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Shirley Chisholm Had Guts

Marilyn L. Grady
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We note the passing of Shirley Chisholm (1924-2005), a 1993 inductee to the National Women's Hall of Fame. Born in New York, she was the oldest of four daughters. Her father was from British Guiana and her mother was from Barbados. In 1927, she was sent to Barbados to live with her maternal grandmother. She was educated in the British school system until she returned to New York in 1934. She attended Girls High School in Brooklyn, graduated cum laude from Brooklyn College in 1946, and received a masters degree in elementary education from Columbia University.

She worked at Mt. Calvary Childcare Center in Harlem, was the director of the Hamilton Madison Child Care Center (1953-1959), and was an educational consultant for the Division of Day Care (1959-1964).

She served in the New York General Assembly from 1964-1968. "During her tenure in the legislature, she proposed a bill to provide state aid to day-care centers and voted to increase funding for schools on a per-pupil basis. In her 1968 campaign, her slogan was "Fighting Shirley Chisholm—Unbought and Unbossed." She won the election and became the first African American woman elected to Congress (PageWise, 2002).

"During her first term in Congress, Chisholm hired an all-female staff and spoke out for civil rights, women's rights, the poor and against the Vietnam War." A cofounder of the National Organization for Women (NOW), she said, "women in this country must become revolutionaries. We must refuse to accept the old, the traditional roles and stereotypes." (PageWise, 2002)

She ran for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1972. She said in her book *The Good Fight*, "I ran for the Presidency, despite hopeless odds, to demonstrate the sheer will and refusal to accept the status quo" (Chisholm, 1973).

She was a founding member of the Congressional Black Caucus. She said, "My greatest political asset, which professional politicians fear, is my mouth, out of which come all kinds of things one shouldn't always discuss for reasons of political expediency" (CNN.com, 2005).

Chisholm was described as a passionate and effective advocate for the needs of minorities, women and children who changed the nation's perception about the capabilities of women and African-Americans. In 1970

she published her first book, *Unbossed and Unbought* (Chisholm, 1970). In 1973 she published her second book, *The Good Fight* (Chisholm, 1973).

Robert E. Williams, president of the Flager County National Association for the Advancement of Colored People said, "She was our Moses that opened the Red Sea for us." Shola Lynch, director of "Chisholm '72: Unbought and Unbossed," said, "Whether you agree with her politics or not, she had a moral compass." "She's an average American woman who evolved into a strong and courageous politician." Conrad Chisholm said, "She was a mouthpiece for the underdog, the poor, underprivileged people, the people who did not have much of a chance."

Shirley Chisholm said, "I'd like them to say that Shirley Chisholm had guts. That's how I'd like to be remembered." . . . as she should be!

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Proposals for presentations at the **19th Annual Women in Educational Leadership Conference** are being accepted! The conference will be October 9-10, 2005, in Lincoln, Nebraska. For information about the conference or proposal guidelines contact Marilyn Grady at mgradyl@unl.edu

Women in History

Mary McLeod Bethune

Mark Giesler

Unlike many of her contemporaries, Mary McLeod Bethune is not a household name. This is perhaps fitting. Despite the fact that she made major contributions in politics and education, she epitomized the quiet, passionate African-American woman of the mid-20th century, “the mothers of the race, the homemakers and spiritual guides” (Hanson, 2003, p. 2).

Bethune was one of 17 children of former slave parents. As a girl, she attended Scotia Seminary, a Presbyterian school that emphasized religious and industrial education. This experience led her to the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, where she dedicated her life to serving God through missionary work. Later she was told there was “no work for Negroes in the missions of Africa” (Skorapa, 1989).

She began a career educating African American children. Among her influences then was an apprenticeship with Lucy Craft Laney, who taught her that educated black women should uplift their families by providing “moral, Christian leadership at home and in their communities” (McCluskey, 1999, p. 5).

She lived by this example in her own home. In 1898 she married Albertus Bethune. In 1908 he returned to his home in South Carolina, leaving Bethune to raise their only son Albert. From this experience she received the inspiration to start a school, the Daytona Normal and Industrial Institute. It began with five girls and her son. In 1929, it merged with the Cookman Institute to become coeducational and eventually was renamed Bethune-Cookman College. Bethune retired from the college as president emeritus in 1947 (Felder, 1996).

Her commitment to this venture accentuates her belief in racial integration. To fund the school, she relied on financial and moral support from the “rich, elite” white community (Skorapa, 1989). Her belief that only a racially segregated American could safeguard black rights alienated her from black politics of the time (McCluskey, 1999).

About the Author

Mark Giesler is a doctoral student in the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He has worked as a researcher and instructor in higher education since 1990. He received his Masters in Theatre Education from the University of Northern Iowa in 1990 and a Masters in Social Work from the University of Nebraska-Omaha in 2002. He has served as program administrator of the Nebraska AIDS Project. He worked as a child/adolescent therapist in Omaha, Nebraska. Currently, he is a substance abuse counselor at LIGHThouse, Inc. in Plymouth, Michigan.

Yet, this stance best explains her ability to move easily into politics. She was an active member of the National Commission for Child Welfare under Presidents Coolidge and Hoover. She was also president of state, regional, and national women's clubs. By 1935, she was appointed director of the Office of Minority Affairs, the first federal office created for an African-American woman (Hanson, 2003). There were other firsts: in 1942, she assisted the Secretary of War on the selection of female officers for the Auxiliary Corps. Three years later she was named the only African American woman consultant to draw up the charter for the United Nations (McCluskey, 1999).

Bethune's legacy is steeped in contradiction. She personified notions of black and female achievement, which in her era, were at odds with each other. Eleanor Roosevelt (1940) said of her, "I have real admiration for Mrs. Bethune and her devotion to her race; as well as [for] her tact and wisdom." Mary McLeod Bethune was truly a woman of her time. She held fast to her core beliefs—religious faith, racial pride, and equal opportunity for all—and did so with the quiet, persistent courage that marks great achievement.

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Observations of Chat Room Conversations on the Internet: Implications for Educators Addressing the Needs of Female Adolescents

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This qualitative study explored the meanings of chat room conversations through observations of teenagers using the Internet. Adolescent girls were a focus because of their shaky sense of self. Participants in ten chat rooms included 534 individuals. Six themes, emerging from analyzing 2526 utterances [descriptive statements], included (a) communicating with abbreviations and acronyms, (b) requesting/providing personal information, (c) requesting/providing pictures, (d) requesting/accepting private chats, (e) using profanity/vulgarity or sexual comments, and (f) using figurative language or sarcasm. Implications were outlined to assist educators addressing the needs of female adolescents.

During the past 25 years, a technological explosion has created opportunities for individuals to communicate throughout the world with just the click of a button. The Internet has created a means to conduct business, retrieve information, and communicate in ways that were previously unknown. E-mails, instant messages, and chat rooms are venues for individuals to keep in touch, share information, and establish relationships. Authors of a 2001 study focused on the use of the Internet reported that approximately 17 million youth between the ages of 12 and 17 use the Internet and 74% use instant messaging. The results from a sample of 754 youth indicated that most online teens use different screen names and e-mail

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Dixie Sanger is a professor in Speech-Language Pathology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

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accounts to manage their communications and the information that comes to them. Significant numbers said that they pretend to be different people and that they have been given false information by others. Close to 60% of teens have received an instant message or an e-mail from a stranger and 50% report e-mailing or instant messaging with someone they have not met before (Lenhart, Rainie, & Lewis, 2001).

Marriott (1998) reported that at least 40 to 50 million individuals communicate through chat rooms. Chat rooms offer an opportunity to interact and establish relationships with a vast number of people without having to reveal true identities. Users rely on a special language containing a kind of shorthand with many abbreviations (e.g., CU or "see you" and acronyms such as LOL or "laugh out loud"). Chat rooms provide opportunities for individuals to communicate practically instantaneously (referred to as "real time"). Typically, chats can be chaotic with comments appearing quickly and multiple conversations occurring simultaneously. Messages can be posted and read by groups of individuals or in private contexts (DiMarco & DiMarco, 2002; Leeper & Gotthoffer, 2001). Conversations occurring in private contexts cannot be observed by outside viewers but only by those participating in the exchange.

Prevalence statistics indicate that the use of Internet chat rooms by teenagers is increasing, and in some instances, is a concern for law enforcement authorities (Ellison, 2001; Huycke, 1997; Magid, 1998). Some Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reports involving child victims suggest that children have been exploited and lured from home as a result of unsupervised meetings online with sexual predators. The reporting of Internet predatory crimes against children has increased by 1,200% nationwide, according to recent FBI reports (Madhani, 2003). Sausner (2001) reported that, according to a survey of 10,000 youths worldwide, more than 25% of teenage girls expressed feelings of uneasiness and fear arising from the sexual or personal nature of conversations during chat room sessions. A number of recent publications portray instances in which teenage girls were targeted as victims for cybercrime involving manipulative and dangerous online conversations (e.g., Baig, 2003; Baker, 2001; *BBC News*, 2003; *CBS News*, 2002).

Dangerous predators use chat rooms to meet, manipulate, and sometimes, seduce their victims. These dangerous cybercrime activities have been discussed by law enforcement officers and reported in cybercrime literature. For example, Douglas and Singular (2003), revealed that individuals can be lured into the dark underground of cybercrime through online seduction by criminal predators with relative ease. Similar to research published about vulnerable teenage girls, the authors emphasized how relationships devoid of physical contact have devastating outcomes for women. They described the story of John Robinson, the Internet's first known serial killer, who now sits in prison on three counts of homicide. After being released from prison in the mid-1990s for crimes unrelated to the Internet, Robinson began using the Internet and the World Wide Web to lure victims and exploit their weaknesses. He entered chat rooms and started conversations. These interactions were followed by relationships with vulnerable women who were looking for romance. He convinced these women to come to his home town by promising to help them; however, once these women arrived they were never seen or heard from again.

Though violent crime from online communications is disconcerting to all individuals, instances of cybercrime may have special implications for educators who are addressing the needs of all teenagers who have language and learning problems. Larson and McKinley (2003) documented that older students with language disorders experience difficulty with higher level syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Ehren and Lenz (1989) reported that such students have problems when processing and producing language. Deficits in both understanding and producing complex vocabulary are often found among these older children. Students with language disorders display

problems in understanding different types of figurative language including slang, jokes, or dual meaning words or phrases (Larson & McKinley, 2003; Nippold, 1998, 2000). Understanding and responding to figurative language and abbreviations for words may present problems for students engaging in chat room conversations. Moreover, teenagers with language and learning problems have difficulties in both decoding and comprehending print (Butler & Silliman, 2002). These challenges may be of concern given that the various codes used in chat room interactions typically cause conversations appearing online to differ from typical interactions (Marriott, 1998).

It is unclear whether educators who serve youth with language and learning problems are aware of the types of conversations occurring in chat rooms. It is not known if the interactions in these settings contain information that would be difficult for vulnerable youth to understand. For example, are the messages in chat rooms clearly written and free of ambiguous information, or do they instead contain higher level language that is difficult to interpret? Are messages misleading with potentially dangerous outcomes? We speculated that understanding chat room interactions has implications for all students, furthermore it may have particular relevance for female teens with language and learning problems. Teenagers with language and learning problems are at-risk and need to understand how their own language problems could relate to their vulnerability during online interactions.

The purpose of this study was to explore the meanings of online chat room conversations through observations of teenagers using the Internet. These observations were the data base that led to the identification of the emerging themes from these communications. This information served as preliminary data to develop suggestions for educators. Suggestions were intended particularly to warn teenage girls of the potential dangers of online chat room conversations. Adolescent girls are targeted because of their still shaky sense of self and their on-going challenges in finding their identity (Pipher, 1994). Additionally, they have often been victims of sexual predators and are twice as likely as boys to have received unwanted sexual comments and requests for face-to-face meetings (Sausner, 2001).

Method

Participants

Two researchers independently observed on-line conversations in chat rooms intended for teenagers. Teenage chat rooms were randomly selected through a well-established Internet provider. Chat rooms were easily accessible and were viewed as representative of typical Internet settings. The names of the service provider and participants remain confidential to protect the identity of

those involved in the study. Participants included 534 individuals involved in chat room interactions. This number was obtained by counting the screen names present in each chat room during observations. The screen names were then used to retrieve background information from the chat room member directory. The submission of personal information to the directory was optional, hence we acknowledge it may have been falsified to camouflage identity. Despite the potential falsification of background member information, a review of available profiles provided descriptive information. Member profiles were available on 69% ($n = 370/534$) of the individuals. Of those who submitted a profile, 49% ($n = 264/370$) were males and 34% ($n = 180/370$) were females. Although all of the chat rooms were designated for teens only (i.e., 12-18 years of age and 13-19 years), these profiles indicated that the age of the participants ranged from 12 to 49 years.

Twenty-nine percent ($n = 109/370$) reported they were students. Of those, 39% ($n = 43/109$) were in grades 8 through 12. Less often, other chat room members mentioned they held occupations such as musicians, or were involved in management, security, sales, or lifeguarding. The most frequent hobbies listed by participants included hanging out with friends, sports, listening to music, talking on the phone, shopping, and chatting online. Forty-five percent ($n = 167/370$) indicated that they were single; only a few reported being "taken" [having a boyfriend/girlfriend] ($n = 20/370$; 5%) or married ($n = 9/370$; 2%). The majority of individuals also included a first name in the profile ($n = 228/370$; 62%).

Data Collection and Analysis

In order to access chat rooms, we downloaded software from an Internet service provider. Information about security, proper use, and etiquette was provided and used when interacting in the chat rooms. The researchers chose a screen name (nickname) that was used during chat room interactions and were given the option, but declined, to provide a profile that consisted of a brief description of oneself to other chat room users. Once these steps were completed, the graduate students practiced observing teen chat rooms prior to collecting observations. This was done to familiarize themselves with terms used and the rapid and random exchange of information. Following initial observations of chat rooms, only the students' screen names appeared on the discussion board. They did not engage in conversations with other group members.

Observations were collected in 30-minute increments from ten different chat rooms for a total of five hours of observation. Each chat room was randomly selected and accessed through the same Internet service provider. This service was obtained through a free promotional compact disc received

in the mail. The chat room conversations were available only to subscribers. Using the software from the service provider allowed researchers to copy sections of entire 30-minute conversations and paste them into a Word document. This provided researchers with an exact duplicate of all conversations.

Following retrieval of exact transcripts of on-line conversations, a modified qualitative procedure by Moustakas (1994) was used to analyze the data. First, we read through the chat room transcripts from participants to determine emerging patterns of communication behaviors. Second, notes on primary meanings of comments were made in the margins to determine reoccurring information/topics. This procedure included identification of all of the descriptive statements/ideas contained in participants' comments. Third, reoccurring ideas [descriptive statements] were grouped together. From these descriptive statements, themes of meaning were formed. Fourth, consensus was established to determine the core themes. Fifth, frequency data on the number of descriptive statements/comments included in each theme were calculated to determine the percent of statements from among the total comments (see Table 1).

Table 1
Percent of Descriptive Statements (n = 2526) from Ten Chat Rooms According to Theme

| Theme | Descriptive Statements/Utterances | |
|---|-----------------------------------|---------|
| | Frequency | Percent |
| Using Abbreviations/Acronyms/Contractions | 1640 | 65.0 |
| Requesting/ Providing Personal Information | 1095 | 43.3 |
| Requesting/ Providing Pictures | 497 | 19.7 |
| Requesting/ Accepting a Private Chat | 403 | 16.0 |
| Using Profanity/ Vulgarity/ Sexual Comments | 322 | 12.7 |
| Sexual Comments only | 227 | 9.0 |
| Using Figurative Language/Sarcasm | 191 | 7.6 |
| Other | 1004 | 39.7 |
| Greetings only | 199 | 7.9 |

*Note: Total number of descriptive statements does not sum to 2526 since each descriptive statement could contain codes representative of more than one theme.

