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1 Foundations and history of the social aesthetic

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Educational leadership and administration have been the subject of explosive growth in scholarship over the last two decades as governments, administrators, and educators have struggled to come to terms with the management of a mechanistic and hierarchical system of organisations that is hopelessly archaic, and, in most respects, terminally ill. Doomed as it is, this unwieldy and hoary dinosaur has managed to rouse itself from its inertia only enough to stumble clumsily and weighly into another century. Leadership studies has unluckily been grasped by many as the panacea to redress decades of short-sighted planning, compounded by countless poor decisions in many cases driven by ill-conceived ministerial and departmental mandates. Either out of desperation or denial, those who optimistically jerk the reins of power send thousands of educators and administrators to conferences and seminars around the world in the hope that they will return to the field with renewed vigour, inflamed with passion by whichever failed motivational speaker or shoddy academic addressed them after the de rigueur morning consumption of bran muffins and decaffeinated coffee.

This book, on the other hand, does not maintain that there are ‘seven simple steps’ to reforming education – there are no such steps that can be applied to a fluid and dynamic environment, and it is risible to suggest that there might be. It will never be reduced to a convenient PowerPoint presentation, nor will it ask you to reflect on your practice and create a ‘vision statement’ for your educational credo. It will not ask you to ‘think only positively’ about change and thus condemn yourself to a life of shadowy half-truths. It contains not a single snappy acronym or mnemonic device, and does not suggest that you begin to develop a ‘leadership portfolio’ with your ‘team’ and head off on a ‘retreat’ with an easel and clutching a fistful of whiteboard markers – unless that ostensible retreat is really an excuse to knock back martinis with your colleagues to reach a state of critical enlightenment.

The intent of this book is to provide a series of aesthetic lenses through which to look anew at the many paradigms of leadership in education and administration. Aesthetics is an old and powerful discipline, and through it is developed our sense of who we are, what we can and cannot tolerate, and our experiential understanding of our environment. As with all else, there is attraction, repulsion, beauty and ugliness, and in each is shrouded, without false clarity, a manifestation of the truth.
There are already established areas in organisational and administrative literature that capture creative activity relevant to educational administration and leadership. One is dramaturgy derived from Goffman (1959; see Brissett and Edgley 1975; Burke 1966; Burns 1972; Coombs 1980; Edelman 1971; 1977; Gardner 1992). However, this approach has two constraints: first, it has been attached most often to administrative behaviour rather than to leadership; and second, it has been most often explored in its functionalist form as a sociological phenomenon, instead of a purely aesthetic expression. Additionally, as Borreca points out (1993: 58), dramaturgical studies went into decline in the mid-1980s as it seemed that little new could be attained, effectively ending contributions the dramaturgical could have made just as leadership studies, and its sub-field charisma studies, became fashionable.

An aesthetic approach is also suggested clearly in organisational culture studies, especially in the more symbolic rather than the functionalist schools, although the latter also points to the many constructions in verbal, behavioural and artefactual form that issue from creative organisational activity. For example, Smircich defines organisations symbolically as culture-producing phenomena: in addition to goods and services, 'they also produce distinctive cultural artefacts such as rituals, legends, and ceremonies' (1983: 344). In her root metaphor approach (Smircich 1983: 347–8), the formal characteristics of organisation are seen to be products of an expressive process including thought, language and interaction using the tools of the aesthetic: images and symbols (e.g. iconographic objects, logos, mottoes, trophies), and styles of behaviour to produce organisational artefacts. The role leadership plays in organisational culture is central – in fact, to some theorists consists its main role, although most often from a culturally functionalist perspective. Pfeffer (1981) and Schein (1985) regard leadership as essentially concerned with the creation and management of culture, composed of language, symbolism, rituals, and ceremonies, focusing often on the creation of symbols of power, such as insignia. Deal and Kennedy (1982), Deal and Peterson (1991), and Deal (1995) more explicitly discuss the creative role of leaders in shaping the symbolic nature of organisations, consisting of artefacts, stories, and dramatic roles of organisational actors.

