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Journal of Women in Educational Leadership, Vol. 2, No. 1-January 2004

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"Journal of Women in Educational Leadership, Vol. 2, No. 1-January 2004" (2004). *Journal of Women in Educational Leadership*. 105.
<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/jwel/105>

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Are We All Firsts?

Marilyn L. Grady
Barbara Y. LaCost

The conversation about “First Generation College Students” is dominant in the university setting. At the November 2003 annual meeting of the University Council for Educational Administration, we were fortunate to engage in special discussions about women. In one session convened by Norma Mertz, the topic of women who are “firsts” as professors of educational administration was highlighted. This discussion will undoubtedly lead to further exploration of the experiences of these “first” women professors of educational administration. In another session, Nancy Mims convened women department chairs and deans for a conversation about their experiences. Once again, the issue of being a “first” was evident in the discussion. Exploration of the experiences of these pioneering women also needs to be conducted.

The status of being a “first” is not limited to women in educational leadership roles. On January 12, 2004, Kathleen Blanco was sworn in as governor of Louisiana, another “first.”

Closer to home for us, a front page headline in the January 11, 2004 Lincoln Journal Star announced that Equity in Gender Still Lags at NU. According to the article, “UNL has gained four female professors since 1996-97, a number ranking it dead last in its own 11-school peer group, according to information compiled from an American Association of University Professors survey” (p. 1). As part of this grim record, there are many “firsts” in different departments on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln’s campus who could describe their experiences.

The manuscripts in this issue of *The Journal of Women in Educational Leadership* also reflect the “first” phenomena. Wolverton and Macdonald report on their study of the career paths to the superintendency in the Northwest. The superintendency is described by the U.S. Census Bureau as the most male-dominated executive position of any profession in the United States (Bjork, 2000).

Helterbran and Rieg describe the barriers women experience as they seek positions in educational leadership. Their manuscript focuses on women as school principals. They provide suggestions for those who seek principal positions.

Uerling discusses two 2003 Supreme Court decisions considered challenges to the use of racial preferences in the admissions policies of two different colleges at the University of Michigan. Uerling's conclusion, "Surely the day will come when race and ethnicity will be of no more significance than any other personal characteristic. But that day has yet to arrive."

Jean-Marie notes that "Black women are subjected to both racism and sexism; those who achieve privileged status are also the targets of classism." Her manuscript focuses on Black women administrators in Historically Black Colleges and Universities..

Taken together, these manuscripts are a vivid reminder of the equity work that demands our attention.

Women in the Superintendency: Opting In or Opting Out?

Mimi Wolverton & R. Timothy Macdonald

The purpose of this article was to report the most common career path to the superintendency in the Northwest. We compared career paths across four subgroups of study participants—male and female superintendents and male and female certificate holders who were not superintendents. First, we sought commonalities in the routes chosen by current male and female superintendents in the study. Second, we examined the career choices of potential superintendency applicants to determine whether they were actually gaining the types of administrative experience required by school boards and search consultants. We concluded with implications for practice based on study findings.

Increasingly, popular literature suggests that the U.S. is experiencing, or will in the near future, a shortage of qualified applicants for the superintendent position (AASA, 1999). Highly qualified candidates often do not want the job (Cooper, Fusarelli & Carella, 2000; Cunningham & Burdick, 1999; McAdams, 1998). Current pools of administrative candidates come from practicing teachers (Glass, Björk, & Brunner, 2000; Kowalski, 1999), and the majority of teachers are women. Yet few women are found in the superintendency. Of the 2,262 superintendents responding to the 2000 AASA superintendent survey, only 297 (13%) were women (Glass et al., 2000). The situation in the northwestern region of the country mirrors the survey results. In a regional study of superintendents in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington, only 13% of the 522 superintendents who participated were women (Wolverton, Rawls & Macdonald, 2000).

In school districts, there are several gateways an individual must pass through prior to the superintendency. Traditionally, a candidate must have survived the classroom as a teacher, engaged in a certification process, and experienced at least one intermediary administrative position before ascending to the superintendency. The types of positions assumed determine the experience gained, which in turn determines an individual's marketability as a viable superintendent candidate (Forbes & Piercy, 1991; Konrad & Pfeffer, 1991).

About the Author

Mimi Wolverton is an associate professor at the University of Nevada Las Vegas where she teaches in and coordinates the higher education leadership programs. Her research interests lie in the areas of professional development, organizational change, and leadership across gender, race/ethnicity, discipline, and industry.

R. Timothy MacDonald served as a research specialist at the UCEA Center for the Study of Academic Leadership during the superintendent project. He is currently affiliated with SRA/McGraw-Hill in the state of Washington.

According to policy makers familiar with the situation in the Northwest, many superintendents are leaving their current positions via retirement (roughly 40% of the superintendents in the study planned to retire within three years). They have joined local consortia of superintendents who promote each other in the pursuit of positions in neighboring states. Increasingly, school boards and search consultants are using these consortia (consisting almost entirely of white men) to select candidates rather than selecting from younger, newly credentialed candidates. Retired superintendents are known to have experience; new certificate holders do not. Using local consortia decreases the likelihood of females gaining access to the superintendency because so few women currently are superintendents in the Northwest (Wolverton, Rawls, Macdonald & Nelson, 2000). Further, much of the research on women in the superintendency suggests that they take a different path to that position than do white males. That path could hamper their chances of gaining the administrative and leadership experience deemed necessary by boards and search consultants (Kamler & Shakeshaft, 1999; Logan, 1999; Sharp, 1991; Shary, Malone, Walter & Supley, 2000; Tallerico, 2000b).

The purpose of this article was to report the most common path to the superintendency in the Northwest. We compared career paths across four subgroups of study participants—male and female superintendents and male and female certificate holders who were not superintendents. First, we sought commonalities in the routes chosen by current male and female superintendents in the study. Second, we examined the career choices of potential superintendency applicants to determine whether they were actually gaining the types of administrative experience required by school

boards and search consultants. We concluded with implications for practice based on study findings.

Conceptual Framework

Leadership development is a process that extends over many years (Gardner, 1987). It includes three components: (a) an *understanding of the desired position*, (b) *skill development*, and (c) practice and time to reflect that can only be gained through *experience* (Wolverton & Gmelch, 2002). Schön (1983) contended that this third dimension is crucial. For leaders to be successful, they must engage in reflective practice. Their ability to reflect on what they do as they gain administrative experience is central to dealing with the uncertainty, instability, and conflict that occur in organizations (Gabarro, 1985; Kowalski, 1999; McAdams, 1995).

The roles and responsibilities of the superintendency have been reported (Blumberg, 1985; Kowalski, 1999; McAdams, 1995). We understand what they do. Similarly, we have developed highly sophisticated certification programs that focus on skill development. A common assumption is that aspirants to the superintendency gain the experience needed through a variety of school administrative posts. That is, they take positions that provide them with the experience and the opportunity to reflect on practices that relate to the superintendency.

Tallerico's (2000a) study suggested that "moving through the ranks" does characterize the typical career path to the superintendent. Most superintendents began as teachers and then followed one of two administrative paths. More than 48% of Tallerico's respondents moved from positions as assistant principal or principal to central administration to superintendent. Another 31% transitioned directly from either assistant principal positions or principalships to superintendencies. Kowalski (1999) stated that, especially for men, the path to the superintendency is through the assistant high school principal and high school principal offices.

Respondents in a study (McAdams, 1995) named the high school principalship as the position in the district most clearly resembling the superintendency. These two positions are alike not only in the variety of complex issues that arise but in the degree of community visibility associated with them (Tallerico, 2000a). Applicants with experience in managing finances, facilities, operations, personnel, and board-community relations that might be gained as a high school principal, prove attractive to school boards (Vail, 1999). Consultants also viewed the rise to the superintendency from this position as being easier than moving from the elementary principal position that has traditionally been held by women

(Kamler & Shakeshaft, 1999; Tallerico, 2000b). The rarity of women in the high school principal position has made it difficult for search consultants to recruit women for available positions. As a consequence, search consultants who continue to rely on the high school principalship as the path to the superintendency disenfranchise women applicants (Björk, 2000; Brunner, 1999, 2001; Chase & Bell, 1990).

The Study

Washington State University's Center for Academic Leadership surveyed more than 1,900 superintendents and superintendent certificate holders in the five-state region (Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington) served by the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory (Wolverton, Rawls & Macdonald, 2000).¹ The master list of potential participants included names of superintendents and superintendent certificate holders provided by each state's Department of Education. Surveys were mailed to prospective participants. The overall response rate was 61% (N = 1,180). Respondents were asked for demographic information including current position, education, types of administrative experience, whether they had ever applied for superintendent positions (and, if so, how many times), and whether they planned to apply for the superintendency within the next three years.

Methodology

We were particularly interested in determining whether certificate holders were gaining the type of administrative experience sought by districts. This interest was driven by the assumption that holding an administrative certificate merely gets you into the candidate pool; experience determines whether you are offered the position. Four of the five states in the Northwest Region require superintendent certificates upon application. Even though Washington does not require a certificate, 80% of its superintendents hold the credential.

To gain a clearer understanding of the career paths of superintendents and potential superintendents, we computed percentages of administrative experience held by four populations (male and female superintendents and male and female non-superintendents) across six positions: (a) elementary principal, (b) middle school principal, (c) high school vice principal, (d) high school principal, (e) assistant superintendent, and (f) other central administration. We then compared administrative experience across groups to answer two research questions: Do men and women pursue similar types of administrative experience? And, are certificate holders pursuing the

types of administrative experience that current superintendents possess and school boards deem necessary? We tested for differences between (a) male and female superintendents; (b) male and female non-superintendents; (c) differences among the subpopulations—male superintendents and non-superintendents, female superintendents and non-superintendents; and (d) superintendents and non-superintendents, using analysis of variance techniques (including post-hoc t-tests).

Results

Demographics

Of the 1,900 individuals surveyed, 1,180 (61%) participated in the study. Forty-four percent ($N = 522$) of the respondents were superintendents. Twenty percent ($N = 240$) of the respondents were women (173 nonsuperintendent certificate holders and 67 superintendents). The mean age of the respondents was 53 years—the youngest was 31 years old and the oldest was 78 years old. Most were married [88% ($N = 459$ of superintendents) and 87% ($N = 572$ of non-superintendents)]. The participant groups ranged in average years in current positions from 4.2 (women superintendents) to 7.4 (men non-superintendents).

Superintendents and non-superintendents bore similar profiles. They were close in age and education attainment. More men than women in both groups were married. Men in both groups averaged more than 19 years of administrative experience; current female superintendents worked in administration, on average, two years longer than women non-superintendents, however. In general, non-superintendents tended to be in their current positions longer than were superintendents.

Differences were noted for superintendents and non-superintendents when divided by gender. Women in both groups were less likely to be married than were their male counterparts. They had less administrative experience and had been in their current positions for shorter time periods. They also tended to be more highly educated with 52% of the female superintendents and 41% of the female non-superintendents possessing doctorates. Comparable percentages for men in the sample were 32% and 30%, respectively. All but one study participant had an administrative certificate; men held their certificates longer than women did.

Career Paths

Twenty-five percent ($N = 259$) planned to apply for the superintendency within the next four years. That percentage included some current

superintendents ($N = 140$) who planned to relocate to other districts in the near future. Only 18% ($N = 39$) of the potential women applicants planned to apply for a superintendency. Such a finding reflects the stance of Gupton and Slick (1996), who found that career aspirations of women typically fall short of the superintendency. Multiple studies confirm that limited career goals correlate with lack of career advancement (Bonuso & Shakeshaft, 1982; Thomas, 1986; Weber, Feldman & Poling, 1981).

Tallerico (2000a, 2000b) suggested that school administrators move along one of two paths that culminate in the superintendency—through central administration or directly from the high school principalship. Others have suggested that the more desirable route is through the high school principal position. That, indeed, the high school principalship prepares individuals for the administrative rigors of the superintendency (Kowalski, 1999; McAdams, 1995).

In the Northwest, men tended to move from the high school principalship, and women from assistant superintendent and central administration positions, to the superintendency. Almost 60% of current male superintendents had been high school principals. In contrast, less than one-quarter of female superintendents had held the high school principal position. More women than men had been either assistant superintendents (43%) or in other central administrative positions (45%). Less than 30% of male superintendents had held either an assistant superintendent or served in a central administrative position prior to becoming a superintendent. If the high school principalship is the predominant path in the Northwest, then it might be the explanation for funding so few women in the superintendency.

Significant differences at $p \leq 0.05$ in career path positions between men and women were found. Among current superintendents, more men (56%) than women (24%) have held high school principalships. Conversely, more women (45%) than men (24%) served as central administrators. Among eligible, but not practicing superintendents, more men (44%) than women (23%) served as high school principals.

Significant differences at $p \leq 0.05$ in career path positions between current superintendents and those eligible but not practicing as superintendents were found. Significantly more members of the applicant pool, that is non-superintendents (40% men and 61% women) than current superintendents (24% men and 45% women) have spent time in central office. Conversely, significantly fewer members of the applicant pool, that is non-superintendents (44% men and 23% women) than current superintendents (56% men and 24% women) have spent time in the high

school principalship. Among men, more superintendents (56%) than non-superintendents (44%) have held high school principalships. Among women, more superintendents (43%) than non-superintendents (29%) have held assistant superintendencies, yet fewer superintendents (45%) than non-superintendents (61%) have held central administrative positions. More men non-superintendents (40%) than men superintendents (24%) served in central administration.

