

Chapter 4

Educational Leadership: A Feminist Critique and Reconstruction

Jill Blackmore

We now have fewer women heads of educational institutions than we had in the first two decades of this century.... When women move into male areas, they remain clustered at the lower levels, marginally represented at the middle levels and absent from the top other than the occasional deviant, nonconformist, articulate, pioneer. On a national scale there are fewer than 3% women heads of mixed institutions in education. (Byrne, quoted in Sampson, 1983, p.52)

The structural barriers can be seen in the cultivation of young male teachers in appropriate administrative and organisational tasks, while in the first five years of teaching, many women teachers concentrate on child centred tasks. In this way, authority in schools becomes linked with masculinity and leadership in education takes on a masculine image. (Sampson, 1983)

This chapter constitutes a marking out of territory which has significance for education and educational administration. Leadership is a concept central to theories of how organizations such as schools and educational bureaucracies work since, historically, schools have been organized in hierarchical ways. Authority is seen to be legitimately accorded to the principal, generally a male. Increasingly the ways in which schooling and school knowledge are defined and organized have been contested. The implications of the gendered and hierarchical division of labour within education for pedagogy and organizational life have been recently theorized about and questioned (Connell, 1987; Apple, 1985). Similarly organizational theory, the source of many central concepts of educational administration, has only begun to be criticized for its gender-blindness (Hearn and Parkin, 1983). Emphasis in this criticism has been on the masculinist model which has been assumed to portray all experience. The assumption of the universality of the male experience has been the consequence of a privileging of positivist knowledge claims and research approaches. It is this positivist research paradigm which has informed the liberal interventionist policies of equal opportunity during the 1970s and early 1980s. Premised upon sex role socialization theory, such policies sought to facilitate individual women taking on 'leadership roles' in schools in order to create a more equitable gender balance, and in so doing establish role models for girls and other women as 'leaders'. But the reduction of women in such positions over this period suggests that the issue is more complex than merely a matter of numbers.

This paper argues that whilst the conceptualization of leadership in education is seen to be unproblematic, there is little hope for education becoming a site for emancipatory change. A particular view of leadership premised upon liberal theories of abstract individualism and bureaucratic rationality, and supported by positivistic theories of knowledge which privilege universal laws of administration and human behaviour, has become dominant in educational administration. The universal individual central to this perspective of leadership is modelled upon men's experience. Hierarchical relationships are considered to be the 'givens'

of 'rational' organizational life. Leaders display attributes and behaviours, possess moral virtues and principles, which are generally associated with 'masculinity'. It is a view which has effectively displaced women in educational thought, and therefore rendered women invisible in administrative practice (Martin, 1984). Currently it is epitomized in the view of school principals as corporate managers.

It is necessary, therefore, to reconstruct a view of leadership which counters the emphasis on individualism, hierarchical relationships, bureaucratic rationality and abstract moral principles. I propose, therefore, elements of what would constitute a feminist reconstruction of the concept of leadership. These would include a view of power which is multi-dimensional and multi-directional. Leadership is seen as being practised in different contexts by different people and not merely equated to formal roles. Leadership looks to empower others rather than have power over others. Such a view assumes a relational view of morality in which moral practice is rational within given contexts and social and political relations and not according to abstract moral laws or principles. Leadership is concerned with communitarian and collective activities and values. Thus the process of leading is both educative and conducive to democratic process, and, one would hope, consistent with education.

Problems and Explanations: The Liberal Interventionist Approach

During the last fifteen years federal and state governments have introduced affirmative action and recognized the principle of equal opportunity through both legislative and policy initiatives. Despite this, the number of women in 'leadership positions' in education in Australia, Great Britain and the USA has decreased (Yeakey, Johnson and Adkinson, 1986). In the state of Victoria, Australia, in the period 1971–1983 the percentage of female principals in the secondary system fell from 20 to 11 per cent, whilst the percentage of female teachers increased from 45 to 52 per cent of all teachers. In the adjoining state of New South Wales the percentage of female primary principals decreased from 28 to 19 per cent of all principals (Sampson, 1987). This phenomenon can be partially explained as a consequence of the declining school population, the reclassification of staff appointments, and major educational and administrative restructuring in most state systems since the early 1980s. Opportunities for advancement in the promotional stakes are often reduced in a contracting system, particularly for latecomers, as many women are, to long-term careers. But economic conditions and structural impediments alone are inadequate explanations of another feature of what is a re-emerging pattern of masculine dominance. This second feature is the tendency for many women who have the qualifications, expertise and aptitude often not to apply for positions of leadership in schools as principals. Furthermore, those women who do apply indicate a 'preference' for more democratic styles of school organization and administration (State Board, 1986). This 'problem' is the focus of this chapter.

There are a number of conventional explanations which have dominated the social science research over the past two decades which suggest reasons for this 'failure' of women to possess those aspirations, behaviours and attributes for leadership so readily displayed by their male counterparts. Women, it would be construed from such research, 'fear' success and lack 'self-esteem', are passive and non-aggressive. These explanations, it will be shown later, imply a female 'deficiency' in terms of 'leadership' skills, attributes and vision. At this stage I wish to suggest that there will be little change in the historical dominance of males in educational administration whilst policy-makers and many liberal feminists merely look to increase the numbers of women in educational administration, in what I call the 'liberal interventionist' approach. It is necessary to 'go beyond the numbers game', in which gender equity is assumed to result purely from the better 'representation' of women in positions of authority, and to question the very concept of leadership itself, how it is portrayed in the literature, and how it is perceived by women and the community in

education. It is the continuing association of masculinity with a particular view of leadership, especially in education where women constitute over half the occupation, which is problematic. How the particular notion of leadership dominant in educational administration has been socially and historically constructed in a way that connects so-called 'masculine' characteristics to leadership will be a theme of this paper. The deconstruction of this 'masculinist notion of leadership' will largely be at a theoretical and conceptual level, in laying out and displaying the assumptions underlying the dominant notion of leadership, although the policy ramifications will not be totally ignored.

Whilst I would argue that liberal feminism, in supporting this 'interventionist approach', has only achieved 'success' for the few, largely middle-class women by not challenging the norms, institutions and structures of masculine dominance in education, this is not to be dismissive of the achievements of liberal feminists during the past decades, or denigratory of liberal reforms as merely co-option of feminist discourse. It is necessary to record, analyze and account for the discrepancies, contradictions and failures of this period in order to create the basis for more radical change. Much of the valuable work on women in educational administration has mapped out the patterned discrimination against women, analyzed why and how it has been historically constructed and reproduced, indicating the structural, psychological and social factors influencing women's opportunities (Adkinson, 1981). Strategies have been developed and undeniably affirmative action policy has gone some way in removing the structural impediments in particular to the progression of women into 'leadership positions' (equating them at this stage with formal bureaucratic roles), whilst enforcing at least superficial change to the sexist attitudes pervading state controlled educational institutions. But it is necessary to go a step beyond having women 'represented' in administrative positions, and undertake a more radical critique from a feminist perspective of the very nature of educational administration and leadership.

