

3-2005

# Leadership-Skilled Women Teachers Who Choose the Classroom over Administration: Career Choice or Career Constraint?

Susan R. Wynn

Duke University, [susan.wynn@duke.edu](mailto:susan.wynn@duke.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/jwel>



Part of the [Educational Administration and Supervision Commons](#), and the [Women's Studies Commons](#)

---

Wynn, Susan R., "Leadership-Skilled Women Teachers Who Choose the Classroom over Administration: Career Choice or Career Constraint?" (2005). *Journal of Women in Educational Leadership*. 150.

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/jwel/150>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Educational Administration, Department of at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Women in Educational Leadership by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

# Leadership-Skilled Women Teachers Who Choose the Classroom over Administration: Career Choice or Career Constraint?

---

Susan R. Wynn

Some indicators point to a potential shortage of school administrators. The principalship has grown more complex due to increased accountability and escalating social complexities. This qualitative study sought to understand why leadership-skilled women teachers choose to remain in the classroom rather than seek administrative positions. Despite some gains, women are over-represented in the teaching force and under-represented as school administrators.

Twelve women were interviewed regarding their choice to remain in the classroom, their perceptions of the principalship, and the barriers for women who might be interested in school administration. Two presentations of the data are given, with the first addressing explicit reasons and the second using a postmodern feminist framework.

## Introduction

Is there a shortage of school administrators? Or is there a shortage of *qualified* school administrators? Regardless of where one stands on this issue, the possible, the pending, or the immediate principal shortage is a hotly contested controversy that has many policymakers wondering if there is a dearth of qualified school leaders. The role of the principal has received increased attention, as stakeholders acknowledge the importance of the person responsible for implementing initiatives generated by school reform.

As the principalship has garnered growing consideration, numerous research studies have been conducted to explore why teachers aspire to school administrative positions. However, few studies have looked at the issue conversely: why do qualified teachers decline entry into school

### About the Authors

*Susan R. Wynn*, Ed. D., is a faculty member in the Program in Education and the director of the Secondary Teacher Preparation Program at Duke University, Durham, NC, 27708, USA. She earned her Ed.D. in Educational Leadership from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC, in 2003. Her primary research interests include women in school administration, teacher and principal mentoring for beginning teachers, and feminist studies. She brings to the university 15 years of experience as a public school teacher and administrator.

---

administration? By examining why leadership-skilled teachers say “no” to school administration, there emerges the possibility to question some of the enduring assumptions about the field.

One way to examine this issue is to explore the gendered nature of education. The fact remains that women still dominate the teaching profession; indeed, they constitute 73% of the teaching force (Education Vital Signs, 1998). This high percentage, however, is not reflected in the numbers of school-level administrators. Recent figures indicate that women hold 44% of all public school principalships (Gates, Ringel, & Santibanez, 2003). Although this percentage is certainly higher than in years past, it is not comparable to the number of women teaching in classrooms. Perhaps even more disturbing, this figure masks the fact that there is greater representation of women in the elementary principalship although men retain the majority of the secondary principalships. At the high school level, women held only 21.3% of principalships (Gates et al., 2003). This discrepancy is noteworthy because the elementary principalship is not considered as prestigious as the secondary principalship, especially as it relates to career advancement (Ortiz, 1982).

The study addressed the following question: Why do leadership-skilled women teachers choose to remain in the classroom rather than seek administrative positions? The participants’ perceptions of the principalship also emerged, as well as their postulations regarding barriers for women who consider entry into school administration. The focus was on the discourse of teachers who have resisted the “tap on the shoulder” that indicates someone in power thinks a teacher should contemplate seeking an administrative position (Marshall & Kasten, 1994, p. 6). The women in this study demonstrated, to some degree, that they have the potential to be successful school administrators but for various reasons have resisted career advancement. Two presentations of the findings are offered. The first

explores the more explicit reasons the participants shared for choosing to remain in the classroom. The second presentation of the data utilizes a postmodern feminist framework to explore some of the more complex reasons they gave. The following literature review gives an overview of the possible principal shortage, examines the role of teacher efficacy, and considers the leadership style of women in the principalship.

### **The Principal Shortage?**

There is much debate over whether or not school districts are experiencing difficulty filling vacant principalships. A recent RAND study claimed that the candidate pool for school administrative positions is relatively stable, having experienced neither an increase nor a decrease in recent years (Gates et al., 2003). Indeed the researchers of this study reported that according to the latest National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), there has been "remarkable stability in the characteristics of school administrators and that any changes that did occur were not consistent with a national labor market in crisis" (p. 21). The study conceded, however, that although there is not a current shortage of qualified school administrators, there are areas for concern. Several indicators do point more strongly to a shortage of administrators, a shortage many states are already experiencing. *Education Week* reported that out of 403 randomly selected districts, more than 50% indicate a shortage of candidates for principalships (Olson, 1999). These shortages were reported in urban, rural, and suburban districts and were true for elementary, middle, and high schools. A study conducted by Educational Research Service (ERS) under the auspices of the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) reported that two out of every three principals surveyed indicated a concern over whether or not school districts could attract high-quality leaders (Education Vital Signs, 1998). Exacerbating the situation is the fact that retirement is imminent for 40% of elementary, middle, and high school principals, according to U.S. Department of Labor Statistics (Klempen & Richetti, 2001).

McAdams (1998) reported that superintendents, as well as search consultants, assert that the candidate pool for principals is about half of what it was 10 to 15 years ago. Fewer people, including teachers holding administrative certification, are applying for positions. The reasons for this phenomena range from higher teacher salaries to more two-income households. However, the requirements of the profession also impact potential candidates' decision to go into school administration. Carr (2003)

explained, “That stellar teachers aren’t jumping at the chance to break into administration isn’t surprising—the incentives just aren’t there for tackling what many view as being among the nation’s most demanding and thankless jobs” (p. 18).

The mounting expectations of the principal to be an instructional leader and an efficient manager are unrealistic and counterproductive, and growing awareness of this difficult dichotomy has led some critics to question the role of the principal, as well as the assumptions about this position. Hurley (2001) noted, “It’s time we stopped insisting that principals be superleaders and supermanagers” (p. 1). Boris-Schacter and Langer (2002) added, “We should stop wringing our hands and start actively modifying the principals’ working conditions and questioning the field’s enduring assumptions if we are to encourage new models and new practitioners” (p. 5).

### **Teacher Efficacy**

According to Black (2001), 30% of beginning teachers leave the classroom within three years. Nine percent of new teachers do not even make it through their first year. Clearly, teachers leave the classroom for a myriad of reasons, but they also have motivation for remaining in the profession. Hailed as one of the most important social psychological factors affecting teachers’ work (Smylie, 1990), teacher efficacy may help to explain why teachers remain in the classroom.

