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SHARING LEADERSHIP IN SCHOOLS
NARRATIVES OF DISCOURSE AND POWER

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the phenomenon of shared leadership as it emerged in three primary schools in Aotearoa/New Zealand, during the 1990s restructuring of educational administration. At this time, two ‘mainstream’ discourses of professional collaborative leadership and neo-liberal managerialism came into ‘collision.’ The principal’s role was *re-constituted* from being a collaborative instructional leader, to being a chief executive, entrepreneurial manager. Separate contracts for principals and senior school managers detailed managerial tasks, performance standards and accountability lines that heightened the existing divisions between them and other teachers. The possibility of developing ‘flattened,’ more democratic forms of shared decision making and leadership seemed *increasingly remote*. Yet it was in this context that a small number of co-principalships were initiated around the country.

The study employs narrative, Foucauldian and feminist poststructuralist discourse analysis tools to examine how opportunities for change opened up within ‘cracks’ and contradictions in the 1990s discursive terrain of educational leadership. Moving between micro and macro analyses, the thesis demonstrates how individual and collective agency is enacted within and against dominant discourses, effecting transformations of practice. Three groups of women challenged and/or co-opted elements of managerial, professional and feminist discourses of organisation as they developed their co-principalships. These initiatives opened up for many people different ways of thinking about and practising school leadership: as one child said about her school, “Here there is no boss.” Three case narratives provide insights into strategies for developing more fully democratic partnerships between principals and staff, principals and board members, professionals and parents. Open, honest communication and mutual forms of accountability that go beyond current requirements for contractual, task specific and linear forms of control, are particularly significant for a successful co-principalship.

Governmental forms of power, material inequalities and socio-cultural hegemonies of gender, class and ethnicity, can constrain the democratic potential of shared leaderships however. Related factors that led to the disestablishment of two of the co-principalships included inequalities of knowledge and experience, difficulties over funding and staffing, and struggles between a governing body and their co-principals over the meanings and practices of governance and management.

There are flaws in arguments that posit a generic model of ‘strong’ management that can be imposed across all schools, with assumed uniform results. This study shows how people’s beliefs about and practices of school leadership are constituted in relation to their own backgrounds, interactions with other people in their local school community and wider socio-political, economic and discursive struggles over power.

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PREFACE

This thesis is a study of shared leaderships in schools. It tells the stories of three primary school co-principalships that were initiated by women teachers in Aotearoa/New Zealand between 1993/5. Three case study narratives, developed from the accounts of the protagonists, their supporters and those who opposed their attempts to change the ways their schools were led and managed, describe the co-principalships' development over periods of between three and five years. In the study, I read the participants' stories and viewpoints within and against other texts, such as school records, my field notes of observations in the schools, policy documents and educational administration academic literature, in a discourse analysis that aims to work at both micro and a macro levels. This is in the sense of, on the one hand, identifying and describing a discursive context in which the co-principalship practices of shared leadership emerged, and on the other, documenting and analysing how individuals negotiated a set of often conflicting discourses that can be seen to be both enabling and constraining their initiatives. In these ways, the study aims to explore the interactions and processes involved in the constituting of a new subject position for school leadership in this country - that of a co-principal - and of new ways of sharing school leadership.¹

While my analysis is developed around an exploration of the intersections and contradictions between professional collaborative, market managerial and feminist conceptions and practices of school leadership, two main strands of interest have underpinned the study. Firstly, it explores the idea of sharing leadership as a way of challenging the taken for granted 'normality' of hierarchical single line structures of management, accountability and control in schools. Secondly, it explores the influence of gender and feminist discourses on women's initiations of different leadership structures and ways of working within an educational system where most schools continue to be led by men, and within an increasingly dominant managerialist discourse that is hierarchical and as some feminist analysis has argued, masculinist, in its rationale and practice. The research study of three New Zealand primary school examples of shared leadership was conceived within a Foucauldian (1980) approach to discourse analysis informed by a feminist concern to identify and discuss the impact of socio-cultural hegemonies on opportunities for developing alternative school leadership philosophies and practices.