Feminism as Critique

First, let me discuss my intentions in mounting a feminist critique. Although I talk of *a* feminist critique, it is necessary to remember that there is no single feminist theory, but rather a body of theories which take on different political hues ranging from liberal feminism to radical separatism. Furthermore, there is a high level of scepticism amongst some feminists about the need for theory at all because of the feminist emphasis on personal experience and understandable distrust of intellectualism. Some radical separatists urge that feminist theory must necessarily reject all that is masculine and set up a theoretical framework in opposition. I would reject both views in favour of the stance that all world views are theory-ridden. The issue is whether these theories are made explicit or not, and the level of theoretical generalization (Gatens, 1986, p.14). Nancy Hartsock expresses it well:

We must understand that theorising is not just done by academic intellectuals but that theory is always implicit in our activity and goes so deep as to include our understanding of reality...we can either accept the categories given us by capitalist society or we can begin to develop a critical understanding of our world. If we choose the first alternative, our theory may forever remain implicit. In contrast, the second is to commit ourselves to working out a critical and explicit theory. (Hartsock, 1979, p.57)

It is necessary to critique the established social theories of politics, economics, philosophy and psychology in order to understand what, how and why the feminine perspective has been obliterated from social theory, and more specifically in this paper from what is construed to be 'leadership'. Barbara Johnson describes what such a critique would involve:

It is an analysis that focuses on the grounds of that system's possibility. The critique reads backwards from what seems natural, obvious, self-evident, or universal, in order to show that these things have their history, their reasons for being the way they are, their effects on what follows from them, and that the starting point is not a (natural) given but a (cultural) construct, usually blind to itself.... Every theory starts somewhere; every critique exposes what that starting point conceals and therefore displaces all the ideas that follow from it. (Johnson, 1981, p.xii–xvi)

Such a critique raises epistemological, moral and political and not merely methodological questions. At the same time that social theory is reworked from a critical perspective, theory can act, in the Foucauldian sense, as a working tool, a strategy through which to critique instances and historical moments intent on reconstruction rather than construction of an alternative theoretical perspective (Morris and Paton, 1979, p. 57). In constructing a 'feminist critique' of leadership in education I will be undertaking a critical analysis of and reflection on how women have been displaced from or submerged in both organizational and political theory, and how much of this invisibility of women has permeated the everyday commonsense notions of 'leadership'.

Before commencing this critique, a further consideration must be acknowledged, although it will not be developed here. Problematic to both stating theory explicitly and critiquing social theory is the nature of language and text. Sarah Fildes asserts that the traditional invisibility of women in theory can be explained partially by the conceptual language and terminology which have implicit masculinist values and models which must be questioned (Fildes, 1983, p.62). The use of certain concepts often sets the agenda and boundaries of a discourse (whether in theory, practice or policy), which in turn determines the direction and force of the final analysis. An essential aspect of feminist theory and feminism, therefore, is to question all that is 'given', to question what is not included in the discourse as much as what is, and what has been reinterpreted in a manner which displaces women's interests. Such a questioning can often commence from the dissonance between personal experience, commonsense knowledge and theory. This is the position implicit in the liberal interventionist model, which assumes that if more women can and do become 'successful' leaders, then societal behaviour and attitudes will change when personal experience 'bumps up against' myths about females in leadership roles. As to whether the success of women such as Thatcher in the particular mode of leadership I will be critiquing—that which focuses upon hierarchy, authority, individualism and claims of rationality—is desirable for women is another matter. Similarly, in a period of rampant corporate managerialism in education, whilst the rhetoric centres on notions of efficiency, skill, hierarchy and control, leadership takes on particular forms and encourages particular approaches (Ministry of Education, 1986). In this sense discourse itself is a form of 'power over others', of masking conflict, of being deployed to reinforce consensus, of constraining action and prescribing behaviours. Power therefore infuses discourse. But discourse can be an instrument of either domination or emancipatory effort (Elshtain, 1982, pp.127–9). This particular point will be elaborated in the last section, in which new elements and parameters for an alternative feminist discourse on educational leadership are offered.

Therefore, essential to a critical feminist perspective of leadership is a critique of the central concepts in the bodies of theory which inform educational administration and which control the parameters of the discourse—concepts such as rationality, individuality, competence and merit. Such a critique undermines the gendered historical and social construction of the relationship between social structures which are construed to be 'given' and 'neutral', such as bureaucracies and organizations, and the individual. Secondly, it challenges the particular views about the nature of human activity and potentiality implicit in such theories. Finally, such a critique analyzes the particular epistemological underpinnings of theories of

leadership. These aspects of social structure, human agency and epistemology are interrelated and mutually reinforcing, and will be dealt with accordingly.

The next section addresses the ways in which traditional views of leadership have dominated educational administration and how leadership has been socially and historically constructed in a manner which looks to characteristics of 'successful' masculine leaders as those constituting leadership. The following section attempts to develop a better understanding of how liberal political theory has encouraged this hegemonic masculinist view of leadership, which is premised upon particular interpretations of rationality, morality, organization and individualism, and is typical of Western societies. In turn, other social, economic and political arrangements such as the dominance of a positivistic epistemology in social science, together with the bureaucratization of social life have supported this particular leadership perspective. The 'liberal interventionist' approach underlying many equal opportunity policy initiatives is derived largely from within this tradition. Next the notions of individual competitiveness, bureaucratic rationality and abstract morality are discussed as central to the traditional, masculinist construct of leadership. Finally, an alternative feminist perspective of leadership will be presented; one that takes into account the historical and social construction of organizations and knowledge, and which presents a view of leadership which is essentially relational and communitarian.

Leadership in Organizational Theory: A Masculinist Construct

To return to the initial question, how has the underrepresentation of women in formal leadership positions been explained in the conventional literature on leadership? Women have been cast in organizational theory as being deficient in terms of leadership skills and attributes. Theories of leadership developing within a positivistic epistemology have relied upon empirical studies of those who are or have been in formal positions of leadership; that is, men. Historical accounts of 'great men' merely substantiate what is already seen to be self-evident. The behaviours, traits and characteristics displayed by men in formal positions of authority have become the 'givens' of leadership. Therefore, leadership in organizations has been historically associated with particular characteristics which are more frequently depicted as 'masculine' than 'feminine'—aggressiveness, forcefulness, competitiveness and independence. Positivistic social science in general, and organizational and administrative theory in particular, have construed that what is masculine experience is universal across time, context and gendered subject. Theoretical work on the social construction of sexuality, from both functionalist and feminist perspectives, has rarely been related to organizational processes or theory (Hearn and Parkin, 1983, p.231).

This 'masculinist' characterization of leadership is common across the main approaches to leadership in organizational theory, whether they be trait model, the charismatic/behavioural model or the situational/contingency models of leadership central to educational administration. (For examples of such theories in a standard text in educational administration see Hoy and Miskel, 1978. For a critique see Watkins, 1986, and Foster, this volume.) Whilst trait theory considers leadership qualities or skills to be inherent attributes of the individual, the behaviourist model allows appropriate leadership behaviours or styles to be learned. More recent situational/contingency theories tend to perceive a 'match' between the individual attributes or leadership styles (innate and learned) and particular situations or contexts.

Although the 'trait' theory model of leadership has been denigrated in organizational literature for its failure to differentiate between effective and ineffective male leaders, it has been duly resuscitated as an explanation for why women are not found in leadership positions. Given that the 'traits' associated with leadership have been defined and prescribed in a gendered stereotypic manner, women are in a double bind. If a woman displays the culturally defined traits of 'femininity' (being emotional, passive, dependent,

nurturing, intuitive or submissive), she is perceived to be a 'poor' leader. If she acts according to the male role definition of a leader (being aggressive, achievement-oriented, self-confident, forceful or competitive), she is condemned as being 'unfeminine' (Chapman and Luthans, 1975). More specifically, the literature on women in management focuses on three sets of personality traits: aggressiveness/dominance, emotional control/sound judgment; self-confidence and self-esteem. Women's apparent lack of such 'traits' as perceived in their behaviour is seen to make them unsuited for leadership (Bannon, 1978; Brown, 1979).

Let us consider these 'myths' in more detail. Firstly, there is little empirical evidence to support the connection between certain 'traits' and good leadership. The literature is unable to substantiate the connection, for example, between aggressiveness and various 'management' skills seen to be essential to leaders in organizations and schools, such as tackling challenges, setting achievable goals, planning, organizing, persuading, conciliating and conveying enthusiasm. The second myth that women are unsuitable leaders and decision-makers because they are too emotional and subjective is equally unfounded, both theoretically and empirically. Theoretically it assumes that decision-making is rational, logical and objective, when increasingly the irrational, subjective and illogical nature of decision-making is the basis of current revisionist theorizing within the traditional organizational research paradigm. It is increasingly accepted that decision-making is value ridden and theory laden, ideologically prescribed, generally based on inadequate and even incorrect information and consequently emotive. Therefore the dominance of a particular 'scientific' view of what leaders do when they make decisions (as being rational and objective) and what 'traits' are required to lead (non-emotional) cannot be upheld. Ironically, more recent studies of leadership, in an attempt to produce a more balanced conceptualization of leadership, look to these very 'feminine' qualities of emotionality, sociality and caring values which traditionally imparted connotations of weakness (Sergiovanni and Carver, 1980, pp.306–26). Likewise school principals are required to become facilitators, not dominators (Chapman, 1985).