During the 1990s, a number of organisation theorists pioneered an aesthetic analysis, largely derived from anthropology and cultural studies, and from pioneering work by Edmund Leach in the 1950s, for whom aesthetics formed the basis for communication and ethics in groups. The field has evolved through three stages. The first is, from a predominantly trivialised view of aesthetics as it relates to leisure and non-essential aspects of organisational life (such as inconsequential furnishings). Witkins argues that aesthetics has been trivialised because it emphasises the sensuous: 'It is the separation of the sensuous aspect of aesthetic experience from knowing and understanding that has led to the trivialisation of the aesthetic domain' (1990: 327). The second stage is the functionalist perspective in the 1970s and 1980s, when aesthetics was appreciated in its symbolic and representational form serving conventional administrative goals (what
Gagliardi, 1996, calls the 'corporate view'). And finally, it has arrived at an independent analysis derived from aesthetic theory, regarded as the ontological underpinning of organisational life. In this latter sense, organisation, administration, and leadership are aesthetic constructions – the means by which interpersonal relationships and organisations take form. While many writers in organisational aesthetics still adhere to some extent to a functionalist view (e.g. Ramirez 1996), a significant number have explored aesthetics as a foundational discipline (notably Gagliardi 1996; Strati 1990; 1992; 1999; White 1996). What distinguishes foundationalism is that it avoids 'any distinction between what is a piece of artwork and what is an object of routine practice, and between what are art events and the events of everyday life' (Strati 1992: 570).

An aesthetic theory of social reality derives from German idealism traceable from Kant through Schelling, Hegel, and Schopenhauer, for whom the aesthetic is integral to insight, intellectual freedom, and conceptual formation. Baumgarten, also in the 1750s, developed a bipartite theory of knowledge based partially on aesthetics, in which intellectual knowledge rests on logic, and sensory knowledge rests on aesthetics (see Wessell 1972). A contemporary of his, Vico, also explored aesthetics, not as a philosophical but an anthropological and psychological inquiry in the 'human sciences'. As Hofstadter (1965: 2–4) demonstrates, this central role of the aesthetic was adopted by post-idealistic thinkers in social and political philosophy such as Nietzsche, Croce, Dilthey, Cassirer, Maritain, Whitehead, Dewey, and Heidegger. Important also in this tradition are Georg Simmel's aesthetically grounded sociology, developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (see Davis 1973) and Weber's value-orientation theory of social action and method in achieving verstehen that draws upon 'an empathic or artistically appreciative quality' (1968: 5). Art provides the means by which the three functions of symbolism, expression, and meaning are integrated (Hofstadter 1965: 6), evident in the Romantic view of politics as an art form (Turkle 1975: 86). The means by which these are formed socially can be derived from the expressive theories of art proposed by Croce, Cassirer, Collingwood, and Langer. For example, Cassirer argues that conventional artistic activity serves an ordering function to our understanding: 'Art gives us order in the apprehension of visible, tangible, and audible appearances ... The infinite potentialities of which we had but a dim and obscure presentiment are brought to light by the lyric poet, by the novelist, and by the dramatist' (1956: 213, 215). It is from this heritage that Morgan draws in Images of Organization (1986), where experience is mediated through mental images of form.

The work of Kant and Baumgarten in large part derives from their idealist or Platonic lineage (Roberts 1988: 34), as does the aesthetic theory of Hegel and the later development of existentialism through the Nietzschean tradition (see Cazeaux 2000). The very style in which Plato wrote, fictional dialogues or conversations with a strongly developed poetics replete with metaphor, simile et cetera necessary to the dialectic method, emphasises the underlying aesthetic foundation to knowledge, ethics, and the political community. It is this kind of reading of Plato, engaged in the conversational and rhetorical qualities of the
texts rather than doctrinal (Gadamer 1986), that distinguishes Gadamer’s hermeneutic disposition towards the ‘art of dramatization’ (1991). In other words, Plato used what we would now call literary sources and style to critique ethics and politics, two of the most famous from the Republic being the cave analogy (Book VII) and the shipparable (Book VI) to illustrate the principles of authority, management, and leadership. The critical role that aesthetic modes, such as literature and music, play in educating people toward ethical and political ideals permeates his dialogues, but one of the most explicit arguments to this effect is found in the Theaetetus (1990), in Book III of the Republic and in Book VII where the abstract aesthetic principles of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, harmony, and music are deemed necessary to ward off vulgarity and decay in the development of reason (see Bowie 2000 for a discussion of the role of the arts in the German idealist tradition, particularly the role of aesthetics in knowledge theory).