The data were verified by five procedures important to qualitative research analyses (Creswell, 1998). First, the researchers used extensive observations by examining chat room conversations in ten different chat room settings. Participants included 534 individuals whose interactions were observed during ten separate, 30-minute intervals. Second, triangulation was established by observing multiple chat room conversations, profiling 370 of the participants, and by comparing transcripts of interactions to relevant literature. Third, because exact duplicates of conversations were obtained, elaborate descriptions of interactions were available to analyze. Fourth, following the initial data analysis and determination of themes, we reanalyzed all data to arrive at consensus of themes. This was done in the spirit of interrater reliability for qualitative research (Creswell, 1998). Fifth, after analyzing ten chat room conversations, periodic reviews of ten other chat rooms were observed to verify whether data in the present study represented typical online conversations.

Chat room participants may have intended that their conversations be short-lived interactions, rather than viewed as permanent text. According to DiMarco and DiMarco (2002), this dilemma needs to be considered, but should not deter researchers from conducting this type of research. In this study, printing the observation transcripts allowed the researchers to analyze the exact occurrence of the utterances and establish reliability of qualitative data.

Results

Six themes emerged from analyzing 2526 utterances [descriptive statements] from conversational interactions among 534 male and female participants. Themes included (a) using abbreviations and acronyms, (b) requesting/providing personal information, (c) requesting/providing pictures, (d) requesting/accepting private chats, (e) using profanity/vulgarity or sexual comments, and (f) using figurative language or sarcasm. Table 1 displays the highest percentages of the themes by highest percentages of utterances. Respectively, these included using abbreviations and acronyms (65.0%), followed by requesting/providing personal information (43.3%), requesting/providing pictures (19.7%), requesting/accepting private chats (16.0%), using profanity/vulgarity or sexual comments (12.7%), and using figurative language and/or sarcasm (7.6%). To further clarify the theme of profanity/vulgarity or sexual comments, the number of sexual references was calculated and found to represent 70.5% of that theme. Though not considered as a theme, another category of frequently occurring utterances

(39.7%) included comments containing greetings and other miscellaneous information. Greetings were found to represent 19.8% of the total utterances in the category labeled “other.” Note from Table 1 that the total number and percent of descriptive statements in each theme and category labeled “other” does not equal the total number of utterances [2526] or 100%. Some utterances contained meanings that represented more than one theme. For example, even though the total number of utterances calculated in chat rooms was 2526, the sum of descriptive statements and multiple codes for the six themes and one category of “other” was 5152.

Examples of the utterances [descriptive statements] are provided to illustrate information contained within each theme. They are presented in this section as written by chat room participants.

Using Abbreviations and Acronyms

Participants frequently conveyed comments that included abbreviations and acronyms. For example, one chat room member wrote, “a/s/lpic pink toes” [age, sex, location and do you have pictures]. “Pink toes” represented a screen name. Many others wrote, “lol” [laugh out loud], “j/k” [just kidding], or “brb” [be right back]. Frequently, participants [members] indicated personal information, such as “im not bi” [I am not bisexual], or “17/m/il/pics” that referred to their age, sex, location of where they lived, and whether pictures of them were available. This information was commonly conveyed through the acronym “a/s/l.” Many participants assumed chat members were aware of the rule that “a/s/l” meant their age, sex, and where they lived and preceded their comments by the acronym. For example, one male indicated, “19/m/here im me” to represent that he was a 19 year old requesting someone to instant message him. These instant messages were frequently conveyed in order to talk with individuals in a “private chatroom,” where information was more confidential and not available for all members to read.

Requesting/Providing Personal Information

Participants frequently requested or provided personal information to other members of the chat room. Though requests involved comments about their interests, hobbies, and feelings, other utterances contained personal information. One member wrote, “asl every1” [age, sex, and location of all those participating in the room], to request personal information. Another wrote “17/m/fl” indicating his age (17), sex (male), and location (Florida). Other members expanded on basic personal information and provided more than just their age, sex, and location. For example, one chat room user wrote “15.f.ny blonde hair blue eyes 5’5 114 lbs cheerleader if u wanna talk im me

☺.” Some requests for personal information were sexual in nature. For example, one chat room user typed, “who in here loves sex?”

Requesting/Providing Pictures

Twenty percent of the total chat room utterances contained information concerning pictures. Frequently, interactions indicated chat room members wanted to trade photos. For example, individuals wrote, “kellie wanna trade?”, “any 1 tradin?”, “hi all, trading webcam pics of fems and selfs of me 30 m Tx”, and “17-m-st.louis-pix hit 314 to trade.” Others included requests with sexual connotations such as, “17/m/nudepic whats up ladies im me.”

Requesting/Accepting Private Chats

Approximately 15% of the conversations occurring in the chat rooms were further expanded in private chat rooms. Frequently, participants conveyed messages such as, “16/f/va if any guyz want to chat IM me,” “17 M Mass ne girl wanna chat im me or press 777,” or “IM me.” Alternatively, others appeared to convey that the private chat would contain more sexual information. Commonly, these utterances were represented by information such as, “any horny girls in here wanna chat? Press 23 or IM me.” Another member wrote, “any fine ladies in southern california want to hook up for what ever u want im me now.”

Using Profanity/Vulgarity or Sexual Comments

Utterances involved severe profanity and vulgar comments that were calculated and analyzed, but were not used to illustrate examples within the theme due to the offensive nature of the language. It was common to also observe less offensive interactions such as, “well get off your lazy ass,” “juicy girl u got any thong or nude pix,” “18m, girls into phone press 555,” or “trading oral sex pics if interested im me thanks.” However, as previously mentioned, it was not unusual to observe very alarming and provocative language in comments containing a high degree of vulgarity.

Using Figurative Language or Sarcasm

Eight percent of the interactions coded within this theme tended to contain examples of figurative language. Some commonly occurring utterances with abstract language included, “any hot chicks that’s 18-20,” “f19 trade hot pics,” “its cool,” or “holla at ya gurl.” Other statements such as, “oh that stinks,” “aiint n0c0dy sweatn u f0ol!” or “well im out like a fat gurl in dodge ball..Peace!!” also were conveyed and interspersed within conversations.

Category Coded as "Other" Types of Information

Though not considered one of the six themes, another category contained utterances that were grouped and labeled as "other." These comments represented 1004 of 2526 (39.7%) of the total utterances analyzed. They included comments or responses such as, "yes," "no," or "ok." Words such as "hahah" representing laughter were contained in this group. Additionally, greetings such as "hello," "hi room," or "hey everone" were coded within this category. These types of comments often appeared throughout interactions. Overall, utterances that did not involve requesting, providing, or accepting personal information, but rather contained miscellaneous comments were considered in this category.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore the meanings of chat room conversations through observations of teenagers using the Internet. Information from the six themes containing 2562 utterances from 534 chat room participants are discussed. This discussion section is presented in four parts. First, we present an example of a chat room interaction and raise questions about the codes and language used in these online settings. Information from the themes illustrates how chat rooms differ from face-to-face conversations. Falsification of information is discussed as it adds to the challenges that particularly face youth with language and learning problems. Second, problems found among teens with language and learning disorders are related to examples from chat room conversations. Themes characterizing abbreviations and acronyms, requesting and providing personal information and pictures, accepting private chats, using sexual comments and examples of figurative language are included. Third, the findings beg the question of whether teens with language and learning problems even interact in chat rooms. To address this concern, prevalence data are presented on chat room use by female incarcerated teens who have been found to have a high incidence of language and learning problems. Fourth, suggestions are offered to educators.

Category Coded as "Other" Types of Information

Consider the following typical chat room conversation:

- ✓ **Hotguy12:** "wassup room a/s/l"
- ✓ **Kellie145:** "14/f/ma"
- ✓ **Hotguy12:** "ne gurls wanna chat with a hot 16-m-oh press 69 or im me"

- ✓ **Sassy47:** "69"
- ✓ **Ktgurl:** "18/f/va/pics"
- ✓ **Dan34:** "lol"
- ✓ **Dan34:** "Who wants my pic im me or press 1212"
- ✓ **Hotguy12:** "send me your pics Ktgurl"
- ✓ **Wildcat2:** "1212"
- ✓ **Citrus33:** "ne horny girls wanna chat im me"

These interactions illustrate how the six themes are represented in typical chat room conversations. Teens with language and learning problems engaging in these conversations might not understand the codes and language needed to "safely" communicate.

Observational findings from conversations in ten chat rooms suggest that these types of communications take on a much different form than talking with a person face-to-face. They support the findings of other researchers who have described conversations in chat rooms (Marriott, 1998). A chat room user must become familiar with the special language used in a chat room, otherwise users will have difficulty interpreting the meaning of chat room interactions. They must understand how to communicate using a type of shorthand that includes abbreviations (e.g., CU for "see you") and acronyms (e.g., LOL for "laugh out loud," BRB for "be right back," SETE for "smiling ear to ear," BTW for "by the way"). Individuals who are not familiar with the specific linguistic codes used in chat rooms find it difficult and almost impossible to understand and participate in a chat room conversation.

Teenagers with language and learning problems may not be aware that the codes and language used in these settings may be difficult to understand, and that individuals can falsify information. For example, it is important that vulnerable teens are aware that chat rooms provide an opportunity for an individual to possibly fabricate everything including his or her age, name, looks, occupation, race, gender, sexual orientation, personal history, and personality. Though this can be disadvantageous for individuals who are honest and who may be seeking meaningful interactions and relationships, it may be considered as an advantage for those who intend to lure and mislead vulnerable individuals into dangerous situations. Interactions without physical contact and devoid of verbal and nonverbal cues lack important communication information for partners. The absence of this information makes it difficult to know if the message is truthful, sincere, relevant, and accurate. However, it is the absence of these cues that allows individuals to be who they want to be, falsify information, and potentially "hide" as a dangerous predator to meet, manipulate, and sometimes seduce their victims

(Douglas & Singular, 2003). Falsification of information, complicated codes, messages asking for personal information, frequent use of profanity and sexual comments, and higher level figurative language occurring at a fast pace may be particularly troublesome for vulnerable youth with language and learning problems who engage in online chats.

Problems Found Among Teens With Language and Learning Disabilities and Related Examples From Observing Chat Room Conversations

A number of researchers (DeKemel, 2003; Ehren & Lenz, 1989; Larson & McKinley, 2003; Nippold, 2000) have pointed out the types of problems that students with language disorders have in understanding semantics and meanings of messages. The problems described by researchers in understanding new vocabulary, and abstract, or figurative language resemble the challenges that may confront individuals engaging in teen chat room conversations. Teenagers with language and learning problems who interact in these settings are particularly vulnerable to understanding the high percent of chat room comments containing abbreviations and novel language such as “addie” for address, or “nick” for nickname, and “TOY” for thinking of you. Possibly, these “at-risk learners” are not aware of implications of providing personal information or pictures when engaging in chats. Moreover, it is questionable if vulnerable teens understand the implications of responding to requests in public or private chat rooms that involve sexual behaviors. For example, one participant comments, “daddy is home alone. Where are my pretty little girls?” Immediately following this utterance is another chat room member who comments, “hi all dad 38 here daughters are 15 and 10.” A teen with a language disorder might have trouble distinguishing between two very different types of “dads.” “Daddy” could be a sexual connotation and the “pretty little girls” are assumed to be his sexual partners. The second utterance appears to be a genuine father monitoring his children’s computer use.

Though conversations involving figurative language occurred less often (191/2526; 7.6%) than utterances about personal information or providing a picture, the multiple meanings of words could be troublesome for those with language and learning problems. It is questionable if these teens would understand the meaning of, “well Im out like a fat gurl in dodge ball..Peace.”

Prevalence Data on Incarcerated Teenage Girls Interacting in Chat Rooms

Chat room use is steadily increasing and a growing concern of law enforcement officials (Ellison, 2001; Madhani, 2003; Marriott, 1998). In an

attempt to understand the opinions of teenagers' about their interactions in chat rooms, we obtained data from female incarcerated teens. In part, this population was sampled because they represent at-risk youth and have been found to exhibit a high incidence of language problems (Sanger, Creswell, Dworak, & Schultz, 2000; Sanger, Moore-Brown, Magnuson, & Svoboda, 2001). However, we had no specific knowledge of the language and/or learning problems of the teens sampled. A survey of 62 female teenagers who resided in a correctional facility was conducted on their use of the Internet to communicate in chat rooms (Sanger, Long, Ritzman, Stofer, & Davis, 2004). Survey findings revealed 54 of 62 girls (87.1%) with a mean age of 16.72 years communicated in chat rooms. The vast majority used a computer in their home as well as at their friend's house ($n = 47$), with four others using their school or library computers. Forty-seven of the 54 using chat rooms (87%) revealed that they spent an average of 9.85 hours per week interacting. Thirty-eight of the 54 girls using chat rooms (70.4%) had been asked to be involved in sexual experiences. Most participants (44 of 54; 81.5%) acknowledged they were aware of the dangers of using chat rooms and offered suggestions for other teens. Despite their helpful suggestions to teens in the general population, the adjudicated girls revealed using chat rooms could be "fun!"

Suggestions for Educators to Consider: Implications for Female Adolescents

Observations of conversations of chat room interactions suggest that educators need to be sensitive to yet another challenge as they address the needs of female adolescents, but particularly for those who are more likely to not understand chat room conversations. It is possible that even teens without language and learning problems may be misled by conversations appearing in these settings. Study findings support that chat room interactions differ from face-to-face conversations, and that falsification of information may occur. The high percent of information involving abbreviations and acronyms, figurative language with multiple meanings, and messages containing sexual connotations adds to the ambiguity of information presented in these settings. Without question, the advantages of the Internet are far greater than the disadvantages. However, cybercrime is increasing and many teens are engaging in chat room conversations. Suggestions for educators addressing the needs of female adolescents include:

- ✓ Discuss with students and each other that typical communication involves both verbal and nonverbal cues to provide the conversational partners valuable information on the truth of the

information. Information is limited about the communication partner in chat room conversations because of the absence of nonverbal signals such as facial expression, eye contact, proximity, and other body language. The lack of verbal cues including stress, intonation, pausing, and voice quality further limit awareness of the true identity of the speaker and listener.

- ✓ Warn teens that the lack of nonverbal and verbal clues helps chat room members to distort communications and hide their true identity.
- ✓ Provide opportunities to inform teenagers that the interactions in chat rooms may be different than in face-to-face interactions.
- ✓ Familiarize teens interacting in the chat rooms with the various types of chat rooms, the language used, and to be aware that some involve more profanity and topics with sexual connotations. Findings from chat room conversations revealed that 13% ($n = 322/2526$) of the utterances analyzed contained profanity, vulgarity, and sexual comments. In chat rooms, individuals can say anything they want to with minimal consequences. For example, in the present study, many utterances analyzed were very vulgar and contained language that could not be reported. Teens need to realize that although only a few interactions will result in fatal outcomes, such as the one involving John Robinson, it is important to know that cybercrime incidents are steadily increasing. They need to remember that, according to teens who were surveyed in a correctional facility, confronting danger in chat rooms is a real concern.
- ✓ Remind teens that it is important to be careful about how much personal information is given out in chat conversations. For example, in this study 43.3% ($n = 1095/2526$) of the utterances involved requesting or providing personal information while 19.7% ($n = 497/2526$) included asking or providing personal pictures. In a related study, 22% of teenagers online used instant messages and shared their e-mail password with a friend (Lenhart et al., 2001). To avoid potentially dangerous encounters, teens should consider not providing personal information such as passwords, telephone numbers, addresses, places to meet, and credit card or other financial information.
- ✓ Emphasize that educational leaders must become familiar with chat room conversations. Increasingly, statistics reveal that individuals are communicating through chat rooms (Marriott, 1998). The researchers in the present study admit that they were initially somewhat unaware of the nature of the language patterns used in

these settings. Hence, it is possible that, in general, educators are not totally aware of the implications of these interactions. Stress that understanding the ease at which chat rooms can be accessed, the types of language, codes, ambiguous messages, and the potential dangers of these online conversations so that all school staff be sensitive to warning youth about these settings.