Significant differences at $p \leq 0.05$ in career path positions between those eligible but not practicing as superintendents were found. More women (61%) than men (40%) served in central administration.

The conclusion might be drawn that instead of aggressively pursuing high school principalships or assistant superintendencies in preparation for a superintendency, these potential applicants are finding that they can be involved at the district level but avoid the pitfalls and hassles of the superintendency by taking central administrative positions, such as director of curriculum and instruction or educational technology director. They may simply have learned vicariously the ins and outs of the superintendency and found the position wanting (Bandura, 1977).

Implications and Discussion

One implication is that the pool of viable candidates for the superintendency may actually become smaller over the next ten years as men and women opt out of spending time in a highly scrutinized, crisis-ridden position (Cunningham & Burdick, 2000). Candidates may be hesitant to enter a position in which authority is undermined by what they perceive as board and community interference and a lack of job security.

Female administrators may climb career ladders that do not reach the top. The myth exists that loyalty as an assistant superintendent will lead to “inheritance” of the superintendency when a current superintendent leaves the position (Kamler & Shakeshaft, 1999). The reality is that when change does occur school boards often do not look within for a replacement. Rather, they look at existing superintendents in other districts or newly retired superintendents to serve as interims—most of whom are men. And, if they look beyond this pool, they often search for applicants who have had high school principal experience (Tallerico, 2000a, 2000b). If states in the Northwest want women superintendents they must embark on concerted efforts to identify and mentor female leaders. Mentors provide essential support and insights into the inner workings of the system. Those

who lack mentors often find themselves excluded and discounted as potential superintendents (Gardiner, Enomoto & Grogan, 2000).

One of the main impediments to women's career advancement, however, seems to be the unstated and understood requirements that aspiring candidates must look and act like those already in power (Gupton & Slick, 1996). In fact, the U.S. Census Bureau describes the superintendency as the most male-dominated executive position of any profession in the United States (Björk, 2000, p. 17). In career trajectory terms, matriculation to the superintendency occurs from highly visible administrative positions, like the high school principalship—a path increasing numbers of women are not taking (Grogan, 1996). Women are equipping themselves for top administrative positions as evidenced by the increased number of women in advanced degree programs and increased number of women in central office positions. The question remains: are they opting in or are they opting out?

End Notes

¹ Northwest Regional Education Laboratory sponsored this study.

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Women as School Principals: What is the Challenge?

Valerie R. Helterbran & Sue A. Rieg

From 1988 to 1998 the percentage of female school principals increased from 20% to 48% and continues to grow. The number of women entering school administration has grown as has the number of principal turnovers.

Women who seek positions in educational leadership face many issues. Ten barriers that continue to surface in the research are:

- little encouragement to assume leadership roles;
- lack of female role models;
- perceived need to be “better qualified”;
- women cannot discipline older, male students;
- resentment of males working for females;
- some educators prefer male principals;
- reluctance to relocate;
- long hours;
- women lack the desire for power; and
- leadership styles differ

The authors address these barriers and suggest ways to overcome them.

Principals are faced with complex tasks. The principal is expected to collaboratively create a school-wide vision and see that vision through successful completion. The principal is expected to raise the achievement levels of the students to meet state and national standards. The principal is to be the instructional leader who plans professional development opportunities for teachers and staff. The principal must handle discipline problems, making sure that punishments are issued fairly and consistently for all students. The principal must balance an ever-decreasing school budget, making sure teachers and students have what they need to maintain an effective teaching and learning environment. The principal must know the laws regarding

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special education, and teachers' and students' rights and responsibilities. The principal is expected to attend after-school meetings and school events. The principal is required to attend administrative meetings and keep up with current research and best practices in education. Along with these tasks, the principal must put out all of the fires that flame daily in the school setting.

Why would anyone want to assume these challenges? Educators take on these tasks because they care about educating children and preparing them to be successful members of society. Despite this motivation, principals choose to leave the field of school administration. Yerkes and Guaglianone (1998) identified factors that make the principalship stressful. These factors include:

- time: for most, a 60-80 hour week;
- workload and complexity of job;
- supervision of “unending” evening activities;
- minimal pay differential between top teacher and administrator;
- bombardment with high expectations;
- state and district mandates that require hours of paperwork; and
- complex society with attendant social problems

Gilman and Lanman-Givens (2001) addressed reasons why promising candidates resist pursuing careers as school principals:

- costly and irrelevant requirements to obtain principal certification;
- too many pressures—accountability, test scores, parents, special interest groups;
- too many hats to wear—community relations director, disciplinarian, business manager, safety officer, fund-raiser, social service agent, law enforcer, and more;
- not enough time; and
- too little authority

The “Typical” Principal

In 1998, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) conducted a study of 3,000 principals in K-8 schools. The “typical principal” was profiled as a 50-year-old white male who worked an average of ten hours per day and devoted up to eight additional hours per week to school-related activities. He has good morale (but could be better) and had no major concerns about job security. He spent much of his time supervising staff and interacting with and disciplining students. The “typical principal” worked with social service agencies, developed instructional practices and curriculum, and worked with site-based counseling. He was concerned about the fragmentation of his time, student assessment, students who were not performing to potential, staff development, and financial resources. He was also concerned about the ability of public education to attract quality people to replace him and others in the K-8 principalship (NAESP, 2002).

Much has been said and written about women assuming the principalship. In an arena that is still largely a “man’s world,” women are defining and redefining their roles and relationships in working with male administrative colleagues and predominately female teaching staffs. From

1988 to 1998 the percentage of female principals increased from 20% to 48% and continues to increase. However, although the number of women entering school administration has grown in the last ten years, so has the turnover of females in the principalship.

The United States is experiencing a shortage of principals due to the additional responsibilities and increased demands placed on principals by the public, central administration, and school boards. Women who seek or are already in positions of educational leadership often face barriers that lead to a change in career due to the difficulty of overcoming these obstacles.

Historical Perspective

Women's roles in society are constantly evolving. McPherson (2000) summarized the traditional roles of women—to follow, to obey, to support, and to provide. In the past, women were punished for speaking out publicly. They were strapped to a ducking stool and submerged in water, or they were muzzled in the town square. Women were seen as “ornaments” but never heard. McPherson symbolized gender as both a destiny and a decision—something that we must define, develop, and deploy in individual ways so that it enhances the talents, intelligence, and gifts that we bring. She asked, “Is gender an instrument to be used or an obstacle to be overcome or avoided?” (p. 150).

As Marshall (2000) reflected on the epistemologies framing research on women school leaders, she reported that in the 1950s and early 1960s there were few women leaders in education. In the 1960s and 1970s, researchers sought answers to why few women had entered and moved into administration.

Well-intended programs to “fix women's deficiencies” focused on public relations, finance, and politics. In the 1970s and 1980s, equal employment policies were developed to help eliminate the barriers faced by women in educational leadership. Women continued to work hard as public educators and, during the late 1980s and 1990s, began entering careers in the field of educational administration in greater numbers.

Issues Cited in the Literature: Research Findings

Women continue to face barriers in educational administration. These barriers may arise in a woman's quest to provide effective leadership. However, the researchers indicate that these barriers are familiar and are encountered by women in varying degrees as careers unfold. The question remains: How central are the following barriers to women administrators?

1. Little or no encouragement to assume leadership roles: Do typical administrative social "bonding" activities, by their nature, raise the discomfort level for women?

Eakle (1995) mentioned that when she attended administrative meetings she sensed a feeling of the "Good ol'boys" club as the men discussed their tennis games, traded jokes that they had heard from the service clubs to which they belonged, and complained about the teachers union. She believed that women who did not belong to the same organizations or clubs as their male counterparts had little opportunity for promotion or advancement. In her study of beginning principals in South Wales, Dunshea (1998) observed that men often viewed women principals as social butterflies, or worse, if they attended meetings at bars or other social clubs. She found that women received "backhanded" remarks from male administrators insinuating that women got their jobs solely because they were women, not because they were deserving or had earned their positions.

2. A lack of female role models and mentors in educational administration: Are women willing to do what it takes to network, mentor, and extend themselves to women who display leadership potential and/or women already in a position of leadership?

Concerning role models and mentors, Eakle (1995) found that the school board was not supportive of her during her tenure in administration. She experienced isolation when moving from a predominantly female teaching atmosphere to a predominantly male administrative environment. She perceived that the female staff members lacked confidence in her and were afraid that she would fail, reinforcing the idea that women cannot cope in the administrative field.

Klauke (1990) contended that professors of educational administration could help to overcome the obstacle of role stereotyping by assuring school boards that women can be effective and competent administrators. She suggested placing women on search teams and providing mentors for female administrators.

3. The perceived need to be "better qualified" than male counterparts: Do women need to work "twice as hard to be half as good?"

In educational leadership, women face different expectations and their actions are judged differently than men. Females must be extraordinary leaders in order to be successful and face the difficulties

of the job (Dunshea, 1998). Eakle (1995) found that women needed to be tenacious and assertive to get promoted—in other words exhibit more male-like qualities than female qualities. Growe and Montgomery (2001) stated that, “American women believe that they have to be twice as good and better than others with the same aspirations” (p. 2).

4. Women cannot discipline older students, especially males: *If women successfully discipline male students in the classroom, why does this belief surface administratively?*

In many instances, parents and community members believe that males can more effectively discipline male students than can women. Hatton (1996) found that in one community, people believed that a male, preferably a *large* male, was the only appropriate choice for selection as principal because if a fight broke out, it would be better to have a male around to handle the situation. In Australia, Sachs and Blackmore (1998, p. 3) quoted a parent as saying, “Why should Johnny listen to you, you are only a woman, he does not like women?” Myths about female administrators include that women are too emotional and too weak physically to discipline older students (Whitaker & Lane, 1990).

5. The resentment of males working with and for females: *What can be done to alleviate gender friction?*

Dunshea (1998) found that males are often patronizing to females and want to tell them how to do their jobs. She stated that teachers and others deliberately kept information from the female administrator in an attempt to make her appear less competent than a man. At one principal’s Parents and Citizens meeting, she noted that a motion was made that included the statement, “It’s ungodly and unnatural to have a woman in charge of a man” (p. 7). Coffin and Ekstrom (1979) found that one of the reasons that women candidates were given for not being hired in a position for which they believed themselves qualified was that men do not want to take directions from a woman.

6. Some educators prefer a male principal: *Is this due to experience, perception, or envy?*

McGrath (1992, p. 62) cited Folmar’s (1989) research that suggested, “School board members see female leaders as less effective than their male counterparts.” Bredeson (1991) suggested that male

teachers continue to take on nearly twice the number of leadership roles in schools; thus, women need to take on more leadership opportunities on top of their regular teaching responsibilities. Bredeson stated that these quasi-administrative experiences might contribute to the preparation, credentials, and confidence women need to assume administrative roles in schools.

7. Women are often reluctant to relocate: *Does a woman's commitment to her family differ from that of a male's?*

Women are still typically seen as primary caregivers to their children. They are often up in the middle of the night with sick children, calming fears, and getting their young ones ready and off to school in the morning. If men devote several evenings per week to various school or community functions, it is seen as part of the job; however, if women are away from home, they are neglecting their families (Eakle, 1995). Shakeshaft (1989) suggested that a lack of motivation for women to become leaders may be an accurate reflection of reality in light of home and family responsibilities and job opportunities. Women were expected to continue to do the majority of the work inside the home while working outside the home. Shakeshaft suggested that the difficulties of juggling family responsibilities with administrative tasks might not seem worth it to some women. Sachs and Blackmore (1998) suggested that networking was especially challenging for women because balancing the demands of work and home were difficult and often had to be completed on the run.

8. Principals work long hours: *Is it possible to balance home and career demands and be effective in both arenas?*

Goeller (1995), referring to Educational Research Service data, noted that “. . . a majority of both school board presidents and male superintendents believed that pregnancy and administration are incompatible” (p. 106). She further suggested that family and home responsibilities were barriers to women. Glass (2000) corroborated that, “the role of mother probably restrains many women teachers from pursuing the principalship—a position they are well acquainted with” (p. 5).

9. Leadership styles differ between men and women: *Is this a problem or an asset?*

Males and females carry out the same tasks as educational leaders but they often focus on different aspects of the job. Women tend to embrace relationships, sharing, and process; men focus on task completion, achieving goals, and winning (Chliwniak, 1997). Women tend to accept disagreement as a natural occurrence, not suppress it (Shautz, 1995). Females typically desire a collaborative and site-based approach to school management, males often desire a top-down approach. Andrews and Basom (1990) affirmed leadership differences and suggested that this is expressed as women being more instructional-oriented in the school.

According to Growe and Montgomery (2001), good school administration is more attuned to female than male leadership behavior. She stated that the female attributes of being nurturing, sensitive, empathetic, intuitive, compromising, caring, cooperative, and accommodating are associated with effective school administration.

10. Women often lack the desire for power: *Is establishing authority related to one's physical size and/or personality?*

Many times women do not feel the need for power. They prefer a more democratic and collegial form of leadership (Sachs & Blackmore, 1991). Shautz (1995) found in her study that 88% of the females preferred a collaborative style of supervision based on problem-solving approaches where the supervisor guides the process. In contrast, according to Oplatka (2001), to make assumptions that women in the principalship “. . . are supposed to use predominately ‘feminine’ management styles” (p. 230) is simplistic and unrealistic. She cited six headteachers in her study who described themselves as “assertive, centralist and task-oriented in their relationship with staff and parents.” To further complicate, yet illuminate, the issue of power, Smulyan's (2000) study participants, three female principals, asserted that they did not believe their “gender made much difference in their lives and work”

(p. 598). The power differential issue seemingly appears to vary from woman to woman.