The concept of teacher efficacy is based upon cognitive social learning theory (Bandura, 1986). He defined self-efficacy as “people’s judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances” (p. 391). Borrowing from Bandura’s theory, educational researchers have sought ways to understand efficacy as it relates to the teaching profession. Hoy and Woolfolk (1993) reconceptualized Bandura’s self-efficacy theory into two dimensions, general teaching efficacy (GTE) and personal teaching efficacy (PTE). General teaching efficacy can be loosely defined as what an individual teacher thinks teachers can accomplish collectively while personal teaching efficacy refers to what an individual teacher believes he or she can do.

Many studies validate Hipp’s (1996) assertion that “teachers have different attitudes about their competence that become apparent in their professional behavior and, in turn, affect the performance of their students” (p. 6). Hoy and Woolfolk (1993) examined relationships between personal teaching efficacy and aspects of a healthy school climate. Healthy school climate indicators included institutional integrity, principal influence, consideration, resource support, morale, and academic emphasis. In this

study of 179 teachers, they found that two aspects of organizational life, principal influence and academic emphasis, predicted personal teaching efficacy. If these two aspects of organizational life were perceived to be present, then teachers tended to have higher personal teaching efficacy scores.

A meta-analysis of teacher efficacy based on research published in primary studies through December 1998 yielded 89 primary studies that addressed teacher efficacy (Shahid & Thompson, 2001). The authors reported that female teachers tended to have higher personal and general teaching efficacy in comparison to male teachers. Hoy and Woolfolk (1993) found that educational level was a personal variable that predicted personal teaching efficacy. They concluded that teachers who went on to graduate schools were more likely to have a greater sense of personal teaching efficacy.

The meta-analysis conducted by Shahid and Thompson (2001) also revealed that many studies indicated that the use of instructional strategies such as centers, cooperative learning, and interdisciplinary studies were strongly correlated to high teacher efficacy. The authors noted that "shared decision making and being part of a coaching network are strong predictors of high teacher efficacy" (p. 8).

### **Women and the Principalship**

Historically, women were teachers and men were principals. Blount (1998) argued that the principalship was a position created for men so they could oversee the work of the women teachers they supervised. The rise and fall of the numbers of women in school administration and the accompanying cultural, social, political, and economical contexts have been well-documented (Blount, 1998; Marshall, 1988; Shakeshaft, 1989). Barriers, constraints, socialization, sex roles and sex-role stereotypes are all themes that have emerged in the last thirty years of research in women and school administration (Banks, 1995).

A more recent research interest has included studies of women's leadership. The conceptualizations of leadership that undergird the administrative field are from a historically male perspective, and the study of women as leaders is a relatively new undertaking. In focusing on women principals' leadership style, some studies have revealed differences in comparison to men. Before noting these differences, however, it is important to express caution. To say that all women lead differently from men is to run the risk of over-generalizing, as well as essentializing women. Grogan (1999) stated that we must operate "on the understanding that there is no one set of

experiences that can be labeled as women's experiences, and that women may be as different as they are alike" (p. 523). Shakeshaft, Nowell, and Perry (1991), however, also pointed out that sex is a biological determination and in and of itself has little effect, but ". . . the way we are treated from birth onward, because we are either female or male, does help to determine how we both see and navigate the world" (p. 258).

There are various ways that women school administrators differ in comparison to men administrators. Shakeshaft (1995) explained that one difference in style is attributable to language, stating that women administrators use language that can be characterized as "power with" versus "power over" (p. 12). This difference for women plays out in many different arenas, including teacher relationships, instruction, community and evaluation. Ozga and Walker (1995) supported this point by stating that women principals exhibit more effective communication skills and foster a sense of community in their schools.

McGrath (1992) noted that women in school administrative positions generally have had more years in the classroom; therefore, they are in possession of more "expert" information. He concluded that women are indeed valuable assets to school districts. Fullan (1997) lauded the increase of more women in the role of the principalship.

Women, more than men, tend to negotiate conflict in ways that try to preserve relationships, to value relationships in and of themselves as part of their commitment to care, and be socialized in a way that prepares them better to work in collaborative organizations. (p. 16)

At a time when the principalship has become increasingly contentious, women have made gains in assuming this position, especially when one considers that the percentage of women school administrators was actually lower in the 1980s than it was in 1905 (Shakeshaft, 1999). The more conventional job description of the principalship required the ability to manage: manage the budget, personnel, discipline, and facilities. In addition to these more traditional responsibilities, principals must now also be collaborators, community-builders, and entrepreneurs. They must also be "instructional leaders steeped in curriculum, instruction, and assessment who can coach, teach, develop and distribute leadership to those in their charge" in order to move schools toward continuous improvement (Sparks, 2002, p. 7-2). Teachers, including the ones who participated in this study, may not be eager to assume these roles. Indeed, Cusick (2003) asserted, "The pool of principal candidates is shrinking because fewer teachers—who represent the vast majority of principal candidates—are willing to take on the job" (p. 44).

### **Conceptual Framework: Postmodern Feminism**

The combination of two perspectives, postmodernism and feminism, promoted an examination of the institutional and social contexts in which women teachers with leadership abilities operate. Fraser and Nicholson (1990) acknowledged that there are some problematic issues when coupling postmodernism and feminism. However, they also noted that although these two perspectives are in some ways antithetical, the merging of the two incorporates the strengths of each while eradicating the weaknesses of both. In regard to their respective strengths, the two perspectives have shared purpose and value in that both have sought to develop new ways to think about social criticism, ways that do not fall back on traditional philosophical foundations (Fraser & Nicholson, 1990).

Most commonly associated with postmodernity, Lyotard asserted that there is no "grand narrative," or universalizing philosophy. Sim (2001) explained, "Lyotard's objective is to demolish the authority wielded by grand narrative, which he takes to be repressive of individual creativity" (p. 9). The grand narratives must be rejected because they are authoritarian but really have no authority. Narratives should be open to reinterpretation based upon changing times and changing societal issues. There should be no "impregnable theory that holds over time and whose authority should never be questioned" (Sim, 2001, p. 8). In the place of grand narratives, Lyotard advocated "little narratives" that are defined as deliberate and particular groupings that search for ways to counter explicit social ills (Sim, 2001).

Fraser and Nicholson (1990) suggested starting with the nature of the social object one wishes to criticize. In this case, the object is the subordination of women to and by men. In doing so, a postmodern feminism would abstain from the analysis of grand causes of women's oppression and concentrate instead on its historically and culturally specific expressions. In short, postmodern feminism is non-universalistic, pragmatic, and diverse. Rather than being universalist, it is instead comparative; instead of utilizing one method or category, it uses many, depending upon the specific task; and finally, instead of essentializing women, it recognizes the diverse experiences and differences of women (Fraser & Nicholson, 1990).