The third myth, that leadership is associated with a high level of self-confidence and self-esteem, is again highly suspect. The literature portrays women as lacking these 'qualities', whether learned or innate. For example, Antill and Cunningham's Australian study, 'Self-esteem as a Function of Masculinity in Both Sexes', argues that men have higher self-esteem than women (Antill and Cunningham, 1979. For a critique of 'self-esteem' see Putnam and Heinen, 1976; Kenway and Willis, 1988). Since 1968 a dominant theory as to why women have not gained more representation in higher levels of decision-making is that of 'fear of success' (Horner, 1972; Condry and Dyer, 1976). This 'fear' explains why women are more 'anxious' than men in leadership positions and why they lack the desire to 'take on' leadership responsibilities. Women are seen to fear success because of the negative consequences which derive from succeeding in competitive situations—social rejection and perceived loss of femininity (Sassen, 1980). Or perhaps it was fear—more of being perceived as being deviant from role models by taking on masculine behaviours (Moore and Rickel, 1980; Greenfield *et al.*, 1980). Ironically, studies which replicated the 'fear of success' model on male subjects found that men also admitted to the same fears (Carlson, 1972, p.21). More recently the 'fear of success' model has been reinterpreted to argue that women were not so afraid of 'success', just more prepared than the male subjects to admit to the negative or 'other side of competitive success' generally ignored in the literature—the alienation, loneliness and conflict (Carlson, 1972). The effect of this research was inevitably to blame the victim. Notions of success and esteem are socially constructed and context bound. The underlying theoretical paradigm, the trait approach to leadership, therefore emphasizes innate rather than learned psychological differences between males and females, ignores the ways in which certain behaviours are developed through experience and positive reinforcement, and portrays leadership as a set of individual characteristics without regard for how behaviour is both learned and situation specific.

Whilst the trait approach assumes innate difference, the behaviourist perspective accepts the notion of learned behaviours which are gender stereotypic. The political effect is the same as that of trait theory in justifying observed behaviours as proof of difference. There are particular sets of learned behaviours which are perceived as being appropriate leadership behaviours or styles. The dominant theory to explain the lack of women in administration and leadership positions is socialization and sex role stereotypes (Adkinson, 1981). This argues that gender differentiation is constructed by the internalization of certain gender role behaviours imparted through such agencies as schools, family, work and the media (see Marshall, 1979, for an example of the argument on the need to 'socialize' female educational administrators). Thus boys learn to be rational, logical, objective and to suppress their feelings. They are encouraged to be aggressive and dominant in social situations. Girls learn to cultivate their emotions at the expense of their rationality, and are therefore more subjective. Their role is to be more dependent, nurturing and passive. This prepares each sex entrance into the public and private spheres of life, since these were the attributes required in each domain respectively. By imparting such significance to socialization, the behaviourist model assumes the passivity of the individual male and female who are 'socialized' into particular roles. At the same time this behaviourist model 'allows' women to acquire the necessary attributes. But in so doing it casts women into a deficit position in that it blames the victim when 'socialization' does not occur; it ignores resistance or the notion that an individual's socialization is partial and selective. It implies the need and precondition for women to take on masculine attributes of leadership (rationality, aggression, the ability to control and dominate) in order to succeed; it accepts the hierarchical relationship in schools and state educational bureaucracies as necessary and given; and it defines success/relevant experience in male terms (occupation, hierarchy, expertise). Ultimately particular sets of observable behaviours are valued more than others.

Finally, the recent emphasis within the traditional organizational research paradigm has been on situational or contingency theories of leadership, best represented by the work of Vroom and Yetton, Blake and Mouton and Fiedler (see Fiedler, 1978; Hoy and Miskel, 1978, for a summary; for a critique see Watkins, 1986). These theories argue that there is a package of leadership skills and behaviours ranging from democratic to authoritarian which can be learned, selected and used according to particular definable situational factors and contexts. Leaders must acquire the skill to recognize, diagnose and select the appropriate style of leadership to 'fit' the situation. No specific leadership style is given preference or more valued because of its intrinsic good. Each 'style' is selected as a means to achieve a particular organizational end most efficiently. By implication, although the gender issue is never confronted in these models, such theories assume that leadership styles and administrative contexts are gender neutral, and that such skills are context and content-free to be freely applied across a variety of 'categorizable' organizational situations. That is, any individual can assume an appropriate style provided she or he possesses this baggage of leadership skills and is able to diagnose the situation correctly. Such models ignore research from within the positivistic research paradigm on small groups and organizations (Jenkins and Kramer, 1978). Regardless of the 'appropriateness' of leadership style adopted by females, female leaders are judged differently by their colleagues and subordinates from men in like situations. Firstly, their competence is judged according to whether the task itself is perceived to be 'masculine' or 'feminine'. Success by a female at a 'masculine' task (such as leadership) is more often attributed to luck than competence by observers, whereas success by a male at a masculine task is attributed largely to competence. By contrast, success by a female at a 'feminine' task is attributed equally to competence. Thus there is different recognition for similar performance. In other words, 'what is skill for a male is luck for the female' (Deaux and Emswiller, 1974; Bayes and Newton, 1978). Secondly, the legitimacy of an action is generally associated with the legitimacy of the actor who performs it and the role he or she occupies. Since leadership is perceived largely to be a masculine role, this gives some reason why within such research paradigms there is systematic variation

between males and females in similar situations (Borman *et al.*, 1978; Walker and Fennel, 1986, pp.270–1). Even the definition of task and skill, merit and competence in work situations is an historical construction which is gender biased (McNeil, 1987; O'Donnell and Hall, 1988).

Such conclusions are not surprising given the nature of the empirical research upon which the traditional construct of leadership has been premised. Because such research has focused largely upon leaders in formal positions of organizational authority, on male occupations and the achievements of men, and within a psychologistic framework, inevitably leadership attributes are perceived to be masculine attributes (Sherif, 1979; Kellerman, 1984; Sayers, 1986). Accordingly findings about male behaviours are generalized to females. Furthermore, research on women in positions of leadership is largely confined to stereotypic areas of women's work. Even when research is in comparative fields, male characteristics are more highly valued than female characteristics in linking them to 'good' leadership. Women who enter male dominated careers are therefore seen to be stigmatized as they are seen to be 'disabled, deficient or deviant' (Marshall, 1985). In such contexts rationality is seen to be a better signifier of leadership than emotionality. Consequently there is a built-in male bias in the research methodology in its assumption of homogeneity and universality of experience (Stewart, 1978; Hearn and Parkin, 1983). But it is more than a matter of methodology, since underlying such methodologies is a set of epistemic assumptions which will be discussed later.

Finally, the research in support of the various organizational theories of leadership, and some could say the 'theory movement' in educational administration per se, is inconclusive. In this field of study Foster points out the state of disarray because leadership is a 'slippery concept' (Foster, 1986). What is not disputable is that organizational and leadership theory neglects the significance of gender. Rather, it discusses authority, power and the division of labour in organizations as being both essential and neutral. It fails to recognize that there exists a gendered division of labour in organizations which historically defines women's position in a negative manner. Such divisions are justified by notions of rationality, expertise and merit. Kanter refers to how the 'masculine ethic' of rationality is found in the image of managers and in the social science models of organizations in a manner which

elevates the traits assumed to belong to men with educational advantages to necessities for effective organisations; a tough minded approach to problems; analytic abilities to abstract and plan; a capacity to set aside personal, emotional considerations in the interests of task accomplishment; and a cognitive superiority in problem solving. (Kanter, 1975, p.43)

Performance is judged in gender biased contexts. Burton cites research which suggests that the effort of women in organizations is 'perceived as diagnostic of men's ability and compensatory of women's lack thereof' (Burton, 1987, p.429). She suggests that 'definitions of what is meritorious can undergo change depending upon the power of particular groups to define it...skill is a direct correlate of the sex and power of those defining it, an ideological category rather than an economic fact' (Burton, 1987, p.430).