- ✓ Raise the awareness among faculty, staff, counselors, computer specialists, librarians, parents and students, etc., could be accomplished through the use of newsletters, bulletins, and school meetings.
- ✓ Hold discussions at staff meetings to allow opportunities to review safety issues concerning chat rooms. Staff development opportunities might include discussing the prevalence of children and youth who engage in these conversations, describing cases in which predators use chat rooms to prey on children and youth, reviewing policies pertaining to computer use, and discussing potential collaborations with the media to provide messages related to safety.
- ✓ Emphasize how collaborations with community agencies could be established to improve the safety programming for youth who may be participating in chat room conversations. By becoming aware of the potential dangers involved in chat room interactions, school staff can collaborate and implement Internet safety policies addressing safe use of school computers among students. Additionally, these policies can encourage safe interactions at home. Though it is recognized that many schools have safety features on their computers to prevent students from selected types of information, this is not the case for Internet usage in homes.
- ✓ Consider discussing potential dangers in chat room interactions with parents during conferences, in-service presentations, or PTA meetings.

Millions of individuals use the Internet to communicate in chat rooms about a variety of topics such as sports or the stock market, but messages may not contain the same types of information as described in this study. Though the accessibility of computers has provided many advantages to individuals, teens' use of the Internet and chat rooms after school or when parents are not home remains a concern particularly if teens are seeking out sexually oriented materials. Cybercrime incidents are increasing and the potential danger from interactions with predators continues to be yet another growing concern of parents and educators. Perhaps predators recognize vulnerable individuals and can spot those they can take advantage of and mislead. If

educators, are aware of vulnerable adolescents [or any adolescents] engaging in chat room interactions on a frequent basis, they need to provide the youth with suggestions about the dangers of chat room interactions. This type of information may help adolescents to avoid dangerous interactions during online conversations.

Notes

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Advice From the Field in Educational Leadership for Female Principals

Carole Funk
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The number of female school principals in the United States continues to grow each year, and many of these women are evolving into outstanding educational leaders. Cultural and gender barriers, however, continue to limit their leadership effectiveness despite their overall achievements. Many of these women have not maximized their leadership effectiveness despite their overall achievements. Many of these women have not maximized their leadership effectiveness because they work in cultures that are not conducive to their transformational leadership styles. In addressing these issues, the authors of this article have provided a research synthesis regarding the female principalship in order to provide “advice from the field” for practicing principals that is designed to enhance their overall leadership effectiveness.

Introduction

“Over the last 30 years, the school principal has been identified as a key player in school improvement and change” (Smulyan, 2000, p. 10). During these years, the number of women who hold positions as school principals has increased significantly although research studies regarding women who serve as school leaders have yet to reveal a comprehensive picture of these administrators. The types of literature to date relating to women in school leadership positions “rarely address the influence of gender (or race or class) on an administrator’s actions, interactions, tasks, roles, or skills” (p. 13), and existing research concerning female principals has also changed over time. In the evolution of the female principalship, researchers looked first at an under-representation of women in the field of administration, then examined differences between styles of male and female management, and more recently explored a set of studies regarding organizational and social

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structures that perpetuate gender imbalances and other problems regarding diversity. These social structures often forced women to be more like their male counterparts, causing them to change their styles of leadership to a more masculine model. Moreover, Campbell (1993) found that these “socializations into male patterns of leadership come at a cost to the public schools as well as the individual” (p. 64) and delimit the effectiveness of females in the principalship.

Krumm and Gates (2000) conducted a descriptive analysis to determine gender differences and leadership styles between female and male principals. The result of these findings revealed that the majority of male and female principals were found to “possess high-task behavior and high relationship behavior as their primary leadership styles,” (p. 20). In addition, female school principals selected more appropriate leadership behaviors as representative of their behaviors than did male principals. The major conclusion of this study was that female administrators appear to be superior to male principals in leadership adaptability. As indicated by Krumm and Gates (2000), female principals appear to possess superiority in leadership adaptability, thereby allowing them to use their transformational leadership styles to prioritize relationship with all stakeholders. Servais (2003) also emphasized the power of female principals, noting that these women “are in a position to impact school reform, school culture, and school partnerships” (p. 401). Females can also attend to meaningful change even in complex organizations.

Because female principals are still concerned with many problems related to their gender, women aspiring to the principalship and those who now serve as principals should benefit from the wisdom of researchers in the field by becoming more successful in their roles as educational leaders. This study addressed problem areas in the principalship for women and provide them with strategies for success that provides critical insights into the do’s and don’ts for these school leaders.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assist aspiring and in-service female principals to become more successful in their roles by providing a research base and a guiding framework for women regarding success in the principalship. Questions that relate to the overall purpose are presented below.

1. What are the most effective practices for female principals?
2. How do female principals overcome barriers to their success?
3. How can female principals become more effective in the political realm?
4. What are the major challenges for female principals?
5. How can female principals best utilize their "female advantage?"
6. How do female principals retain and use their distinctive voices?
7. How can female principals seek balance in their personal and professional lives?
8. How should female principals gain positive power and influence in their school districts?
9. What factors lead to future success for female principals?

This study involved a literature review regarding best practices for female principals. The review of problems and challenges for female principals was designed to provide assistance to aspiring and in-service administrators that will help them be more successful in their essential roles and responsibilities.

Advice From the Field

Effective Practices for Female Principals

Slick and Gupton (1993) reported that 300 female administrators were subjects in their research regarding women in school administration, and 75% of these administrators were principals. In this study, women in educational leadership positions gave their best advice, both reflective and specific, to assist aspiring and in-service female leaders. Their suggestions for success as administrators included: (a) being prepared with the necessary degrees and credentials; (b) becoming psychologically ready and politically aware; (c) working hard to be highly qualified; (d) being persistent, strong, firm, and fair; (e) learning from failure in order to be more successful; (f) having good people skills, including listening and showing genuine interest in the concerns of others; (g) being professional at all times; (h) developing and maintaining strong support systems; (i) believing in yourself; (j)

upholding and protecting your integrity at all times; and (k) maintaining personal ethics and values. These authors also provided “an up-to-date analysis of the evolution of issues underlying women’s inequitable representation in executive positions” (p. xiv) in the profession of educational leadership. In addition, a two-phase narrative study provided information that revealed how these women achieved their career successes. In their book, Gupton and Slick (1996) also described the need for a better support system for females in leadership positions and the quality of their educational preparation, their retention issues, making the “ultimate shift from access to equity” (p. xi).

Mullen and Patrick (2000) shared leadership practices in inner city schools and concluded that sharing the “human touch” was one of the most effective strategies for success for female school principals when confronted by complex problems that exist in at-risk environments. The strategies that one principal used to achieve success as a caring leader included her role as a change agent on behalf of children. Serving as a catalyst for change by building a shared vision allowed this school leader to develop an outreach program to connect her to the school and the neighborhood in the projects. Her motto was “hanging tough, being loving” (p. 37) as she worked to change the lives of her students in significant ways. The strategies that made her successful in her efforts on behalf of children involved increasing opportunities for children to be successful, empowering teachers, and changing the climate of the school. The specific strategies included: (a) applying a philosophy of management and discipline that values discipline with dignity (p. 38), (b) developing and utilizing a core group of teachers who care about children—the principal’s main support system, (c) precipitating changes in staff to ensure that the children had better teachers, (d) creating rituals of relationship and visibility, (e) applying Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs to aid with social acceptance and self-actualization, (f) designing educational and remedial programs new to the school, and (g) changing the traditional academic year to year-round schooling. The principal’s efforts in this program resulted in positive changes in all the areas in her plan.

Another successful principal noted the lessons that she learned as the first female administrator in a rough campus (Wilmore, 1998). School leadership was a stressful career for this young woman who learned that female principals must find ways to combine stress management and relationship-building in order to survive physically and emotionally. This undaunted principal also stressed the importance of mentoring connections with a trusted confidant by showing her the way, teaching her the unwritten

rules of the school community, and looking out for the well-being of the young woman she was mentoring.

Through her experiences at this school, the principal discovered that successful women should always be watching for new female administrators to bring through the ranks to provide the leaders of tomorrow, and she practiced what she preached. In addition, she suggested that successful women take care to prioritize their time in order to save for family and friends and to seek a daily time to meditate. Another strategy to reduce stress included exercising daily and pounding her frustrations out on her treadmill. She also noted the importance of a last piece of advice—find a hobby you really like and provide a time in every day to refocus and reflect on other important areas in your life. In conclusion, Wilmore (1998) noted that school principals must bloom where they are planted but should also seek ways to stretch out in the sunlight, walk with confidence, and realize their own personal visions. Through the themes identified above, those in female principalships as well as aspiring principals must understand the primary task in their leadership roles: to ensure that *all* children can and will learn in their schools.

Barriers for Female Principals

According to Helterbran and Rieg (2004), women who become school principals continue to experience many barriers to their success. The following barriers synthesized from the work of these researchers regarding female principals reveal the roadblocks that they will have to contend with in their roles as school leaders.

- Lack of encouragement from other administrators to assume leadership roles.
- Shortage of female administrators to serve as role models and as mentors.
- Beliefs that female principals must be better qualified than male candidates.
- Lack of assurance that female principals can handle discipline problems, especially regarding older, male students.
- Gender issues related to male resentment regarding working with or for women in administration.
- Relocation issues suggesting that women are reluctant to move.
- Difficulty in balancing home and family responsibilities.

- Differences in male and female leadership styles.
- Lack of desire for power by female principals.

Overall, these authors indicated that female school principals need strong support and encouragement from both males and females in educational administration to overcome barriers that many women continue to face in their roles as school leaders. Standards for males and females should be equal, and women should not be expected to be better qualified than males to be hired as a principal. In overcoming barriers, female aspirants to the principalship must also utilize their humanities skills in student discipline. Other areas to address in removing barriers to a principalship should include: create a sound career plan, be ethical, create relationships with stakeholders, be true to your word, lead with collaboration, and continue to learn the historical context regarding women in educational administration.

Grogan (2000) addressed other problem areas regarding women in the principalship, noting difficulties faced in the real world of schooling. The most important issue female principals have to address is how to maintain the difficult balance between their own personal backgrounds and the demands of stakeholders who have different role expectations for a female principal. In addition, she indicated that female principals must also address institutional barriers that are “both inside and outside of the boundaries of historically and socially defined norms” (p. 201). Other barriers encountered by women in the principalship include negotiations with superintendents, shifting roles and responsibilities, difficult leadership processes, overwhelming demands, and negative male rituals within school cultures. In addition, time demands are heavy, changing contexts emerge, and tensions within the system must be negotiated. Increasing demands are also placed on the time and energy of a principal who must oversee ever-shifting school communities and personnel and understand the contexts within which female principals can be successful. Other barriers for principals include navigating new conceptual networks in which they must operate within district and school hierarchies, understanding the dynamics of school leadership, assessing their own backgrounds and training correctly, and revisiting their beliefs, values, and interaction styles in order to understand their own visions of leadership.

According to Grogan (2000), the predominant gender issue for female principals included institutional and individual social structures that have a powerful impact on both their private lives and their work. Another problem for female principals occurs when they try to interact positively with male administrators but are rejected by their male peers. Other balancing acts for these female school leaders included (a) dealing with unplanned career

trajectories; (b) having problems with age (too old or too young); (c) trying to resolve work conflicts; (d) selecting approaches to leadership, family, and work contexts; (e) revealing mixed expectations of parents and teachers; (f) being an insider and an outsider in the educational system; (g) resisting changes in the hierarchical structures; and (h) balancing continuity and school reform. In conclusion, Grogan found that female principals must be able to adapt and work toward systemic change in order to be successful in their positions.

Political Savvy for Female Principals

In their research, Hill and Ragland (1995) found that many women in educational administration do not exhibit the political savvy necessary to be successful in advancing through the ranks to higher positions. According to these authors, male administrators cut their political deals on the golf course and use their strong networks through other male activities, leaving female administrators out of the decision-making loop. In a similar vein, Funk (1998) addressed the problems that female principals face in their roles and emphasized the need for women in school leadership roles to play the games “that mama taught you not to play . . . but doing so by establishing your own rules and limits based upon your principles” (p. 11). This author also concluded that women who know how to play the game in an *ethical context* can survive political intrigues, school district cultures, the infamous grapevine, bad or weak bosses, and knowing how to play power games. In order to play these games well, Funk noted that female principals must learn to win political games by using the following female-friendly strategies.

- Deal with politics on your own terms.
- Have something in common with the male administrators.
- Never say anything negative about your boss, superintendent, or your district.
- Be wary of “talking shop” with others—be careful or *what* you say every moment.
- Identify and get to know the movers and shakers in your district so you can get things done quickly and effectively.
- Control your own behavior at all times and follow the chain of command.
- Get help when you have a problem that you can’t solve.
- Take the job that the superintendent wants you to do even if *you* don’t want it.
- Build your own powerbase within your district and at state and local levels.
- Don’t expect organizations to be fair—they are amoral!
- Build your own power base by building your reputation as a leader.

- Learn from your mistakes through introspection and determine new strategies that work.
- “Never forget kids and their best interests are the bottom line in everything you do as an administrator—don’t be diverted from the principle” (p. 17-18).

Following these political rules helps female administrators to be more politically savvy in the difficult world of educational administration (Funk, 1998). Aspiring and practicing female school administrators must realize that “playing the game” is necessary if you wish to be successful as a school principal and that the world of school politics is a minefield that can be successfully traversed. Stepping stones to success in the political arena include: having a clear purpose—to ensure that all children learn, to gain a realistic understanding of the political and cultural aspects of school organizations, to develop a sense of power, and to believe that you have an entitlement to do things your way as a leader.

Challenges for Female Principals

In a qualitative study, Eckman (2003) found that women who are school principals continue to face conflicts and challenges regarding their careers, particularly problems related to gender in their schools. One of the main problems that emerged in her study of female principals revealed that the image of a principal for many people remains a “male image,” thereby continuing problems that women in principalships encounter who do not *see* a female in the role of the school principal. She also noted that critical factors in the success of these women included support from other female and male leaders who mentored them. The major themes found in the qualitative research study were: personal attributes, family support, mentors and mentoring, encouragement from university professors and leadership training programs, networks and support for women principals, role conflict and role balance, the image of the high school principalship, and leadership styles.

Challenges for females in principalships are described in the words of the women in this study regarding their lives as school leaders. “I try and lead by being a leader with instruction and curriculum . . . many of the males that I work with . . . were hired and their roles had been very different—they were managers” (Eckman, 2003, p. 196). Another principal stated that “she relied ‘more on relationships than the men I’ve worked for. I spend a lot more time listening . . . I think that this is a female characteristic. I use a lot more feeling words. . . .’” (p. 197).