Substantiating the view of Fraser and Nicholson (1990), Flynn (2002) stated, "Postmodern feminists criticize modernist tendencies to universalize, to focus on the individual divorced from social context, and to ignore the ways in which local situations affect interpretive processes" (p. 44). Blount (1994) asserted that a postmodern feminism is able to break free of the limitations of essentialism. She identified two essentialist narratives that have served previously to constrain feminism. One included the theory that men



and women have essential dissimilarities due to biological differences. The other one claimed that women are different from men, in that women have essential positive feminine qualities, like caring and compassion.

This type of framework allowed for exploring the complex and varied reasons teachers offered for remaining in the classroom. Additionally, with the use of the theoretical constructs discussed in the next section, this framework provided for an exploration of a deeper understanding of women teachers' perceptions of school administration and the principalship.

### **Theoretical Constructs**

Four constructs were of central importance for this research study: language and discourse, subjectivity, power, and common sense assumptions. These constructs are more commonly associated with poststructuralism as explicated by Weedon (1997) and Capper (1992) and applied by Grogan (1996) in her study of women who aspire to the superintendency. However, it is important to note Stone's (in press) point about poststructuralism, which is, "There is no poststructuralism" (p. 1). Instead of a "unified theory or tradition" there is "a set of shared concepts" (p. 6). It is more appropriate to locate these constructs in postmodern feminist theory. The following section provides a brief explanation of each of the constructs.

#### **Language and Discourse**

According to Weedon (1997), language must be understood as existing within the context of historical discourses and also in terms of competing discourses. Language and discursive practices reveal various conceptions of femininity and masculinity through which people live their lives. Related to language is the concept of *discourse*, primarily developed in the work of Foucault. Scott (1988) defined discourse by first stating what it is not—it is not a language. Instead, a discourse is "a historically, socially, and institutionally specific structure of statements, terms, categories, and beliefs" (p. 35). Capper (1992) suggested considering the following questions: "To what extent are particular values and interests served, and which ones are silenced? What discourses are named and which are silenced" (p. 200)?

#### **Subjectivity**

Subjectivity places doubt on the stability and innateness of identity. Weedon (1997) noted that subjectivity is "not genetically determined, but socially produced" (p. 21). Grogan (1996) added, ". . . subjectivity is a changing process and often involves conflicting versions of the self made available as one grows older, moves in different circles, and even as the institutional

discourses themselves change over time” (p. 36). The idea of subjectivity allows us to understand how we are constituted by our position in a discourse (Grogan, 1996). With subjectivity, there is no one fixed identity. In fact, subjectivity “allows for the exploration of the shifting, contradictory, incomplete, and competing interpretations of personal identity” (Capper, 1992, p. 21).

### **Power**

Power, a most complicated construct, is thought of as located in the institution rather than in the individual (Grogan, 1996). Borrowing from Foucault’s notion of power, power is relational. In other words, the issue of power is not power over in superordinate/subordinate sense. Grogan (1996) noted that through alliances that are formed by groups sharing similar thoughts, they are able to marginalize those who have different views. Capper (1992) suggested comparing dissensus and resistance to consensus.

### **Common Sense Assumptions**

Common sense assumptions are knowledge statements that are accepted unquestionably because that is the way things are perceived to be. As Weedon (1997) noted, however, “Common sense knowledge is not a monolithic, fixed body of knowledge” (p. 75). As she reminded us, the power of common sense lies in its claim to be “natural, obvious and therefore true” (p. 75). It is important to examine the common sense assumptions that permeate and often mold one’s life experiences.

## **Methods**

Qualitative research was the most appropriate approach for giving voice to the women in this study. Qualitative researchers look for “answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 8). This qualitative research study sought to understand the following: Why do leadership-skilled women teachers choose to remain in the classroom rather than seek administrative positions? Two sub-questions emerged: (a) How do leadership-skilled women teachers perceive the principalship role? (b) What barriers related to school administration do leadership-skilled women teachers identify? Postmodern feminism served as the underpinning for the analysis of the data.

I focused the research study on one school district in North Carolina. Located in the central part of the state, this district enrolls 31,000 students in schools that vary tremendously based upon their locations. The district

consists of 44 schools that serve students who are ethnically, culturally, and socio-economically diverse.

In the tradition of qualitative research, purposeful sampling (Patton, 1990) was used to select teachers who varied in regard to level of school (elementary, middle, secondary, high), location of school (rural, urban, suburban) and years of teaching experience.

Principals of ten schools were asked to recommend two or three women teachers who, in their opinion, demonstrated leadership in the school and had the capacity for school administration. For each recommended teacher, principals completed two forms. The first form asked principals to identify the following for each teacher: the assumption of additional school-related duties, participation in decision-making, and the provision of instructional leadership. Principals also completed a Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) (Northouse, 2001). The LBDQ was designed to measure two major types of leadership behavior, task orientation and relationship behavior. Task orientation refers to the degree to which the person helps to establish structure that aids in role definition and identification of expectations. Relationship behavior refers to the degree to which the person engages in interpersonal actions that help to build positive relations. Consisting of 20 statements to which the principal replied how often the recommended teacher engaged in the described behavior, the questionnaire provided a profile of leadership style.

Through this process a pool of 21 candidates was created. The selected teachers were mailed a letter explaining the study, an informed consent form, the LBDQ, and a sample of the interview questions. Using maximum variation sampling, the researcher selected and interviewed 12 participants who had been identified as possessing leadership skills suitable for administration and varied across school grade level, location of school, and years of experience. Pseudonyms were used. The leadership survey scores (both the principal's assessment of the teacher and the teacher's own self-assessment) also were used as a tool to ascertain the final participants.

Interviewees were asked to share their thoughts and feelings regarding their own roles as teachers and teacher leaders, their perception of the principalship, and their reasons for choosing to remain in the classroom rather than positioning themselves for school administrative roles. The teachers were interviewed face-to-face in their school settings for approximately one and a half hours. The interviews were semi-structured, tape-recorded and later transcribed for purposes of analysis. A reflective journal and extensive field notes documenting body language, facial expressions, gestures and other non-verbal cues were kept throughout the process.

The conceptual framework, the sites, and the sample helped to focus the data analysis. Following complete immersion in the data and reflection on the conceptual framework, themes and categories emerged, that were supported with thick description including quotations and details. The data were triangulated and verified by using multiple data collection methods: the in-depth interviews, the interview log, document analysis, field notes, leadership survey scores, and reflective journal.

## **Findings**

### **Explicit Reasons**

The purpose of this study was to better understand the reasons why leadership-skilled women teachers choose to remain in the classroom rather than position themselves for school administrative positions. A primary reason for their decision to remain in the classroom was related to their strong sense of personal teaching efficacy, as well as the teacher leadership they exercised at their respective schools. Additionally, as they discussed the job responsibilities of the principal, it became clear that in comparison to this position, they preferred their own as classroom teacher.