Conclusions and Applications: Overcoming the Obstacles

We have faced some of these obstacles throughout our years as principals. We found the following strategies helpful in overcoming the issues faced

by other female administrators and offer these suggestions based on our experiences:

- Like the “Little Train That Could,” we knew we had the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively manage a school and reminded ourselves, “We know we can, we know we can. . . .” Possessing confidence, courage, and determination was invaluable in entering and navigating the male-dominated world of public school administration.
- We sought out effective mentors, female and male, with whom we chose to collaborate and commiserate. These mentors had long-standing positive reputations in our districts and surrounding districts and were always willing to listen and share ideas.
- We networked with our female administrators, enjoying professional and social occasions, as we discussed school issues.
- Delegating responsibility was another way we balanced and managed the demands of home and school. We realized the importance of hiring accomplished, qualified staff members who could effectively dispatch their duties. We recognized teacher leaders and their many strengths, and we offered opportunities for these teachers to assume meaningful leadership responsibilities.
- *And possibly the most important suggestion*, we acknowledged that we benefit from the differences between our leadership styles and those of our male counterparts.

Success in the principalship appears to be highly idiosyncratic for both male and female principals. Principals with the knowledge, attitudes, dedication, and stamina to assume the school’s top job are the only individuals who stand a chance to survive, and indeed flourish, in a position that rivals any other in the importance and service of educating and serving children. Schools are a mirror of the society that created and supports them; this includes gender issues as well. The pressure of society plays a large role in determining work of the principalship. Women who are interested in becoming principals should recognize these challenges. Differences and difficulties may exist in the perceptions of women in the principalship. The charges for women are to winnow through the issues and tasks, to identify what is hindering performance, and to face hinderances and work to diminish them.

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Racial and Ethnic Preferences in College Admissions: How Much is Too Much?

Donald F. Uerling

Two 2003 Supreme Court decisions—*Grutter v. Bollinger* and *Gratz v. Bollinger*—considered challenges to the use of racial preferences in the admissions policies of two different colleges at the University of Michigan. Taken together, these two Equal Protection Clause decisions stand for the propositions that the educational benefits resulting from a diverse student body can be a compelling government interest and that race and ethnicity can be used as a “plus” to promote that interest, but not to the extent that such a preference insulates minority applicants from competition with other applicants and ensures the admission of nearly every minority applicant who is minimally qualified.

Introduction

In American higher education, there has been a general belief that racial and ethnic diversity in a student body adds a valuable dimension to the educational experience of all students. Also, there has been a sense that higher education has a role to play in solving some of the problems associated with past discrimination against certain groups of people. Because racial and ethnic minorities have been underrepresented in the student bodies of many institutions, some admissions policies and procedures have sought to promote the admission of more minority students by using racial preferences. But the use of race to benefit some students because of race or ethnicity raises the issue of potentially unlawful “reverse” discrimination.

This article focuses on a discussion of two 2003 Supreme Court decisions—*Grutter v. Bollinger* and *Gratz v. Bollinger*—that considered challenges to the use of racial preferences in the admissions policies of two different colleges at the University of Michigan. Taken together, these two Equal Protection Clause decisions stand for the propositions that the

educational benefits resulting from a diverse student body can be a

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compelling government interest and that race and ethnicity can be used as a “plus” to promote that interest, but not to the extent that such a preference insulates minority applicants from competition with other applicants and ensures the admission of nearly every minority applicant who is minimally qualified.

In each case, the nine justices participating rendered a number of opinions--six in *Grutter* and seven in *Gratz*. This disparity among the points of view held by the justices suggests the difficulty of the issues involved. In each case, the majority opinion garnered only five votes. In the discussion that follows, the focus is on the majority opinion in each case, for it is the reasoning in those opinions that provides guidance to be followed in devising legally permissible admissions policies.

The Cases

Grutter v. Bollinger

The first of the two cases was *Grutter v. Bollinger*, that involved a challenge to the use of racial preferences in the admissions process at the University of Michigan Law School. In this 5-4 decision, Justice O'Connor

delivered the opinion of the Court, and it is that opinion that is discussed here.

The opinion summarized basic relevant information about the institution and its admissions program. The Law School ranks among the nation's best. Each year it receives more than 3,500 applications and admits a class of about 350 students.

In 1992, a faculty committee crafted an admissions policy that would implement the Law School's goals of admitting a diverse group of capable students who were likely to be successful both in school and in the practice of law and who would bring a mix of varying backgrounds and experiences. In particular, the policy sought to ensure that its efforts to achieve diversity complied with the Supreme Court's most recent ruling on the use of race in university admissions, *Regents of University of California v. Bakke* (1978). The committee report was adopted and became the Law School's official admissions policy.

The hallmark of this admission policy is a focus on academic ability coupled with an assessment of applicants' talents, experiences, and potential to contribute to the learning of those around them. The admissions policy requires the evaluation of each applicant based on all the information available in the application file. In reviewing an applicant's file, admissions officials must consider the applicant's undergraduate grade point average and Law School Admissions Test (LSAT) score because they are important, even though imperfect, predictors of academic success. The policy stresses that no applicant should be admitted unless that applicant is expected to do well in law school.

In addition, admissions officials look beyond grade point averages and test scores to other criteria important to the Law School's educational objectives. A number of "soft variables," such as the enthusiasm of those submitting recommendations, the quality of the undergraduate institution, the quality of the applicant's essay, and the areas and difficulty of undergraduate course selection, are considered in assessing the applicant's likely contributions to the intellectual and social life of the institution.

The admissions policy also aspires to achieve a diverse student body that would have the potential to enrich everyone's education. The policy does not restrict the types of diversity that could be given substantial weight in the admissions process. The policy does, however, reaffirm a commitment to one particular type of diversity—racial and ethnic diversity—with special reference to the inclusion of students from groups that have been historically discriminated against—African-Americans,

Hispanics, and Native Americans—who without this commitment might not be represented in the student body in meaningful numbers.

Barbara Grutter was a white Michigan resident who applied in 1996 with a 3.8 grade point average and 161 LSAT score. The Law School initially placed her on a waiting list, and subsequently rejected her application. In 1997, she filed suit in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan against the Law School and various University officials. She alleged that defendants discriminated against her on the basis of race in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and 42 U.S.C. § 1981. Grutter further alleged that her application was rejected because the Law School used race as a predominant factor, giving applicants who belonged to certain minority groups a significantly greater chance of admission than applicants not from those racial groups. She sought compensatory and punitive damages, an order requiring the Law School to offer her admission, and an injunction prohibiting the Law School from continuing to discriminate on the basis of race.

During a 15-day bench trial, the parties introduced extensive evidence concerning the Law School's use of race in the admissions process. The Director of Admissions at the time Grutter applied testified that he did not direct his staff to admit a particular percentage or number of minority students but to consider an applicant's race along with all other factors. During the height of the admissions season, he would consult daily reports that kept track of racial and ethnic composition of the incoming class; this was done, he testified, "to ensure that a critical mass of underrepresented minority students would be reached so as to realize the educational benefits of a diverse student body" (*Grutter*, 2003, p. 233). The successor Director of Admissions testified that "critical mass" meant a number that encourages underrepresented minority students to participate in class and not feel isolated. She also asserted that race must be considered because a critical mass of underrepresented minority students could not be enrolled if admissions decisions were based primarily on undergraduate grade point averages and Law School Admissions Test scores.

The Dean of the Law School testified that critical mass meant a number such that underrepresented minority students did not feel isolated or like spokespersons for their race. He testified further that the extent to which race was considered varied for one applicant to another, in some cases playing no role, while in others being a determinative factor. The chair of the faculty committee that drafted the 1992 policy emphasized that the Law School seeks students with diverse interests and backgrounds to

enhance class discussions and the educational experience both inside and outside the classroom. He explained that the commitment to racial and ethnic diversity was not intended to remedy past discrimination but, rather, to include students who may bring a perspective different from that of students from groups not victims of such discrimination. The Dean of another law school, who had been a faculty member when the 1992 policy was adopted, submitted several expert reports on the educational benefits of diversity and testified that when a critical mass of underrepresented minority students is present, racial stereotypes lose their force because nonminority students learn there is no "minority viewpoint" but rather a variety of viewpoints among minority students.

The plaintiff's expert witness testified that his analysis of admission data led him to conclude that membership in certain minority groups was an extremely strong factor in admissions decisions and that applicants from minority groups were given an extremely large allowance compared to applicants from other groups. He conceded, however, that race was not the predominant factor in the admissions calculation. The defendant's expert witness focused on the predicted effect of eliminating race as a factor in the admissions process. In his view, a race-blind admissions system would have had a dramatic negative effect on the number of minority admissions.

At the end of the trial, the district court concluded that the Law School's use of race as a factor in admissions decisions violated the Equal Protection Clause. Applying the strict scrutiny test, the district court determined that the asserted interest in assembling a racially diverse student body was not "compelling" and that even if it were, the use of race in the admissions process was not "narrowly tailored" to further that interest. The district court granted plaintiff's request for declaratory relief and enjoined the defendants from using race as a factor in admissions decisions.

Sitting en banc, the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit reversed and vacated the injunction. The court held that the Law School had a compelling interest in establishing diversity and that its use of race was narrowly tailored because race was merely a potential "plus" factor in the admissions decision. The court of appeals thought that the Law School's program was virtually identical to the Harvard admissions program described approvingly by Justice Powell and appended to his *Bakke* opinion.

The Supreme Court of the United States granted *certiorari* to resolve a disagreement that had surfaced among courts of appeals on a question of national importance: Whether diversity is a compelling interest that can

justify the narrowly tailored use of race in selecting applicants for admission to public universities.

The Court began its analysis with a review of the landmark *Bakke* case, which ruled that a racial set-aside program reserving 16 out of 100 seats in a medical school class for members of certain minority groups was impermissible. *Bakke* produced six separate opinions, none of which commanded a majority of the Court. Justice Powell provided a fifth vote that invalidated the set-aside program, but reversed a state court injunction against any use of race whatsoever. The only holding for the Court was that a state has a substantial interest in diversity that may be served by a properly devised admissions program involving the competitive consideration of race and ethnicity. Since the splintered decision in *Bakke*, Justice Powell's opinion announcing the judgment of the Court has served as the touchstone for constitutional analysis of race-conscious admissions policies, and public and private universities across the Nation have modeled their admissions programs on his views about permissible race-conscious policies.

In this *Grutter* case, the Supreme Court discussed Justice Powell's *Bakke* opinion in some detail. In his view, when a government decision touches on an individual's race or ethnic background, then that individual is entitled to a judicial determination that the burden asked to be borne on that basis is "precisely tailored to serve a compelling governmental interest." Of the several interests asserted by the university, only one survived his scrutiny. He rejected an interest in reducing the historic deficit of minorities in medicine as racial balancing; he rejected an interest in remedying societal discrimination because of the unnecessary burdens imposed on innocent third parties; and he rejected an interest in increasing the number of physicians who would practice in underserved communities because the program was not geared toward that goal. Justice Powell did, however, approve the university's interest in "the attainment of a diverse student body." He grounded his analysis in the concept of academic freedom, part of which extends to a university the right to select its students. But he was careful to emphasize that race is only one element in a range of factors to be considered in attaining the goal of a heterogeneous student body.

The *Grutter* opinion then explained the constitutional analysis used in cases involving racial classifications. The Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment provides that no State shall "deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." All government actions based on race—a group classification that is in most instances

irrelevant and therefore prohibited—should be subject to detailed judicial inquiry to ensure that the personal right to equal protection of the laws has not been infringed. “[S]uch classifications are constitutional only if they are narrowly tailored to further compelling governmental interests” (*Grutter*, 2003, pp. 2337-38). Absent such a searching inquiry, there would be no way for a court to determine which race-based classifications are benign or remedial and which classifications are in fact motivated by illegitimate notions of racial inferiority or simple racial politics. This strict scrutiny is applied to all racial classifications to assure that government is pursuing a goal important enough to warrant use of a highly suspect tool.

Turning then to the question of whether the Law School’s use of race was justified by a compelling state interest, the Court noted that the Law School had asserted only one justification for the use of race in the admissions process—obtaining the educational benefits that flow from a diverse student body. The Court noted that some of its other affirmative-action cases since *Bakke* had suggested that the only justification for race-based government action was to remedy past discrimination, but pointed out that it had never held that this was the only use of race that could survive strict scrutiny. For the first time since *Bakke*, the Court addressed the use of race in the context of public higher education, and held that the Law School did have a compelling interest in attaining a diverse student body.

The Court deferred to the Law School’s educational judgment that such diversity is essential to its educational mission, noting that it had long recognized that “given the important purpose of public education and the expansive freedoms of speech and thought associated with the university environment, universities occupy a special niche in our constitutional tradition” (*Grutter*, 2003, p. 2339). The conclusion that the Law School had a compelling interest in a diverse student body was informed by the view that attaining such a student body was at the heart of its educational mission and that good faith on the part of a university is presumed absent a showing to the contrary.

The Law School’s interest was not to simply assure that within the student body there would be some specified percentage of a particular group based on race or ethnic origin; that would amount to outright racial balancing, which is patently unconstitutional. Rather, the concept of critical mass was defined by reference to educational benefits that diversity is designed to produce. The Court thought these benefits to be substantial and noted the Law School’s assertions of the benefits of diversity in some detail: promotes cross-racial understanding; helps break down racial

stereotypes; enables students to better understand persons of different races; enlivens classroom discussions; promotes learning outcomes; better prepares students for an increasingly diverse workforce and society; and develops needed skills through exposure to diverse peoples, cultures, ideas, and viewpoints.