Likewise, success can be conceived in different ways, just as self-esteem is evident in ways other than a display of uncaring aggression, competitiveness or dominance in particular social situations. Because women may value different types of success and achievement, success and actions are interpreted in negative terms for women. The construction of success is elaborated upon by Markus.

...in contemporary society the organisational and technical changes in work make it increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to evaluate individual achievement, but at the same time, the work organisations and society at large, are increasingly in need of maintaining the disciplinary and legitimising function of the achievement principle. This means, then, that the evaluation of

‘performing capacity’ has to be accomplished symbolically. That is, based on ‘extrafunctional’ attitudes and ascriptive criteria of different sorts rather than effective achievement...as Offe points out...the ‘achievement principle’ has been transformed from an ethical attitude into ‘one of the important forms of class-based power-games that rewards loyalty to dominant interests and forms of life’, perpetuated cultural divisions and legitimised the existing organisational and social hierarchies. (Markus, 1987, p.104)

The manner by which authority and power in organizations are perceived and exercised is significant for women in that many do not measure their ‘success’ by the same external or symbolic criteria. Markus’ research on female engineers in managerial positions indicates how they formulated their notion of success as being basically private. Job satisfaction was connected to internalized concrete achievements gained through personal experience (overcoming some difficulties, maintaining double roles, helping others in their work) rather than external social recognition. It was a form of success she called ‘vicarious achievement’—success resulting from the contribution of the subject to the achievement of some other person. This privatized conception of success in a public arena which rewarded outward achievement (formal status, position of authority) through uniformization of success standards is thus read as indicating that women lack motivation to succeed and has the ironical effect of maintaining the inequity of their work situation (Markus, 1987, pp.101–2). They are labelled for not ‘planning their careers’, or ‘keeping their eyes open for the next step to promotion’. Markus indicates how this is seen to be a problem particular to women, ‘given the observable switch in the basic hierarchical advance within different work organisations increasingly obtained not through internal promotions, but rather through external recruitment to higher positions’, as in, one could argue, the case of local selection of school principals (Markus, 1987, p.105). Thus the cultural association of masculinity and authority, of maleness and management, is reproduced by those in power who do not wish to disturb this ‘natural’ arrangement. Authority in organizations is judged by external and overt symbolic signs of power such as salary, space and titles rather than ‘complex staff positions that involve significant discretion’ (Burton, 1987, p.431). Organizations, as are all workplaces, are socially constructed along gender lines (Acker and Van Houten, 1974).

Thus the social science model utilized in organizational theory assumes that organizations such as schools are value-free, and that the social organization of schooling is neutral. It also assumes that relatively complete explanations can be found about individual behaviours within the organizations themselves and in the public domain of paid work. Little consideration is given to the private domain of human activity and how it connects to organizational situations or paid work. This distinction between the public domain of the rational and the private domain of the emotional and affective is critical to ongoing power relations in that it allows the perpetuation of the invisibility of class or gender relations in organizations (Stewart, 1978; Shakeshaft and Hanson, 1986). Furthermore, any collective activities by women to alter the ways in which organizations are structured must challenge the masculine ethic of leadership premised upon individuality, rationality and hierarchy. It is this collectivity that sociologists have failed to identify (Hearn and Parkin, 1983, p.233).

It is therefore necessary to undermine the theoretical paradigm dominant in administrative theory, which assumes that conflict is pathological and a problem to be controlled by administrators. Whilst the notion that conflict is abnormal is legitimated by administrative theory, a feminist perspective will be marginalized, controlled or dismissed as irrelevant. O’Brien aptly comments, ‘The central defects of the liberal social science is that they do not treat patriarchy as an essential component of exploitation but as an accidental aberration’ (O’Brien, 1986, p.96). The next two sections look to the historical contexts from

which the above ideas about leadership emerged, and the political and epistemological traditions which supported and informed such a perspective.

Liberalism, Bureaucratization and the Subordination of Women in Education

So far I have laid out some of the conceptual approaches towards leadership dominating traditional administrative and organizational theory, and since the 1950s the theory movement in educational administration. The last section has indicated how organizational theory has made women 'invisible' or 'deficient' as leaders. This section examines why the particular view of leadership portrayed in administrative literature has come to be considered applicable to education. It suggests that the social formation of bureaucracies (as in education) was informed by liberal political theories which conceived of a relationship between the individual and society in a way which influenced and promoted hierarchical and individualistic views of leadership, and in turn justified patriarchal dominance in education. This is not to argue that there is necessarily some causality between bureaucracy and liberal democratic or capitalist states, as Pateman points out in her analysis of the parallel bureaucratic formation in communist states (Pateman, 1970). Rather, it is to try and understand why in liberal democracies such a view of leadership has become dominant.

The displacement of women in organizational theory is derived from their invisibility in social and political theory in general. Thiele argues that social and political theory has practised three forms or typologies by which women have become invisible: exclusion, pseudo-inclusion and alienation. Exclusion exists, for example, when Hobbes, in discussing his initial State of Nature, states that all men and women were equal, that women had natural authority over children. Yet in the civic society envisaged by Hobbes (and Locke) the Commonwealth is entirely inhabited by men. Rousseau, in his notion of the social contract, takes women into account in a pseudo-inclusive fashion, but marginalizes them by making women a 'special case'. 'What is normative is male' (Thiele, 1986, p.34). Alienation occurs when women are included as subjects, but the experience and parameters of women's lives are distorted by being 'interpreted through male categories because the methodology and values of the theorists are androcentric' (Thiele, 1986, pp.33-4). Thus Marxist theory is both pseudo-inclusive and alienating of women in arguing that women's inequality will disappear once women enter the paid labour force. Ultimately women's perspective is rendered invisible in political and social theory firstly, by the decontextualization or abstraction of real events and people from their situation in order to make generalizations or universal statements, and secondly, by the creation of dualisms between nature/culture, public/private, mind/body, rational/emotional, which cast women into the private sphere of emotionality and men into the public, civic sphere of political and economic activity. This process of decontextualization and conceptual dualism is characteristic of liberal theory, and is focused in the notion of individuality. As Carole Pateman points out, the abstraction of the individual had unfortunate consequences for women. 'In order that the individual could appear in liberal theory as a universal figure who represents anyone and everyone, the individual must be disembodied' (Pateman, 1986, p.8). The public individual, the universal man, was masculine. He possessed the material and symbolic interest which invested his political status with power.

Hester Eisenstein, in her analysis of contemporary feminist thought, traces the dilemmas created by the connection between the parallel growth of feminism and liberalism because the roots of both lie in the emergence of individualism as a general theory of social life. Both feminism and liberalism have conceived in some way of individuals as free and equal beings, emancipated from the ascribed, hierarchical bonds of traditional society. Feminism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was, Eisenstein argued, merely making claims for an extension of these liberal principles to women. In attempting to universalize

liberalism across gender, it inevitably challenged it because of the essential separation between public and private spheres in liberalism, which excluded women from public roles and which perceived of the family as a natural given. The contradiction which emerged centred on the issue of participation and equality when feminists were to claim equal rights to participate in the public sphere in terms of the vote (Eisenstein, 1985, p.xv).