### **Making a Difference: Teacher Efficacy**

Several of the participants felt a special calling had brought them to teaching, speaking of destiny, fate, and “heart-felt decisions.” Some expressed that they “were born to teach” and spoke of their parents and grandparents being educators, which had influenced them as they made career choices. Regardless of whether they had always wanted to be a teacher or whether they entered the profession after trying another field, they were all passionate about their students and felt that they made a positive difference.

This passion for their students was closely tied to personal teaching efficacy. A former elementary school teacher who was in the process of transitioning to the middle school stated, “If you are asking me what keeps me in the classroom, I really and truly have to say seeing the students succeed. Success is not necessarily passing, because I’ve had students that have been retained. But to know that they made progress academically, socially. Just seeing that, that really does a lot for me.” Another affirmed that it was an “inner reward” that she wasn’t sure how to explain, but it was related to planning an elaborate lesson and having the students succeed in accomplishing what she had designed for them. High school veteran Kim Dorsey referred to teaching as “probably the most natural thing I’ve ever tried to do. You wear so many hats in life. Being in the classroom and being a teacher is a hat that just fits.” Another high school teacher, Rhonda Waters,

commented, "I can actually say that I love my job. People all around me say, 'Yes, you really love your job.' I look forward to coming to work every morning." In essence these participants expressed a fundamental concern for the welfare of children and derived their job satisfaction from feeling they had made a difference in the lives of children.

These teachers demonstrated an acceptance of responsibility for student outcomes rather than to factors beyond their control, a key element of teacher efficacy. Several of the teachers spoke of the fact that they had greater success than their colleagues with some of the more challenging students, whether it be in their academic instruction or in their classroom management. Celie Chaps said, "My affinity is toward the under-achieving, behavior problem child that you can just see so much intelligence in, and getting them to get on track." Lana Adders commented,

I care about my students . . . I want to work hard at trying to figure out how I can teach them best what they're learning. I have four different classes now, and I teach each class differently because I feel like their needs are different. I really work hard at that. I don't just teach the same thing every class. I want to learn new strategies.

Lana's statements revealed her belief that her students' academic success was directly related to her ability to teach; thus, she sought numerous ways to refine her teaching practices.

### **Making a Difference: Teacher Leadership**

Similarly, the participants stated that they made a difference in the lives of adults and derived satisfaction from their exercise of teacher leadership. Without exception, all of the participants were extremely busy with school obligations outside of their regular teaching duties and put in a tremendous amount of time, often coming in early and leaving late. With the exception of one participant, they expressed satisfaction that their colleagues viewed them as leaders, thus indicating they might have been less likely to choose school administration as a career choice.

Of significance was the fact that all of the participants were actively engaged in several areas of school-wide decision making. Eight of the 12 women mentioned their participation on the site-based decision-making team of their school. With the exception of the least experienced participants, many of them were either on the site-based decision-making team or had previously served on site-based teams.

Eleven of the participants also alluded to their mentoring of other teachers, both formally and informally. In this context, mentoring served as a reason to remain in teaching. With the exception of one, all the participants

were certified mentors who had undergone district-level training, and many also provided mentoring in their roles as chairs of departments or teams.

A middle school veteran, Patricia Cabby, who was not mentoring formally at the time, expressed that she would basically help out any teacher who needed assistance. "I don't necessarily have to be assigned a mentee, but I'll work with any teacher that's new, (give) any advice, anything that I can do to help them." Another high school teacher, Rhonda Waters, expressed her willingness to help new teachers.

A lot of the younger teachers do come to me, which I find surprising. Not realizing that I have all this experience now, for a long time I saw myself still in that mentee role as opposed to a mentor. The younger teachers, the beginning teachers, and even when they have questions, people come to me. . . .

It appeared her experiences and years had contributed to her formation as a mentor, as she moved from being a beginning new teacher to an experienced veteran.

### **Teachers' Perspective on the Principalship**

Without exception and perhaps unsurprisingly, the participants in this study viewed the principalship as a position fraught with difficulty, stress, and problems. Their perception of the principal's role also contributed to their reasons for choosing to remain in the classroom rather than considering school administration as a career choice. They reported that school administration entailed problems: problems working with adults and problems navigating through politics. Working with adults was viewed as one of the primary reasons they would not consider entering the pipeline for school administration. In many instances they compared working with adults to working with children.

The thing with me is that I really don't like working with adults. I do because I have to. They (teachers) do the same things that you tell your students not to do. It's so hard . . . an adult's mind is already formed. They're not going to change . . . For a child, the mind is still conforming, so they're pretty much going to conform in one way or the other at some point. (Katie Mills)

. . . I have a real hard time with people who are supposedly professionals and know what the job is that they're supposed to do and won't do it. I don't feel like it is my job to treat them as children. Elementary school teachers are a whole lot like elementary school children. I just really lose patience with that, and I am the type of person that I don't want to offend anyone or be disrespectful and nasty. (Celie Chaps)

I can't stand negativity, and I find there are a lot of adults who are very negative . . . I dislike being around people who don't want to be here and hate their job. It's hard to work with somebody like that. They complain all the time. I know a lot of adults do that. A kid has an excuse, and an adult really doesn't. I can see a principal hearing so much . . . and it's just one problem after another. (Lana Adders)

These teachers viewed the principal as having to work with adults who were often negative and unprofessional. Working with children seemed preferable to tolerating the actions and attitudes of adults.

Several of the teachers also observed the political nature of the principalship and their perception was that principals often had to make decisions based upon the politics of an issue. They viewed this as another major disincentive for moving into school administration because they did not see themselves enjoying the role. Some feared that the political nature of the principalship would cause them to make decisions that were not student-centered. Teresa Vrack commented,

. . . I wouldn't want to be that political, worried about pleasing the parents and all the pressures that come. To have to be political and to worry about all the attacks, I think that would be my biggest reluctance about going into school administration. I think I'd be really frustrated by that and if I didn't feel like I was doing what I thought was best for the kids, I'd be really frustrated.

This participant's perception was that principals must be "political," which negatively impacts students.

Related to their observations about the politics of the principalship were the participants' perceptions about parents. A high school teacher, Kim Dorsey, expressed her concern that people in school leadership roles were losing their power because of demanding parents. She expressed her frustration with the fact that, in her opinion, parents have too much power, which often leads to parents dictating policies and programs. She also commented on the need for principals to "back" their teachers, especially in instances where the parent and student were clearly wrong. In her mind, there should be no question of whether the principal would support her or not.

Choosing the classroom over a career in school administration was a decision the participants had all made, despite the fact they were perceived to be well qualified and to possess the potential to be successful school administrators. The next section uses a postmodern feminist framework to explore the somewhat more complex reasons, both external and internal, that factored into their decision.