Other principals indicated that “women are much less concerned about power and . . . have less of that kind of ego connected to it” than males do (p. 193). Recognizing the support from family members was also reported by one principal who stated, “I couldn’t have done it all alone” (p. 189). In a similar vein, the support needed from others was voiced by a principal who said, “I go to work all the time and anytime, and if I had a husband who didn’t understand . . . it never could have happened” (p. 189). Help from a mentor provided a boost to her mentee by telling her, “You stick to your guns. You’re doing the right thing. And you’re going to make it” (p. 199). In contrast, some female principals revealed that they were making a difference in the eyes of young women. As one woman stated, “I’m very proud of being a high school principal. I’m very aware when I walk down the halls of being a role model for girls” (Eckman, 2003, p. 191).

Problems with “good old boys” networks, role conflicts, and role balance that were revealed by the women in this study “acknowledged that the ‘good old boys’ network was alive and well” (Eckman, 2003, p. 192). These principals also noted that they “felt that their concerns were different from those of the male administrators in terms of needing people to talk to their mutual concerns” (p. 192). With regard to her role conflicts, another principal noted that “the number one issue is time commitment . . . you’re the organizational person” . . . and “it’s stressful!” (p. 193). Finding a balance between work and home was an issue with a different principal, who stated, “I work 70 hours every week . . . it’s a minimum of a 12-hour day, and it’s very often 15 hours and another 8 hours on the weekends” (p. 193). The workload for one principal caused stress and she noted that

my health has not been as good as I want it to be. I’ve gained weight in the three years that I’ve had this position . . . If I had to do this for a long, long time, I think that it would have a detrimental effect on my health. (p. 193)

Gender differences between male and female principals led another principal to note that “gender was affecting my career path” (p. 194). Another agreed, indicating that “the people who hire high school principals ‘don’t see a woman as somebody who manages the building and deals with discipline . . . they feel that men are better at that” (p. 195). Overall, the voices of these female high school principals revealed the challenges in their roles, especially problems, and stresses that they face in their positions as school leaders. In their reflections regarding their personal challenges, they indicated a need for feedback, balance, support, mentoring, networking, role models, self-confidence, and their own distinct leadership styles.

The Female Advantage for Principals

Funk (1993) noted specific advantages for female school leaders; 74% of the respondents in the study were school principals. When asked to respond to the advantages that school leaders had because they were female, these women indicated that their gender roles made them more effective and affective leaders. Specific characteristics noted by these women in administration were: being nurturing, giving, adaptive, collaborative, intuitive, flexible, peace-making, empathic, able to compromise, sensitive, humanistic, responsive to others' needs, strong communicators, active listeners, and collaborative. The conclusions regarding the advantages that women have because of their gender indicated the following:

- The experiences of women in their roles as girls, mothers, daughters, and sisters had a significant impact on their leadership behavior.
- The major strengths that women brought to their leadership roles were empathy, sensitivity, caring, nurturing, supporting, compassion, and patience.
- Female school leaders viewed assertiveness, confidence, high self-esteem, strength, and competence as the most important characteristics of effective women in school leadership roles.
- Motivational styles of female school leaders reflected their strong beliefs in the importance of praise, rewards, and modeling, within a school culture that values professional growth, input, and teamwork.

Overall the advantages indicate that female school leaders “see leadership as a shared process in which all work together toward synergy and view the work-team of the school as a family, treating people with respect, not telling them what needs to be done” (Funk, 1993, p. 41). They also acknowledged the importance of caring as well as competency and brought their “real selves” and their unique strengths to school administration.

Voice and the Female Principal

Villani (1999) described women in the principalship as leaders who take care of the needs of others but are also expected to put their own needs last and silence their voices. Because of this phenomenon, “women often swallow their voices and try to keep the peace” in their multi-faceted roles (p. 26).

Quotations that represent the voices of women principals are powerful tools that bring forth a richness that generates affective emotions, thereby personalizing the issues, concerns, and successes regarding female principals. The following quotations are presented in order to hear the voices of female principals in their own words.

One female school principal felt a need to persevere "in the face of the animosity I experienced, but I was determined not to leave without having had a fair chance to succeed at what I was trying to do." (Villani, 1999, p. 26)

. . . the principal is like the pilot of the B-29 bomber in the South Pacific . . . the job alternates between the routine and boredom of a long flight—and stark terror. (Campbell, 1993, p. 61)

One time, in search of the principal, a visitor came to the front office. First he looked at the office clerk and asked if he was the principal. When the clerk, a man my age indicated that he was not, the visitor turned to the secretary. Upon learning that she, a woman older than I, was not the principal, the person at last looked at me. He asked, "Where is the principal?" (Villani, 1999, p. 5)

Women administrators are more willing to listen, not "shoot from the hip" as men do—but be aware—when we are forced to shoot, we usually shoot to kill. (Funk, 1993, p. 35)

I'd make two pages of things I needed to do. Then, be totally frustrated because of the interruptions . . . I didn't get anything done. (Campbell, 1993, p. 61)

When I went to the interview for this job, you know, Dr. (male superintendent) said why would you ever think I'd put a woman there . . . it's a big school, you need to start at a small one. (Campbell, 1993, p. 63)

For many, men remain the leaders and women the caretakers in schools. (Villani, 1999, p. 27)

Because women have become such a vital part of the administrative team, I think the rules have changed? (Funk, 1995, p. 64)

There are three reasons why she shouldn't be principal. First, she's a first-grade teacher and this is a school for fifth and sixth graders; second, she's 5 foot 4 and weighs 117 pounds; and third, she's a girl! (Villani, 1999, p. 9)

He walked over to the telephone that had once been his and dialed the other principal. "Hello, Mike, this is Sam. I'm in the new little girl's office." (Vallani, 1999, p. 10)

"I simply couldn't comprehend that people . . . would be so purposefully hurtful. They must really hate me to do such a thing," was what kept coming to mind. I tried to tell myself that I was not in Junior High and that I needed to rise above their pettiness and remember why it was happening. Yet I felt so distinctly isolated and rejected that this was hard to remember. My mind tried to reassure me, but I still felt the pain of their exclusion. (Vallani, 1999, p. 19)

Women are expected to attend to others' needs, and in fact are sometimes criticized when they put their own needs or ideas first. As a result, women often swallow their voices and try to keep the peace. Although I struggled to be perceived as a leader who spoke up, my uncertainty was probably evident. I had temporarily lost my voice. (Vallani, 1999, p. 26)

Putting my head in the sand wasn't going to make their confusion go away. By not directly confronting the issue, I missed an important opportunity. I didn't model strength or courage. (Vallani, 1999, p. 26)

Becoming an administrator opened me to a level of scrutiny that was daunting. It seemed that everything I did was being observed and analyzed. It became clear that I would never please everyone with anything that I did. This seems obvious, yet because I was on the receiving end of the disapproval, it was hard for me to take the criticisms in stride. I needed to remember that I couldn't please all of the people all of the time, although the teachers clearly expected me to please each of them. (Villani, 1999, p. 39)

Carr (1995) revealed the importance of communication skills to female principals as a "critical element in the exercise of influence" (p. 49). Carr noted that male dominance is "built into the very structure of society, including language and speech" (p. 49), signaling the importance of communication styles in the principal's world. She found that the female subjects in her study admitted to having influence but not power because they saw these connotations as aggressive and pushy as related to power. The women agreed that they wanted to do the right thing rather than doing things right. They were also very effective when using micro-political strategies that allowed them to have mutual exchanges with others as well as utilizing mutual decision-making and collegiality in improving schools. Carr revealed a view of female principals who are not subordinate "but are strong and influential principals whose practice reflects clearly the behaviors associated with effective school leaders" (p. 55).

Sacrifices and Successes

Krajewski, Matkin, Chance, & Galletti (1998) studied three female administrators who felt that "administration is one of the most rewarding parts of their lives even though sacrifices and tough decisions are regular, everyday occurrences" (p. 182). The principals summarized the following lessons learned from their experiences.

- Administration is one of the most rewarding segments of their lives in spite of the sacrifices and hard choices.

- It's always difficult to come home at a certain time of day because of problems that need immediate attention.
- The hours for a principal are long, the pace is rigorous, and the day is unpredictable. Nobody is concerned about what meetings you may have had the night before.
- My salary as a principal is calculated on how long I have worked in the system, not on my merits.
- A principal's life must be reassessed, new goals must be set, and any priorities must be adjusted.
- Being a principal has to be more than a job—it is a calling.

The three principals, who started at the ground floor and moved into higher and loftier roles, offered the following advice. Administration is one of the most rewarding segments of their lives in spite of the sacrifices and hard choices that occur everyday in their lives. These women said that keeping balance in their lives was the key to their successes. Time for these women was critically important and had been protected as the role demands increased. Females in the principalship must spend time deciding what is most important to them.

When giving advice to others, the principals noted the following important aspects that must be considered as a school principal.

- Balance your life if you want to be successful.
- Learn to use your time well because your role demands will increase.
- Don't ever sacrifice being professional, moral, and ethical.
- Always be optimistic and maintain a healthy sense of reality.
- Keep your sense of humor and maintain your perspective.
- Be a lifelong learner in order to grow both personally and professionally.
- Spend time deciding what's important to you.
- Make the hard choices on behalf of children.
- Be a lifelong learner in order to grow personally and professionally.

Learning from the sacrifices as well as the successes of female administrators provides real-life stories of women school principals. Passing the torch to those who practice these lessons can serve as a gift from those who blaze the trails in the role of school principal.

Summary and Conclusions

The number of female principals in the United States continues to grow each year, and these individuals are evolving into strong educational leaders. Further research regarding this role for women is essential. Barriers of all types still exist for women in educational administration. Additional research regarding female principals would help level the playing fields for females and males in educational leadership. As the aspiring women administrators enter their first principalships, they should be prepared through innovative, transformational preparation programs that target the unique needs of women who plan to institute humanistic school reform practices on behalf of the children they serve. Researchers must provide a stronger knowledge base regarding the differences in male and female leadership styles in order to individualize graduate school education for students of both genders. Providing school leaders with cutting-edge knowledge, tools, and visions will be necessary in a time when school funding is insufficient for the increasing number of students in the schools.

Conclusions

1. Although female school principals continue to face barriers that limit their success as school leaders, many women in principalships are providing strong leadership in their schools.
2. Female principals have distinct advantages in their roles as school executives because of their humanistic and collaborative leadership and they are changing the negative perceptions of female principals.
3. Female principals are successful, empowering leaders who serve as change agents, treat everyone with respect, care about children, provide a positive school culture, and make a difference in the lives of the children in their care.
4. The success of female principals can be enhanced through mentoring, building strong relationships with all school clienteles, taking care of their personal health issues, being confident, and learning from their mistakes.
5. Female principals must use their powerful individual and collective voices in order to make a difference in the lives of children.
6. Female principals have learned that leadership is very rewarding and they enjoy their roles as school leaders.

7. Effective communication with all stakeholders is a “must” for successful female principals.
8. Female principals must seek balance in their personal and professional lives through physical exercise, enjoying hobbies, and making time for family and fun in order to be renewed for the next crisis.
9. The latest picture of a female principal is an effective school leader who is strong and influential in her position as leader and who involves others in the important decisions within the school.
10. Female principals must learn to use their powerful “voices” to persuade others to support their schools and use their referent power to provide the best opportunities for the children they serve.
11. Female principals must develop stronger support systems at local, state, and national levels.
12. Female principals should create a personal vision for their roles as school leaders that correlate with their school-wide vision and that of the district.
13. Female principals should use politics effectively to obtain a power base within their school districts.
14. Female principals should be strong communicators and active listeners in order to build relationships with all stakeholders.
15. Female principals must understand and use referent power to be truly effective as school leaders.
16. Female leaders should honor, preserve, and protect their integrity and maintain their ethical character.
17. Female principals should create a career plan for their next steps into higher-level administration.
18. Female leaders should be more accepted as principals as more women move into the principalship, thereby erasing the “male image” from the minds of stakeholders.
19. Female principals bring their true selves and their unique strengths into the world of school leadership.

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Gender Differences in Leadership Style: A Literature Analysis

Mary Clisbee

This analysis of literature explores gender differences in leadership style. As greater numbers of women enter the ranks of leadership and more research is conducted, contradictory findings emerged. Using the qualitative software program NVivo version 1.2, 36 pieces of qualitative, quantitative, and popular culture literature were summarized, coded, and the coded information analyzed. The analysis revealed that (a) the characteristics of the rater have significant impact on the findings, (b) the research instrument and methodology used effect the findings, and (c) there are many varying and often contradictory explanations for gender differences in leadership.

Introduction

For more than 30 years, researchers have been studying gender differences in leadership style. As women have broken through the glass ceiling into top leadership positions there has been increased research interest in this area. Using qualitative research analysis techniques, I examined the research and writing on the topic of gender-based differences in leadership style.

This literature review and analysis revealed that the findings of presence or absence of gender-based differences in leadership style were influenced by (a) characteristics of the rater, (b) research instrument and methodology used, and (c) position of the leader within the management hierarchy.

The bulk of materials reviewed were drawn from studies and issues specific to educational settings. In addition, I included studies conducted in various work domains and the laboratory. Studies and issues peculiar to education leadership are isolated and discussed. Research specifically studying leadership style of educational leaders was limited, with a distinct narrowness for attention to the leadership style of women superintendents. Schmuck (1999) explained that since schools are gender-bound institutions, and since women experienced a different reality than men, "we need to understand women's experience; what has been written about men superintendents does not necessarily apply to women" (p. xi).

About the Author

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First, I will begin by describing the methodology used in this study. Second, the characteristics of the literature will be presented. Third, a discussion of the three major findings formed from the analysis of the coded information will follow. The paper will conclude with a summary and analysis of the interpretations.

Method

Computer based information searches were conducted in addition to a second-generation review of reference lists from articles and books found in the computer-based search. Keyword "leadership style" was paired with keywords "gender differences," "sex differences," and "female." These keywords were searched in the following databases: Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC: 1982–2002), Psychologic Abstracts (PsychInfo), and Ingenta. Searches using the same keywords were conducted in the following websites: <findarticles.com>, <google.com>, <amazon.com>, <bookfinder.com>, and <excite.com>. I also searched Barnes and Noble and Border Books for popular culture books. In total, the search produced 132 pieces of literature, out of which 36 were selected for use in this study.

Sample selection used the following criteria: (a) they were specifically related to gender differences in leadership style or contained sections strictly discussing this area, and (b) I was able to gain access to the work within 2 ½ months, since this was a time limited study. All forms of literature that fit these categories were included. The final sample consisted of 36 works of literature.

First, using the software program *Endnotes* 1, I developed a database of references from the literature search. I recorded all documents found, including those that I did not analyze in this study. Second, using the *NVivo* 2 software program for analysis of qualitative research and data, I created a project entitled *Gender-Based Differences in Leadership Style*. Third, from the *Endnotes* database, I created a bibliography and saved it as a word

document. Next, I converted the word document to *rich text format*, which allowed me to directly import it into the NVivo software program. Finally, I read and wrote a summary of each work. Three of the 36 works were available in digital format so, for those, rather than just summarizing; I converted them in their entirety to rich text format and imported the document into the NVivo program. The documents that I accessed from websites had to be saved in *text only* format initially to remove pictures and unreadable tables and figures, then converted to rich text format and imported into the NVivo program.

NVivo is organized around two databases: (a) documents, and (b) codes (or nodes) and the user may cross-reference information within the two databases. A special feature that was particularly valuable for this study was the *document link* feature that allows a user to set up a hyperlink from a place in one document to another document.

I then created a document link from the individual documents to the corresponding citation in the reference list. I also made reverse document links, from the reference list to the document. This facilitated easy movement back and forth from the document to the reference list. It also provided a check and balances thereby ensuring that all documents had been duly included.