Feminists turned to more radical and socialist demands for equal economic rights in the workplace—equal opportunity in access to education and occupation and equal rewards in terms of pay—on realizing the ‘hollowness of political liberalism without the economic means’ to achieve its promises (Eisenstein, 1985, p.xvi). But the failure of Marxists to explicate the alliances of interests which have acted to maintain the masculinist ideological hegemony continues to, and in fact has exacerbated, the sexual division of labour and existing power structures in capitalist societies (Stacey and Price, 1981). As with liberal feminism, socialist feminism has tended to perpetuate the private/public dichotomy, and thus fails to produce an adequate theory of social change which can lead to radical social action. Both theories look to universal categories of ‘individual’, ‘worker’ and are

sexually particular, constructed on the basis of male attributes, capacities and modes of activity.... The ‘individual’ is masculine, but because he appears to be universal and because the categories of liberalism and socialism appear to hold out a universal promise, it seems either (for liberals) that the task of feminism is to make good this promise and incorporate women into existing institutions as equals, or (for socialists) to carry out the class revolution which will bring true universalism into being. (Pateman, 1986, p.7)

Liberal political theory has thus reified the notion of the abstract individual, freely making choices, autonomous and motivated by external rewards. At the same time liberal capitalism has spawned another form of organizational life—the bureaucracy.

Ferguson traces the links between liberalism, the bureaucratization of social life and the ‘feminization’ of the lower ranks of educational bureaucracies since the late nineteenth century (Ferguson, 1984; Hansot and Tyack, 1981). The significance of the bureaucratization of education for women in education lies in the embeddedness of the hierarchical relationships, the division of labour premised upon expertise and notions of bureaucratic rationality. It is best exemplified in the gendered and hierarchical distinction between administration and teaching as categories of work based on expertise, for example, rather than as inextricably dependent and within the same field of practice (Blackmore, 1987). Such hierarchies reinforce existing power relations and the ways in which femininity and masculinity are socially constructed and reproduced in schools. The emphasis on authority as being legitimately and rationally imparted through neutral organizational or bureaucratic means renders the gender relationships which co-exist in bureaucratic life non-problematic. Thus

bureaucratic control...operates through denial that there is discrimination. It is asserted that gender is irrelevant, that women can make it the same as men, that all will be rationally and fairly evaluated according to the same criteria. This ignores ...the way the world is structured around men’s norms. (Game and Pringle, 1983)

Mary O’Brien considers the epistemological and political implications of this unsteady co-existence of liberalism and the bureaucratization of social life.

Liberal statism has spawned an administrative mode—bureaucracy—in which crass indifference to the much vaunted rights of individuals is passed off as ‘objectivity and efficiency’. Objectivity too is the myth on which liberal theory and research thrive, forming the intellectual—or preferably scientific—basis of liberal perceptions of knowledge. As liberal statism has grown and flourished to the point of bloat, the attenuated epistemology of liberalism and the notion of state organization and control of knowledge and/or ideology have been central to liberal strategy for the maintenance of political power. Further, the major strategic achievement for liberalism—the vitiation of democracy by the political party system—ensures the limitations of women’s political power...liberal aspirations to epistemological sophistication and the development of scientific, empiricist and structuralist research models probably owe more to the capitalist political economy than to the development of liberal philosophy. (O’Brien, 1986, p.96)

The irony remains that the expansion of bureaucracies which increasingly regulate all aspects of social life has been accompanied by modern political theory centring on individual freedom and autonomy (Ferguson, 1984, p.31). ‘Educational institutions generate and reflect both the course of bureaucracy and the roles and events that recruit individuals into bureaucracies’ in that the bureaucratic discourse seeks to promote individual merit and bureaucratic rationality (Ferguson, 1984, p.42). In this sense leadership is ‘earned’ by those with merit. Meanwhile, corporate capitalism leads to the fragmentation of work and the productive process, which has meant ‘the withdrawal of aspirations from the workplace into private goals, the disruption of indigenous networks of support and mutual aid’ (quoted in Ferguson, 1984, p.48). Individual happiness has come to be identified with success in organizational life. ‘Hence parents seek upward mobility for their children increasingly looking to education, not simply to provide access to a better job at a higher salary, but to supply an institutional linkage to an established occupational hierarchy’ (Ferguson, 1984, p.45). Bourgeois individualism so promoted this bureaucratic means of organization to the extent that children have come to appreciate and understand the workings of hierarchical organizations at an early age. They do not distinguish hierarchy as characteristic merely of organizational life but of social relationships generally (Ferguson, 1984, p.46).

Thus the tenet of liberal, bourgeois individuality has done little to alter the gendered division of labour in work, school or at home. Instead, liberalism has advocated equality for women as articulated through the notion of individual merit and success, the autonomous, universal individual making rational decisions. The upward mobility of individual, generally middle-class, women through affirmative action and the institutionalization of equality as conceptualized in the liberal state have been illusory in that the rhetoric is not matched by the reality of what is occurring in the organization and structuring of education (particularly state education). Walkerdine indicates how class and gender within the liberal paradigm have continued to be the main structuring factors:

Females may cross over on to the side of masculinity in so far as they are permitted to enter into these practices. Similarly, given it is bourgeois individuality, possessed of rationality, which is taken as the key to normality, the working class can in principle become ‘bourgeois individuals’ by dint of those liberal practices which provide that possibility. However such an individuality and autonomy is produced at a price. Playful rationality is made possible through work, the hidden work of servicing, manual labour and nurturance. Here the ultimate irony is to be found in the position of the middle-class male, whose powerful position is guaranteed by the trap of reasoned argument. (Walkerdine, 1985, p.235)

The unfortunate consequence of the adoption of the liberal tenets of individualism is that feminist values are incorporated, appropriated and submerged. There is little opportunity to question the fundamental nature of organizations, to challenge relationships premised on hierarchy or individualistic competitiveness or the privileging of scientific knowledge upon which it is premised.

Positivism and the Rationalization of Administrative Work

Nineteenth century liberalism was imbued with a worldview well suited to capitalist economic structures and work ethic. By the mid-twentieth century positivistic social science offered predictability, universality and certainty to the policy-makers of the developing liberal bureaucratic state. Thus many tenets of liberalism, individual merit and expertise, for example, found justification in positivistic epistemology. Positivistic theories of knowledge hold that all genuine human knowledge is contained in the boundaries of science, that is, the systematic study of observable phenomena that can be explained by scientific laws. Social science, in emulating the physical sciences, also made claims of prediction and control, thus giving privilege to its knowledge claims of objectivity and universality over other forms of 'subjective', non-observable, particularistic or experiential knowledge. The implications for women have already been addressed in the discussion of how positivistic social science constructed a masculinist model of leadership.

Educational scholars and practitioners alike, by claiming status for educational administration as a science in a period when both progressivist and conservative educational traditions valued social efficiency, sought to gain both professional and public legitimation in the first decades of the twentieth century (Hansot and Tyack, 1981). Since the 1950s the theory movement in educational administration has taken as its own the industrial metaphor central to administrative theory, and applied the industrial model to schooling (Griffiths, 1979). Implicit in the functionalist view of education was the epistemological assumption that scientific knowledge, gleaned through observation and empirical studies, was objective; that knowledge derived through scientific method could be generalized across situations, time and gender. In this way positivism and liberalism shared like views about the abstraction of the individual in order to universalize experience.