Plato’s conception of human nature, the state, and moral and political values, reflect an underlying aesthetic associated with his theory of forms (the Platonic solids) – the unchanging, objective, and perfect conceptions of truth and knowledge that exist on an ideal ideational plane. Aesthetic principle governing social reality can be seen in the tripartite form human nature takes (composed of affect, courage, and reason), and in his analogous conceptualisation of the ideal state in the Republic (consisting of three classes: commoners or artisans, soldiers, and guardians) (Book V). Contrary to many popular conceptions of the Republic being primarily a text on ethics or politics, six of the ten books are devoted to educational topics covering curriculum, the nature and role of teaching and their relationship to hierarchy, discipline, authority, ethics, and political values – as are many of the early Socratic dialogues like the ‘Euthyphro’ and the ‘Meno’ (Plato 1981). Here aesthetic expression is regarded as necessary for the education of the whole person towards the good consisting of wisdom, bravery, temperance, and justice (Book IV), which in turn are required for the development of the political system and the state (see Janaway 2002 on the role of the arts in Plato’s argument for aesthetics in moral and political education). The philosopher kings or guardians are analogous in their administrative role to the mandarin tradition in Westminster systems (or any other elite-type administrative cadre produced traditionally in such countries as France, Germany and Russia), distinguishable by an intellectual formation characterised by cultivation, in large part produced through aesthetic education.

The purpose of philosophy, and of aesthetics, for Plato is to point the way to an ideal free from the degeneration, corruption and decay characteristic of a world not yet freed from evil and injustice. Aesthetic principles govern his conceptualisation of the Good at all levels, from the nature of the individual, the nature of social interaction, the structure of society, and, in particular, the nature of political systems (composed of leadership and administration) that have risen above the degenerate forms of political ‘constitution’: the timocracy produced by an aristocratic rule of honour; the oligarchic governed by wealth; the democratic ruled by licentiousness; and the tyrannical driven by violence.
It is proposed here that one can extrapolate from this relationship of the ideational to the actional as fundamental ordering principles, much as Weber did from Kantian concepts in developing social action typologies in Economy and Society. One can also use Khatchadourian’s approach to the aesthetic: ‘what we refer to or think of as the work of art is at least in part the sensible patterns qua kinds of patterns’ (1971: 10). Administrative and leadership behaviour, then, are accessible to aesthetic analysis, such as the aims, enjoyments, ascriptions, psychological and epistemic factors, aesthetic valuation, and social utility of any work of art. Viewing the aesthetic domain within a general theory of culture and society, argues Hunter, has ‘the potential for inaugurating a new and fruitful mode of reflection ... aesthetics appears both to embody and forestall [in a developmental dialectic of the ideal and real] the unfolding of all that we might become’ (1992: 349). The aesthetic, then, is the way that leadership constructs organisational form and represents itself to its members and the outside world.

Fundamental characteristics of social reality need to be viewed for an aesthetic analysis of the transformational function of administration as heterogeneous, dynamic and conflictual, since significant organisational and subjective change is inherent to the phenomenon. Viewing organisations dialectically, as advocated by Murphy, requires stressing contradictions, inconsistencies, and paradoxes: ‘It portrays a universe of dissonance underlying apparent order and seeks deeper orders beyond the dissonance’ (1971: 117). As creatively formed, organisational activity continually evolves. The fixing and framing of social reality through symbols, myths, and customs, are themselves the products of processes borne out of a continuous flux, an approach taken by Pettigrew (1979: 572) who emphasises the creative activity of people in organisations in constructing and managing meaning. This flux is described by Turner (1986: 24–5) as a dialectical reflexivity between the workaday world and cultural performance, as both product and cause of change in social action. Organisations are constantly re-enacted and revised as social actors negotiate their way through organisational life, construct realities, ascribe values, and establish meaning for themselves individually and for the organisation collectively. Organisation, then, like any cultural construction, is the product of creative acts. Ebers emphasises this in his contention that imagination serves as the creative power that allows one to create the visions, management of meaning, symbolic action, and enactment necessary to organisation (1985: 54–5).