## Using a Postmodern Feminist Framework

The previous section shared some of the explicit reasons that the teachers gave for choosing the classroom over pursuing a career in school administration, despite the fact that they possessed, in many regards, the necessary qualities to pursue a position in school administration. This section applies a postmodern feminist framework with the four constructs of language, subjectivity, power, and common sense assumptions.

### Language and Discourse

The discursive fields of the participants in this study were primarily that of education and for many, family, partnering, and motherhood. These two discursive fields were, for the most part, compatible for the participants in this study, whereas the discourse of school administration was not.

The language some of the participants reflected their perceptions of the role of principal, a role they more often than not viewed as one filled by a man. Dora Cobb, a high school teacher, revealed that during the course of her 30 years in education, she had always worked for male principals. As she considered the under-representation of women in the administrative ranks, she commented that perhaps men felt “this lack of satisfaction” and that “there’s a hole that’s not being met in the classroom,” a feeling that could be met by being “in control of the school,” which will lead to feelings of satisfaction. She handed it over to men.

Maybe the women just don’t need that, and that may be from society, the man of the house type thing, the father is the one who has the final word. Let the principals and the assistant principals be the father.

She also noted, however, that administrators could not do the job without the teachers, “like there’s Dad, but he couldn’t get supper and we were starving.” Her comparison of school administration to the father, to the male, reveals her belief that men administer and women teach; however, her statement reveals that this is not, perhaps, a negative circumstance because women teachers are doing the real work in the classroom. By outward appearances, women follow the rules and mind the boundaries, but when the classroom door closes, they are doing the important work of educating children, regardless of male-established rules and boundaries. Her analogy of the principal to the father is both fascinating and troubling, since this comparison reveals this participant’s belief that women are still viewed in a subservient role, earning less money and held in less regard than the “father,” even



though women are doing the real work. In a patriarchal society, the father is the one in control, who sets the limits, and establishes the boundaries.

Kim Dorsey reported that little had changed in regard to stereotypical gender roles. She thought that men were much more aggressive about pursuing administrative positions, even when they had only four or five years of teaching experience. "Very few females are ever going to be seen doing that. Someone has to plant the seed." However, she did not feel that this was the case for men.

. . . I think for a lot of male administrators, that's when they start. That's why they climb up the ladder and become principals of high schools. Year ten of the principalship, they've done the elementary, they've done the middle school, they've done it all.

She thought school administration was more likely to be a profession for men, AND teaching was a profession for women. "I would put it in the lines that doctors are male and nurses are female. It's the same. Bosses are male; secretaries are female. I don't know where that chain breaks; I don't know how it breaks."

### **Subjectivity**

As noted previously, subjectivity is socially produced and is a changing process. As these teachers tried to imagine themselves in the role of the principal, they had difficulty conceptualizing a position that removed them from the classroom. A point made by Grogan (2000) is relevant. She noted, "Teaching encourages relationship building; administration recommends keeping distance" (p. 128). This fact was apparent in the comments that many participants made as they projected their feelings about moving into school administration. Kim Dorsey thought that she might consider school administration if she didn't have to give up the classroom, "because that's the most positive contact you can have with kids." Likewise, Teresa Vrack said she would want to teach at least one class if she were ever a principal.

Rhonda Waters said that she would consider school administration if she could still teach a couple of classes, noting that this would be the ideal situation. Patricia Cabby stated, "If I could be a principal, I would have to be in the classroom. I would probably aggravate the teachers because I would be in the room helping with the students. I'm more hands-on with the children." Patricia shared that she had been a summer school administrator, though she felt it gave her a better perspective of what school administrators actually do, the experience solidified her belief that the classroom was the place for her.

In comparing male and female principals, Kim Dorsey made an interesting comment that shows the interaction of language, subjectivity, and power.

You can get a lot of things done with a male principal that I think are tougher sometimes to get done with a female principal . . . One of the things that I have learned is that you can either use your femininity to stop something from happening or you can use it to make something happen. I think a lot of times we (women) shoot ourselves in the foot by using it to make something not happen.

She later elaborated that it was important to “remember that in society we still play male and female roles.” She gave the example of “being sweet and kind” and “letting them (male principals) come up with the idea themselves and planting the seed” for getting something done. She added,

It’s not that you’re playing stupid; you’re letting them be in control. If we don’t do that, we don’t get what we want sometimes . . . I hate to say it, but if you stroke an ego, they’re going to perform for you.

She contrasted this with a previous female principal, stating that you didn’t have to “play the gender role” because this principal was a “straight shooter.” Her narrative revealed that her interactions with a male principal differed from her interactions with a female principal; however, she has still traditionally positioned herself in her relationships with male principals.

The relationship between subjectivity and discourse is closely intertwined because discourse shapes subjectivity. The participants in this study indicated that their subjectivity was constructed around the discourse of teaching and for the most part, they had difficulty imagining themselves in roles that removed them from teaching and students. The consideration of gendered subject positions is especially important for this particular study in light of the fact that the respondents were all women teachers, and teaching was definitely a part of their own gendered subjectivity.

### **Power**

Power, according to Foucault, is everywhere, organizing discourses and serving a number of purposes, often concurrently (Williams, 1999). As mentioned previously, the concept of power is complex and contentious. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, points of resistance are discussed, for a postmodern perspective implies resistance as other voices are included (Grogan, 2000).

All the participants in this study acknowledged that the principalship is a position of power; however, many of the teachers have found ways to temper this power. Particularly noticeable in the discourses of women high school teachers working for male principals were localized points of resistance to the school administrative discourse. It was important for Kim Dorsey to point out that she didn't think she was "beneath" the principal. She elaborated, "I think you need both parts to make a school work. I don't think that being a classroom teacher is necessarily less than anyone else." She added that individuals "enable somebody to either look down on you or judge you by what your profession is. I'm happier in the classroom than I would be as an administrator, so I choose to stay in the classroom." In this case, Kim has tried consciously to place herself outside of the hierarchical nature of school administration.

Lana Adders shared a similar sentiment. She did not view herself as subordinate to the principal, again viewing this person as male. "I may be subordinate to him on the books and on the ladder, but I think that any principal that is worth his weight in cotton or anything knows that you are only as strong as your faculty."

High school teacher Dora Cobb had a rather subversive point of resistance in regard to the male-dominated principalship.

From my point of view, if the good teachers stay in the classroom and the not-so-good teachers are the ones who leave the classroom, then I can almost have a bias the other way and say the males who are in administration might not have been cutting it as teachers, whereas the females who are in the classroom may be very successful and feel satisfied.

She said that she got the "pluses and the minuses" by working with the students, and she could "still have a finger in the pie of the running of the school" through weekly meetings with the principal. In her opinion, this was much more preferable than having to be the one "to take all the phone calls." Her statement revealed a possible point of resistance as she explained that the effective ("good") teachers are really the ones who experience job satisfaction in comparison to the principal.