In this framework organizations such as schools were considered to be value-free contexts, in which organizational objectives could be stated and adhered to; in which individuals were treated as autonomous beings whose interests and objectives could be moulded through the gentle direction of their leaders to those of the organization or school; in which consensus was the norm and conflict regarded as aberrant behaviour by those in authority; in which power was not confused with notions of authority and control. Organizational control was legitimately invested in formal institutional roles. Power was ignored as having connotations of being manipulative, political and devious. Administration in schools thus came to be conceived as a neutral practice carried out by experts in a scientific and rational manner. Decision-making was seen as a rational and a linear procedure, not a matter of values or subjective opinion. Means were separated from ends, fact from value. Valerie Walderkine comments:

The investment of reason in the sexed-body, as the foundation of modern western scientific rationality, not only locates self-control in rational argument, but also places it at the centre of an omnipotent fantasy of control over the workings of the universe. Mastery and control of the 'real' are centrally located in claims to truth and therefore to possess knowledge. In this sense mastery, control and bourgeois masculinity are conjoined in that uncertain pursuit of truth. (Walkerline, 1985, p.235)

What are the consequences of this privileging of positivism in educational administrative theory? External factors (family, relationships, politics, etc.) have come to be seen as merely disruptive to productive organizational relationships (Stewart, 1978; Shakeshaft and Hanson, 1986). When women's subjective experience does not fit this 'reality' of scientific management, it is treated as an aberration, non-relevant and deviant. Jan Grant suggests that women's incorporation into masculine domains in organizations has been at a cost. It often requires women publicly to reject and submerge their definition of self as women (Grant, 1985). Such co-option is because women's subjugated knowledge or subjective experience is not valued as a resource or valid alternative worldview. Conversely, it means that radical action or opposition by women in organizations such as teachers (predominantly female) to employers has been interpreted by sociologists and political scientists primarily as a male search for professional status rather than a female rejection of the values implicit in a systematic and dehumanizing control by men of women. Women's activities are thus cast more as 'submission' than 'subversion', but in neither case legitimate (Markus, 1987, p.98). This is not to suggest that male teachers do not value other than occupational success, or are not motivated by humane values, or that women do not aspire to occupational mobility or status, but rather that dominant explanations for particular attitudes and activities are framed by narrow and limiting masculinist perceptions and experience of what is problematic. Likewise, the dominant definition of educational leadership has been historically constructed in a manner which ignores, reinterprets or denigrates feminine values and experience.

The positivistic epistemology underlying conventional organizational and administrative theory has undergone an attack from within its ranks since the early 1970s for its naive scientism which separates fact from value, and assertion that administration is a value-free science (Hodgkinson, 1981; Greenfield, 1986; Codd, 1988; Bates, 1986). This 'intellectual turmoil' in educational administration has not ruffled the calm of masculine domination in education at either the theoretical or practitioner level. The inability to incorporate a theoretical explanation for continued masculine domination, despite increased sensitivity to gender issues, has been excused on the grounds that 'organisational theories have been based on the perspective of executives', the emphasis being on the disempowerment resulting from the emphasis on social control, hierarchy and bureaucracy rather than recognition of the reproduction of gendered dominance as a set of power relations as a significant phenomenon of educational organizations (Griffiths, 1979, pp.43–65). The interpretivist perspective of educational administration which has emerged maintains as its essence the individualism of liberal political theory and the fact/value distinction of positivistic epistemology (see Greenfield, 1984, 1986). That there may be some shared experience of particular social groups who have a different way of seeing from their position of non-control at the base of *male* dominated, hierarchical organizations is only implied. Perhaps women share certain common organizational experiences through their patterned subordination and powerlessness as women, and not merely in their commonality as subordinates. The issue is one of control, but by whom, over whom, and on what basis?

Both the positivistic and interpretivistic traditions which have dominated approaches to educational administration have come under attack from the perspective of critical theory for their common epistemological assumption of the distinction between fact and value, which effectively excludes moral commitment and ignores the historical, political and personal nature of organizational relationships (Codd, 1988). Such critiques tend to presume that discussions of domination and subordination, of power relations and the significance of ideology, necessarily include women as objects of subjugation. But there has been little attempt overtly to connect this powerlessness to matters of the social construction and reproduction of gendered power relations in educational organizations (see Fraser, 1987). Depending upon whose interpretation of the Frankfurt school is taken to portray their position best, there would appear to be some convergence of feminist approaches and that of the critical theorists. Salleh discards the view that critical

theory is 'drenched in a Freudian inspired nostalgia for patriarchy, an obsession with the "ideal bourgeois" family, a static and cynical brand of individualism' (Salleh, 1981, p.5). What is evident, she argues, is the shared concern for the merging of theory and practice, the moral commitment to social change, the ongoing critique of all ideologies (including that of critical theory itself), and an historically materialistic analysis which displays a sensitivity to subjectivity without neglecting structural constraints, a dimension ignored or exaggerated in positivistic and interpretivist approaches respectively to educational administration. Salleh suggests that critical theory in fact contributes to the radical feminist problematic in that its analysis rests upon a 'more profound materialism than that of the "mode of production"', that perceives that social change must have a biological and psycho-social basis and which has an epistemology which does not split consciousness from the act of knowing (Salleh, 1981, p.12).

Lather and Fraser share similar optimism when considering how critical theory, and the work of Jürgen Habermas in particular, can contribute to feminist theory. Lather suggests that critical theorists and feminists share the desire to transform the production and dissemination of knowledge, a commitment to more democratic forms of governance which empower disadvantaged groups, a view that looks to the sociality rather than the autonomy of individuals as the guiding force of practice (Lather, 1984). Whilst Fraser is happy to extrapolate from Habermas what she perceives as the gender sub-text, she is still conscious that Habermas fails to theorize 'the norm mediated character of late capitalist official-economic administrative systems...the systemic, money and power-mediated character of male dominance in the domestic sphere... nor the gender-based separation of the state-regulated economy of sex-segmented paid work and social welfare. Ultimately, he also seeks to universalise experience' (Fraser, 1987, p.55). Yet critical theory and feminist theory would appear to share common concerns. The extent of this commonality needs to be explored further.

So far I have elaborated upon the ways in which gender-biased educational structures, organization and practice have been justified as necessary and rational. The gendered and hierarchical division of labour in educational administration, for example, has rested at various times upon notions of natural, psychological and social difference. It is further legitimated by theories of knowledge which are supportive of notions of rational and hierarchical forms of administration as givens or technical necessities. Leadership has thus been portrayed within liberal political theory and positivistic theories of knowledge as an individualistic enterprise essential to the given hierarchical arrangements and premised upon notions of technical expertise.

Individualism, Rationality and Morality

A feminist critique of educational organizations and the ways in which educational leadership has been conceptualized would therefore involve a reconsideration of the concepts of the universal individual, abstract morality and bureaucratic rationality central to liberalism and positivism.

Carol Gould sees the starting point of liberalism as the assumption that 'human individuals are essentially solitary, with needs and interests that are separate from, if not in opposition to, those of other individuals' (Gould, 1983, p.24). It has already been illustrated how social contract theory, upon which liberal polemics is based, specifies the interests of the individual as protection of life, civil liberties and property as exemplified in the autonomous, abstract individual. The emphasis on the individual's interests in liberal political and positivistic organizational theory has many consequences. In particular it denies the individual's need for collective action and sociality. Elshtain argues:

The problem with a politics that begins and ends with mobilizing resources, achieving maximum impacts, calculating prudentially, articulating interest group claims, engaging in reward distribution

functions and so on is not only its utter lack of imagination but its inability to engage the reflective allegiance and committed loyalty of citizens. Oversimply, no substantive sense of civic virtue, no vision of the political community that might serve as the groundwork of a life in common is possible within a political life dominated by self interested, predatory individualism. (Elshtain, 1982, p.141)

Liberal theory also produces an instrumental interpretation of rationality which assumes that the individual has a set of interests and preferences which are known and constant, and that individuals are motivated purely out of a desire to maximize these preferences. The state merely facilitates this process and protect the individual's preferences. Rational behaviour is therefore depicted as when individuals (as organizations) act to maximize their own interests. Gould refutes this assumption, arguing that humans must live in social groups, and that 'human interdependence is thus necessitated by human biology and the assumption of individual self-sufficiency is plausible only if one ignores human biology' (Gould, 1983, p.24). At the same time she is not advocating biological determinism, but rather recognition that 'interests' (whether self-interests or altruistic interests) must take into account the material situation of people and their relationships with others—that is, community. A rational person in Gould's perspective values her abilities to empathize and connect with particular others by recognition not ignorance of social interdependence. It is a notion which is both materialist and non-deterministic. This requires turning liberal theory upon its head. Instead of community and cooperation being problematic in liberal theory, the existence of egoism, competitiveness and conflict, which liberalism sees as endemic and natural, would be the puzzle.