Both pre-determined and emergent codes were utilized in the coding scheme. The following codes were pre-determined: (a) does the document identify a difference in leadership style, (b) research instrument used, (c) leadership style differences (by gender), (d) why are styles different, and (e) positions on difference (is a difference, no difference, androgynous). The following codes emerged as summaries were analyzed: (a) when is female style advantageous, (b) who rated style, (c) research question, and (d) leadership position of subject. This combination of pre-defining coding categories drawn from existing theory and developing codes that emerge as the data are analyzed is one accepted coding strategy (Maxwell, 1996, p. 79). Many of the coding *nodes* included *sibling nodes*, which were subsets of the coding node, itself.

An *attributes list* was created in the NVivo project for ease of data organization. I chose to use this function of NVivo because it arranges, in spreadsheet format, a report of all designated variables. The attributes used were (a) sex of researcher/author, (b) publication date, (c) methodology used, (d) general leadership study, (e) education leadership study, (f) presence or absence of difference, and (g) popular culture book.

I coded all summaries and full text articles. As codes emerged and were added to the coding scheme, I returned to documents that had already been coded and searched for evidence of the newly added coding categories. The

coded information was then analyzed. These data were then interpreted and served as evidence for this paper's discussion.

Characteristics of Literature Analyzed

This study was based on the review of a sample of 36 research studies and books (studies = 8, books = 28). Of the total documents reviewed, 22 were research based, 12 were popular culture books, and two were books that were neither research-based nor popular culture. Included in the sample is the meta-analysis of 161 studies (Eagly & Johnson, 1990). Of the 22 documents that were research based, 12 used qualitative methodology, 4 used quantitative methodology, 2 used meta-analysis, and 4 used mixed methodologies.

Of the 36 documents reviewed, 34 had at least one female author, and 3 at least one male author. Thirty-two had exclusively female authors, and 2 had exclusively male authors. Two documents were authored by a male/female combination.

Table 1
Publication Dates

| Publication Year | Number Published | 12 Popular Culture Books | Research Based Articles and Books |
|---------------------|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1981 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 1988 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 1989 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 1990 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| 1993 | 4 | 1 | 4 |
| 1995 | 5 | 1 | 4 |
| 1996 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 1997 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 1998 | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| 1999 | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| 2000 | 6 | 3 | 3 |
| 2001 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| 2002 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| No Publication Date | 3 | 0 | 3 |

Of the 36 studies and books that were summarized in this review, 14 were based on research conducted in educational settings, and 10 were conducted in other work settings or in the laboratory, and 12 were not based on research.

Thirty-three documents identified a difference in leadership style and one document reported no difference in leadership style, the meta-analyses reported on studies that identified findings in both categories, and one document reported that difference was dependent on who rated the leadership style.

Research instruments used to rate leadership style across the 36 documents included:

1. Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) (Albright, Haines, Savarese, Wasserman, Yoshida, and Benson, n.d.).
2. Least Preferred Coworker Scale (Albright et al., n.d.; Eagly & Johnson, 1990).
3. Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) (Albright et al., n.d.).
4. Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Lewis, 1998).
5. Leadership Style Inventory (LSI) (Reardon, 1995).
6. Leadership Orientation Survey (Thompson, 2000).
7. Quinn's Competing Values Leadership Instrument (Thompson, 2000).
8. Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (Carless, 1998).

Qualitative methodology included interview, case study, diary study, participant observation, and artifact analysis techniques.

Three gendered leadership styles were identified across both quantitative and qualitative documents: (a) male, (b) female, and (c) androgynous. Four documents reported findings of androgynous styles of leadership. References to specific male styles of leadership were found in 13 documents and to specific female styles in 26 documents.

The popular culture books summarized in this study tended to focus more on strategies women could use to be successful in the male dominated world of leadership, and less on explaining or understanding the actual differences in leadership style. These books often used humor to frame a structure to understand the demands and expectations of leadership. The most blatantly comical (and perhaps offensive to some), *How to Succeed in Business Without a Penis: Secrets and Strategies for the Working Woman* (Salmansohn, 1996) uses humor and sexual metaphor to describe male and female leadership traits, their advantages and disadvantages. *Play Like a*

Man; Win Like a Woman (Evans, 2000), and *How Men Think: The Seven Essential Rules for Making it in a Man's World* (Mendell, 1996) described scenarios in which women do not understand how to behave in the leadership world because they were not socialized as children in the same way as men through sports and competitive games. These books differed in their focus on the issues of gender-based differences in leadership style, however I elected to add the dimension of popular culture since it is through popular culture books that a segment of the population of readers are gaining information on this subject.

Male leadership was most often described as hierarchical, top-down, and task oriented. Lewis (1998) described male leaders as high in self-confidence and low in emotionality. Men used power as a tool to control subordinates through domination (Grogan, 1996; Rosener, 1990). Male leadership approach was often depicted as managerial, with strict adherence to bureaucratic systems; using male-exclusive networks to gain access to social or interpersonal power (Carli, 1999; Ozga, 1993).

Female leadership style was described as collaborative and caring and less hierarchical than their male counterparts. Blackmore (1999) stated that:

The ethics of care has provided a powerful discourse for women collectively and individually because it offers an alternative image of organization and leadership premised upon the ethical and moral positions for educational administrators, which revalues women's experiences. It recognizes that schools should serve the public and private needs of all individuals; it recognizes the moral aspect of education in terms of relationships and civic responsibility and not just the public needs of men; it fosters caring attitudes in children and administrators by prizing kindness, compassion and commitment; and it seeks to organize schooling around long term social relationships, not differentiating disciplinary boundaries that serve the economy or the elite. (p. 56)

The literature also revealed that women spent less time on paperwork, spent more time visiting classrooms, ran more closely-knit schools, used different, less dominating body language, used different language and procedures, were nurturing, kept up-to-date with curricular issues, spent more time with their peers, were better change agents, and sponsored other women (Brunner, 1999, Ozga, 1993, Reynolds, 2002). Female leadership traits were described as emotional, collaborative, flexible, facilitative, nurturing, sensitive, and cooperative.

There was a clear pattern of reporting that women tended to be more collegial and men more hierarchical. This pattern occurred across research and popular culture material, among quantitative and qualitative studies, and

throughout documents regardless of publication date. Embedded in the reporting is the way that power was perceived as either power over (male) versus power with or to (female). Women were reported to perceive power as a resource to share rather than as a use over subordinates, and that they perceived no limit to the amount of power within an organization (Ah Nee-Benham & Cooper, 1998; Dunlap & Schmuck, 1995; Rosener, 1990). Some studies mentioned that the research must be carefully analyzed to ascertain the relevance of these findings. Studies differed in the ways they controlled for several critical variables, including sex of the rater, positional relationship of rater to leader, and management level occupied by the leader, making comparison of results difficult.

The studies revealed that a transactional/transformational leadership style scale or continuum was most often used to measure male and female leadership traits. Transactional leadership style (task centered) was described as top down and hierarchical. Transactional leadership is a series of transactions between the leaders and his/her followers. Transformational leadership (follower centered), was based on the relationships among leaders and their followers, was more collegial and collaborative, and often synonymous with "servant leadership" style. Transformational leadership facilitated change in an organization through the commitment, loyalty and respect leaders and followers shared.

Findings

Three major deductions were drawn from the analysis of the literature. First, there was a distinct relationship between the findings (of absence or presence of gender-based difference in leadership style) and the rater in the study. Second, the rating instrument and the methodology used appeared to affect results. Third, there were many complex and often intertwined explanations for gender-based differences in leadership style

Rater Effect on Findings

There was evidence suggesting that the presence or absence of gender-based leadership style difference can be linked directly to the positional relationship of the rater to the leader (self, subordinate, and superior) (Carless, 1998, p. 10). This was quite consistent throughout the studies. The greatest report of difference in gendered leadership style invariably appeared through self-evaluation. These studies include those conducted by Ozga (1993), Grogan (1996), Gardiner, Enomoto, and Grogan (2000), and Adler, Laney, and Packer (1993). However, superiors, subordinates, and others reported absence or limited presence of gender-based difference in leadership

style. Eagly and Johnson (1990) stated that "the identity of the raters who provided the data for the style measure did have some impact on sex differences . . . self-ratings were significantly more stereotypic than subordinate ratings for interpersonal skills and task style" (p. 16). Eagly and Johnson were referring to quantitative data in this statement, and there were no available figures to suggest that this finding can be generalized to qualitative data.

Self-reports were used in both quantitative and qualitative studies. Qualitative studies using interview methodology with female leaders reported the greatest finding of gender-based differences in leadership style. This was very important in educational research since the majority of research on gender-based differences in leadership style in the education milieu relied on self-reports of female administrators. Thus, the differences found were seen through the eyes and in the voice of a female administrator, only. Research did not include the examination of the perceptions of those in the position of superior or subordinate to the female administrator. Male superintendents were not included in qualitative studies.

The gender-role perceptions of the rater also impacted findings. Albright et al., (n.d.) discussed:

Due to gender-role perceptions, the leadership roles of the sexes have been called into question. This is due to the increasing number of women attaining leadership positions within organizations and the new emphasis toward teamwork, cooperation and employee empowerment (Lee, 1994). The leadership strategies that promote these concepts of teamwork are traditionally associated with more female styles . . . that have not been associated with effective management. As a result, the concepts of masculinity and femininity do not necessarily correlate with the persons biological sex (Kent, Russel, & Moss, 1994), and thus not with a person's leadership capabilities. Perhaps . . . the most effective leader is a person who is able to incorporate both styles. Such an individual is labeled androgynous. (p. 3)

Albright et al. (n.d.) asserted that it is not the biological sex of the individual that determined leadership style, but rather their gendered qualities. A man can exhibit qualities associated with feminine leadership style, or a woman, male leadership style. This theoretic framework placed collaborative, transformational feminine leadership style on one end of the spectrum, and hierarchical, transactional, masculine leadership style on the other, with a mixed, androgynous style in the middle. The rater may have included in his or her response, ratings partially or fully influenced by personal gender-role perceptions.

The sex of the rater was also a variable for which there was control and/or recognition. Many of the studies did not report on the biologic sex of the rater, therefore there was no way to discern if sex was considered at all. The sex of the rater must be examined as a variable in the interpretation of data in the area of gender differences in leadership style.

Some instruments include a rating instrument for *others* to use (e.g., Leadership Practices Inventory, Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire). Others included friends, family members, or anyone who was not a direct superior or subordinate. Some instruments used the others report form for subordinates and superiors, as well. Once again, there was little consistency between rating instruments in the language identifying the raters' positional relationship to the leader. In some instances, the information about leadership style held by the other was obtained through the eyes of the leader. There was a second-generation self-report affect from these other raters.

The age of the rater may also have affected findings. The *new* preferred style of educational leadership looks much more transformational than transactional. Younger direct subordinates, or those with recent higher education experiences, may have had a different and perhaps clearer understanding of these leadership style differences. Sergiovanni (1996), Senge (2000), and Bolman and Deal (2003) are but a few of the current theorists writing about this new style of leadership. Raters with recent exposure to these kinds of theories may rate in a different way than those with little or no exposure to this new leadership way of thinking. Although the presence of this experience is not limited to the younger educators, there may have been greater likelihood that the younger raters would have more of this sort of exposure, and should therefore have been examined for impact on outcomes. Likewise, the age of the leaders being rated must be noted. Newer leaders would have more exposure to and training in the new leadership style.

Rating Instrument/Methodology

Eagly and Johnson (1990) asserted that the divergence in findings on the topic of gender-based differences in leadership style was partially explained by the basis of their conclusions on different kinds of data from different rating instruments (p. 6). It appeared that the instrument used to rate leadership style affected the results of the study. Eagly and Johnson (1990) stated, "the diversity of the methods that have been used to assess style complicates the task of integrating research in this area" (p. 6). The variance in qualities that the different instruments rate partially explains discrepancy in findings. It was important that the instrument used targeted the scale of

behaviors associated with male and female leadership style. There were many leadership-rating instruments available, and care should have been used to choose a rating instrument that measured traits associated with male and female leadership style.

Qualitative studies used a variety of techniques, but resulted in findings that were more similar in nature than those studies that used quantitative methodology. This can, in part, be explained by the fact that in all but one study (Sherman, 2001), the rater was the female leader, herself. Qualitative studies were broader in scope and varied in their description of the focus of their study than the quantitative studies. Qualitative studies typically sought to understand the meaning, identify unanticipated related phenomenon, understand the process, and develop causal explanations (Maxwell, 1996, pp. 17-20). The scope tended not to be specific, but rather an open process seeking rich description and deep understanding. Like feminist research, these qualitative studies sought to give a voice to those being studied. The findings of the qualitative studies were derived from the analyses of collective stories and experiences obtained through in-depth interview, observation, participant observation, case study and diary study. These studies most often sought to explore the experience of the leader, herself.

When designing methodology, the hierarchical position of the leader within the organization should have been contemplated. Varying findings were reported among studies of low, mid and upper level management leaders. Eagly and Johnson (1990) argued that management level had little impact on effect sizes (p. 16). Duerhst-Lahti and Kelly (1995) found that "gender neutral traits were valued most in top level positions by both men and women" (p. 27). Additionally, they found that masculine traits were more likely to distinguish those at the top of organizations from those in middle management positions rather than distinguishing male leaders from female leaders, suggesting gendered executive management status. (Duerhst-Lahti & Kelly, 1995, pp. 79, 80). Carless (1998, p. 9) outlined a structural model of gender differences and found that men and women who occupied the same position and performed similar tasks behaved similarly. Therefore, methodological design should have been sensitive to the management position of the leader, and not have included, within one study, a mixture of management positions.

The use of multiple rating instruments would increase the validity of the research, and enable the researcher to develop a more comprehensive picture of gender differences in leadership style.

Explanations for Differences

Multiple explanations for gender-based differences in leadership style emerged from the data in this study. The first and most pervasive explanation was that men and women are socialized differently, and that this difference in socialization resulted in gender specific personality traits that were exhibited in leadership behavior. In this framework, men were socialized to be competitive and authoritarian, and women to be caring and collaborative. Brunner (1999) claimed that males and females exist in realities that are not the same, society is gendered, and that men and women behaved in different ways as defined as appropriate by society. Collay and LaMar (1995) found in their study that “different societal expectations of men and women and their parallels in administrative practice were a powerful theme in the interviews” (p. 148). They found that superintendents carried out socially constructed gender appropriate roles, such as male superintendents acting as head of household and female teaching principals acting more nurturing and maternal (p. 161).

A second theoretic explanation of gender-based differences in leadership style involved “gender-role spillover, which was a carryover into the workplace of gender based expectations for behavior” (Gutek, 1982, p. 58, as cited in Eagly and Johnson, 1990). This theory suggested that followers’ expectations are developed from accepted societal gender roles, and that followers’ expectations dictate leaders acceptable behavior based on what society determined was appropriate gender behavior. Hart (1995) further described this phenomenon in *Women Leading in Education* (p. 105) as *organizational socialization*. She asserted that a leader ascended to her position of leadership through adaptations and adjustments she made in her leadership style in response to the collective expectations of her subordinates. It is through the organizational socialization framework that one saw new leaders shape their leadership in a manner that is socially acceptable, therefore resulting in a gendered leadership style.

A third explanation of gender-based differences in leadership style was a result of the manner in which the definition of leadership was constructed. Gosetti and Rusch (1995) asserted that women work in an environment “dominated by a culture of privileged, white, male, leadership which sets the standards and norms” (pp. 15, 16) of leadership behavior. They asserted that when you looked at the development of leadership theory, you found that women were invisible. Therefore, individuals who participated in rating leadership style understood leadership through the lens of white, male leadership behavior, and thought of leaders as male only. Henceforth, leadership behavior (female leadership behavior) that differed from the standard under which they understood leadership was not understood.