The connection between leadership and creativity is assumed, although not critically developed, in much of the leadership and charisma literature, beginning with Weber’s treatment of the phenomenon. He contrasts charisma with rationality and routine: ‘mass versus personality, the “routine” versus the “creative” entrepreneur, the conventions of ordinary people versus the inner freedom of the pioneering and exceptional man, institutional rules versus the spontaneous individual, the drudgery and boredom of everyday existence versus the imaginative flight of the genius’ (Gerth and Mills 1946: 53). The earliest modern literature by Burns and House include, in their portrayal of transforming and charismatic leadership respectively, a strong creative dimension. For Burns, it
was a creative capacity that could result in new institutions such as nations, social movements, political parties, or a bureaucracy (1978: 454), and for House, it was characterised as a 'creative or innovative quality' (1977: 190). Trice and Beyer (1993), also, credit charisma's influence as primarily a creative one.

Many of the characteristics commonly associated with leadership, and charisma in particular, are highly suggestive of an underlying aesthetic, however, most frequently interpreted in social terms. These include the articulation of a vision (Conger and Kanungo 1988a: 325; 1998) and myth-making (Conger and Kanungo 1988a: 326), highly developed linguistic skills oriented towards the 'skills of artful persuasion and meaning making' (Conger and Kanungo 1988b: 316), and performative abilities such as the heroic role (Burns 1978: 244), expressiveness (Bensman and Givant 1975; Willner 1968), and presenting an image through 'impression management' (Conger and Kanungo 1988c: 82, 85–7; see also Conger and Kanungo 1998; Bass 1988; House 1977: 205–6). Intellectual creativity was identified by Burns (1978: 163) as a defining trait, further developed by Bass as the stimulation of followers' thinking and imagination as one of the four key attributes of transformational, and therefore, charismatic, leadership (1985: 62; also Avolio et al. 1991; Bass and Avolio 1994). Their originality, according to Bass, extends to their use of 'symbolism, mysticism, imagery and fantasy' to construct and convey the distal goals and utopian outcomes of charisma (1985: 6). Conger and Kanungo promote in the training of charismatic leaders the use of 'creativity training programs' to enhance both the creation of an organisational vision and in developing the 'skills of artful persuasion and meaning making' (1988b: 315–6). While their conception of charismatic abilities is still tied to conventional organisational management and behavioural psychology, it does lay necessary groundwork for an aesthetic of charisma.

Shamir more explicitly assumes an aesthetic in the way that he identifies the source of charismatic authority as originating in their employment of artistic disclosure in making contact with the 'vital layer' of reality (1991: 87). Therefore, behaviour characterised of the charismatic is not only pragmatic and goal-oriented, but also 'expressive of feelings, aesthetic values and self-concepts' (Shamir et al 1993: 580). Boal and Bryson, also, contend that charisma is 'intimately and unusually involved in the creation of a new or different world ... [consisting] of all the sensory, affective, and cognitive events subjectively experienced by the actor' (1988: 12–13). The verbs used in describing the activities of charisma appeal frequently to such artistic roles: orchestrate, mesmerise, create, shape, innovate, form, recast, design, construct, play, project, perform, generate, conceive, reorder.