The issue of salary was not a point of resistance for the participants. Although the majority of these teachers mentioned they were not motivated by money, they did lament the fact that their salaries were incomparable to other fields.

When I graduated, I'd have done it for free, I was so ready to get in a classroom. I look at my brother-in-law, who used to work for the Pic n Pay shoes home office, and he was in charge of teaching people how to sell

shoes and was making twice as much money as I was and benefits. I said, "This is our future I am teaching, and you're just teaching somebody how to sell pairs of cheap shoes that you just have to go get the box off the shelf." (Celie Chaps)

Celie added that teaching was respected but "respected on the level that you would respect a minister or whatever, but you know those people aren't in it to make money."

Katie Mills drew a distinction between men and women related to money, noting that women appear to be "happy" with the salary and don't mind the fact that they are not well compensated. Similarly, Kim Dorsey said, "I know that we don't get paid what we're worth, but I live just fine." Patricia Cabby summed it up:

I wish I made a little more money, but money is not everything. You have to love what you do. If I were making \$100,000 and didn't like what I was doing, it wouldn't be worth it to me. I love what I do.

Participants expressed their awareness of the discrepancy in pay for a teacher in comparison to a principal. It became clear that they often attributed this discrepancy to the male gender, a common sense assumption:

For one thing, males have always traditionally gotten paid more than us. They're supposed be the breadwinners. I don't see too many males trying to have a family on a teacher's salary. (Patricia Cabby)

I think one of the reasons why men leave the classroom is money. If you have a family, it's certainly more enticing. Even though the hours may shift and may not be as wonderful at the high school level, certainly for an administrator, I think there's significant, if not just pay raise, potential to move on from there. (Kim Dorsey)

Kim realized that the high school principalship, predominantly filled by men, offered greater financial rewards, as well as more potential for career advancement. Implicitly, her common sense assumption was, however, that women are not motivated by the desire to earn more money. In this discussion of financial compensation, no mention of equity was made. The participants did not question the fairness of men earning more money than women, nor did they raise the question of why teachers made less money than administrators.

### **Common Sense Assumptions**

The interaction of language, power, and subjectivity leads to common sense assumptions about the way the world operates—the way things are perceived

to be by individuals. Common sense knowledge relies on human nature “to guarantee its version of reality” (Weedon, 1997, p. 74). The most commonly repeated common sense truism noted by the majority of these participants was the belief (sometimes attributed to society) that women are nurturers by nature. In this sense, personal style was ascribed to what were perceived to be innate qualities of women. This led many participants to the point that women were perhaps better suited for working with children because of their possession of nurturing, caring qualities, while men were more “business-like,” more “driven,” more “logical,” making them more suited for school administrative roles, especially at the middle and high school level. This nurturing also related to two barriers they identified for women who might consider school administration.

A recurring comment made by the respondents referred to women as nurturers. Although they did not say that men were incapable of being nurturers, they did note that “society” attributed more nurturing qualities to women and viewed education as women’s work. Thus, teaching evolved into a position for women.

I think the bottom line is raising children is women’s work. It’s accepted in society traditionally, always. Therefore, it’s not as important; therefore, you’re not paid as much; therefore, it’s not valued as much. There are a lot of ramifications from that. Until we sort of look at raising the young as being very important for everybody to do, I don’t think it’s going to change. I think ideally it needs to change because you not only look at college, high school, middle school, and elementary, you look at day care. In day care the conditions are abysmal. It’s for the same sort of reasons. (Dottie Holt)

... there may be women like me who say, ‘I’m more nurturing than men. I don’t want to be the bad guy so I’m not going into administration because I don’t want to be the wicked witch of the East. I’m going to stay here in my classroom and give them hugs, wipe their noses, pat them on the shoulder and send them out.’ (Dora Cobb)

Maybe people don’t take women as seriously because they’re not as business-like, because women seem to be more nurturing. That’s why more women are teachers, I believe. (Lana Adders)

“Women’s work” and “wicked witch of the East” are in contrast to men who “have the power and control” and are perceived to be “business-like.” Participants in this study underscored their belief that, at least in the eyes of society, teaching is a more acceptable profession for women, while school administration is more suitable for men. Related to this belief was the participants’ conjecture about more women serving in elementary principalships than in secondary principalships.

. . . I think women are naturally more nurturing, and for the elementary kids, a woman's disciplinary style works better with elementary school kids, or they perceive it as working better with elementary school kids. (Teresa Vrack)

I think men might have the persona more of getting the respect of the people, whereas in elementary, it's more nurturing and a more mother-like role. (Barbara Fitz)

Again the idea of being nurturing, I'm sure an elementary school principal gets to stand in the hallway or at the bus line and smile at the kids and take their hands. . . . (Dora Cobb)

In light of their assertions about societal expectations regarding women as nurturers, it appears that these beliefs influenced them when they considered the possibility of moving into school administration.

Related to their role of nurturers, the majority of the participants indicated that women have more family responsibilities in comparison to men, who were perceived to be unfettered by the conflicting demands of motherhood, partnering, and home life. Nine of the 12 participants were married and/or had children, thus focus on a family was present. Those who commented about family said that it served as a deterrent for women who might consider school administration as a profession.

A middle school veteran, Patricia Cabby, acknowledged that the primary care of her child fell upon her shoulders; thus, she did not consider school administration as a viable career option for her. She said, "If you're an administrator and have a family, it's probably more difficult for a female to be out on a limb as a principal than it is for a male because women are the ones who usually take care of the children. Right now I have a sixth-grader. Could I be at school all the time if I were an administrator and not give my daughter the time that she needs?"

Dora Cobb alluded to the extra-curricular events that principals must also attend and the impact that this could have on a family.

I think one of the reasons is if you have women such as I who had young children. Mine are now grown. At the time they were young, I couldn't have put in the hours for administration. I could not have come here for all the plays, the games, and everything else that happens after school because my family was important.

Some of the participants shared their assumption that men were more suited to dealing with student discipline, thus serving as another barrier for women who might consider school administration. Katie Mills, an elementary teacher who had just taken a position at a middle school, said that

due to inherent qualities of males and females, males were better equipped to address the discipline issues because they were less emotional.

I think more males, as far as discipline goes, feel they can handle it simply because of the fact that they don't wear their hearts on their shoulders. With most females, of course, the job is a little more stressful for them because that's what they do. They feel each and every student's pain. They get more involved. Not to say that male principals don't get involved, but on a different level. They're more logical, I guess.

Patricia Cabby reported,

As far as high school, I don't think they feel that females can handle discipline issues at a high school. Say two big boys who are 6'2' get in a fight, and they weigh 200 pounds. They don't think that a female can handle that.