Therefore, the difference found may not be as substantial as reported, and merely a result of perceptual, rather than actual, difference due to the biologic sex of the leader.

A fourth and final common explanation of gender-based difference in leadership style was due to the perception that women possessed less organizational power and/or status. Eagly and Johnson (1990) pointed out that women “differed systematically in seniority, salary, the availability of mentoring and informal collegial support, and other characteristics that conveyed some of the subtleties of organizational status” (p. 5). It has also been determined that men and women defined and used power differently. Women defined power as shared with others or as collaborative, whereas men tended to think of power in terms of dominance, control and authority over others (Brunner, 2000, p. 148). Since the discourse of leadership was based on predominantly white male experience, and the use of power was embedded in this discourse, women’s use of power can be confused with having no power. The perception that women held less status and power within an organization could impact the way in which an individual rates leadership style.

Other interesting conclusions have been drawn about why gender-based differences in leadership style existed. Although not found repeatedly in the literature, I suggest that they needed to be included in this discussion. Eagly and Johnson (1990) maintained that leadership studies that did not examine organizational leaders in the field, such as laboratory studies conducted with college students, were likely to show greater gender-based differences in leadership style since there was no long term relational impact for their behavior (p. 3). Helgesen (1990) believed that since there were fewer women at the top, they were of higher quality than the men, thus explaining differences in their leadership style.

Limitations

The original study that led to this paper was time limited. Many studies and books, although seemingly important as they were frequently referenced in many other studies, were not included due to lack of quick access.

This study is not a comprehensive meta-analysis nor a limited literature search. Data interpretation and analysis of the coded information drawn from the summarizing of literature was conducted in a qualitative manner, rather than calculating effect sizes as performed in meta-analysis. Furthermore, although qualitative data analysis techniques were used, this study should not be categorized as phenomenological in nature.

This study did not include a search of literature on male superintendents, leaders, or educational leaders, so no comparison can be drawn between the literature on how men and women describe their leadership style. The literature did include many qualitative studies describing the leadership style of women and their opinions about the difference in how men and women lead, as self-reported by the women leaders. Therefore, the cumulative sample of self-reporters was not balanced for sex, perhaps threatening the cumulative validity of the studies.

I question the generalizability of the cumulative findings of the population, female leaders, to a smaller, sub-population that is discipline-specific, such as female educational leaders. I wonder if there were discipline specific phenomena that would have influenced leadership style. Perhaps the discourse of female leadership needs to be deconstructed, and theory developed specific to female leaders from particular work settings. Since the methodology and structure of many of these studies have not been reproduced in the educational milieu, the findings and their resulting theoretic framework should not be blindly applied.

Summary and Conclusions

On the surface, it appears that studies do, generally, find gender-based differences in leadership style. However, since this is still a young field of study, over time as research matures in this area and more robust knowledge emerges, researchers will find that there is more complexity to this issue. Csikszentmihalyi's (1994) description of complexity serves as a way to understand the development of this body of knowledge as influenced by research. Csikszentmihalyi explained that complexity occurs when something is both differentiated and integrated. Therefore, as the research on gender-based differences in leadership styles becomes integrated into other research disciplines and gains increased differentiation as a field of research, the body of knowledge created will naturally become more complex.

As opportunity for women to enter the superintendency expands, the elevated numbers of women in the superintendency will influence an increased occurrence of research in the field of gender-based differences in leadership style specific to the educational setting. Brunner (1999) noted that Bell and Chase (1995) have suggested that the issue of gender in leadership had been either oversimplified or denied. In time, we can hope, however, that this body of knowledge will then become more sophisticated and robust as it is interwoven with theory from other disciplines. Clearly there is more to learn about the leadership style of women, as it becomes the subject of further studies in the K-12, public school arena.

My personal experience from over 20 years in the field of education in informal conversations with both men and women who work for female administrators yields contradictory information to the general thinking on gender-based differences in leadership style. I have heard subordinates, peers, and others describe female leaders as more difficult to work with, less collaborative and more dictatorial, more unpredictable and actually meaner than their male counterparts. There may have been other factors at play in these discussions and interpretations, such as the gender role expectations of the follower. The observer (subordinate, peer or other person) may have entered their relationship with the female leader having expected them to behave in gender stereotypical ways, and when the leader behaved in ways contradictory to this discourse, it was confusing and unnerving for the observer. Also at play could have been the discourse of leadership based on white male standards of behavior, and consequently the behavior of the woman leader was not understood, therefore it appeared confusing to the observer.

The group of researchers studying gender-based differences in leadership style in the educational setting was still relatively small. Almost exclusively, women have conducted the research in this field. I found only two examples of men conducting research on this topic. This lack of sex diversity among researchers could have led to or be interpreted as, a problem of research bias where women researchers sought specific results in their research that would have promoted women leaders. For the field to gain more credibility and be recognized as an important area of research there needs to be a broader, more diverse group of researchers. One can also make the interpretation that since the field of researchers interested in this area is narrowly limited by sex, it is not a field of research found by a more diverse group to be worthy of study or have status.

It appeared that as more women enter leadership positions, a greater divergence emerges within female leadership style that has gone somewhat overlooked in the design of studies. Strachan (2002) defined a difference between feminist leadership and female leadership. Strachan asserted that feminist leadership has a different focus than that of neo-liberal managerialism.

The “underpinning philosophies” of feminist leadership included emancipatory practice that was committed to working for social justice and equity, contesting and resisting injustices, shared power, and the emotional and ethic care in leadership practice, with a particular emphasis on delivering quality education to students. (p. 115)

Feminist leadership style differed from female leadership style in its focus on, identification of, and emphasis toward emancipation from and reparation for social injustice. The qualities of shared power, emphasis on quality education, and leading with an ethic of care are conjoint practice behaviors between the two sub-categories of women leaders. The operation of two subcategories of leadership styles of women needs to be recognized as an important variable in future research. Findings can vary depending on the representation of subcategory members within the research sample.

If, indeed, the behavior of feminist leaders and leaders who are female can be disaggregated, then there may be need for adjustment to the transactional/transformational continuum usually used in the rating of gender-based difference in leadership style. I would see this new paradigm as parallel to the transactional/transformational continuum. Since *activism* would be a separately rated behavior, it could hypothetically occur anywhere along the transactional/transformational continuum. A two-dimensional model would be constructed. For instance, one could rate high in transformational style, but low in activism, or vice versa. Poststructuralism could serve as the grounding point for the development of this new model, with discursive theory central to the new, emerging model.

It appeared that as more women achieve top leadership positions in organizations and more research is done on this topic, there was an emerging new way of thinking about leadership style differences. Future research can look at the impact that time and increased numbers of women in top leadership positions has had on gender-based differences in leadership style theory. Additionally, future research can examine if organizational culture and discipline-specific leadership are variables in gender-based differences in leadership style worth considering, and if there are qualities within organizations that promote or encourage particular gender-based leadership style.

Notes

- 1 Endnotes is a software program for organizing bibliographic information. Endnotes 4.0 was used in this study.
- 2 NVivo is a software program for qualitative research and data analysis. NVivo 1.2 was used in this study.

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Career Paths and the Superintendency: Women Speak Out

Nancy Hergenrother Seyfried
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According to the 2000 census, women comprise nearly 51% of the American population. Women constitute two thirds of the work force in education. Seventy-five percent of teachers are women; 41% of principals are women, and women fill 60% of central office administration positions, yet, at the superintendent level, only 10% are women (Vail, 1999). Guthrie (1999) found that the shortage of women in top education positions mirrors other fields. Women make up 50% of the work force, yet they represent fewer than 11% of the corporate officers of companies and 3% of the heads of companies. Women are relative newcomers to the fields of law, government, and business. In education, they are not new to the field. Keller (1999) indicated that policy experts indicate that the status of women is one of the most troubling leadership issues in education.

Newton (2000) observed that the low number of women in the superintendencies in Pennsylvania, New York, and Texas was representative of the distribution in the United States. In spite of recruitment, state school officials observed that the low rates might not be caused by discrimination but by minimal interest among women in the position. In a field otherwise dominated by women, the question arises: Why are there so few women in the position of school district CEO, the superintendent?

Keller (1999) asserted that the lack of data is a major hindrance to improvement in the status of women. There are few efforts at the state and national level to track the number of women entering and leaving the position or to offer explanations for discrepancies among the data. Historically, research about leadership has focused on male leadership, and interest in female leadership has only emerged in the last 20 years (Harman, 2001; Skrla, 1998b). Furthermore, women themselves have been the leaders in conducting research on women in the superintendency (Brunner, 1998). Vail (1999) argued that the differences between the leadership style of males and females might be a matter of personality and philosophy, not gender. Research on androgynous leadership has not yielded significant findings, but

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profiles of successful leaders appear to combine characteristics from both masculine and feminine models (Vail, 1999).

An additional phenomenon in education confounds the problem. The pool of administrators is dwindling (Morie & Wilson, 1996). Seventy-one percent of superintendents are over 50 years of age and are expected to retire after 35 years of service to education. Thus, one third are likely to retire by 2005 (Dunne, 2000). The generations replacing them, born between 1965 and 1977 and between 1978 and 1983, are fewer in numbers. Members of these replacement generations appear to be changing the ways in which women view their participation in the workforce, that is, they appear to desire more flexibility and balance between life and work and seem less willing to sacrifice family for careers than did their mothers (Harman, 2001).

Newton (2000) noted the low numbers of women in the superintendency in Pennsylvania, New York, and Texas at less than 20%. More women than men are in graduate programs and more women than men hold doctoral degrees in education.

An overview of the literature reveals four areas that contribute to the scarcity of women aspiring to or maintaining positions in the superintendency: family issues, perceptions (including stereotypical perceptions of gender), lack of mentors or sponsors, and disincentives for the position. Career has powerful effects on home and family. A set of competing urgencies are present for women and balancing these urgencies is difficult (Bascia & Young, 2001). Important domestic relations have a significant impact on the careers of women. A spouse's support has a greater effect on the career path of females than males (Ramsey, 1997). A husband's encouragement and support may be critical for the success of the wife. In

fact, women may not be successful in the superintendency without the support of the spouse, especially “if your marriage comes first” (Fulmer, cited in Ramsey, 1997, p. 1).

Men and women react differently to the need for balance and healthy family relationships. A commitment to the family’s children and recognition that “the family is too young” to make a career change or commitment may affect professional women more than men (Ramsey, 1997). Children may represent a strong “pull” on the time of women. Additionally, Moen and colleagues (cited in Williams, 2000) found that 44% of men and 49% of women reported that the husband’s career received top priority, and that the wife’s career is interrupted for a geographical move intended to bolster the husband’s career.

Time constraints related to providing for the family also can impact women’s decisions to enter the superintendency. Only 8% of mothers aged 25 to 44 work outside the home for 10 to 14 hours per day—the time frame necessary to be successful as a superintendent (Williams, 2000). Few women are willing to deduct such an amount of time from the family for career advancement.

Because women enter the superintendency later in their careers, fight harder to get there and stay there, undergo greater scrutiny than men entering and holding the position, and remain a minority, there are fewer networks upon which they might rely; thus, the support of family, friends and colleagues is valued highly (Ramsey, 1997). Vail (1999) reported that a recent superintendent of Memphis City Schools stated that women opt out of the superintendency because of a mismatch between being a top executive and maintaining a family. Issues of scrutiny, privacy, tradeoffs in priorities, and the long hours associated with the position affect women’s decisions to include the superintendency as an element in their career decisions.

Perceptions held and voiced by women and by others are another factor affecting women contemplating advanced leadership in education. Others’ perceptions also affect women. Gender bias is perpetuated through external perceptions. Olsson (2000) referred to gender bias as the “masculinist paradigm.” Leadership may be perceived by outsiders as a masculine concept that is permeated by masculine ideals to such a degree that women should not attempt to identify with them (Harman, 2001). Vail (1999) indicated that men and women have difficulty accepting females as leaders; a practice that increased reliance on a stereotype of women as difficult bosses. Brunner (1998) stipulated that no empirical evidence exists that women operate in the workplace in a manner different from men, but that, instead, evidence exists that men and women see, value and know their work worlds differently. It is problematic when men are perceived to be more effective as leaders by

superiors and by subordinates—including women (Brunner, 1998; Harman, 2001; Vail, 1999). Lewis (1998) reported that perceptions of differences between men and women continue to exacerbate the issue.

The perceptions of others regarding the gender of the teacher or administrator have their roots in history and maintain relevance today. The thinking of the 19th century was that a woman could not serve two masters—home and school. At the turn of the 20th century, 95% of female teachers (who made up 75% of all teachers) were single, widowed or divorced (Sullivan, 1996). Well into the 1920s and 1930s, women who married were required to resign teaching positions. The single-only bias towards women applied to women in management as well. Leadership was considered a masculine calling; women who pursued leadership positions were considered “deviant.” Men affirmed their stability and sexuality through marriage. Women, conversely, had their sexuality and stability questioned by remaining single and striving to hold leadership positions (Sullivan, 1996). Blount (cited in Sullivan, 1996, p. X) pointed out that “unlike women, male teachers and school administrators were expected to be married to indicate strength of character and masculinity [sexuality].” Grogan (1996) reported that a female aspiring superintendent declared that, in her opinion, even if a man were to have sexual encounters outside of marriage, it would bolster the idea that he was not gay. A woman, however, would be labeled “promiscuous,” clearly a negative connotation. Grogan further stated,

Sexuality cannot be ignored as it is an integral part of daily life experiences of both men and women, but if women remain relatively invisible in certain settings it does not threaten to disrupt the dominant discourse. Where it becomes an issue is in the professional sphere, when the question of sexual motive can be asked of one administrator hiring another administrator. Again, a woman’s subordinate position makes her even more vulnerable. (p. 10)

Self perceptions are another powerful factor. A woman’s self concept and perceptions of abilities are significant factors to entry into and advancement within the superintendency (Bascia & Young, 2001; Lewis, 1998; Sharratt & Derrington, 1993). The role of self-concept is known to have a significant impact on one’s motivation and aspirations for achievement (Sharratt & Derrington, 1993). Shakeshaft concurred and stated that an undocumented, but real, barrier to women was low self-image and low self-confidence (cited in Sharratt & Derrington, 1993). Grogan (1996) cited one of the significant qualities expressed by women in her study was their ability to reflect on who they are and what they do. Women have higher

self-expectations than men. They do not give up their concerns over being a wife and mother; they just add to them and “jump higher” (Williams, 2000).

Men have been perceived to possess characteristics that are aligned with leadership: aggressiveness, low emotionality, and high self-confidence. Women have been said to have characteristics that are not associated with leadership, such as emotionality, kindness and nurturance. Despite mixed results from research about gender difference and leadership, these perceptions remain prevalent. Leaders’ self-perceptions affect performance and motivation to advance and leaders who perceive themselves to be lacking are reluctant to apply for high level positions (Lewis, 1998). Disincentives inherent to the position and those specific to gender affect women’s attitudes toward upper level management positions. Salary is a disincentive for both sexes. Average superintendents’ salary was \$98,106 prior to 1998 (Statistical Abstracts, 1998). Increases in salaries for educators have been greater at the lower steps of the salary schedule (Endangered Species, 1999). This would support the anecdotal evidence suggesting that teachers with fewest years of experience gain financially by moving into entry-level administrative positions. Women, however, entering administration later than men and bringing more years of educational experience (Tallerico & Tingley, 2001), may not reap benefits in moving into administration roles.