The essential characteristic of leadership, and, following Weber's definition of all authentic leadership as charismatic, lies in the creation of new organisational, conceptual, and behavioural practices. As such, the study of leadership is also arguably an aesthetic field, a study of form. A few pioneered the aesthetic, like Tead (1951) and Selznick (1957), followed by Eble (1978), Wildavsky (1979), House (1982), Peters and Waterman (1982), and Duke (1986). However, their work is largely functionalist in approach, reducing the art and craft of leadership
to deft decision-making, exercise of judgement, both pragmatic and moral, and a greater facility in interpersonal relations. Duke, as well as Peters and Waterman, separates the creative from routine aspects of leaders’ roles, relegating the aesthetic to that ‘in’ the organisation rather than ‘of’ it. One of the most intriguing to adopt an aesthetic perspective on managing is Kuhn:

To borrow from Virginia Woolf a definition of managing as an art form, the manager continually affirms a point of view that is constructed and sustained through creative, aesthetic affirmation. Managing becomes art as managers create meaning, construct form, recognize patterns and place values on their relationships with others, both within and outside the organisation. They affirm the structures of their perceptions in the face of the chaotic elements of daily life and the contradictions in nature and even the negations in themselves and in others. The meanings of their affirmations are as fleeting and fragile as the vital, creative part of the organization itself; it is art that exists only in process. It is in fact processional art.

(1982: 12–13)

Klein and Diket (1999) consider an artistic expression of leadership through the management of space. However, they distinguish between artistic and non-artistic spaces, rather than using aesthetics as an ontological foundation to all organisational form. Selznick comes closer to a foundational notion of organisational aesthetics, for whom ‘the art of the creative leader is the art of the institution building, the reworking of human and technological materials to fashion an organization that embodies new and enduring values’ (1957: 152–3), however he, too, restricts this only to ‘creative’ leaders. Goodsell (1992) comes close to an appreciation of a foundational aesthetic in his consideration of styles and forms of administration. While aesthetic features of furniture and decoration do compose and reflect organisational identity, such a narrow view is indicative of a structural-functionalist paradigm in organisation theory, not one well equipped to consider a more radical and fundamental aesthetic approach to reality construction (Strati 1996: 210).

Reading social reality in aesthetic terms stresses the creative, that is, the material culture, social action, and presentation of ideas as the primary media of expression. Explored in this book is the degree to which such a reading suggests an aesthetic foundation to administration and leadership, and the educational organisations that form around them. A study of the aesthetic requires examining the means by which their symbolic, behavioural, and visionary dimensions, as a social art work, bring order out of chaos, shape physical and social reality, and embody values and visions (elevated quite often to ideological force). And it requires examining critically how these creative expressions make human action meaningful, satisfying emotional and existential (metaphysical), as well as rational, needs, or, in their more repressive or destructive forms, violate human values. These necessarily are political – one can examine both the aesthetic inherent in politics, but also the political use of art. Such a connection has been
explored in studies of Italian and German fascism (by Berezin 1994 and Friedländer 1984, respectively, on kitsch) and Stalinist Russia's (see Sabonis-Chafee 1999) aim to create a new national culture through public policies and a bureaucracy to regulate and administer state art. These examples are important, since in all these regimes, and arguably equally in the democratic politics of education, aesthetics plays a critical role in creating new regimes and institutionalising power.

Aesthetic features, as Carter and Jackson demonstrate, can elicit responses from organisational actors: 'in producing an aesthetic, what an organization does, intentionally and/or unintentionally, is to structure both form and content in such a way as to elicit a positive response from all those with whom it has any transaction' (2000: 189). Or, the aesthetic can mask or deny unpleasant realities by inducing, sustaining, and rewarding compliance (2000: 193). As a social aesthetic, administration and leadership structure, sustain, and convey meaningful social action. This is a broader application of the ethics of aesthetics that Hunter regards as a dialectic practice 'by which individuals shape themselves as subjects or aesthetic experience and conduct their lives as aesthetic beings' (1992: 352). While Hunter restricts his discussion to individual development characteristics of the Bildung tradition, it is expanded in this paper to social action as suggested by Mach:

Symbolic forms like rituals, ceremonies, myths, festivities, art, literature, are the way in which a group, a community or a state organizes the intellectual and emotional framework of its members' lives, confirming its value-system, social norms and goals, and legitimizing social order. In such a way group identity is created, maintained, and transformed together with the identity of other groups with which one's own group has relations.