The Court reiterated its view of the overriding importance of education in preparing students for work and citizenship, in sustaining our political culture and heritage, and maintaining the fabric of society, noting that “education is the very foundation of good citizenship” (*Grutter*, 2003, p. 2340). Also important to the Court was that public institutions of higher education be accessible to all, regardless of race or ethnicity. “[U]niversities, and in particular, law schools, represent the training ground for a large number of our Nation’s leaders” and “to cultivate a set of leaders with legitimacy in the eyes of the citizenry, it is necessary that the path to leadership be visibly open to talented and qualified individuals of every race and ethnicity” (*Grutter*, 2003, p. 2340).

In this case, the Law School’s mission was supported by having a critical mass of minority students. “Just as growing up in a particular region or having particular professional experiences is likely to affect an individual’s views, so too is one’s own, unique experience of being a racial minority in a society, like our own, in which race, unfortunately still matters” (*Grutter*, 2003, p. 2341).

But even in a limited circumstance where drawing racial distinctions is permissible to further a compelling state interest, the means chosen to accomplish the government’s asserted purpose must be specifically and narrowly framed to accomplish that purpose. This narrow tailoring is required to ensure that the means chosen fit the compelling goal so closely that there is little or no possibility that the motive for the classification was illegitimate racial prejudice or stereotype.

To be narrowly tailored, a race-conscious admissions program cannot use a quota system; it cannot insulate each category of applicants with certain desired qualifications from competition with all other applicants. Instead, a university may consider race or ethnicity only as a “plus” in a particular applicant’s file, without insulating that individual from a comparison with all other candidates for the available seats.

The Supreme Court found that the Law School’s admissions program had the hallmarks of a narrowly tailored plan. It did not operate as a quota, in which a certain fixed number or proportion of opportunities are reserved exclusively for certain minority groups. It did not insulate the individual applicant from a comparison with all other applicants. Instead, it permitted

consideration of race as a “plus” factor, while still insuring that each candidate compete with all other candidates.

Of significance to the Court was that, when using race as a “plus” factor, an admissions program must remain flexible enough to ensure that applicants are evaluated as individuals and that an applicants’ race or ethnicity is not the defining feature of their applications. “The importance of this individualized consideration in the context of a race-conscious admissions program is paramount” (*Grutter*, 2003, p. 2343).

The Court found that the Law School’s race-conscious admissions program adequately insured that all factors that may contribute to student body diversity were meaningfully considered alongside race in admissions decisions. Furthermore, all underrepresented minority students admitted were deemed qualified in regard to other factors, such as test scores and grade point averages. Also, the program gave substantial weight to diversity factors other than race, frequently resulting in the admission of nonminority applicants whose test scores and grades were lower than those of underrepresented minority applicants who were not admitted.

Nor does narrow tailoring require exhaustion of every conceivable race-neutral alternative; narrow tailoring does, however, require good faith consideration of race-neutral alternatives that would achieve the diversity the university seeks. The Court agreed that the Law School sufficiently considered other race-neutral alternatives, such as a lottery system or decreased emphasis on test scores or undergraduate grades and was satisfied that the Law school considered other race-neutral alternatives capable of producing a critical mass of students from underrepresented groups without abandoning the academic selectivity that was the cornerstone of its educational mission.

Narrow tailoring also requires that a race-conscious admissions program not unduly burden individuals who are not members of the favored racial or ethnic groups. The Court was satisfied that the Law School’s admissions program did not impose such a burden, because while race was used as a “plus” factor, the individualized inquiry into the possible diversity contributions of each applicant meant that no one was foreclosed from consideration.

Finally, the Court noted that a core purpose of the Fourteenth Amendment was to do away with all government-imposed discrimination based on race; accordingly, race-conscious admissions policies must be limited in time. The requirement of a termination point assures that the deviation from the norm of equal treatment is a temporary matter, a measure taken in the service of the goal of equality itself. Taking the Law

School at its word that it would like nothing better than to find a race-neutral admissions formula and would terminate its race-conscious admission program as soon as practicable, the Court stated its expectation that 25 years from this decision the use of racial preferences would no longer be necessary.

Because the Equal Protection Clause did not prohibit the Law School's narrowly tailored use of race in admissions decisions to further a compelling interest in obtaining the educational benefits that flow from a diverse student body, the plaintiff's statutory claims based on Title VI and 42 U.S.C. § 1981 also failed, because these statutory prohibitions against discrimination were co-extensive with the Equal Protection Clause.

The judgment of the Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit was affirmed.

Gratz v. Bollinger

The second of the two cases was *Gratz v. Bollinger*, which involved a challenge to the use of racial preferences in the admissions process at the University of Michigan's College of Literature, Science, and the Arts (College). In this 5-4 decision, Justice Rehnquist delivered the opinion of the Court, and it is that majority opinion which is discussed here.

Jennifer Gratz and Patrick Hamacher, both Caucasian residents of Michigan, applied for admission to the College. Gratz applied for the fall of 1995. She was notified in January of that year that a final decision had been delayed until April, based on the University's determination that although she was well qualified, she was less competitive than the students who had been admitted on first review. She was notified in April that the College would not offer her admission. Hamacher applied for the fall of 1997. A final decision as to his application was postponed; he was notified that although his academic credentials were in the qualified range, they were not at the level needed for first review admission. His application was denied in April 1997.

In October 1997, Gratz and Hamacher filed a lawsuit in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan against the University, the College, and various officials. Their complaint was a class-action lawsuit alleging violations of equal protection of the laws under the Fourteenth Amendment and for racial discrimination in violation of 42 U.S.C. § 2000d *et seq.* (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964), 42 U.S.C. § 1981, and 42 U.S.C. § 1983. The plaintiffs sought punitive and compensatory damages, declaratory and injunction relief, and an order requiring an offer of admission to Hamacher.

The University had changed its admissions guidelines a number of times during the period relevant to this litigation, and the *Gratz* opinion summarized those various guidelines. The Office of Undergraduate Admissions (OUA) oversaw the College's admissions process. To promote consistency in the review of applications, the OUA used written guidelines for each academic year, and admissions counselors made decisions in accordance with those guidelines.

The OUA considered a number of factors in making admissions decisions, including high school grades, standardized test scores, high school quality, curriculum strength, geography, alumni relationships, and leadership. The OUA also considered race. During the relevant time period, the University considered African-Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans to be "underrepresented minorities" and admitted virtually every qualified applicant from these groups.

From 1995 to 2000, the OUA used various combinations of factors other than grade point averages and ACT scores to identify those applicants who would be offered admission. Included in these factors were certain characteristics of the applicant's high school, as well as certain personal characteristics of the applicant. A major consideration was whether the applicant was a member of an underrepresented minority group. From 1995 to 1998, the admissions guidelines provided that qualified minority applicants be admitted as soon as possible because it was believed that such applicants would then be more likely to enroll. Also, admissions were managed so that some seats were protected for certain groups, including minorities.

Beginning in 1998, the OUA used a "selection index," on which an applicant could score a maximum of 150 points. This index called for admissions dispositions as follows: 100-150 (admit); 95-99 (admit or postpone); 90-94 (postpone or admit); 75-89 (delay or postpone); 74 and below (delay or reject). Each applicant received points based on high school grade point average, standardized test scores, academic quality of high school, strength of high school curriculum, in-state residency, alumni relationship, personal essay, and personal achievement or leadership. Of particular significance was that under a "miscellaneous" category, applicants were entitled to 20 points based on membership in an underrepresented racial or ethnic minority group.

Then, beginning in 1999 a system was devised for "flagging" certain applications for additional review if the applicant was academically prepared to succeed, had achieved a minimum selection index score, and

possessed certain traits important to the composition of the freshman class. One of these traits was being a member of an underrepresented group.

The district court began its Equal Protection analysis by reviewing the *Bakke* decision, and finally concluded that the University of Michigan had presented “solid evidence” that a racially and ethnically diverse student body produces significant educational benefits and that achieving such a diverse student body constituted a compelling government interest. The court then considered whether the admissions guidelines were narrowly tailored to achieve that interest. The court emphasized that the admissions program did not utilize rigid quotas or seek to admit a predetermined number of minority students.

In the district court’s view, the practice of awarding 20 points for membership in an underrepresented group was not the functional equivalent of a quota, because minority applicants were not insulated from review by virtue of those points. The court thought this preference was permissible, and granted defendant’s motion for summary judgment. However, the earlier admission guidelines that protected some places in the class for underrepresented minority applicants kept nonminority applicants from competing for those seats and were the functional equivalent of an impermissible quota. The district court found this approach to be impermissible, and granted plaintiffs’ motion for summary judgment.

Both parties appealed to the Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, which heard the *Gratz* case en banc on the same day that it had heard the *Grutter* case. After the court of appeals issued an opinion upholding the Law School admissions program in *Grutter*, but before it issued an opinion on the undergraduate College program in *Gratz*, the plaintiffs petitioned the Supreme Court to grant certiorari in both cases, and the Court did so.

Before the Supreme Court, the parties revisited the strict scrutiny analysis required by the Equal Protection Clause. The petitioners argued that the University’s use of race in undergraduate admissions was not a compelling government interest and thus violated the Fourteenth Amendment. But the Court, citing the reasons set forth earlier in the day in the *Grutter* case, rejected that argument.

The Court then turned to the second phase of the strict scrutiny analysis, which required the University to demonstrate that the use of race in its current admissions program employed “narrowly tailored measures that further compelling governmental interests.” “Because ‘[r]acial classifications are simply too pernicious to permit any but the most exact connection between justification and classification, . . . , our review of

whether such requirements have been met must entail “a most searching examination” (Gratz, 2003, p. 2427).

The Supreme Court found that the University’s policy, which automatically gave 20 points, or one-fifth of the points needed to guarantee admission, to every single “underrepresented minority” applicant solely because of race, was not narrowly tailored to achieve the interest in educational diversity that the University contended justified the program. The primary problem was that this policy did not provide for individualized consideration of all the qualities the applicant possessed and the individual’s ability to contribute to the unique setting of higher education. Rather than race being used as only one factor, without being decisive, the admissions program’s “automatic distribution of 20 points ha[d] the effect of making ‘the factor of race . . . decisive’ for virtually every minimally qualified underrepresented minority applicant” (Gratz, 2003, p. 2428). In contrast, other desirable personal characteristics were awarded fewer points. And, an examination of the way that certain application files were flagged further illustrated an overemphasis on minority status.

The University contended that the volume of applications made it impractical to use the system upheld in *Grutter*. But the Court rejected that contention; “the fact that the implementation of a program capable of providing individualized consideration might present administrative challenges does not render constitutional an otherwise problematic system” (Gratz, 2003, p. 2430).

The Court concluded that because the University’s use of race under the current freshman admission policy was not narrowly tailored to achieve the asserted compelling interest in diversity, the policy violated the Equal Protection Clause, as well as Title VI and 42 U.S. C. § 1981. The Court reversed that part of the district court’s decision granting the University summary judgment with respect to liability and remanded for further proceedings.

Discussion

Many American colleges and universities have programs in place to recruit and enroll more minority students. For those crafting admissions policies, *Grutter v. Bollinger* and *Gratz v. Bollinger* have resolved some issues, but other issues remain.

The two cases reiterated a proposition already generally understood—for purposes of constitutional analysis under the Equal Protection Clause,

state-imposed classifications based on race or ethnicity are subject to the “strict scrutiny” test, which means that such a classification must be narrowly tailored to further a compelling governmental interest.

In the 1978 *Bakke* case, Justice Powell’s opinion provided the only holding for the Court, which was that a “State has a substantial interest that legitimately may be served by a properly devised admissions program involving the competitive consideration of race and ethnic origin.” (438 U.S. at 820, 98 S. Ct. at 2733). Many public and private universities have modeled their own admissions programs on the *Bakke* holding, and now both *Grutter* and *Gratz* have endorsed Powell’s position.

But the *Bakke* holding included two parts: first, diversity may be a substantial government interest justifying the use of race or ethnicity; and second, a properly devised admissions program would involve the competitive consideration of race and ethnic origin. Both *Grutter* and *Gratz* endorsed the view that having a diverse student body is a compelling state interest that can justify the use of race in college and university admissions. Both decisions also held that the view that race and ethnicity may be considered as factors but cannot be used to insulate those favored applicants from competition with others not favored.

It is the second part that poses the practical problem for admissions offices: How much preference is too much? Clearly, a “quota” involving setting aside a certain number or percentage of seats for minority applicants would be impermissible. On the other hand, using race or ethnicity as a “plus” factor when comparing a minority applicant’s file against those of nonminority applicants would be permissible. But at what point does the “plus” become such a heavily weighted factor that it is impermissible? *Grutter* suggests that if some minority students have been denied while some nonminority students with lower grade point averages and test scores have been admitted on the basis of other kinds of diversity, that is evidence of a permissible use of preferences. *Gratz* indicates that if minority students are awarded so many points as to make race or ethnicity outcome-determinative, then that much of a preference would not be permissible.

Excerpts from the two Supreme Court cases summarize the basic legal principles.

When using race as a “plus” factor in university admissions, a university’s admissions program must remain flexible enough to ensure that each applicant is evaluated as an individual and not in a way that makes an applicant’s race or ethnicity the defining feature of his or her

application. The importance of this individualized consideration in the context of a race-conscious admissions program is paramount (*Grutter*, 2003, p. 2343).