A second disincentive to women entering the superintendency is the career path itself. The most traveled path to the superintendency requires experience as a high school principal, although no research supports the contention that high school principals make better superintendents (Tallerico, cited in Vail, 1999). Women, serving education as elementary teachers and perhaps moving into elementary principalships, may lose the opportunity to progress to the superintendency by circumventing the natural and expected career path choices (Endangered Species, 1999). Keller (1999) suggested that being married decreased a woman’s chances for a secondary administrator’s position and that the probability for becoming a high school principal—a key step to the top position of superintendent—remained far below that of men.

Additional disincentives loom on the horizon. Some states are lowering the bar by allowing non-educators to assume superintendencies, and at the same time increasing requirements for certification of administrators. Men hold the majority of leadership positions in corporations, government, and the military. The majority of experienced educators are women. The current trend to award superintendencies to non-educators constitutes another incentive for male leadership progression and a more difficult path for women (Tallerico & Tingley, 2001).

A final disincentive to women seeking to be superintendents is related to the opportunity to have mentors or sponsors. Grogan (in Vail, 1999) reported

that women superintendents were those who had the advantage of a male mentor with contacts with school board members and search committees. Search consultants recommend males, more than females, for superintendent positions (Vail, 1999). Search committees are comprised of men. Research suggests that humans related strongly to persons that resemble them; since consultants, often former superintendents themselves, and search committee members are men, there may be few opportunities for women to be recommended for open positions (Vail, 1999). Shakeshaft (cited in Sharrett & Derrington, 1993) identified lack of support, encouragement and counseling, lack of role models, sponsors or mentors, and limited access to vacancy networks as disincentives for women. Furthermore, the availability of female role models and the availability of sponsorship or mentorship were two of four barrier statements identified as significant ($p < .05$) for females seeking to secure a position as a superintendent (Sharrett & Derrington, 1993). The researchers also reported that the lack of sponsorship or mentorship further impeded women's advancement into the superintendency.

Schneider (1991) provided several explanations for the lack of mentoring among women. Men who serve as mentors attend to the mentoring task and are engaged for a short period of time; women tend to pursue the relationship within the mentoring. Women are less likely than men to initiate mentoring contacts. Such passivity results in less contact with the mentor. Women, as mentors, may not have positions of influence. Finally, women protégés have a greater fear of failure than men and require a longer period of time to see themselves in the roles for which they are being mentored.

The Study

The purpose for conducting this study was to explore, with credentialed and qualified women educators, career paths in educational administration. The research was qualitative. Data were collected through focus groups and mailed surveys. Six persons attended two focus groups that lasted approximately 90 minutes each. The interaction of the members of the focus groups and the focus of inquiry allowed for the maximum exploration in the amount of time available. Seven persons unable to attend focus groups were surveyed by mail; 5 responded resulting in 11 participants in the study.

Participants

The 11 women professionals were employed in different school districts. Only one had been a superintendent. Respondents were of the age that most women, according to literature, in education typically enter the superintendency. Two had been married and had no children. Two were divorced with grown children. Seven were married with nearly grown

children. They varied in undergraduate and graduate educational backgrounds.

Instrumentation

A discussion guide, provided to each focus group participant, included the following questions:

1. Are you seeking a position as superintendent: Why or Why not?
2. What was your motivation for pursuing a career in educational administration?
3. What barriers do you see or have you encountered (in your career path)?
4. What have you found to support or motivate you in your career path?

The same questions were sent, along with a stamped self-addressed envelope, to those participants who could not attend the focus groups.

Themes

Three themes emerged from the responses of the participants. (a) pervasive and persistent gender stereotypes, (b) family conflicts, and (c) lack of networking opportunities.

Gender Stereotypes and Bias

Gender bias was a much discussed subject. One participant, ready to retire from her position as Director of Student Services in a large suburban district, reported that at the beginning of her career, she was too naïve. She had served as a curriculum coordinator and “right hand” to the superintendent in a previous district. She said,

I did it all. But I wanted to be home with my children in the summer. The superintendent said that would be okay, as long as I got the work done. Of course, he adjusted the salary accordingly, and I still worked all summer to get it done. It took years to get that salary back up.

Another participant, nearing retirement with 29 years of experience in education, said, “The gender bias goes way back. For my generation—my father said, ‘you’ll be a teacher or you won’t go to college.’” Choices did not appear to be available to this group of women. Planning a career was a factor for only three participants—all of whom were young, relative to the pool of participants. The remaining participants reported that their careers just seemed to “evolve.” Gender bias was reported in the expectations and the lack of credibility. One participant stated,

There's just no credibility in being a superintendent as a woman. You work twice as hard, but no one knows it. Men are allowed to take the credit. If a district is doing well, the male superintendent "is doing a good job." If the superintendent is a woman, well, "she has a great staff."

Another participant referenced her experience as a principal with multiple requests of the board for an elementary school guidance counselor.

We had two different superintendents during that time, and . . . I watched as the business person got an assistant and the tech coordinator got an assistant. [The superintendent] told me "I don't want to hear it anymore." This was part of the reason I wanted to leave. It was so frustrating and overwhelming. We had 450 kids and no guidance counselor. And I begged for one. When I left, they hired a man to replace me and lo and behold, he got a part-time guidance counselor. It always struck me that men always seem to get what they ask for. For women, it's kind of like being a mom—they figure you're a woman, so can just deal with it.

Another respondent shared:

When I was named superintendent [15 years ago] and went to the first superintendents' meeting, I was met with three reactions: (a) genuine people who react with you as a person; (b) patronizing, sexist types, who would say, "you sure improve the looks of the group;" and (c) people who would just ignore me and couldn't deal with me.

Another subject added that others gossiped or made comments about what she wore.

I was judged by how I looked. Women are judged by their appearance. It is a view of women as a whole in the community. Women are not supposed to be in those positions. I got comments for wearing "short" skirts, when in fact I avoided wearing skirts at all, but purposefully [wore] work pantsuits. But the clothes I wear—because I am small, appear youthful—that can be a problem. I got judged on how I looked.

Issues of sexuality were a great concern for the participants. No one, they agreed, would ever accuse a man of sleeping his way to the top. But this was an issue for these women. One subject made sure she took her husband with her to evening events. None of the women felt like they could "go out for a beer" with a male colleague or superintendent after a meeting, or outside of a group, without fear of repercussion and accusation that would further damage credibility.

Networking and gender bias were linked in the conversations with the participants. One administrator remarked,

So much administration happens on the golf courses. I've tried to join them, but I'm treated like I should be carrying their bags. I go to athletic department meetings, and they're all men, and they look at me like I hate all athletes just because I am a woman. One student I had to discipline pleaded with me not to suspend him just because "he was a football player."

Another participant commented, "At [district name] that wasn't the case. To get in you had to drink like a fish! At the big administrators' conference every year in August—the women would shop and the men would go drink!" Another reported,

I was naïve when I entered administration. I did not realize how pervasive the "good old" boys club was. Networking is important in any field. But taken to extreme, it excludes many. I found out quickly that if I didn't play golf with the guys, I was not in on many of the team-building activities in the district.

Another participant reported the lack of networking was keeping her out of administration. "It's such a powerful force."

All the participants reported gender stereotypes. One participant articulated the problem. "As a woman, you're pushy, 'ballsy.' But if you were a man, they would say 'he's being aggressive.' How do you go in the middle? You're too aggressive or you're too weak." The "women are bitchy; men are strong" mentality was pervasive. One participant commented, "at one of my first administrator meetings as a high school principal, the group was told to take care of their wives, they're going to be needing them. I asked, 'How do I get one of them?' I felt I needed a housewife!" The participants struggled with family responsibilities as they moved into and through administrative ranks. The women who had no children acknowledged that they experienced more freedom in their work. One participant said, "It's way beyond eight to four [o'clock]." Two other participants, who had children in the home, emphasized the difficulty in maintaining balance. Another, with high school children in the home, was putting off career advancements until the teens had graduated high school. Three participants had children growing up when they were advancing through their careers. One said of her children,

I felt like my teenagers could take care of themselves in high school. They were great kids. I know now what I did to them by not being there. My son got into drugs. I neglected them in high school. They would say that I was

spending more time with other people's kids than my own, but I scoffed at it. These other kids will keep on coming, but your own don't.

Another agreed. "I neglected my kids." She reported that, as adults, they had come to appreciate her accomplishments; their attitudes changed as they moved through school. "In elementary school, they said 'Mom's too busy for us.' By high school they were saying 'Mom does it all.' They could see how hard I was working at home and at school." Another participant stressed that it was easier to balance your life when "your kids are in the same school [as you are], and you can do 'double-duty' on evenings and weekends." All participants spoke of the difficulty associated with maintaining balance. References to the difficulties for spouses were made. "My husband," one said, "was resentful at times. It's difficult when your wife makes twice the salary." Another participant's marriage ended in divorce.

Perceptions

The perceptions they held and those they believed were held by others impacted the women's career paths. The perceptions that they believed were held by others were related to gender bias. The first participant to respond said,

that word [perception] came up when I was a school principal. I was being chastised for something that was not true. The superintendent said that it was the perception that people had, so it might as well be true, so you better fix it."

Another participant said, "'Moody' is the one I hate. A man can kick a trash can across the room and be called that."

None of the participants reported negative perceptions. One referred to her education and career as "cream rising to the top." All saw themselves as capable, and all wanted to do well in the administrative position. None described themselves as leaders. What appeared to be significant in this area was that when they saw the job as doable, they saw themselves as able to lead. One participant recalled her service on a search committee "Hey, I can do as good as them!" Several participants stated that they believed they could perform the job responsibilities better than the principals who had had supervisory responsibilities for them. Several reported that they wanted to make changes and improvements that they did not observe being accomplished in their schools. All made comments that indicated they saw themselves as able to change, improve, and make a difference.

One participant recalled her father's advice, "Don't back down because you're a girl." Another remarked,

Not only am I female, but I'm younger than most administrators. [I just think that] none of my undergraduate classes prepared me for what I would face in teaching, so now I wonder how any classes I take will possibly prepare me for being an administrator.

Her "learn as you go" philosophy expressed her self-confidence in her ability. She stated that she tried to maintain a balance in her self-perceptions. "I try to take the perceptions of others into consideration [as] I view [how] they live out the principles I value. [Some people who have negative values] carry little weight with influencing how I view myself."

The self-confidence of these women is not without battle scars. A participant who had been a high school principal, said,

Sometimes I wonder what I'm doing—particularly when I am with the athletic directors, because I don't understand. I just keep thinking I don't belong here. Outside that role I am fine. I'm not afraid to admit I don't know. When I was a teacher I believed I was an excellent teacher and disciplinarian. But when I was an administrator, I thought "I'm not all that!" It's too complex for you to be doing it right all the time. It was a real blow for me when I realized it. When I realized I didn't have to, it was a real growing experience.

Other disincentives of administration related to the resources of time and money. Much time is necessary to attend to all responsibilities. A participant said, "I found I didn't have a life. My job was eating my heart, my soul, and my gut." Another said she intended to seek a superintendency but did not have time to finish the certification requirements, "I don't even have time for a phone call to find out [what the certification requirements were]." The additional compensation was deemed not sufficient when the amount of time one spent as an administrator was compared to the time spent as a teacher. Only one woman indicated that the particulars of the superintendency were undesirable for her. She said, "I'm not too fond of dealing with the union . . . or with facilities." Two spoke of the loneliness of leadership positions. One in particular said,

At conferences, at county meetings, you're often the only woman. You're involved in everybody's job, but there's not one who will go out of their way to spend time with you outside of school. I made the mistake of making friends [at school]. It didn't work. Then, our job takes so much out of you that you don't want to be with anyone or even talk to anyone on the phone in the evening.

One subject summed it up: “No one encourages you, there are conflicts with the time issues, you’re always battling stereotypes, and you can’t network.”

Summary and Conclusions

Although the question “Why are you NOT applying to be superintendent?” was asked, the more general issues of educational administration and gender stereotypes were so compelling that they dominated the discussion. Every woman volunteered information and differences were noted between the responses of the focus group participants and those responding in writing. Although the women returning written responses had no time limit, their responses were shorter and more “politically correct.” The women who participated in focus groups were more emphatic and candid in their responses. Such response patterns support the contention that focus groups encourage more “give and take” and offer opportunities, in a naturalistic setting, to express opinions, emotions and experiences.

The women in this study seemed united in their need to pursue a position in educational administration. They indicated the need for change and expressed strong feelings about that need. Most expressed regret that sacrifices were needed to take on such responsibilities, and some indicated that their health suffered. But, they included comments such as “I loved it,” “. . . it was exciting,” “I wouldn’t change a thing.” One subject said concisely, “I continue to believe I can make more of an impact in an upper leadership position.”

In conclusion, the women in this study reflected much of what is stated in research about women in leadership. Women are under-represented in the upper levels of administration and the reasons may be: Competing urgencies of family life, lack of time to attend to the responsibilities of the position, lack of credibility attributed to gender, and in some cases, self-doubts, or reactions to external doubts about abilities.

Paul Houston, former superintendent and executive director of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) offered multiple reasons why educators, both male and female, do not aspire to the superintendency. He refers to the “lightning rod” aspect of the job—high expectations, politics, and public criticism, often without necessary resources; a mismatch between accountability and authority. The unrealistic expectations and criticisms are often higher for women than they are for men in the same positions. Houston (2001) suggested a need for shifts in society’s expectations of the role of the superintendent and of boards of education, and in the “hearts and minds” of those who fill the role.

The reality is that the current system is better than ever at conducting its current mission. The problem is that, while the system has gradually

improved, conditions have exploded around it. Schools have been making incremental progress in an exponential environment. That does mean that major transformation is required—not because the system has failed, but because the mission has shifted [for both men and women].

The data in this study support gender stereotypical disincentives; when coupled with Houston's admonition, we see a further shift in gender stereotypes. Skrla (1998a) wrote that the terms "masculine" and "feminine" are socially constructed and help in creating the roles that individuals play, rather than referring to biological differences. The terms masculine and feminine, logical and intuitive, rational and emotional, aggressive and submissive, dynamic and receptive, mature and personable, competitive and cooperative, strategic and spontaneous, reliable and sociable are associated with males and females (p. 7). These are characteristics that represent wholeness in an environment, and should be embraced in the superintendency, in the central office, in educational leadership as a whole. Balance and inclusion is desirable, not exclusive. Keller stated that the superintendent's position requires redefinition so that the well-being of the superintendent and other administrators is seen as a positive contribution to the success of the organization. Alternative models may more fully embrace the reality of women's lives. Bascia and Young (2001) suggested that a model recognizing the powerful effects of home and family circumstance on career would benefit both men and women as they fulfill their equally important roles in their families.

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VOICES OF WOMEN IN THE FIELD

Advice from Women Rural Superintendents

Kaye L. Peery

Note: This summary is based on interviews with women rural superintendents. As more women become superintendents, they will need information about their new roles. Often they do not have access to the network of other rural superintendents. This summary is a “quick” guide for the women who will enter their first rural superintendency.

Grand Tour Question

How do female
superintendents
administer rural school
districts?

Sub-Questions

- How do rural female superintendents describe their leadership style?
- How do rural female superintendents build relationships?
- How do rural female superintendents implement and sustain change?
- What types of professional support and mentorship assist rural female superintendents?

About the Author

Kaye L. Peery, Ph.D., is superintendent of the Maxwell Municipal Schools in New Mexico.

How do rural female superintendents describe their leadership style?