She conceded, however, "A male might not be able to handle it either."

Jan Moore suggested that women were "afraid" to take high school principalships due to the fact that teenagers have become much more challenging. She referred to "the belligerent kid who is probably going to be lucky if he lives to be 30. A kid like that had just as soon shoot you as do what you want them to do . . . I think fear is a factor." This was a fear she attributed to women only, even though men face the same challenging teenagers as women. These same teenagers were also the ones Jan dealt with everyday in her classroom; however, she apparently drew a distinction between women teachers and women administrators.

Teresa Vrack, a seventh-grade teacher who taught at a secondary school (grades 6 through 12), observed that the discipline problems were not as severe at the elementary school level and that high school discipline would be "intimidating" for women administrators. High school teacher Dora Cobb suggested that women would not want to be perceived as disciplinarians, especially as they moved from elementary schools to middle and high school. "If a woman doesn't want that role of the ogre, she's not going to choose the high school level." It is interesting to note that in her comment, she implied that men do not take offense to being known as an ogre, but women would sacrifice career advancement to avoid being considered a monster.

## **Discussion and Recommendations**

The interviews with 12 women teachers revealed that their decisions to remain in the classroom were a complex mixture of both choice and

constraint. Based upon strong feelings of teacher efficacy, their decisions can be viewed as a choice. Similarly, they derived satisfaction in their roles as teacher leaders, perhaps contributing to their choices to remain in the classroom. They also viewed the principal's role as one fraught with stressors, thus reinforcing their decision to remain in the classroom.

In utilizing a postmodern feminist framework, the more subtle reasons were also presented. Fraser and Nicholson (1990) asserted that a primary aim of feminist theory is social criticism. As this type of framework suggests, gender is a major focus and the purpose is to explore ways to alter the existing power relations between women and men in society (Weedon, 1997). Although the participants, for the most part, rejected the stereotypical belief that women were not suitable candidates for school administrative positions, they often made comments about cultural expectations for appropriately feminine behavior. The participants associated women with the role of teacher and nurturer, and they, in turn, nurtured their students and colleagues. They did not associate nurturing with school administration, nor did they view this role as compatible with their own identities.

These participants shared their perspectives on what it meant to be a woman teacher with leadership skill working in a predominantly male-dominated administrative arena. They had thought about school administration and their understanding of the discourse of school administration and its associated power was apparent. Their points of resistance ranged from almost unconscious to subversive. What they often struggled with was their own position within this discourse and the opportunities it made available and the constraints it placed upon them.

The women in this study noted the multi-faceted role of the principal and realized that it was a complex position due to the varying demands made by different stakeholders. The respondents indicated they valued (as they considered school leadership) principals who facilitated, a leadership quality more often attributed to women. Evident was a strong preference for what Shakeshaft (1995) termed "power with" as opposed to "power over." One participant reported that it was important that every person's role be perceived as different, but equally important. The term these participants used most frequently for their preference of a principal's leadership style was *collaborative*, meaning that the principal sought and valued the input of the teachers. In their opinion, the principal should be viewed as a member of a team.

There will continue to be a need for highly qualified principals who are grounded in curriculum and instruction. Women, such as the ones who participated in this study, have the potential to be qualified school administrators. School administration was structured from the beginning as a



“manly” profession, and research on school administration historically has reflected this androcentric bias (Blount, 1998; Shakeshaft, 1989). As Blount (1994) noted, many feminists have argued that “studies of leadership behavior have presented problems for women in general because the scientific, positivistic underpinnings of such works are inherently gender biased” (p. 51). Thus, the discourse of school administration remains male-dominated, despite some gains that have been made by looking at the leadership styles that women bring to the profession. Although not attributable to the male-dominated discourse of educational administration, this fact, along with societal expectations, contributed to these participants’ reasons for saying “no” to school administration.

What are some ways to challenge the current discourse of school administration? Further examination of the topic of women’s leadership is needed. This does not mean the presence of more women in school administrative positions will automatically challenge the current discourse. It does mean, however, that further study of the characteristics more commonly associated with women—collaboration, care, facilitation—is a topic for further exploration.

Another possibility, and one that would perhaps encourage women such as the ones who participated in this study to consider school administration, is to further explore mentoring possibilities. Gardiner, Enomoto, and Grogan (2000) made a strong case for the possibility of mentoring to transform educational leadership. They noted that the accounts of women’s mentoring “. . . do not show only status quo reproduction of existing social mores and norms, but of women’s resistance and proactive shaping of new agendas for our nation’s schools.” Furthermore, they stated, “Women are located in a position to know and understand the system, and to defy and change it” (p. 27). The women in this study demonstrated extensive understanding of the system, especially in their own positions as teacher leaders and mentors to their colleagues. If they were willing to engage in a formal mentoring relationship, then they may have the opportunity to challenge their own assumptions about school administration and their decision to remain in the classroom.

The Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) (2000) published a report from the Task Force on the Principalship in an effort to raise the public’s awareness about the problems facing educational leadership. The Task Force highlighted two important points: the top priority of the principalship must be “leadership for learning” and the principalship as it is currently configured fails to meet the first priority (p. 1). As a result, the Task Force urged school systems to “reinvent the principalship” so that the needs of schools can be met. “School systems should recognize that one person cannot provide

effective leadership for student learning while tending to the thousand tasks traditionally heaped on principals” (IEL, 2000, p. 13).

Another possibility for challenging the existing discourse and for recruiting leadership-skilled women teachers to school administration would be to restructure the job responsibilities, duties and expectations of the principal. Though there are various conceptualizations for this, one possibility is the co-principalship, currently practiced only in localized and isolated circumstances. This option has the potential to effect change in the way the role of the principal is configured. In arrangements such as this, two qualified administrators share the principalship. Either all the responsibilities are evenly divided, or there are two principals, one for instruction and one for management (Boris-Schacter & Langer, 2002). It is this latter configuration of co-principalship that would perhaps hold the greatest promise for attracting qualified women teachers to consider upward career movement. As principals of instruction, leadership-skilled women teachers could maintain their connection to students and the classroom and focus on impacting instruction. A postmodern feminist perspective questions both why things are the way they are, as well as whose interest is being served by the way things are (Grogan, 2000). It would be useful to examine why the role of the principal continues to be perceived as a position solely for one person, given the increased demands being placed on principals.