Justice Powell's opinion in *Bakke* emphasized the importance of considering each particular applicant as an individual, assessing all the qualities that individual possesses, and in turn, evaluating that individual's ability to contribute to the unique setting of higher education. . . . [E]ach characteristic of a particular applicant was to be considered in assessing the applicant's entire application (*Gratz*, 2003, p. 2428).

The current [College] policy does not provide such individualized consideration. . . . [T]he [College's] automatic distribution of 20 points has the effect of making 'the factor of race . . . decisive' for virtually every minimally qualified underrepresented minority applicant (*Gratz*, 2003, p. 2428).

In addition to racial and ethnic preferences in admissions, some colleges and universities use other programs to increase the number of minority students. Two examples are minority-based scholarships and minority-based learning communities. If "quotas" are not permissible, then surely a scholarship program for which only minority applicants are eligible would be constitutionally impermissible. (See, e.g., *Podberesky v. Kirwan*, 1994; absent a showing that program was intended to remedy current effects of past discrimination, raced-based scholarship program unconstitutional). Similarly, if a learning community has membership in a certain racial or ethnic group as a threshold requirement for admission and excludes nonminority students from participation, that would seem to constitute an impermissible "quota" system. But advocates of such a program may contend that there are good reasons for such learning communities. For example, it could be argued that minority students do better in a program that addresses their specific learning needs; however, it could be argued that such an assumption of inherent differences based on race or ethnicity is presumptively wrong from both legal and practical perspectives.

Both *Grutter* and *Gratz* imply an important point about the purposes of "affirmative action" admissions programs in higher education. At those colleges and universities with a strong majority of white, nonminority students, the efforts to enhance diversity are not directed only toward the educational interests of the relatively small number of minority students, but also toward the educational interests of the relatively large number of nonminority students. The educational benefits flowing from a diverse student body are intended to be enjoyed by all students.

Grutter and *Gratz* involved admissions programs at a state university, and thus the primary challenge was that this “state action” violated the Equal Protection Clause. Most private institutions would not be “state actors” for purposes of the Fourteenth Amendment, so challenges to the use of minority preferences in their admissions programs would necessarily be based on other grounds, such as Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d *et seq.*) or 42 U.S.C. § 1981. Title VI would be applicable to any institution—public or private—that receives federal funds. Section 1981 extends “equal rights under the law” to applicants at either public or private institutions.

Conclusion

A prevailing belief in higher education is that having a diverse student body will result in educational benefits for all students. In *Grutter v. Bollinger* and *Gratz v. Bollinger*, the Supreme Court held that to enhance the level of diversity, racial and ethnic preferences may be used as a “plus” factor, but not to the extent that a minority applicant is insulated from comparison with nonminority applicants. Minority status should not ensure admission.

Probably there are cultural differences between different racial and ethnic groups, but once past the legacy of discrimination, those differences are rather difficult to identify. Surely the day will come when race and ethnicity will be of no more significance than any other personal characteristic. But that day has yet to arrive.

References

- Equal Protection Clause, U.S. CONST. Amend. XIV § 1. [No State shall] deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.
- Gratz v. Bollinger*, - U.S. -, 123 S. Ct. 2411 (2003).
- Grutter v. Bollinger*, - U.S. -, 123 S. Ct. 2325 (2003).
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- Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*, 438 U.S. 265, 98 S. Ct. 2733 (1978).
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d. No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.
- 42 U.S.C. § 1981. Equal rights under the law. (a) Statement of equal rights: All persons within the jurisdiction of the United States shall have the same right in every State and Territory to make and enforce contracts, to sue, be parties, give evidence, and to the full and equal benefit of all laws and proceedings for the security of persons and property as is enjoyed by white citizens, and shall be subject to like punishment, pains, penalties, taxes, licenses, and exactions of every kind,

and to no other. (b) "Make and enforce contracts" defined: For purposes of this section, the term "make and enforce contracts" includes the making, performance, modification, and termination of contracts, and the enjoyment of all benefits, privileges, terms, and conditions of the contractual relationship. (c) Protection against impairment: The rights protected by this section are protected against impairment by nongovernmental discrimination and impairment under color of State law.

Black Women Administrators in Historically Black Institutions: Social Justice Project Rooted in Community

Gaetane Jean-Marie, Ph.D.

Black women are subjected to both racism and sexism; those who achieve privileged status are also the targets of classism. Frazier (1957), in addressing issues of the Black bourgeoisie, said “the frustration of the majority of the women . . . is probably due to the idle or ineffectual lives which they lead” (p. 222). These negative judgments are based on the *gaze*, in other words, who these women “look like” from the outside. We hear a different story when listening to the *voices* of Black women educators working for social change.

The consequence of desegregation has been “Black flight,” the geographic dispersal of Black professionals, and the breaking of their social ties with the Black working poor and underclass living in deteriorating neighborhoods. Yet, some Black professionals continue to create community in face-to-face relationships with the dispossessed in churches and schools. For example, in whatever conditions African American students come to HBCUs to obtain a higher education, they come across professionals from administration, faculty, and staff committed to their success. The mission of these institutions is to prepare African American students academically, socially, culturally and spiritually as they are nurtured to become active citizens in the Black community as well as the larger society.

Many Southern Black women leaders view their vocations as service to God and to community. These women are both actively involved in policy decision-making that affects the academic curriculum, and are committed to providing a moral and social curriculum to ensure their students’ success. According to Bakhtin (1981), they exercise responsible-ability as “village elders.” They become organic intellectuals of and for the community (Gramsci, as cited in Forgacs, 2000).

About the Author

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Purpose of the Study

Since the 1970s, the number of women in higher education administration has increased. Research provides the historical and contemporary perspectives of women in administration (e.g., Klenke, 1996; Ndiffer & Bashaw, 2001; Quinn, Davies, & Lubelska, 1995). During the past 20 years, research has focused on African American women in majority White institutions (Benjamin, 1997; Harvey, 1999; James & Farmer, 1993). Studies generalize the experiences of women and as a result overlook the increasing number of women of color entering administration. The literature does not reflect the work of African American women administrators in HBCUs.

The purpose of this paper is to present the perspectives of six African American women who were executive-level administrators in the southeastern United States. These stories of university-level women administrators can contribute to the understanding of cultural frameworks and the pedagogies of African Americans.

Conceptual Frameworks of Leadership

Scholars offer multiple definitions of leadership. Gardner (1991) defined leadership as “the process of persuasion or example by which an individual induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and followers” (p. 1). Similarly, Nanus (1992) reported that leaders attract and energize the voluntary commitment of followers, and transform organizations into new entities with greater potential for survival, growth and excellence (p. 10). These two definitions present traditional views that

emphasize a hierarchical approach to leadership. The leader's role is to persuade, guide, and gather support from followers who are expected to carry out what the leader communicates. This generalized definition of leadership is gender-biased and reflects the male characteristics of leading.

These African-American women administrators practiced leadership that was closely aligned to Foster's (1986) critical perspectives of leadership. These African American women administrators were distinguished by their commitment to improve social conditions, empower others and support democratic participation through their roles.

Foster: Critical Perspectives of Leadership

Traditional theories on leadership place emphasis on the technical aspect of leading. However, Foster (1986) proposed that an "administrator's work involves the establishment of community and culture within an organization and the development of an organization's self reflective ability to analyze its purpose and goals" (p. 10). Critical perspectives of leadership entail:

. . . the ability of humans to relate deeply to each other in the search for a more perfect union. Leadership is a consensual task, a sharing of ideas and a sharing of responsibilities, where a "leader" is a leader for the moment only, where the leadership exerted must be validated by the consent of followers, and where leadership lies in the struggles of a community to find meaning for itself. (Foster, 1986, p. 61)

Foster (1986, 1989) advocated a leadership that promotes democratic process and calls for political activism that leads to social justice. As a result, this practice of leading is critical, transformative, educative, and ethical. These elements deserve further analysis to identify the important work involved in a critical perspective of leadership.

Critical Leadership

Critical leaders examine previous conditions of social life and subject them to critique (Foster, 1989) in order to change existing conditions that contribute to their domination. There is no complacency with existing practices because critical reflection and reevaluation are always at work. "In being critical, then, leadership is oriented not just toward the development of more perfect organizational structures, but toward a reconceptualization of life practices where common ideals for freedom and democracy stand important" (p. 52).

Transformative Leadership

Transformative leadership is about social change. Transformation is a process and occurs over time. The transformation is not only in structures but also with leaders as well as participants. A willingness to examine one's life and ideas to develop a critical framework for leadership is the aim of this leadership model. The civil rights movement was transformative in the efforts to gain rights for people of color during the 1960s.

Educative and Ethical Leadership

The other two components of critical leadership are education and ethics. According to Foster (1989), a leader can present both an analysis and a vision, and can devote time to organizational history, purpose, and responsibilities. Effective leadership involves working as a community and being willing to listen and reciprocate leadership responsibilities. Leadership and organizational change move in a direction of shared vision and practices.

Leadership as ethical practice involves moral relationships and is intended to elevate people to new levels of morality (Foster, 1989), including maintenance of democratic values within a community. The role of a leader is to create other leaders. Participants can assume leadership roles, and leaders can become followers when the situation calls for communal exchange.

The leaders in this study relied on transformation for social change. They did so through inclusion of other voices in decision-making, connection to communities, and awareness of inequalities in educational and leadership practices; thus, they committed themselves to making those kinds of differences. Leadership theory to date has not been developed from Black women's experiences. The discussion that follows focuses on the ways in which African American women define themselves.

Black Women's Self-Definitions

During the fight for civil rights, Black women questioned the sexism in institutionalized systems. Disenchantment with the White-dominated feminist movement and Black male scholars exclusive concern with racial issues (Schiller, 2000) heightened Black women's interest in liberation. Finding no place in the existing movement and wanting to respond to the racism of White feminist and sexism of Black men, Black women formed separate "Black feminist" groups (hooks, 1981). They sought to create new

knowledge about African American women to “formulate and rearticulate the distinctive, self-defined standpoint of African American women” (Collins, 1996, p. 225). They also sought to change the one-dimensional perspective on women’s reality (hooks, 2000).

As African American women continue to make gains in educational attainment and inroads into professions and occupations previously dominated by Euro-American women (Mullings, 1997), they will likely impact the representation of African American women at all echelons:

As more Black women earn advanced degrees, the range of Black feminist scholarship is expanding. Increasing numbers of African American women scholars are explicitly choosing to ground their work in Black women’s experiences, and by doing so, many implicitly adhere to an Afrocentric feminist epistemology. (Collins, 1996, p. 239)

Through these efforts, African American women position themselves to engage in critical analysis by articulating their “voices to express a collective, self-defined Black woman’s standpoint” (Collins, 2000, p. 99). Voice defines who they are, interprets what their experiences are, and analyzes their coping mechanisms for survival. Consequently, African American women develop a double consciousness (Collins, 2000) that empowers them to move in and out of diverse spaces.

Developing an Afrocentric Epistemology

To understand how Black women’s consciousness evolved, an understanding of Afrocentric epistemology (Collins, 2000) is vital. First, the Afrocentric concept, whose prominence and clarification was brought by Molefi Kete Asante, is “the belief in the centrality of Africans in post-modern history (Sanders, 1995, p. 9). It is an excavation of the “African past in an effort to free African Americans from an oppressive Eurocentric consciousness and to create for them a new, African-centered way of thinking and acting” (p. 10). Second, epistemology constitutes an overarching theory of knowledge that investigates the standards used to assess knowledge or why we believe what we believe to be true (Collins, 2000, p. 252).

Black women’s Afrocentric epistemology is the significance and richness of African roots that inform what they believe to be true about themselves and their experiences. In a society that often devalues heritage, Black women draw from common experiences that historically connect them to the fundamental elements of an Afrocentric standpoint. Because Blacks share a common experience of oppression resulting from

colonialism, slavery, apartheid, imperialism, and other systems of racial domination (Collins, 1996), these shared conditions cultivate Afrocentric values within Black communities throughout the world. As a result, they seep into the family structure, religious institutions, and community. The collective history of people of African descent from Africa, Caribbean, South and North America constitutes an Afrocentric consciousness that permeates through the framework of a distinctive Afrocentric epistemology (p. 228).

Similarly, women share a history of patriarchal oppression. The persistence of sexism contributes to the exploitation of women. Furthermore, the degree of exploitation is related to social class, race, religion, sexual orientation, and ethnicity (Collins, 1996). Women have a body of knowledge that corresponds with feminist consciousness and epistemology. Because Black women have access to both the Afrocentric and the feminist standpoints, an alternative epistemology is used to rearticulate a Black woman's standpoint that reflects elements of both traditions (Collins, 2000). Black women's epistemology represents a specialized knowledge that provides opportunity to express Black feminist and womanist concerns.

The experiences of African-American women scholars illustrate how individuals who wish to rearticulate a Black woman's standpoint through Black feminist thought can be suppressed by prevailing knowledge validation processes. (Collins, 2000, p. 254)

African American women's epistemology deconstructs dominant ideologies that justify, support, and rationalize the interests of those in power (Mullings, 1997). African Americans, through music, arts, academia, and other mainstreams, tell their stories about why things are the way they are and create alternative and oppositional views of the world (Collins, 2000).

Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Following is a brief discussion of the role of historically Black colleges and universities. According to Roebuck and Murty (1993), HBCUs are Black academic institutions established prior to 1964 whose principal mission was, and still is, the education of Black Americans. Since their inception in 1854 (Garibaldi, 1984), the interest was to provide

1. education for newly freed slaves that was rich in Black history and tradition;
2. educational experiences that are consistent with the experiences and values of many Black families; and
3. service to the Black community and the country by aiding in the development of leadership, racial pride and return service to the community. (Sims, 1994)

In addition, HBCUs continue to serve as educational citadels and cultural repositories for the Black community and as centers for social and political development of students, faculty, and communities, regions, and states in which they are located (Sims, 1994, p. 9).

There are 109 HBCUs in the United States; 21 are Land-Grant institutions (Roebuck & Murty, 1993). Although HBCUs were established to serve the educational needs of Black Americans, they serve students from a wide range of cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. HBCUs have both racially diverse student enrollments and a racially diverse faculty and administration. With respect to their enrollment and staff, HBCUs are more racially desegregated than historically White institutions (Roebuck & Murty, 1993).

Methodology

Narrative research was (Casey, 1993, 1995-96; Reissman, 1993) the methodology used for studying the life stories of African American women. This method provides the means to record and interpret (Reissman, 1993) the voices of women (Benjamin, 1997; Fonow & Cook, 1991; Gilligan, 1982; Gluck & Pataia, 1992; Reinharz, 1992). The participants' backgrounds, education, experiences, church, and family, that informed their identities were highlighted.

Cooper (1995) asserted that stories speak of the power of narrative in human lives. She maintained that "stories can be retold, reframed, reinterpreted and because they are fluid, open for retelling and ultimately reliving, they are the repositories of hope" (p. 121). The stories of the women participants' interpretations of leadership practices, revealed how they were experts and authors of their own lives. The narratives of the African American women administrators explore the thematic issues of communal values, spiritual/religious discourse in historical Black campuses and their interpretation of the world.

Participants

Six African American women administrators were interviewed for this study. Pseudonyms identified participants to minimize disclosure of information about individual lives. The participants were Deans Frazier and Smith and Drs. Giddens, Johnson, Allen, and Owens. All except Dean Smith taught in public schools prior to experiences in higher education. Dean Smith's background was in the field of nursing. Four of the women's educational experiences were at both historically Black and at White institutions; Dr. Giddens attended only historically Black institutions, and Dr. Owens obtained her degrees from historically White institutions. These administrators have served in the capacity of vice presidents of academic affairs, deans of schools of education and nursing, executive director of a leadership institute, and faculty and former department chair at six historically Black colleges.

Interview Questions: Open-Ended and Semi-Structured

In the interviews, participants were asked an opening question: "Tell me your life story by reflecting on your personal life in relationship to your professional experiences." The ensuing story, or "main narrative," was not interrupted by further questions but was encouraged by means of nonverbal and paralinguistic expressions of interest and attention (Rosenthal, 1993). In the second part of the interview, the "period of questioning" initiated more elaborate narrations on topics and biographical events previously mentioned.

The interviews were one to two hours each; on occasion I returned at a later date to continue the interviews. Each participant, prior to the start of the interviews, signed a consent form that explained the purpose of the research, outlined the conditions of participation, and gave the option to withdraw from the study.

Backgrounds of African American Women Participants

Because every text has a context (Casey, 1993), the historical backgrounds of the women's narratives are essential to understanding their self-definitions. The African American women participants grew up during a period in history in which the social and political climates were in upheaval. For some, "separate but equal" still applied, others were experiencing the unsettling changes in the early years of desegregation.

The expectations of families and members of the African American community for Black young adults to attend college and further their

education weighed heavily on these women's shoulders. The Black community depended on their success. One participant summarized her college experience:

I felt like I was carrying the weight of my race on my back. I constantly felt that I had to do well because if I didn't, I would be letting my people down. It is a big burden to carry.

African American women being first in their families to obtain a higher education and represent the African American community are indicative of what was to alter the economical, intellectual, and social capital of African Americans.

As texts were compared, the similarities of the women's experiences revealed the events of American society for Blacks at that time. The discrimination experienced by these women was present in their pursuit of terminal degrees, in the teaching profession, and in administrative roles. Some encountered racists and sexists within historically White and Black institutions in both White men, White women, and Black men. According to Moses (1997),

African American women not only attended universities which are often not only non-supportive but at times outright hostile; they also worked within these environments facing similar conditions. . . . Black women faculty members and administrators face numerous barriers to their growth and success in academe. The leadership, advocacy, and career satisfaction Black women administrators strive for are affected in subtle ways by a sometimes chilly and unwelcoming environment. (p. 24)

Some women confronted the double jeopardy of race and gender. Racism and sexism may be so fused in a given situation that it is difficult to tell which is which (Moses, 1997). Experiences such as these were common for both African American men and women.

The discriminations experienced by the participants were not random acts but were common to both their educational and professional experiences. Despite these encounters, women "stood their grounds" in order to "break down the walls" of repressive structures.

Analysis

How do these African American women link their work as educational leaders to the mission of developing the educational and social functions of the Black community?

Children of the Community: The Students We Serve

Of central concern to the women in this study were the students they met daily. Collectively, these women viewed students as the children of the community. Of all the issues raised in their narratives, they have a particular concern regarding the overall development of students. Dr. Giddens talked about those struggles:

And since I've come here, it has always been a *struggle* to develop students, because of the students that we serve and the environment—lack of equipment, lack of resources, trying to work with faculty members who don't care [and] students [who] don't have initiative and drive. That has been a *struggle* to truly do that. It has been a *struggle* for me to even remain at (HBCU), knowing the potential that I have, but I stay there for the students. You see, I could go some other place but, *I truly love* the students there. And the *struggles*—my *struggles* have been personal.

I look back at a lot, and I am learning to negotiate with the world that we have now, but, like I said, I don't forget. I can't forget what we grew up with and what I have seen in my life and know to be real. So I can't forget that, but my kids don't know that so they can't relate to it. So in a way it is good but . . . the only reason I would go to a White school [is] so I could help Blacks understand where they came from.

According to Dean Frazier:

My students at this university are students I know that *most other universities would not touch*. Not because they don't have the ability, because they do and you have to reach inside and pull that ability out. But because [college personnel] have such high standards, they feel like "Well, *we just don't have to bother with that student*." But that's the kind of student that we have here. We have all kinds of students here. We also have students that have had all kinds of experiences, and I believe that there is an opportunity to give credit for a lot of experiences.

The participants voiced concern about the lack of preparation students received prior to coming to colleges. They emphasized that historically

Black campuses are aware of their students' lack of academic preparedness and seek to provide resources to help them. A number of African American students are first generation college students and may require additional support to flourish in the academic setting. Dean Frazier asserted that, "somebody [has] to help polish them a little bit, refine them some and that's the role I think I've played in my first 20 years as a professional in higher education." The pay and prestige for bringing marginalized students to a level of success can never be compensated in monetary terms. But, the reward is seeing students become academically, intellectually, and socially prepared when they graduate from the institutions.

HBCUs and Community Building

Preparing students in historically Black institutions for a better future is connected to community building. Many African American parents whose educational attainments have been from historically Black institutions often encourage their children to follow a similar path. The belief may be that transitioning to the Black college experience is not as difficult as acclimating to historically White institutions. hooks' (1989) account of leaving home to traverse the unfamiliar worlds of [White] colleges is similar to sentiments of many students of color.

To a southern Black girl from a working-class background who had never been on a city bus, who had never stepped on an escalator, who had never traveled by plane, leaving the comfortable confines of a small town Kentucky life to attend Stanford University was just not frightening, it was utterly painful. (p. 74)

Historically Black institutions are a replica of the Black community's concept of "village—raising." According to Sims (1994),

they continue to serve as educational citadels and cultural repositories for the Black community, as well as centers for social and political development of students, faculty and communities, regions and states in which they are located. (p. 9)

And Dean Frazier recommended:

Send them to an HBCU where people will take time to *cultivate* them, *mold* them and be a good level of *comfort* for them and then send them out and they are prepared with *confidence* to go out in the world and make contributions. [emphasis added]

The people she referred to who will “cultivate,” “mold,” “comfort,” and “[build]” “confidence” are not only performing their designated roles as teachers and administrators but also are nurturers to the “children” [*the students*]. Each of the school personnel plays an integral part in the village—rearing of African American students. The “village” concept is crucial to the development of students who attend Dean Frazier’s institution. In recognition that many students come from “impoverished homes and backgrounds,” she stated:

We felt it was our responsibility to bring these students and *help them with language*, help them *with basic academic skills*. But equally important is to help them *understand the culture* and *how the culture was changing* because culture is dynamic.

Developing students cannot be accomplished without the contribution of the “we” and “our” of everyone included in the task. The “village” calls forth all who have a specific role to play in the development of each student. Dean Frazier asserted,

Bring them into that village called [HBCU] and work with them! Also prepare them to do as the eagle does the little eaglets: make you secure and warm in that environment but at some time let you know you got to go back into the larger culture. It prepares you for that larger culture by giving you good skills and then giving you a piece of confidence that says, “You can go out, you can survive.”

Dean Frazier did not view her profession as mere work but rather as means of providing a purpose for the Black community. She displayed compassion for her students that went beyond the call of duty of an administrator. Her effort has had significance for her. The mother-tongue she used—“Cultivate,” “mold,” “comfort,” “secure,” “warm,” “prepare”—were descriptors of a nurturing person interested in the development of [Black] students. She reported building confidence into students entering the work world and compelling them to contribute to their communities. She was continuing the African American interpretive tradition of her predecessors.

Frazier’s ethic of care spoke to the nature of her spiritual life. Raised in the Methodist church, her father a minister, she brought those elements of her religious and spiritual life into her work. As she reflected on her life, she shared a most remarkable aspect:

My spiritual connection gives me some stability. And every day of my life I think about what that is. And recently I thought for example with my parents, there is a spiritual piece there to them that moved me to the point where I am now even though they're deceased. There is still that spiritual connection with them that we don't quite understand. But I think that influence is there to guide us along the way.

These profound moments of reflection helped her understand that educating students was not the only focus for her. "We need to help young people understand that you ought to be accountable to someone as a spiritual person." That is the stability she had and wanted to provide to students. It was also necessary for the extension and preservation of the community.

Her foundation of community promoted the deep symbolism that community building held for Dean Frazier. One of her first childhood memories was of her father "hewing" out a southern city. Just as her father carved a city to erect a community, she carried that tradition into her work of preparing future generations to build on to what had been started.

The Role of Black Churches in Community Building

Institutional location in the Black community has historical significance since Blacks were not allowed admission into historically White institutions. So, too, do Black churches set in the heart of Black communities serve an integral role for Blacks. Both symbolize a sense of hope, aspiration and refuge for the Black community. They have been pivotal in revolutionary movements in the social and economic development of Blacks. An understanding and valuing of the African American culture allows administrative staffs, faculty, nonacademic personnel, and governing boards to accomplish initiatives and goals.

Dean Frazier expressed the importance of the Black church:

And what I suspect that I had coming out of the Black church—that children don't have now—is an opportunity for *speaking*, for *making presentations*, for *learning how to present ideas and activities* that we probably don't have at this time. And that is the missing part, I think, for young children who are developing in the African American community. They don't have as much support in the Black school; but more importantly, I don't think some churches do as much as we did in the past to help children develop and grow. So a major influence, obviously, in addition to my parents in my home, was that community church.

The Black church was a central figure in the lives of many Black people during tumultuous periods in history. Church was the opportunity for large masses of people to congregate, not only for religious and spiritual purposes, but also for social activities, community building, and intellectual exchange. A deterioration of the Black church's influence in the lives of African Americans is associated with the changing times after desegregation. A number of Black families have moved away from "Black" neighborhoods because of upward social mobility.

African American women, whose foundations are strongly tied to religious traditions, link the declining presence of the Black church in the lives of African Americans to implications. The opportunity to pass on the "culture," "traditions," "heritage," "legacy," and "intellectual capital" of the Black race is threatened because of the disconnection between church and community. Church is likely to be the only institution where large masses of African Americans from different socioeconomic backgrounds congregate. The church may provide models of successful Blacks for children.

In universities and in churches, the Black community is extended so that successful African Americans can give back to 'whence' they have come. Dean Frazier emphasized the need to reach out to members of the Black community:

We have to go back into the communities and work with others and try to make a difference in what they do. I think again the keys to whether or not you are successful somehow someone has to mentor you and instill in you that you can be successful and give you that confidence. . . . Youngsters need models and mentors to help them to be successful. They need to see that person who looks like them being successful.

"African American women have been involved not only in work outside the home but also in transformative work," individual and collective action to improve social conditions throughout their history (Mullings, 1997).

This analysis revealed that administrators, as critical investigators, explore the circumstances of the conditions of students who enroll in their institutions. Concerned with change and creating opportunities for all students, they critically assess the limits society imposes on groups and the paths to remove those limits (Foster, 1966). They bring these concerns to their institutions, raise the consciousness of the school community, and implement structures to improve educational opportunity.

Leading as “Servants of the People”

Dr. Allen and Dean Smith were proponents of servant leadership and directed comments to that area. The metaphor of “servants of the people,” a term coined by Dr. Allen (1998) in her book on servant leadership, characterizes the role of an administrator. During the interview she said, servant leadership:

... comes right out of biblical teaching ... the church was a very strong influence in people's lives for the most part and this servanthood and the idea of service to others. You could trace it to the Judea Christian teachings.

According to Dr. Allen, it has historical significance in the African American community. She asserted:

It was people in the minority communities of color who have always been of service in their communities and so for us, servant leadership is not something that is new. It's been around a long time. It is something that we have been doing, giving a helping hand, helping one another. You know because the wider society has always been discriminatory toward us.

