman (1999) argues regarding charter schools so often advocated in Australia:

When charter school policy making abstains from vigorous open debate over democratic values and commitment to issues of social and educational justice, charter schools are tacitly given free rein to occupy any of the moral territory stretching between a narcissistic brand of individualism on one extreme and a numbing social conformity on another. In a technologically driven postmodern society growing more culturally assertive and economically polarized, suffering profound dislocation in family and community life, neither alternative appears particularly hopeful. (p. 40)

RECIPROCITY

Reciprocity means trust and openness based on mutual accountability (between government and schools; between executives and teachers, parents and teachers, children and teachers) and both-way learning. This includes recognizing what communities can bring into schools as well as what communities can do for schools.

PUTTING SOCIAL JUSTICE ON THE LEADERSHIP AGENDA: MORE SUBSTANCE AND LESS STYLE

Working from the basis of such principles, leaders should ask particular questions about key aspects of their work. For example, a socially just
learning system, network, or partnership would then require *socially just markets*. Third Way policies under New Labour in England are now struggling with whether "marketlike features can coexist with collective action and public accountability combining the dynamism of markets with the public interest in mind" (Giddens, 1994, p. 100). English research suggests that this may not be possible, but that distribution of educational goods on market principles increases rather than reduces risk for individuals, and increases rather than reduces educational inequality across systems. A socially just view of markets raises questions as to how you work with neighborhood schools, how you promote the school publicly, and what types of practices exclude some kids and not others? Does your school population represent the mix of the local population? If not, why not?

*Socially just curricula* would require us to think about whose knowledge, culture, and belief systems are included and excluded? Curricular justice would be premised upon citizenship and common schooling, where no one group imposes decisions on another and the curriculum is inclusive. This advantages the most disadvantaged by reconstructing the mainstream to embody the interests of the least advantaged and recognizes the ongoing historical project in which curriculum is produced. It also seeks to engage and negotiate constantly with the above two principles (Connell, 1991).

Bigum and Lauksheer (1999) see a *socially just high-technology future* as one based on:

- prioritizing—getting teachers familiar with the use of technology so they can make sound educational choices;
- complementarity—adopting a particular technology for as broad a context as possible (e.g., relation of language and literacy across the curriculum, home-school relations, etc.);
- workability—considering whether the new technology improves working conditions of teachers and students, inviting feedback on teacher and student use of technology;
- equity—guaranteeing that equal access and equal competence are the basic rights of all students.

Social justice requires that we focus on *socially just literacies* based upon a sociocultural approach that treats children as "linguistic detectives" who seek to acquire a range of literacies, intelligences, and "contingent repertoires," therefore broadening the notion of school success (Comber, 1998). This means we cannot reduce notions of disadvantage to simplistic measures of literacy or numeracy. While recent policies focusing upon encouraging parental support of student literacies assume we familiarize parents
with school expectations and routines in a one-way flow from school to home, a cultural apprenticeship suggests a two-way flow of influence between the school and the home and community. Parents bring in outside discourses, different literacies, and act as teachers in a form of cultural apprenticeship. Children can acquire differential literacies from their experiences in schooling, which use the cultural resources of home and community. Barbara Comber (1998) asks:

- What if these designs were infused with explicit ethic of social justice and community responsibility rather than competitive individualism?
- What if we reinvested the literacy curriculum with power and pleasure?
- What if teachers had time for research, for rejuvenation, for remembering, not just literacy?

Cultural apprenticeship approaches to literacy see language as important for the maintenance of cultures and cultural knowledge, which are in themselves productive in the most commercial as well as cultural sense. It means shifting from the 1980s view of assimilating migrants and indigenous peoples to the standardized "proper" language of the colonizer, while recognizing that access and competency in standard language for the colonized is also important.

And, of course, a socially just system, network, or partnership would be premised upon gender justice. Gender justice is when boys' and girls' education is located within a wider social justice framework, which recognizes what Connell calls "gender multiculturalism," that is, recognition of diversity and multiple modes of masculinity and femininity. We need to work with each other over issues of how masculinity and femininity constitute key aspects of student, teacher, and indeed, leadership identity, and to take personal and collective responsibility for gender practices in schools. We also need to provide critical pedagogies, which address the social relations of gender as well as the more therapeutic exercises that make us feel good. This means feminists taking on issues of masculinity in alliances with profeminist men, and seeing masculinities and femininities as being in a state of ongoing renegotiation within the social relations of gender (Lingard & Douglas, 1999).

Gender justice means that not only should we as feminist leaders focus on getting things done effectively, but that our focus on pedagogical leadership takes into account a wider set of social, economic, and political phenomenon. Sergiovanni (1998) refers to pedagogical leadership as being the difference between leadership premised upon social contractualism (e.g., entrepreneurship, incentive schemes, and performance pay) and that premised upon a social covenant of trust, mutual respect, kinship, a sense
of duty, community responsibility, and professional ethics. In an educational system built on a narrative of self-interest, psychological egoism, and competitive individualism, when there is no bonus pay or promotion, the contract is readily broken. Liberal instrumentalism sees schooling as distributing goods that benefit learning and function as opportunities (e.g., a student reads in order to get a job). Individual students are committed to goods for their own purposes, and grades function as the currency. Equal opportunity policies exist merely as a means to fair competition.

A narrative of a social covenant, while more altruistic, has more enduring moral values, a sense of cooperation, and willingness for cooperation. Altruism does not have to be positioned in opposition to "being real." It does mean putting equity as central, and that is difficult in real terms. It does not mean rejecting corporate sponsorship, just expecting that sponsors exercise corporate citizenship—that corporations give back to communities to balance what they take out. Equity is not a "luxury item" but an essential aspect of a truly civil society, which will, incidentally, also promote economic growth. It recognizes that education and training are about building social capital and the formation of citizenship identities, where workers are more than human resources.

This means linking education back to citizenship and not just as an arm of economic policy. It is about bringing the civil and civic into the same sphere of activity, and recognizing that social capital is what binds society. That is, it requires us to ask governments central questions about where parental choice as a principle is taking us as a society. Justice without care is not an ideal basis for citizenship, and liberal societies based upon the autonomous self-maximizing individual are noncommunal because all social contracts are at a distance and based on rational self-interest. A minimalist view of democracy or passive citizenship is an inadequate model of citizenship for the 21st century. Active citizenship, as activist professionalism, is more than exercising rights, it is also about realizing responsibilities. We need to have public reasons why citizens support public policies, ones not totally grounded in our distinctive religions or interest groups. Schools therefore need to see their role as developing a generalized empathy for a culturally diverse global society—to expand their "attachment to strangers." Without this, global networks or virtual communities on the Internet are lacking any educational function.

A socially just education requires educational leaders to practice moral outrage at the persistence, if not worsening, of homelessness, hunger, and poverty, which are not going away, but worsening. It requires educational communities to defend and extend principles of human dignity, community, and realization of democratic process; to reinvent a sense of commitment to the public as a social good; and to restructure market models to
limited spheres, which improve social relations and conditions of learning. It is about developing learning networks and partnerships premised upon trust and reciprocity between schools, communities, and among individuals. It is about recognizing that while we may need new literacies, new technologies, and even new kids for new times, that education is still and will continue to be a social, ethical, and political practice. It is about expecting that the best school is my local school.

REFERENCES


presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal.


Jill Blackmore is an associate professor at the School of Social and Cultural Studies in the Faculty of Education, Deakin University. She is also director of the Deakin Centre for Education and Change, the past managing editor of the Australian Educational Researcher, and currently the regional editor of the International Journal of Educational Leadership.