Blount (1998) noted that for power to be distributed more equally, the ones who have the lion’s share must be willing to give some of it away. The redistribution of power

does not happen in a vacuum, however, but instead occurs when groups with relatively little power organize and force the matter, when law or public policy requires an open process of power negotiation, or when positions of power become so unpalatable that persons privileged with choice regard them as undesirable. (p. 166)

It is this third option that holds the most promise for change at this point. One could argue that it is already happening to some degree, especially in urban districts where it is becoming increasingly difficult to fill vacant principalships and superintendencies (Stover, 2002). The options of restructuring the principalship and offering formal mentoring opportunities might encourage qualified women teachers to consider this role and in the process, help to alleviate the possible, pending, or immediate administrative shortage. It is impossible to ignore the fact that with the very real teacher shortage that many locales are experiencing, encouraging women such as the ones who participated in this study to leave the classroom for school administration is almost paradoxical. However, in hearing the voices of

leadership-skilled women teachers who choose to remain in the classroom, their critiques may suggest ways for both the fields of teaching and administration to profit.

## References

- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Banks, C. (1995). Gender and race as factors in educational leadership and administration. In J. Banks & C. Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of research on multicultural education*. New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan.
- Black, S. (2001, September). A lifeboat for new teachers. *American School Board Journal*, 188(9), 46-48.
- Blount, J. (1994). One postmodern feminist perspective on educational leadership: And ain't I a leader? In S. Maxcy (Ed.), *Postmodern school leadership: Meeting the crisis in educational administration* (pp.47-60). Connecticut: Praeger.
- Blount, J. (1998). *Destined to rule the schools*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Boris-Schacter, S., & Langer, S. (2002, February). Caught between nostalgia and utopia. *Education Week on the Web*. Retrieved December 3, 2003, from <http://edweek.org/ew>
- Capper, C. (1992). A feminist poststructural analysis of nontraditional approaches in educational administration. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 28(1), 103-124.
- Carr, N. (2003). The toughest job in America. *Education Vital Signs 2003*, supplement to *American School Board Journal*, 190(2), 14-20.
- Cusick, P. (2003, May). The principalship? No thanks. *Education Week*, 44-34.
- Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (1998). Entering the field of qualitative research. In N. Denzin, & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (pp. 1-34). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Education Vital Signs. (1998, December). *American School Board Journal*, 184(8), A15, A28.
- Flynn, E. (2002). *Feminism beyond modernism*. Illinois: Southern Illinois Press.
- Fraser, N., & Nicholson, L. (1990). Social criticism without philosophy: An encounter between feminism and postmodernism. In L. Nicholson (Ed.), *Feminism/Postmodernism*. (pp. 19-38). New York: Routledge.
- Fullan, M. (1997). *What's worth fighting for in the principalship?* New York: Teachers College Press.
- Gardiner, M., Enomoto, E., & Grogan, M. (2000). *Coloring outside the lines*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Gates, S., Ringel, J., & Santibanez, L. (2003). *Who is leading our schools? An overview of school administrators and their careers*. Retrieved November 13, 2003, from <http://www.rand.org/publications/MR/MR1679>.
- Grogan, M. (1996). *Voices of women aspiring to the superintendency*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Grogan, M. (1999). Equity/equality issues of gender, race, and class. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 35(4), 518-536.
- Grogan, M. (2000). Laying the groundwork for a reconception of the superintendency from feminist postmodern perspectives. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 36(1), 117-142.
- Hipp, K. (1996, April). *Teacher efficacy: Influence of principal leadership behavior*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York City, New York.
- Hoy, W., & Woolfolk, A. (1993). Teachers' sense of efficacy and the organizational health of schools. *The Elementary School Journal*, 93(4), 356-372.
- Hurley, J. (2001, May 23). The principalship: Less may be more. *Education Week on the Web*. Retrieved December 3, 2002, from <http://www.edweek.org/ew>
- Institute for Educational Leadership, (2000). *Leadership for student learning: Reinventing the principalship*. Retrieved December 3, 2002, from <http://www.iel.org>
- Klempen, R., & Richetti, C. (2001, December). Greening the next generation of principals. *Education Week on the Web*. Retrieved December 3, 2002, from <http://www.edweek.org/ew/>
- Marshall, C. (1988). Analyzing the culture of school leadership. *Education and Urban Society*, 22(3), 262-275.

- Marshall, C., & Kasten, K. (1994). *The administrative career: A casebook on entry, equity, and endurance*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- McAdams, R. (1998). Governance: Who'll run the schools? *The American School Board Journal*, 185(8), 37-39.
- McGrath, S. T. (1992). Here come the women! *Educational Leadership*, 49, 62-65.
- Northouse, P. (2001). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Olson, L. (1999, March). Demand for principals growing, but candidates aren't applying. *Education Week on the Web*. Retrieved December 3, 2002 from <http://www.edweek.org/ew/>
- Olson, L. (2000). Finding and keeping competent teachers. *Education Week, Special Report* 29(18), 12-18.
- Ortiz, F. I. (1982). *Career patterns in education*. New York: J. F. Bergin.
- Ozga, J., & Walker, L. (1995). Women in educational management: Theory and practice. In B. Limerick & B. Lingard (Eds.), *Gender and changing educational management, Second Yearbook of the Australian Council for Educational Administration* (pp. 34-43). Australia: Hodder Education.
- Patton, M. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd ed.). California: Sage.
- Scott, J. (1988). Deconstructing equality-versus-difference: Or, the uses of poststructuralist theory for feminism. *Feminist Studies*, 14(1), 33-50.
- Shahid, J., & Thompson, D. (2001). *Teacher efficacy: A research synthesis*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, WA.
- Shakeshaft, C. (1989). *Women in educational administration*. London: Sage.
- Shakeshaft, C. (1995). Gendered leadership styles in educational organizations. In B. Limerick & B. Lingard (Eds.), *Gender and changing educational management, Second Yearbook of the Australian Council for Educational Administration* (pp. 12-22). Australia: Hodder Education.
- Shakeshaft, C. (1999). The struggle to create a more gender inclusive profession. In J. Murphy & K. Louis (Eds.), *Handbook of research on educational administration* (pp. 99-118). San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Shakeshaft, C., Nowell, I., & Perry, A. (1991). Gender supervision. *Theory into Practice*, 30(2), 134-139.
- Sim, S. (2001). Postmodernism and philosophy. In S. Sim (Ed.), *The Routledge companion to postmodernism* (pp.3-14). London: Routledge.
- Smylie, M. (1990). Teacher efficacy at work. In P. Reyes, (Ed.), *Teachers and their workplaces* (pp. 48-66). London: Sage.
- Sparks, D. (2002). Designing powerful professional development for teachers and principals. National Staff Development Council. Retrieved January 29, 2004 from [www://http.nsdc.org/library/leaders/sparksbook](http://http.nsdc.org/library/leaders/sparksbook).
- Stone, L. (in press). Poststructuralism. In J. Paul (Ed.), *Philosophies of inquiry*. Prentice-Hall.
- Stover, D. (2002, December). Looking for leaders. *American School Board Journal*, 189(12), 38-43.
- Weedon, C. (1997). *Feminist practice and poststructuralist theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Williams, G. (1999). *French discourse analysis: The method of post-structuralism*. London: Routledge.