We have been our own support, community builders, helping one another and providing that kind of leadership. ... But for me, it was just something that explained both how Blacks and African Americans in the 60's during a very difficult time in the nation's history were able to survive so much cruelty and to rally people to risk so much because servant leaders are also risk-takers as well.

Dean Smith articulated her perspective on servant leadership:

A leader is a servant. ... If I cannot serve my students or serve this university or serve a community, then what good is it? Then what have I done? If I'm serving myself, if I'm trying to make myself look good, that's going to fall apart. But if I'm trying to take somebody else somewhere, it's going to be there, it's going to be and it's going to continue to grow. So that's what I think a leader is. I think you have to, you also have to teach people to lead, but you have to teach people to lead by example. I believe you should always be developing somebody to take your place.

A leader demonstrates a selfless desire to both serve and prepare others, and creates an organizational system that is committed to developing and sharing relationships that drive visions. This commitment to serve is not

confined to her role as administrator but is equally vital to the community. Dean Smith described her grade school teachers who made sacrifices to provide students educational opportunities despite limited resources. The teachers were servant leaders:

We went to a three room school house with teachers who had nothing but our future at point. I mean everything they did was in the vein of telling us we have to make it. You cannot live the way we have lived and these are the things you have to do to make it. We didn't want anything that we didn't have in that school. Although we were not given anything from the school system, they improvised; they took old books that the school system gave us and taught us like you would never believe.

Dean Smith carried this tradition of preparing future generations to her postsecondary profession. She acknowledged the tireless efforts of her former teachers and she continued the tradition by providing students in the nursing program with a quality education.

Leading as a Ministerial Duty: Accepting the Call to do God's Work

Although all made reference to God, Dr. Johnson focused on God talk. Another aspect in these women's narratives was God-talk. According to Williams (1993), Black women often use religion to cope with and transform the negative character of social processes in the African American and Anglo-American community (p. 33). Dr. Johnson reflected on her educational and professional experiences that involved many struggles. Although experiencing traumatic events, she sought understanding by connecting those experiences to her "calling" or "purpose." She recalled a situation in which she realized God had not given her a sign that it was time to move forward:

Because I said, I am not going through all these changes, but God did not want me to leave the university. He had me there for a reason . . . why do I have stay in this wilderness so long. Oh, I was going through. The children of Israel stayed in the wilderness for forty-years; am I going to be here for forty years? . . . I shall never forget it. And that is when it was revealed to me why I was there.

The close connection she had with God developed over time and allowed her to acknowledge the presence and work of God in her life. As she encountered different situations, she was adept at interpreting those

situations in the context of her personal relationship with God. When hired at her institution, she credited God for her appointment:

From the very first day, I just knew this was the place for me and I know that God sent me there. There is no question because I had been praying. I said, "God, wherever you want me to go, that's where I will go."

Dr. Johnson drew strength from her faith to get through difficult moments in troubling times. She said, "So when things happen that are ugly, I know it's only the enemy because I know that God sent me to this place because He has a job for me to do here." This can be identified as a "womanist" thought (Williams, 1993). Dr. Johnson was "not just merely [having] conversations with God or seeking divine intervention, but [her] stories tell of [her] absolute dependence upon God generated by faith-consciousness incorporating survival intelligence and visionary capacity" (p. 159). Not only did she seek wisdom to understand the problems she would encounter, but through spiritual intervention, has helped many of her students through difficult situations. She described an interaction with a student at a public institution:

And I heard her [the student] say something about praying. I said, "That was the only opening I need because at a state school you had to be very careful and I never would say anything about God or Jesus to those students unless they said something to me.

And she said, "I prayed." I said, "Oh, I heard you say you prayed. Are you a Christian?" She said, "Yes." I said, "Well then, since you are a Christian, I can talk to you differently. I have some other things I can tell you. And I started telling her about the situation and counseling her and giving her spiritual counseling."

Dr. Johnson frequently encountered incidents in which she could assist students through prayer, especially in her position as vice president of academic affairs at a private college. She stated, "So when students come in here with all their issues, I have prayed with students right here and have sensed the surge of the Holy Spirit, right in this office."

For many African American administrators, faith is a focal point of their personal and professional lives, and everything they do is interpreted and defined from their spiritual connection to a higher force. Working at religious institutions that embrace the practice of their faith provides an environment for individuals to live out their convictions.

Leading in the Classroom: I'm Going Back Down the Hill

Broadening this concept of God-talk (Williams, 1993), Dr. Giddens talked about her past leadership experiences. In sharing her story, she told of her unrelenting dependence on God for guidance during her years:

I wasn't the right kind of administrator, because I was very vocal and when it came to my faculty I was very *outspoken*. When it came to my students, I was very, very *passionate*. And I would just think, and know you were supposed to think about what you're going to say. But oh, if you bothered my students or if you messed with my faculty, I just forgot about this thing called diplomacy. I would pray to God, "God please help me hold my tongue or teach me to be different. I need to learn tact." [emphasis added]

Disapproving of how administration conducted the "business as usual" she felt compelled to

. . . go back down the hill. I'm leaving this white house up here and I'm going back down the hill so I can do what I want to do and I can be effective. . . . So I said, I'm getting out of this mess. Anybody else wants to come up here and be crazy if they can. I don't care . . . I'm not happy here. I don't like administration. I'm not able to do some things I want to do. I want to go back to the classroom so that I can do what I need to do for my students. I need to go where I know I can make a difference.

Her rhetoric on the "white house" implied how some faculty perceive the friction between administration and faculty. For example, administrators were critiqued for setting themselves apart from the members in the university community. There was very little collaboration between administration, faculty, students and staff. Her experiences led her to conclude that academics were not always a priority: "We were down on list number 8." Consequently, she had to "defend and fight for faculty." It became too exhausting to be in a constant battle with other administrators whose agenda differed; she decided at that point, it was time for her to leave her position.

Dr. Giddens saw the classroom as the venue where she could have an effect on students. As she said, not everyone who is given leadership responsibilities finds it to be a rewarding experience; fortunately, she was able to return to where she was most needed and could make a difference. Dr. Giddens said: "God told me that when you get to a place that you don't enjoy coming to work; it is time to leave. I knew then it was time for me to go."

Desegregation Damage

Dr. Giddens offered a special perspective on the damage caused by desegregation practices. In addition to disliking administration, her reason for returning to the classroom as a biology professor was connected to what she saw as the damage caused by desegregation. Desegregation unquestionably was a detriment to Black people. She contended that many in the African American community suffered even greater because of desegregation:

For me, the reason I'm so *compassionate* and *committed* to my students and people may look at me when I say it, but I do say it, integration was not the best thing for my race. I grew up segregated, in a segregated schools, but with that segregation, I had the best teachers. Teachers who *knew how to talk* [emphasis added], who knew how to teach with what they had and they taught you. You learned. They didn't skip over this and skip over that. We had second hand materials, but we were taught well and I remember that. I didn't take education for granted or didn't have this instant gratification.

She noted that a quality education was paramount to the success of Blacks. "To know how to talk" which translates to formal English means acquiring proper education as the entryway to upward mobility. Black teachers, during her educational experience, understood the significance of providing formal education to Black children. Knowing how to read and write meant increased opportunities to further one's status in American society. Desegregation, according to Dr. Giddens' perspective, placed African Americans at a disadvantage. The necessity to provide high-quality education to Blacks was threatened. The quality of education deteriorated for Blacks because their interests were not a priority for many White teachers who taught in the Black community. Dr. Giddens commented:

We get the teachers now who don't know how to teach the students and the teachers now are afraid to teach the Black students. So they have developed things. *They're trying to still tell us that we are not intelligent and we cannot learn so they have developed these easy ways out. Like I hate this thing called Ebonics. They are going to tell my race of children that they can't learn their own English language but you can get a foreigner to come and they learn our English language.* The White students can learn the English language, but all we can do, we can speak is street talk and do *Ebonics*. I hate that. Then we bought into that and then we can't teach our children because we don't have the same books

and we don't have this that the Whites have. Yes we can! [emphasis added]

Dr. Gidden compared her educational experience to that of her younger brother, whose educational experience was described as going in a downward slope. "Integration was not the best thing for my people."

Whites' assumptions about Black students' intellectual competence resulted in many being placed in lower level classes, thus actually causing them to drop out of school or to graduate without receiving a good education. Dr. Giddens witnessed these incidents not only in her years of teaching in public schools but also during her younger sibling's educational experiences. Her concerns, which also were her fears about the continual deterioration of Blacks, carried over to her son's schooling years. She became involved in his experiences to ensure he would have a different outcome.

Dr. Giddens is committed to changing the conditions of students who come to her classroom. Dr. Giddens and Dean Frazier suggested encouraging more African Americans to pursue the field of teaching. African Americans can retain the culture of their communities and provide quality education for all children.

Leading as the Collective Mission

Dr. Owens emphasized leadership as a collective mission. The purposes and goals are rooted in the shared efforts of community members. Dr. Owens spoke directly to that:

I don't even think of myself as a leader. I oftentimes describe myself as the grunt worker. I just try to find out what kind of things need to be done to support the other people in these positions that being the assistant dean, the assistant and associate vice chancellor. I see my role primarily as support.

Her style of leadership emphasized shared inquiry as an important activity in problem identification and resolution. Members of communities engage in common efforts to create professional knowledge and grow together for the purpose of establishing a set of goals.

Breaking away from old assumptions and developing new behaviors for the construction of meaning is essential (Foster, 1986). Because everyone can perform an act of leadership, participants are able to assess their contribution or lack thereof that impedes the growth of their institution's community. The climate of the community is one that

surrounds itself with a sense of purpose and ethics by building trust among administrators, faculty, staff, and students. When Dr. Owens brought her community together, her function was to facilitate discussions so that others collaborate, construct meaning, and move in the agreed upon direction. What she observed about her collective nature of leading was:

A whole lot of discussion will turn around and once it is turned around nobody remembers how they got where they are and I've had people observe me and they say that it is very smooth the way you do it. You redirect them. They don't know that they have changed directions; they think it is their idea.

Another important element of "acts of leadership" is the continuous effort by the person who does have the formal title of leader to work against the notion of having power over others. Instead, the leader is to cultivate a leadership that is aligned with "the reciprocal processes" proposed by Foster (1986). Self-reflecting on what she does as a leader, Dr. Owens said:

Some people if you look from below, you look up and see a person in a higher position. And you think, "Oh, they are way up there by themselves." They are unreachable but what you find is the higher you go the more people you need.

And so, it is constant bridge building activity as you move through these positions and as you move through your career. *Building bridges with people in the community. Building bridges with people in the work place. Building bridges with people in the family.* And you have to oftentimes work harder to prove that you don't think that you are above the other people. [emphasis added]

"Other People's Children": Who's Teaching Them Their African and African American History?

The women in this study shared similar concern about the "cultural decay [that] results in the erosion of a nurturing system for children" (West, 1994). Dean Frazier asserted.

I think when I look at teacher education now having been in teacher education thirty plus years, I'm really concerned that perhaps, African Americans in particular are losing the vision that we have to prepare our students to be teachers. Because if we don't prepare African American students to be teachers, who's going to pass on the culture? And I think that's a real void there. And I don't think we are thinking about that. I

cannot pass on the White culture. I don't know White culture. But I can pass on Black culture. But if we aren't careful and if we allow all of our children to be taught by other who will pass on the culture?

A growing concern for many African Americans pertains to the education of their children—the mismatch between the background and expectations of educators and those of students. Delpit's (1995) work in *Other People's Children* offered a critique of the cultural conflict between White teachers—Black students and pedagogy. Although she provided transformative approaches to minimize the disenfranchisement of students of diverse backgrounds, few are hopeful these approaches will impact change. An escalated concern is that many African American teachers are leaving the profession and few are entering the field.

The transmission of cultural values, morals, and ethics of the African American community is occurring less frequently because of the declining presence of people of color entering the teaching profession. Who is committed to teaching African Americans their history? Schools are places where children receive affirmation of who they are and learn values, beliefs, and morals as part of their development. For Dr. Giddens, teaching was more than the fundamentals of reading, writing, and math; this is where one's culture is enriched. The declining presence of Black teachers in public schools increases historically Black institutions' responsibilities to fill that void.

“This is Where I'm Supposed to Be: Journeying Back to the Historically Black Colleges and Universities”

In their dedication to changing social conditions of the Black community, these women administrators echoed their reasons for remaining at historically Black institutions and/or transferring from one institution to the other. They did not take for granted what their purposes were in the capacities they have served in their professions. Their *raison d'être* for journeying to historically Black institutions follow. Dean Frazier concluded:

My choice is to be here. And I think that's the difference. Where do I choose to work? I have the options to work at either place but I choose to work here with African Americans who in many instances have not had the opportunities for academic excellence and they want the opportunity. They want to be successful. And so that's why I am here.

Dean Smith commented:

I've come back to the place where I started so I can give something back. And although, I tried not to come back, you know I told you when I walked off the steps in '79 and something said, this is where you're supposed to be, I tried my best not to come back but I did.

Dr. Giddens described herself as remaining at a historically Black college because "those are my roots" and all her degrees have been from HBCUs. She added, "My terminal degree is as good as the ones from the White schools." She said, "I might need to go to some predominantly White school so that I can get my hands on the Black students that are there so that they could have a Black experience." Dr. Owens, the only administrator whose educational experience were from historically White institutions, made the decision to work at historically Black institutions:

When I graduated I got offered jobs to teach in [suburban city], New Jersey which at the time not many of us were there. And I remember my mother saying, "You are going to take the job in [suburban city], aren't you? It's going to be easier—you know this." I said, "I'm not." I'm going to take the job in [urban city] because that's where the children need me. And if I were not any good, they wouldn't have asked me to come to [suburban school]. So when I left undergraduate school, I knew and felt that I had a commitment to work with people who needed help.