Thus feminists argue that the notion of the abstract individual so implicit in liberalism ignores the essential interdependency of human beings. Sandra Harding suggests that notions of abstract rationality expressed by Kohlberg, Kant and Rawls exemplify a modern liberal ideal not only of the individual as a citizen but also an abstract, transcendental view of morality which is ahistorical (Harding, 1983, pp.40–50). In their view the resolution of moral problems in a 'rational' manner requires abstract judgments arrived at through abstract principles. Harding points out that such a view of moral reasoning does not take into account the contextual and inductive thinking characteristic of taking the role of the particular other. In so doing it creates an opposition between reason and affectivity. Furthermore, the hallmark of this moral reason is impartiality.

Impartiality names a point of view of reason that stands apart from interests and desires. Not to be partial means being able to see the whole, how all the particular perspectives and interests in a given moral situation relate to one another in a way that, because of its partiality, each perspective cannot see itself. The impartial moral reasoner thus stands outside and above the situation about which he or she reasons, with no stake in it.... (Young, 1987, p.60)

This causes a problem which Adorno has called 'the logic of identity' in that it looks to order and describe particulars of experience, to create unity, to eliminate uncertainty and unpredictability. It requires the reasoner to treat all situations alike according to a set of rules, in effect to universalize.

as a consequence of the opposition between reason and desire, moral decisions grounded in considerations of sympathy, caring, and an assessment of differentiated need are defined as not rational, not 'objective', merely sentimental. To the extent that women exemplify or are identified with such styles of moral decision making, then women are excluded from moral rationality. (Young, 1987, p.63)

This dichotomy between reason and desire, we have shown, appears in political theory as the distinction between the public realm of the civic and the state and the private realm of needs and desires (Young, 1987, p.63).

What are the implications of such a stance for leadership? Such a view does not require the impartial reasoner to acknowledge other subjects' perspectives, since they are incomplete. Thus impartiality often results in authoritarianism, in that one claims authority to decide. Furthermore, it is argued that the impartial reasoner has a holistic view, able to abstract himself or herself from self-interests in the interests of the unity (organization). Chris Hodgkinson in his books, *A Philosophy of Leadership* and *A Theory of Educational Administration*, exemplifies such an approach. Hodgkinson calls for a new form of moral leadership in which he posits a hierarchy of values giving priority to cognitive reason over emotive preferences. Thus conflict and self-interest are seen as a debasement of human activity. Throughout his analysis he assumes Plato's view of a leader as a philosopher-king, a rational individual able to abstract *himself* from value judgments embedded in specific situations but based upon universal principles (Hodgkinson, 1981). Such a position assumes a notion of transcendental morality which is ahistorical and ignores the sociality of humans. Such a view invests this capability for superior moral reasoning in the occupants of formal institutional positions, and would divest all others of the moral potential to take decisions which are rational. Hodgkinson does not tell us how to learn or acquire such superior moral powers or how they are recognized. In effect, the consequence would be to reassert the hierarchical relationships premised upon a concept of moral rationality and impose them upon organizational reality in a manner which is detrimental to certain types of valuing and reasoning which are other centred, affective and caring.

Thirdly, in educational administration, as in organizational theory, the dominance of a science of administration has legitimated power relations in schools and maintained a myth of bureaucratic rationality and individualism. Administration is value-free, hierarchy is technically rational and domination legitimate. Urban talks of this bureaucratic rationality 'as a mode of thought, which can be understood as an expression of power relations in the social world, on the one hand, and a mystification of those relations on the other'. Furthermore, 'the defining element of relations inside a bureaucracy is hierarchy, itself another word for domination. Given the worldview of technical rationality, however, bureaucracy does not appear as a structure of domination; on the contrary, the bureaucratic hierarchy manifests itself as a technical necessity (to co-ordinate the subdivided tasks), as a rational organisational arrangement for the accomplishment of collective ends' (Urban, 1982, pp.23-4). The hierarchical arrangements in organizations such as schools are thus premised upon such notions of individualism and rationality. Rizvi has elsewhere developed the ways in which this notion of bureaucratic rationality has particular political implications. He suggests that the traditional notion of administrative leadership reifies the role of the principal as a leader. Principals are seen to be effective only when they are 'in charge' or 'in control'. This encourages manipulation and control of subordinates by principals, generally not conducive to mutual benefit (Rizvi, 1986). He suggests that if schools are seen in terms of individuals and their position in hierarchies, then 'leaders will always be set apart from followers', 'relationships will be one-sided' and mediated through bureaucratic definitions of role (Rizvi, 1986, p.39).

Ferguson criticizes this bureaucratic mind set in which the 'interaction with others is debased and the self is created as a rationalised commodity' (Ferguson, 1984, p.20). In her view bureaucracy rests on assumptions of scientific rationality, the generalized other which is apolitical and ideologically invisible (Ferguson, 1984, p.16). Women are thereby a marginalized group who possess 'subjugated knowledges' located low down the hierarchy. At the same time women are both active creators and passive victims because their experience is more continuous with than in opposition to others. That is, women are neither purely self-interested nor purely altruistic and self-sacrificing. Rather, self and other can be seen to be

attached and continuous, making human sociality a fundamental component of the individual. Because women tend to assume responsibility for taking care of others as defined by traditional roles, they tend to pass judgments that are based on contextual rather than abstract criteria, focus more on process than outcome. In management terms this has been recognized as women's tendency (and failure) to be task- rather than organizationally oriented (Ferguson, 1984, p.25). This is not to deny that men live in families and women work, but the traditional public-private dichotomy means that the members of each gender carry the worldview of their own domain with them into the other realm, and must consciously put it aside to succeed in the other world on its own terms (Ferguson, 1984, p.27).

The masculine image of leadership in education is therefore historically constructed and maintained by its ideological underpinnings of dominant theories of a value-free science and liberal political theory. Leadership is justified on the grounds of rational necessity, individual behaviours and opportunities, and technically necessary hierarchical social arrangements. Founded upon a positivistic epistemology which separates the body from the mind, which extracts feeling and emotion from the material, leadership is defined to be a rational, cognitive process. Because expressive behaviours are denigrated as irrational, it is possible to argue that gender relations are unproblematic and are not a substantive issue in the culture and structure of organizations. The lack of women in higher positions can be excused within such a theoretical framework as a consequence of women's irrationality, subjectivity and emotionality. They choose not to aspire for such positions, or are excused on the grounds of their moral inadequacy in not being able to make the 'hard' decisions in the interests of the organization. The question remains, how then can feminist theory not only deconstruct these dominant epistemological and political perspectives but also reconstruct an alternative which opens up different ways of seeing educational leadership. What then would constitute a feminist perspective of leadership?

The Elements of a Feminist Reconstruction of Leadership

Feminist theory does not ask merely to include women as objects in the patriarchal discourse, in which sameness is emphasized rather than difference. It rapidly becomes evident that it is impossible to incorporate or 'add on' a feminist perspective. Rather, a feminist critique ultimately leads to the need to reformulate the methodologies, criteria of validity and merit and ultimately the political and epistemological commitments underlying the dominant notions or discourse. Feminists demand not just equality, but that they become the subjects and objects of an alternative, autonomous discourse which chooses its own measures and criteria. It is necessary not only to explain the pervasiveness and persistence of gender divergence and gender subordination (which are not the same thing) but also to provide an explanation that avoids a rigid universalism and provides a way of understanding cultural and historical difference. It is also essential that theory provides the basis for a politics directed towards changing this subordination, a politics of change (Thornton 1982, p.53).