The study is presented in this thesis in three main sections. Part I uses a personal storytelling approach to explain the background to the study and to discuss the literatures about co-principalship and shared teacher leaderships, and feminist studies of women in educational

¹ In my analyses in Part III, I use different aspects of the narratives for illuminating different theoretical arguments, rather than just developing inter-case comparisons.

administration. I discuss the work of Foucault, feminist poststructuralists and narrative researchers whose approaches have informed my research rationales and methods, shaping my questions and interpretations of the research material I generated and/or gathered during five years of fieldwork.

Part II begins with my analysis of the educational leadership discursive context in which co-principalships emerged in Aotearoa/New Zealand. These two chapters are followed by the three co-principalship case narratives, which are the heart of the thesis. These narratives describe the schools and their communities and represent the participants' stories, experiences and accounts of their shared leadership initiatives. While there seems to be little obvious analysis from me in these three chapters, they are research narrative inquiries, in the sense that "narrative is both phenomenon and method" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, p.416). Although my voice is not overtly present, it is my research concerns that have shaped the stories I have been told and the investigations and observations I have carried out in the schools. The narratives have been constructed to illuminate the central problematic of this study: why and how did the three primary school co-principalships emerge as they did, going against the grain of 'commonsense' understandings of leadership and dominant theories and regulations for 'efficient' school management. They explain also what happened to each of the initiatives and provide insights into factors that may contribute to the successful establishment of alternative structures and practices of leadership and organisation in primary schools.

Part III draws together the threads of argument developed throughout Parts I and II. Chapters 11, 12, 13 and 14 extend the largely implicit interpretations embedded in the co-principalship narratives into analyses of theoretical questions that increasingly interested me during the course of the study. These chapters draw on different parts of the case narratives to explore some aspects of the sociological structure/agency debate and seek new insights into how individuals live their lives and take action within a range of competing and often contradictory discourses. Using a combination of Gramscian, Foucauldian and feminist poststructuralist theoretical tools, I show how discourses can be both constitutive of and constituted by individual subjectivity and inter-subjectivity, and how wider socio-cultural hegemonies (organised in particular around gender, ethnicity and class) can cut across these discursive dynamics, shaping individual and group practices in historically specific times and institutional sites. Within an analysis of current forms of governmentality as both centralising and individualising forms of power (Foucault, 1982; 1991), I show how varying recognitions of dominant discourses, and different practices of accommodation, resistance and/or co-option, have been contributing to the constituting co-principalship as a counter discourse of school leadership in this country. Some implications for policy and/or practice are highlighted in the conclusion.

PART I

A RESEARCH JOURNEY

There is more than one way to tell a story, and more than one story to be told
(Pagano, 1991, p.197).

At the outset of this thesis, I highlight the point that this thesis is just one account of the co-principalship initiatives. Like all research accounts, it is partial, constructed as it is through my own research interests and views of the world. While Middleton has noted that bringing personal accounts into the academic sphere can discount our work from “what counts as high-status or proper academic knowledge (and) lay the feminist academic open to accusations ... of being unscholarly” (Middleton, 1993, p.18), feminists have argued that positioning ourselves within our work and our texts enables a closer scrutiny of these (Harding, 1986; Jones, 1992). Jones commented that “consciously exposing the particular theoretical/cultural spectacles which determine our view” can enable others to view the words as one perspective: this can help to set up a potential dialogue between writer and reader where they can bring forward their own view (1992, p.26).

In the first chapter, therefore, after outlining the two main threads of interest that the study explores (team leadership and gender issues in leadership), I explain some links between my personal background and the focus of my previous research studies, both of which have contributed towards shaping the questions that this thesis explores. In this chapter I also introduce in footnoted commentaries, some of the feminist concerns and theories that I expand on later.

Chapter 2 takes up the theme of shared leadership in a review discussion of international studies and reports on co-principalships. Because so little is known about these initiatives, I engage here in fairly detailed accounts of each of the cases I found, before summarising at the end of the chapter, the limitations that I have seen in the research approaches that have been employed and in a few attempts to theorize co-principalship.

Chapter 3 provides a critical review of feminist theoretical approaches to studying women in educational leadership. My aim in this chapter is two-fold. Firstly I explore debates over liberal, radical/cultural and ‘difference’ feminist discourses that have shaped not only my own developing understandings, but also those of several of the women co-principals who are the focus of this study (as I show later in Part III). Secondly, I trace how these debates have influenced my choice of a Foucauldian feminist poststructuralist ‘toolkit’ for this study. Chapter 4 then explains this toolkit, outlining the work of Foucault and discussing the feminist poststructural critical evaluations and/or appropriations of Foucauldian concepts that I use for my analysis of educational leadership discourses and the co-principal initiatives.