(1993: 38)

Such a view, however, returns us to the functionalist conception of aesthetics where the 'function' of art is the maintenance of social order or group identity. Bourdieu (1984; 1993; 1998) argues, for instance, for a high level of correspondence between 'social' space and 'symbolic' space where 'distinction' is conferred upon those with accumulated 'cultural' or symbolic capital. But the accumulation of such capital and its recognition are dependent upon a hierarchy of aesthetic values that specifies a system of relationships between positions in social space. 'Good' taste and 'poor' taste or 'high' culture and 'mass' culture are contrasts that construct social and aesthetic distances between locations within a social order. Aesthetics or 'taste' therefore not only serve as a unifying social mechanism, but also a divisive one, allocating those with various cultural or symbolic capital to different social spaces. Bourdieu argues that the function of education is to ensure the replication of distinction through the institution of 'social borders analogous to those that formerly separated nobility from gentry and gentry from common people' (1998: 21). The administration of education is therefore in part the administration of culture that through its construction and
allocation of aesthetic, symbolic or cultural capital serves to administer and perpetuate social hierarchy. The role of educational administrators is, therefore, to preside over systems and institutions that structure and allocate access to aesthetic experience in particular socially conservative ways, thus matching the possession of cultural capital to the possession of economic capital. Leadership in educational administration is, therefore, constituted by ingenuity in devising ways to both further and legitimate this process.

Such a position is not far from that of theorists like Adorno (1970, 1991) who argued that the 'culture industry' was constructing an 'administration of culture' dependent upon the manufacture and consumption of cultural products. Here, he posited the extension of capitalism into the aesthetic sphere, with the consequent construction of class relations and exploitation in the sphere of culture through the construction of mass 'commodity fetishism'. Organisations of whatever kind (including education) therefore administered culture in ways that reproduced cultural as well as economic relations, serving to perpetuate as well as disguise the inequity of unequal class relations.

More recent analyses within the (largely British) cultural studies movement both support and challenge these ideas. Williams (1958; 1961; 1980), being a working class boy, was well aware of the social mechanisms by which 'distinction' was produced. He was also one of the first of a group of working class 'scholarship' boys to invade British universities and to argue that working class culture was not a degenerate form of elite culture, but rather a culture with its own unique and valuable aesthetic from within which cultural criticism could be articulated (Gorak 1988; McKee 2005). This aesthetic was closely related to the conditions of the working class as it emerged during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in particular to the struggle for decent work, political representation and freedom of expression (Hartley 1992; McKee 2005). The role of schools in this struggle was central as the aesthetics of education were articulated in ways that were progressive in political as well as social terms.

Dewey (1931; 1966; 1980) argued that art, experience, and democracy were closely related through progressive forms of education. Herbert Read argued that 'art should be the basis of education (1958: 1) and that 'a democratic method of education is the only guarantee of a democratic revolution' (1958: 304). More recent advocates of the close relation between aesthetics, democracy and education such as Eisner (1979) and Greene (1988; 2001) have, like Dewey and Read, been largely ignored in the literature on educational administration and leadership. The result has been that discussion of aesthetics and educational administration has largely been confined to the consideration of aesthetics as a mechanism through which the understanding and effectiveness of educational administrators might be enhanced. Culture, as has been argued elsewhere, is seen as a mechanism for enhancing control (see Bates 1981; 1987). Few voices among writers on educational administration have seen beyond this horizon. To be sure, Hodgkinson (1991) spoke of educational administration as 'The Moral Art', and Greenfield (1993) provided constant allusion to art and literature as sources of insight into the reality of organisational life. But neither
developed an appropriately articulated theory of aesthetics and educational administration. Others, such as Ribbins and Zhang (2003a, 2003b) have appealed to ‘Art and Artfulness’ in their study of Headteachers. But here the ‘art’ is that of Sun Tzu and Clausewitz which, like that of Machiavelli, is the art of war, of strategy, deception and mastery. As a metaphor for educational administration such ‘art’ seems well removed from an aesthetic of sensitivity, imagination and cultural inclusiveness that might form a more proper ethical basis for democratic education. An alternative conception is, however, provided by Starratt (1990) who uses the metaphor of the drama of schooling (1990) and the drama of leadership (1993) to suggest that schooling is not only preparation for work, but also preparation for participation in a wider ‘social drama’:

The social drama always has to deal with issues of alienation, whether that alienation has political, economic, cultural or familial roots. Similarly, the social drama involves the tension between individual autonomy, creativity and freedom on the one hand, and the demands of membership in one or more social organizations. Schools must deal with these issues.