- Relational, collaborative, participatory
- Multi-task
- Establish relationships, enlist cooperation
- Always listening, explaining expectations
- Two persons stated that it's always changing as they continue to learn

How do rural superintendents build relationships?
(with school board)

- Very personal; one-on-one
- Honesty, build trust
- Provide lots of advance information, prepare them
- Model positive behavior

How do rural superintendents build relationships?
(with community)

- Be visible—attend events, belong to community groups
- Shop locally
- Be responsive—to complaints and/or requests

How do rural superintendents
build relationships?
(with media)

- Be responsive
- Always be positive—downplay negativity
- Establish relationship—easy since there is usually only one reporter!
- Use the media—to emphasize positive events/programs

How do rural superintendents
build relationships?
(staff, parents, students)

- Know everyone—know their families, needs, listen
- Recognize accomplishments—both formally and informally

How do superintendents build relationships
while maintaining a personal life in a
rural community?

- You don't—standards different for women
- Never, ever, ever go out to a bar or have a drink in public (men can do this, not women)
- Never live with your boyfriend (men can live with a girlfriend)
- Two superintendents grew up in their communities—both live in the country outside the community

How do rural female superintendents implement and sustain change?

- Use data to inform need for change
- Get information out to everyone, education
- Listen, get input from all persons—surveys, meetings, advisory councils
- One superintendent uses negative persons to implement pilot study

What types of support and mentorship Assist rural female superintendents?

- Other superintendents
- Draw from previous hands-on experience
- Some graduate courses in leadership

What advice from your experience would you share with an aspiring female rural superintendent?

- Be bold
- Be prepared to prove yourself; don't give up
- Communicate with the public
- Be a positive role model
- Be honest

Enjoy the beauty of a rural community and personalities. Be grateful. Enjoy the Blessings. Know the people. Turn everything around to the positive.

Book Review

Linda L. Lyman

CLOSING THE LEADERSHIP GAP: WHY WOMEN CAN AND MUST HELP RUN THE WORLD. Marie C. Wilson. New York: Viking, 2004 (190 pages)

Marie Wilson is out to get your attention in a book beginning with facts and stories from a national and global perspective about the leadership gap between women and men. For example, she offers this question from a European attendee at a March 3, 2003, gathering of global women leaders at the National Press Club in Washington, DC: “Can a nation call itself a democracy when ‘women are so grossly underrepresented?’” (p. 14). At the same meeting, a woman from South Africa

marveled that America, for all its progress, was still so backward in advancing women in politics. And with a conviction that took our breath away, she offered to help us become a democracy: ‘I will stand by you, sisters, I will stand by you’. (p. 15)

Reading this book helps one place the struggle for gender equity in leadership of schools into its rightful larger context: equal numbers of women in school, district, and university leadership will contribute to transforming not only these organizations, but also American culture, and ultimately the world. Starkly stated, Wilson’s premise is “that our future depends on the leadership of women—not to replace men, but to transform our options alongside them” (p. x). Growing poverty, a broken health care system, looming environmental problems, and other human and organizational crises throughout the fabric of our society reinforce the need for new options.

Since May, 2004, Wilson has been devoting her full energy to an organization she founded in 1998 called *The White House Project*, “whose mission is to advance women’s leadership in every sector, up to and including the presidency, changing society from a system built on the labor of women to one led equally by their vision” (p. xi). Although she presents innovative research to document the leadership gap, Wilson’s purpose in

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writing the book is fundamentally to mobilize women, in concert with men who care, to bring about a major cultural shift in perception that will alter the reality of women's leadership in American society, and close the leadership gap permanently.

Overview and Themes

Wilson writes succinctly about the leadership gap, "The problem is layered, as is the solution" (xii). In the book she presents both: the multi-layered problem and multiple approaches to its solution. Noting research on how women lead differently, Wilson argues in Chapter 1 that women's leadership matters. Her discussion about how women's leadership differs from men's goes back to Follett's (1924) advocacy of a democratic participatory style, includes Peters and Waterman's (1982), Helgesen (1995), and even Goleman's (1997) work on emotional intelligence. Evidence for how women's leadership matters comes from what the few women in the U. S. House and Senate have been able to accomplish through working from "values women bring to the arena, both in how issues are discussed and in the legislation that follows" (p. 9). She also shares lessons from abroad, where "women now hold at least 30% of the seats in the parliaments of 14 countries, and 22 women are speakers of parliaments," (p. 11) as well as 17 countries where women serve as heads of state. Why so few women, only 14%, in the U. S. Congress, she asks? Answers lie in the many-layered cultural barriers.

In Chapter 2, Wilson explores the concept of cultural barriers to women's leadership, saying that in this country we remain in denial. "Americans tend to ignore the societal and cultural foot dragging at the root of the matter, often failing to recognize deeply embedded gender roles that, for all our advancement, have kept our nation from realizing its potential" (p. 18), she writes. The barriers are cultural and emotional, societal and historical. A huge problem is how many people insist there is *no problem*, although there is much evidence, to the contrary, of widespread problematic perceptions that men should be leaders and women should not. Although blatant discrimination may be illegal, perceptions rule, Wilson asserts, and

must be directly attacked. Perceptions can change, but if we simply wait for a critical mass of women to make it through the pipeline to higher positions we will likely wait for several more centuries. The current flow is only a trickle. The female advantage is not taking hold because it has “never found value in the corporate or political worlds in America. Male assertiveness and control continue to be in higher demand” (p. 21). We must redefine the culturally accepted definitions and perceptions of leadership and who leaders are, Wilson concludes.

Wilson then tackles what she calls women’s four scarlet A’s, “the ways we are minimized and defined, ways we are kept in our place, and ways we keep ourselves from the life we might lead” (p. 29). These are: authority, ambition, ability, and authenticity. Each barrier is explored in detail in Chapters 3–6. In Chapter 3 she addresses the role of the media in supporting the perception that women neither have nor can handle authority. She counters, however, with how several women political leaders have changed such perceptions “by addressing nontraditional issues for women and insisting that they themselves be taken seriously” (p. 47). The chapter concludes with suggestions for what readers can do to help resolve the cultural contradictions that keep women in roles with limited authority. Research from campaigns of women political leaders serve as illustrations.

In Chapter 4 Wilson looks at how women with ambition are often required to cut down their ambitions to what is considered appropriate for women. Only two ambitions for women are unquestioned: “wife and mother” (p. 56). She links resistance to women’s ambitions with culturally pervasive fear that we women, if given a chance, will all climb right out of the private sphere into the public realm and never return. She indicates that women have been relegated partly by religion to the private sphere, but does not elaborate. Wilson is articulate about the barrier, but concludes with strategies for overcoming it, including women helping women, acting “as if” big dreams were the norm for women, and keeping a really big dream alive.

Wilson traces in Chapter 5 how perceptions of women as less able have developed historically over time through the devaluing of women’s work in the home. She cites “dueling polls,” that reflect our cultural schizophrenia about gender. For example, results from a January 2001 Gallup poll indicated that “a majority of Americans (57 percent) believed the country would be better governed with more of us [women] in office” (p. 77). However, in a Roper poll in November of 2001 the message was “Nearly six in ten Americans said they felt the sexes were naturally suited to different jobs” (p. 77). Then by spring 2002 another Roper poll

found a majority of Americans comfortable with women at the top of most industries—over 90 percent felt we can lead large technology companies, major film studios, universities, financial institutions, law firms, newspapers, charities, and large retail organizations, as well as serve in Congress. (p. 77)

She concludes the chapter with a powerful argument for women as peacemakers, for sustaining peace as the biggest contribution women in leadership could make to the world. Wilson elaborates on how women's values and skills could reshape our country's involvement in the international arena, ending with powerful stories of how women everywhere are working for peace. The final sentence of the chapter is, "If we interrupt even one entrenched pattern a day, we will create our own butterfly effect, changing the lives of women far beyond our own shores" (p. 93).

In Chapter 6 Wilson explores the authenticity barrier. She suggests that as we review the choices we have made we ask, "What songs have we stopped singing? What parts of ourselves have we cut off to survive" (p. 96). Looking at the cultural disconnect between "leader" and "woman," she advocates hanging on to authenticity and emphasizes the importance of refusing to imitate men as a pathway to authority. She considers the cost to men and boys, as well as to women and girls, of keeping one's caring side out of the public sphere. She documents the price, including school violence, we all pay for our culture's one dimensional view of manliness. She insists that we redefine what is meant by "real men" and "real women," calling for a "post heroic" understanding of leadership as "relational and collaborative (read female)" (p. 107). However, "traditionally, our culture sees leadership as men's work; when it is executed by women (or nontraditionally by men), it is often not acknowledged as leadership at all" (p. 106). She explains how as a result of gender codes "no one who practices post heroic leadership is seen as real leader material, even though they are the most real of all" (p. 110). She proposes a campaign for *role expansion* that allows both men and women to bring their private sides into the workplace and create genuine community. Her final point in this chapter is that we must move the private and public circles closer, so they almost fully overlap, and include women's voices. "Women's leadership, with its focus on community, could neutralize the nastier aspects of capitalism and shift the balance of our democracy, making it about *all* the people, using *all* the resources we have to make 'work' a community value" (p. 115), she writes. The chapter closes with this sentence: "When we finally assign value to the assets of women, when we encourage men to lead relationally, when we merge our public and private selves to create strong bonds at work and at home, we will alter the meaning of leadership" (p. 115). A disturbing slice of the chapter is the discussion of

gender and party politics in America, how we have developed “mommy and daddy parties, separated by the gender of their issues, even though that analysis is not so clean” (p. 111). The Democratic party is regarded as feminized, with only 22% of white men now identifying themselves as Democrats according to a July 2003 poll.

In the final three chapters Wilson offers what she and others have learned through experience about approaches to transforming culture. She reiterates her firm belief that we can overcome or change the common perception that men are leaders, and women are not. In Chapter 7 she reports on successful initiatives that have contributed to changing perceptions. Her first venture was the phenomenally successful *Take Our Daughters to Work* day, an idea that gave people something concrete they could do to make a difference for their daughters. She also initiated the creation of a *President Barbie* doll through working with Mattel. Doing so required her to look at the reality of Barbie’s potential for being a positive influence on aspirations, to hijack what had been for her an anathema, a negative cultural symbol, and use *President Barbie* to start new conversations for big and little girls. Wilson reviews and details ongoing media initiatives to change current effects of television, movies, and advertising on perceptions of women as leaders. Throughout the chapter she asks and answers the chicken or the egg question: “Does culture simply reflect society, or does it change the society it serves, moving it a step beyond its comfort zone?” (p. 123). The answer is both, with numerous examples. The chapter ends with a section headed *Don’t Just Watch TV! Do Something!*

In Chapter 8 Wilson presents two in-depth examples of how women’s leadership both transformed and was good for business. A law firm in Houston is presented as a business model for the expansion of women’s leadership, and the Women’s Initiative in the crisis-ridden state of Alabama is depicted as a model for grass roots political change. Both were fascinatingly similar in their problems and solutions. “Neither initiative assigned blame, but both took responsibility for future solutions” (p. 145), Wilson explains. These two models have succeeded in redrawing the frame and creating circles of work and family that overlap. She describes the women involved in each initiative as refusing to accept barriers and demanding new options. In the process of creating change, “ability went unquestioned, authority was given and used, ambition became a group value, and everyone spoke with an authenticity that brought strength and diversity, and a culture of inclusion” (p. 146). Such change required male allies, but also persistence on the part of women. Wilson concludes, “We must make it known that we are ready to lead, that, in fact, we demand it, not only to fulfill the promise of democracy, but also to save it from a laundry list of ills”

(p. 148). She calls on our courage to choose action, to “speak your mind by telling all your heart” (p. 149).

The final Chapter 9 is simply a compilation of quotes gathered from those friends and professional contacts to whom she sent two questions: (a) What were your biggest obstacles to attaining leadership, and what helped you most to overcome them?; and (b) If you could give leadership advice to the generation that will ultimately replace you, what would it be? The advice in this chapter is particularly worth pondering. One representative piece of advice is: “Don’t ever agree to take on a leadership role for the money, power, title, or prestige; take on the role because you have a passion for the cause” (Colleen Barrett, president and COO, Southwest Airlines) (p. 157). This is advice any woman leader would do well to heed, including those of us in education. The quotations in this chapter speak for themselves and Wilson ends the book on a positive and optimistic note.

Discussion

Wilson offers this description of her book in the introduction: “It is not a scholarly work and it is not comprehensive; it is a book about experience—*my* experience and the lessons I’ve learned—backed by research conducted and gathered at the White House Project and the Ms. Foundation [which she directed for 20 years]. It is a book of stories and facts, historical and current, with suggestions for how we might all, in our own way, put more women at the top, possibly even ourselves” (p. xiii). This “non-scholarly” book in fact has 57 references, and reports on more research than can be remembered after one reading. The author does not gloss over or minimize the leadership gap in any way, but remains fundamentally optimistic that concerted action can and is changing the current reality. “In each of the following chapters,” she writes in the introduction,

you will learn how, through guts and gumption, women have managed to outsmart the limits of our prescribed roles, providing a template for change. If enough of us follow their examples (and create our own methods of resistance), we will accelerate the movement of women into top positions.
(p. xv)

Her stories of individual and collective action are inspiring. The book is intended to be both *manifesto* and *handbook*, both a call and a guide to action. We in educational leadership need to pay attention.

Seemingly unconcerned about the error of essentializing, Wilson calls it a hot underground topic and clearly states and restates her view that women’s leadership differs, and that the difference is both powerful and needed in the 21st century. She describes female leadership as inclusive and other-

centered; featuring communicating across lines of authority, caring, and relationship building; and focused on broader issues that reflect values. Essentializing, seeing women as all alike, typically shows up in generalizations about gender differences in leadership style. Wilson manages to get away with asserting gender differences, however, perhaps because the book includes so many examples of diverse women from differing racial and ethnic groups and nationalities. In fact, she makes clear that we have much to learn from our sisters abroad, like how to become a truly democratic country, for example. Her position is that women leaders who are authentic will integrate female approaches into leadership, whereas those who take a more stereotypically male approach limit their own effectiveness.

Wilson's presentation of the cultural barriers to women's leadership is enlightening and more memorable for me than Jamieson's (1995) scheme of the "double binds." The scarlet letter works as a metaphor, and I for one am more than ready to wear the scarlet A's of *authority*, *ambition*, *ability*, and *authenticity*—to turn the barriers into badges of honor. Wilson not only has the ability to find the sliver of hope in the complex cultural puzzle of contemporary American society but with audacity she has attacked cultural constraints with the "tools of the master," as she characterizes television, movies, journalism, advertising, toys, and books. Whereas others fixate on the problem she sees "a huge opportunity to stretch the collective imagination, showing women and men in nontraditional roles and changing the perception of what is possible in the real world" (p. 119). She has used her passion, position, and contacts to be an agent of cultural change on a large scale. If Wilson can take on the whole culture surely we can work to change the face of educational leadership one school, district, and university at a time. Continued quiet *accommodation* is clearly not the answer.

Conclusion

Although the book does not directly address the leadership gap in education, I would recommend this book to any educator interested in understanding education's leadership gap and envisioning creative remedies. Wilson offers a vision we could learn from of how to close the leadership gap through innovative out-of-the box actions to change cultural perceptions, through claiming our strengths and supporting each other. At the very least, her book suggests that the work of women educational leaders is enormously important. By their very presence, women school, district, and university leaders strongly influence cultural change by providing a female image of leadership. As images change in the minds of the young, so over time do cultural perceptions. The common perception that men are leaders and women are not *must*, in the words of Blount (1998), "go the way of the

buffalo” if we are to have an America where women and men share leadership, if we are to have mutually supportive merged public and private worlds, if we are to have schools that teach democratic values, if we are to have a society where public policy emerges from human values, and if we are to have a world in peace.

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