A feminist alternative to the view of leadership criticized in this chapter would consist of a number of elements including the central concepts already discussed, concepts which are common to most feminist perspectives. Such a view would focus on the relationship between the individual and a more egalitarian notion of community and civic participation which does not adhere to abstract principles of rational judgment or morality outside specific contexts. Harding, for example, calls for a more practical, contextualized notion of rationality. Perhaps a more politically universal conception of human rationality would refer to normative conditions as personhood and human good in a relational morality which emphasizes attachments and responsibilities to others as well as to self. This suggests that 'interest' should not be regarded as either total self-interest or altruism. A relational view of morality and judgment

recognizes the interdependence of people, and sees moral judgment as not being predicated upon some abstract universal morality or individual rights, but upon concern and responsibility consequent upon the relationships of self to others within specific contexts. In this sense administration as moral judgment would need to be aware of the context of the judgment and the responsibilities of the actors. In effect, it is arguing that the relational bias in women's thinking, which has been seen to compromise their moral judgment in the past and impede their moral development, in fact has significant moral value for all. Gilligan has argued that this relational morality should not be regarded as the deficit model, but that it merely reflects a different social and moral understanding—a different set of interests (Gilligan, 1977, pp.481–2).

I do not take the stance that women's worldview or perspective is either biologically determined or premised on an essentialism which perceives female morality, interests or behaviours as being superior to those of males. Rather, I adhere to the view that at a specific historical moment, traditional patterns of behaviours prescribe certain roles to which individuals, males and females, partially conform to differing degrees. For example, women's centrality to the family and as principal child rearer is not greatly challenged in practice, and is therefore a dominant part of women's identity, value systems and needs. That is, women's 'interests' are associated with caring and commitment to others. Carol Gould argues that 'a dialectical conception of human biology sees human nature and the forms of human social organisation as determined not by biology alone but rather a complex interplay between our biological constitution, our physical environment and our forms of social organisation, including our level of technological development' (Gould, 1984, p.22). Within this framework feminism would not expect that everyone be treated exactly the same, since responsibility and relationships have specific temporal and historical contexts.

Such a perspective would mean a reconstitution of the public sphere in what Markus calls 'the more or less fluid self-organisation of a public committed to principles of equality, plurality and democratic forms' (Markus, 1986, p.9). This is not to return to the Enlightenment ideal of civic public

which excludes the bodily and affective particularity as well as the concrete histories of individuals that make groups unable to understand one another. Emancipatory politics should foster a concept of public which in principle excludes no person, aspects of persons' lives or topic of discussion and which encourages aesthetic as well as discursive expression. In such a public, consensus and sharing may not always be the goal, but the recognition and appreciation of difference, in the context of confrontation with power. (Young, 1987, p.76)

It is also time to consider why it is that women's accounts of power differ so systematically from those of men. Men see in power domination, whilst Hartsock argues that women take a more emancipatory perception in that they see 'power as a capacity of the community as a whole'. Women tend to characterize power over others as domination and illegitimate, without questioning why there are systematic relations in which some have more power over others. Individual power (or leadership) is often treated with scepticism. This comes largely from Arendt's formulation, when she treats individual actions outside community with contempt, as non-political. Hartsock warns that in so doing power is described in terms

that emphasise the submersion of the identity of the individual in the community, thereby falling into a form of female pathology of loss of self, a fluidity that may submerge individual identity.... It is better to have an understanding of power for the individual which stresses both its dimensions of competence, ability and creativity and does not lose sight of the importance of effective action...in part defined by its sensuality and its variety of connections and relations with others in the community. (Hartsock, 1983, pp.253, 256)

Rather than condemn the notion of leadership as anathema to democratic community, it is essential to reconceptualize a different type of leadership in a caring community, to recognize that at particular instances individuals can and do act in a powerful manner but with good intention for the community, whilst laying themselves open to communal scrutiny (Noddings, 1985).

An adequate theory of power, according to Hartsock, would give an account of how social institutions have come to be controlled by only one gender; it would locate where and how the points of conflict between men and women are generated; and it would make clear the specific relations between individual intentional actions and structural constraints (p.254). Such an approach would necessarily subvert the hierarchical structures of social institutions such as bureaucracies. Ferguson argues that women already offer an alternative construct to the dominant bureaucratic discourse in which 'women's lives constitute a submerged voice'. She continues:

The traditional experiences of women in our society shed light on bureaucracy in two ways—by revealing persistent patterns of dominance and subordination in bureaucracy that parallel power relations between men and women, and by suggesting a different way of conceiving the individual and the collective that reflects the caretaking and nurturant experiences embedded in women's role. (Ferguson, 1984, p.x)

She suggests that a feminist discourse in organizations would therefore encourage the caring and reciprocity central to a relational worldview which gives prior concern to others, which would recognize both familial and friendship connectedness and acknowledge the civic as well as the personal importance of friendship. It would also be committed to participatory democracy, whilst being aware that the sharing of power, language and knowledge critical to participation can assume gendered formations which must be constantly analyzed.

Given the attack on abstract individualism and organizational hierarchy implicit in feminism, an alternative conception of leadership emerges. It is suggested here that leadership can take other forms than having *power over* others and that leadership 'skills' can be used in a different way. Rather than privileging the individual who is often already in a position of status and power because of the possession of specialist knowledge, capacities, skills or role allocation, expertise can, in a cooperative environment, empower the individual *and* the group. Leadership, and the power which accompanies it, would be redefined as the ability to *act with* others to do things that could not be done by an individual alone. Leadership, therefore, would be a form of empowerment and not of dominance or control (Ferguson, 1984, p.206; see also Burbules, 1986). Hartsock takes up this point when she claims that 'to lead is to be at the centre of the group rather than in front of the others' (Hartsock, 1983, p.8). Authority based on skill and knowledge (both of which are imbued with power) would be, according to Hartsock, 'compelled persistently to demonstrate its force to those concerned in terms which they can grasp and, by dint of being so compelled, be made in some real measure responsible to them' (Hartsock, 1983, p.10).

It is suggested that women have been alienated by the masculinist portrayal of leadership and organizational life which emphasizes control, individualism and hierarchy. The false dichotomy between fact and value, ends and means, derived from the positivistic assumptions of the traditional 'science of educational administration' has political repercussions in the sense that it is exclusive of women's experience by rejecting all that is affective or experientially-based. It casts particular groups as 'others', and privileges certain types of knowledge, experience and expertise over others. Furthermore, organizational theory has assumed and maintained the dualisms derived from social and political theory which have portrayed women's experiential and knowledge claims to be in opposition, and thus peripheral or

insubstantial. This has been exacerbated in practice by the historical and social construction of the gendered division of labour in schools and educational administration.

What does this mean in practical terms and policy in educational administration? Educational leadership as portrayed in the conventional literature may have little to attract women. That is, the perception of what constitutes leadership is problematic, not women. If administration is no longer treated as separate from teaching, if leadership is not merely equated to formal roles and responsibilities, if what is worthwhile knowledge and experience is not restricted to formal qualifications or institutional experience, then it calls upon a new set of informed judgments which must be brought to bear on the valuing of people's activities in educational organizations. What counts as *administrative* and *leadership* experience and skills or potential could therefore include community activities, teaching, curriculum development and child rearing, which recognizes what difference can bring to education. This would go some way towards recognizing women's experience in the 'private' sphere, and imbuing it with equal status to male experience in the public sphere. It may challenge what Jan Grant describes as the way in which organizations reproduce themselves in the masculine view via 'homosocial reproduction' (Grant, 1985).

It would also require a shift to be made from the individual to a collective focus in terms of what is meant by leadership. This would require going against the renewed push towards more masculinist notions of leadership embedded in corporate managerialism, the impetus for current restructuring of secondary and tertiary education, which equates efficiency and effectiveness with organizational rationality and hierarchy (Blackmore and Kenway, 1988). While administration and leadership are premised upon conventional theories which reify hierarchy, rationality and individualism, which are perceived to be masculinist attributes or behaviours, women's experiences and values will continue to be displaced. To conclude, Hartsock suggests that '...it would raise for the first time the possibility of a fully human community, a community structured by its variety of direct relations among people, rather than their separation and opposition' (Hartsock, 1983, p.262).

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