(Starratt 1990: 141)

So, in the pursuit of an aesthetics of educational administration and leadership, it is important that aesthetics are employed not only to examine administrative behaviour, but also to examine the aesthetic responsibilities of educational administrators in playing their role in the social drama: one that acknowledges Dewey’s awareness of ‘the continuity of aesthetic experience with normal processes of living’ (1980: 10).

The contributed chapters in this volume explore a wide variety of issues. Chapters 2–6 in Part 1 address the philosophical foundations for an aesthetic approach to educational administration. In Chapter 2, Samier argues that Kant provides a foundation for a critical approach to educational administration through his insistence that the processes of imagination and judgement involved in aesthetics allow the development of independent thought and action, and suggests that such independence ought to characterise both education and administration. In Chapter 3, Samier and Stanley examine the contributions made by both British and German Romantic traditions in the drive for self-determination against various forms of despotic power, culminating in Nietzsche’s advocacy of individual character as a work of art – an aesthetic and ethical achievement of the self, freed from irrelevant constraints through independence and self-determination. Harris, in Chapter 4, provides an exegesis of Collingwood’s philosophical, historical and political critiques, showing how the aesthetic was central to his critical analyses, emphasising his distinction between art and craft, and highlighting the fundamental importance of imagination and its realisation through creativity of expression. In Chapter 5, Maxcy examines the metaphysics supporting the conception of pragmatic aesthetic leadership, drawing heavily on Dewey’s view of the field as both a moral and an aesthetic enterprise. In Chapter 6, Milley looks to the Frankfurt School of Social Theory
and the work of Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse and especially Habermas, for an understanding of aesthetic leadership as a critical, emancipatory practice.

Following these initial chapters, Part II turns to an exploration of aesthetic sources for administration and leadership. In Chapter 7, Klein and Diker look to architecture and the conception of artful design as a metaphor for educational administration. Building for change through imagined alternatives is the thesis presented here as applicable to both architecture and educational administration. Stanley's Chapter 8 takes British Victorian literature, especially the novels of Dickens and Brontë, as the starting point for his analysis of the aesthetics of characterisation, arguing that the cultural archetypes found in their novels can be used as Weberian ideal types that can elucidate the nature of headmastership in educational administration. In Chapter 9, Stockton examines the nomothetic basis of most contemporary administrative theory and contrasts this with the ideographic possibilities inherent in literature and cinema as an aesthetic approach to the understanding of administration and leadership in education. Snowber, in Chapter 10, shares with us the poetics of an aesthetic that continually surprises and allows us to see the world in different, more sensual ways; ways that have the capacity to transform the self and allow the development of a more personal and spiritual conception of leadership.

Part III develops various critical applications of aesthetics to educational administration. Samier, in Chapter 11, takes Weber's theory of charisma and examines its expressive features in terms of the architectural, the theatrical and the literary. These are used to propose a new way of evaluating the 'content' of charisma in both its creative and destructive forms, opening up a new possibility for the evaluation and critique of leadership. In Chapter 12, Ribbins draws on his work with Gunter to locate the aesthetic within a mapping of various forms of knowledge relevant to the understanding and practice of educational administration, and advocates this as part of a comprehensive approach to understanding and improving practice in leadership education. In Chapter 13, Oronn examines the aesthetics of the cult of leadership through an analysis of the careers and especially the fates of Mussolini, Hitler, and Stalin, arguing that these are exemplars of the dangers of embracing ideas of heroic organisational leadership. In the final chapter, Bates sees the aesthetic as essentially a cultural product and argues, pace Bourdieu, that education typically distributes culture in ways that confirm social distance. This does not invalidate the liberatory potential of the aesthetic in developing a sense of agency; the construction of such an aesthetic is argued to be the central purpose for a truly educational administration.

References