Discussion and Conclusion

The accounts of these six women provided a glimpse of the critical social practices of African American women administrators in historically Black institutions. These administrators' leadership practices served to transform existing conditions and empower those they serve. They facilitated democratic participation. They communicated to institutional members that change can be made by an "us" mentality. The organizational structures they created were critical, transformative, educative and ethical (Foster, 1986). Although there were struggles, the work they performed has implications that go beyond institutional purposes.

These six leaders represent a social justice project rooted in community. Their political engagement and efforts to transform educational conditions for African American students reflect (a) Gramsci's (as cited in Forgacs, 2000) organic intellectual concerned with ideologies and activities in developing specific groups or communities; (b) hooks' (1999) assertion for Black women to have an intellectual presence in academia; and (c) West's (1991) insurgency model for Black intellectual

activity that challenges Blacks to be organically linked with Afro-American cultural life.

The women's decisions to remain at historically Black institutions were not only politically motivated but were also socially germane to their life's purpose. As one administrator said,

And the reason I encourage African American children to start at HBCUs is because I think *we* can bring them in here, give them the skills, dispositions and preparation for professions and develop and competence and confidence in them. Then when they leave here they can go out and challenge the Harvards, the Stanfords, or the Oxfords. Sometimes they can do it in other situations but I just believe the one thing *we* can do for the majority of African Americans is to instill in them a degree of confidence so that they can go out and challenge the society and make obviously great contributions.

These women described their social responsibility to develop African American students to become successful members of the Black community as well as the larger community. Their purposes were in accord with the interpretive tradition of historically Black institutions that are tied to community development. Historically Black institutions were established to serve the educational needs of Black Americans who were denied admission to White institutions; the goals of these institutions have expanded beyond their initial intent.

The religious/spiritual faith of these six women has guided them to lead, educate themselves and others, and to change repressive conditions. As Collins (1998) wrote, "justice constitutes an article of faith expressed through deep feelings that move people to action" (p. 248). For these administrators, their concern with justice, infused with spirituality, moved them to build communities of socially responsible students. Additionally, these women's narratives reveal how their professional work intersected with their spirituality and the "uplift of the race."

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Book Review

John M. Palladino

THE SOUTHWEST AIRLINES WAY: USING THE POWER OF RELATIONSHIPS TO ACHIEVE HIGH PERFORMANCE. J. H. Gittell. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

In *The Southwest Airlines Way: Using the Power of Relations to Achieve High Performance*, Gittell, an assistant professor of management at Brandeis University and a member of Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Global Airline Industry Program, provides a template of female leadership.

Gittell described Southwest Airlines as a gemstone in the industry. After the tragedy of September 11, 2001, Southwest did not lay off employees; yet, the airline showed profit each year. Southwest's 2002 \$9 billion total market value was greater than all other major airlines combined (Gittell, 2003, p. 3). *Fortune* magazine called Southwest "the most successful airline in history," praise that coincided with the magazine's affirmation that Southwest is one of "100 best companies to work for in America" (p. 3).

Southwest's success permeates the United States. Success in new market areas has led the United States Department of Transportation to dub the Dallas, Texas-based company as "the dominant airline in the United States" (p. 7). Thirty days after Southwest began service between Chicago and Louisville, the Louisville market tripled. The same "Southwest effect" occurred in Manchester, NH where, after the first year of Southwest's services, air traffic increased 75% over previous estimates (p. 184). Gittell reported that by the end of 2002, Southwest "was the third largest airline in the United States, and the largest in terms of the number of flights per day" (p. 5).

At the core of Southwest's success is its ability to sustain the presidential leadership that Herb Kelleher initiated. Kelleher knew it was important to step aside and let new leaders assume the roles of CEO and President. One chief pilot summarized the sentiment of employees: "He picks sharp people. There will never be another Herb Kelleher, but the spirit will carry on" (p. 68). Gittell reported that Kelleher demonstrated to his employees and the airline industry that he could identify an ideal leader to become Southwest's

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second President. His choice was Colleen Barrett, “the first top woman executive in the United States airline industry” (p. 69). Barrett commented:

First of all, the airline industry really isn’t known for its women. That is a fact. But the glass ceiling has never been an issue for me at Southwest Airlines, so I’ve never particularly thought of that. But I have heard really big-dog people saying how great it is. It makes me feel great for women. It’s kind of humbling. And I wish my mother was alive, because she’d love it. (p. 69)

Barrett and Southwest’s Best Practices

Gittell dedicated a chapter to each of Barrett’s unique practices. “Other organizations can adopt Southwest’s powerful organizational practices without attempting to recreate its culture” (p. 197). A summary of Barrett’s practices and the implications for school leaders is provided.

Lead with Credibility and Caring

Gittell noted that “not every leader of a successful organization must be charismatic . . . however, what successful organizations do need from each of their leaders is credibility and caring” (p. 72). In describing their new president, one employee said Barrett “is up there with Jesus Christ, in our eyes” (p. 58) because of her credibility, honesty, and ability to gain employee trust.

Similarly, school administrators strive to gain the trust of teachers, students, and community members. Reiss and Hoy (1998) reported “little scholarly attention has been paid to either faculty loyalty in schools or loyalty as a multidimensional construct” (p. 4). Reiss and Hoy administered the Rutgers School Loyalty Questionnaire (RSLQ) to 120 New Jersey teachers. They affirmed their hypothesis that the “greater the

degree of openness in the managerial level, the greater the degree of loyalty to the principal” (p. 10). Likewise, Gittell concluded that Barrett gains trust by maintaining open lines of communication. A Southwest pilot commented: “They [Barrett and her assistants] communicate with customers and employees on every little issue. Their philosophy is to take care of the small problems” (p. 59).

Gittell described Barrett’s behavior in leading a meeting with Southwest’s department managers. Barrett said, “Title means very little here” (p. 71). Gittell provided other examples of how Barrett set the tone of collaboration by presenting herself as part of the managerial team. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (1997) described principal loyalty: “Trust in the principal is determined primarily by the behavior of the principal . . . the principal controls his or her own destiny by acting in ways that engender trust or distrust” (p. 348).

Invest in Frontline Leadership

Under Barrett’s administration, Southwest maintained the highest number of supervisors per frontline employee in the airline industry, a 1 to 10 ratio. Barrett’s justification for the high ratio is to ensure that supervisors have the means to identify and develop the talents of each employee. In turn, the supervisors step aside and allow employees to assume leadership responsibility and gain self-esteem. A supervisor for the Chicago Midway Airport station justified Barrett’s vision: “We learn that not everyone is the same as you or each other. You develop your best qualities and treat everyone as a human being” (p. 76).

Borelli (1997) offered a similar example. She demonstrated how the role of school leaders may change when administrators empower teachers to assume leadership positions. She inherited a “gang school” riddled with discipline problems. Her quest was to depart from the school’s traditional method of addressing discipline problems. Her primary goal was to treat teachers as professionals, affording them the authority and support to use a variety of progressive disciplinary actions.

Hire and Train for Relational Competence

Southwest Airlines, when hiring a new employee, considers job experience secondary to relational skills. “We’ve turned away people with 15-16 years of airline experience in favor of people with none” (p. 87). Southwest affirms that their success is a result of employees able to perform, or at the very least, respect the functions of other employees. “Through programs called ‘A Day in the Field’ or ‘Walk a Mile,’

Southwest employees periodically spend a day working in another department to become familiar with other aspects of the work process related to their own jobs” (p. 89). For Barrett, positive employee relations are the required springboard for expansion into new markets:

The naysayers said we could never fly to the Northeast [e.g., Providence, RI and Manchester, NH] because we wouldn’t be able to find employees there who were nice. But we can do it, and we do. Someday, we may go international. And even internationally, *we can maintain our culture if we go after people’s hearts and grow our community* [author’s emphasis]. (p. 91)

Like Barrett, Yasumato, Kazuaki, and Bidwell (2001) suggest teacher relations affect a school’s mission. They suggested that increased collegiality, similar to what Barrett has accomplished at Southwest, should result in four outcomes. The outcomes include: (a) elimination of instructional problems, (b) consistent use of successful teaching practices, (c) reduction in pedagogical interference among faculty, and (d) trust among members of the group.

Use Conflicts to Build Relationships

At Southwest, employees reported that when a breakdown in collegiality occurs, a “whodunit” witch-hunt does not occur (p. 103). Rather, managers will bring the parties at conflict together to resolve the problem. Employees nickname these conflict resolution sessions as “‘Come to Jesus meetings,’ suggesting that conflicting parties were expected to bare their souls if necessary to achieve reconciliation” (p. 102).

Barrett acknowledged that her supervisors sometimes encounter employees who do not want to participate in the resolution of their voiced grievances. In response, Barrett added a final question to the company’s grievance documentation form: “If it [the grievance] involves a Southwest employee, have you discussed it with him or her?” (p. 111). Barrett commented, “If we get a form where the answer was ‘no,’ we would call and say, ‘Why don’t you all have a little chat?’” (p. 111). She is willing to fly a flight attendant and a pilot to a mutual location.

Henkin, Cistone, and Dee (1999) address the topic of conflict resolution as it relates to principals and teachers of site-based schools. Their study of 300 principals in a large, urban school district in the southeastern United States found that principals preferred collaborative problem solving. They concluded, “inclinations toward solution-oriented

conflict management strategies in self-managed schools appear to be associated with higher levels of constituent group involvement” (p. 153).

Bridge the Work and Family Divide

Barrett empowers employees to build a healthy bridge between work and personal life. Passengers notice the family-like behavior of Southwest employees:

Hugs were observed to be a common form of greeting [between employees], whether in the original Southwest station at Love Field [Dallas, TX], or at Southwest’s big East Coast station in Baltimore. Indeed, family was more than a metaphor at Southwest: many employees reported family ties with other Southwest employees, something the company encourages so long as those involved were not also in a reporting relationship. (p. 115)

In the early 1990s, Barrett initiated the first “Culture Committee.” She flew interested employees to her headquarters to discuss sustaining and enhancing the Southwest family culture. Each Southwest airport station has its own Culture Committee to “accommodate the needs of families, so as not to burn out this important source of employee commitment” (p. 121). Gittell praised Southwest’s efforts to “look for synergies between family and work relationships and ties to avoid trading off one for the other” (p. 122).

The demands associated with the job of school administration permeate principals’ personal lives. Bruckner (1998) conducted a survey of 575 spouses of school administrators in Nebraska. Her findings painted a bleak picture of how school administration places a toll on spousal and family relations:

- He [principal] is so drained from his job, he has nothing to give when he’s home. (p. 25)
- It has been a real strain in our marriage. He has a tendency to take out his frustrations at home, not in an aggressive manner, (but he’s) short with us. His mind is occupied with other things. The public gets his best side. (p. 25)

Create Boundary Spanners

Gittell compares the function of operation agents (OA) at Southwest with other airlines. In the airline industry, an OA is an essential leader, coordinating data and personnel prior to and during a plane’s arrival at a

terminal's gate. The coordination is the basis for employee functions. The goal is spending the least amount of time at a gate in preparation for the next takeoff.

Southwest assigns one OA per flight. Other airlines assign one OA for as many as fifteen flights. The other airlines rely on technology and two-way circuit televisions to process and communicate data. Southwest refuses to over-automate the OA position: "It is coordination with a human face" (p. 127).

Barrett suggested that success is achieved, not by streamlining measures, but from employing adequate human resources. As aspiring administrators enter the field, they encounter a shortage of teachers in certain fields, such as special education and mathematics (e.g., Buchanan, 2002; Prince, 2002). The decisions they make may succeed if they are able to gain the confidence of their constituents, a phenomenon Gittell observed at Southwest:

Almost all the passengers were smiling, though it was not apparent why. There was a general feeling of speed and efficiency rather than the usual feeling of 'hurry up and wait' that one gets when boarding an airplane. These passengers seemed to feel confident that they were in good hands and that their hurrying would pay off. They seemed not to mind being hurried. (p. 135)

Avoid Finger Pointing

I equate Gittell's description of the heartache that is associated with flight delays in the airline industry with administering a school that failed its state's high stakes testing. In the airline industry an on-time flight departure is *the* item of assessment. Southwest is concerned about resolving patterns of flight delays. Barrett's "team delay" report allows all employees associated with a flight's departure to process the conditions that prevented an on-time departure. The report has the fewest categories of any similar reporting form in the airline industry.

Touchton and Acker-Hocevar (2002) concluded that Florida's accountability measures "have taken a toll on teachers in high poverty, low-performing schools" (p. 335). They reported qualified teachers abandon jobs in low socioeconomic communities because they do not want to assume full responsibility for low test scores. One principal described the destruction of morale:

And then you have teachers who first of all have been branded an 'F,' so they are not feeling good about themselves to begin with and you are

coming along and telling them they are not doing the right thing so we are going to change everything you are doing and do it this way. It wrecks their self-concept unless you are doing a lot to build it up as you are doing these things. (p. 340)

Conclusion

Barrett, Southwest's first female administrator, is a people mover. Southwest's statistics validate the millions of people flying on her company's airplanes. Gittell's portrait depicts Barrett as a dynamic, humble and loyal leader. She is a woman who has gained the respect of her constituents. Her tenacity to maintain the "humanness" of her organization and its employees is a model for aspiring and practicing school administrators.

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