Chapter 5 describes my research approach and methods. I argue that although it may not seem to conform to earlier versions of feminist research politics, this study is conceptualised within the aims of a feminist intervention. Through storytelling, narrative and discourse analysis it aims to contribute towards the building and dissemination of strategic knowledges (Foucault, 1980) that will lead to more inclusive and democratic practices of educational leadership.

I acknowledge that in privileging feminist theorising in this thesis, I could be charged with replacing the dominance of masculinist discourses with feminist discourses. This is an understandable criticism, and perhaps a valid one. However, given the continuing under-representation of women in educational leadership positions, this focus is justified, particularly for a study of initiatives such as the primary school co-principalships which were begun by women. My privileging of feminist approaches is, in these terms, part of a struggle against systematising and unitary bodies of theory that continue to discount areas of subjugated knowledge (Foucault, 1980).

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCING THE RESEARCH THEMES

Professional teamwork and/or managerialism?

There is a thread of seeming paradox in the way shared leaderships emerged in Aotearoa/New Zealand during a time when flattening staff management and control hierarchies in education was not on the political agenda for educational administration. Indeed, the restructuring of education in the late 1980s had the opposite aim of introducing managerial hierarchies. This ‘puzzle’ stimulated my interest in exploring not only what was happening in three particular school situations, but placing this within an analysis of how school leadership was being constituted in Aotearoa/New Zealand in the years preceding and during the time when the co-principalships emerged here.

During the 1980s and 90s, two mainstream discourses of professional collaborative leadership and market managerialism were in circulation, with protagonists of each promoting often opposing sets of values and beliefs about the purposes and nature of education. While market managerialism became the ascendant state discourse during these decades (within what has been called by Boston and his colleagues (1996) the New Zealand model of New Public Management), the rhetoric of teamwork also became an almost taken for granted part of organisational discourse in both the private and public sectors. Business managers who had ‘team skills’ were called for in newspaper job advertisements and the dynamics of team leadership were analysed in professional reports and academic research. These emphases have been reflected in an MMP² world, where politicians are required to be ‘team players’ and media scrutiny of their performance is relentless.

In education, teamwork in both teaching and management has been described by many professionals as an educationally sound and logical way of building learning cultures in which both teachers and students can benefit from the sharing of ideas and resources. Research in both the US and the UK has documented links between teacher collegiality and effective school operations (Lee, Bryk, & Smith, 1993; Little, 1982; Nias, Southworth, & Yeomans, 1989; OECD: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1994; Southworth, 1994). While collegiality has not been seen as a problem free panacea for

² The Mixed Member Proportional Representation (MMP) electoral system in Aotearoa/New Zealand combines constituency and proportional representation. Electors vote for both a member of parliament (MP) for their electorate and for an MP on a separate party list, in effect choosing both a person and a party. Two coalition governments have been elected under this system, the National/New Zealand First coalition in 1996 and the Labour/Alliance coalition in 1999. Arguably, these coalition governments have had to engage in much more internal negotiation and team work than previous one party governments.

education,³ critical theorists in the US, Australia, Aotearoa/New Zealand and the UK, have promoted a discourse of collaborative leadership as an educative and transformative approach that is oriented towards democratic values (Codd, 1989; Foster, 1989; Grace, 1997; Smyth, 1989a). These theorists have endorsed the principalship as a “shared enterprise of the teachers, the pupils and the community” (Grace, 1997, p.63). Grace considers that there are as yet few examples of “serious organisational democracy” involving major shared decision making in UK schools (p.65)⁴, but some studies there have identified staff teamwork approaches in primary schools that were characterised by professional “co-operation, communication, continuity, co-ordination, collaboration, consistency, coherence and collegiality” (Southworth, 1994, p.29).

Despite these international research findings about the value of collaborative approaches, and the interest of many educational professionals in developing more fully democratic forms of leadership in schools, the restructuring of educational administration in Aotearoa/New Zealand during the late 80s and early 90s, re-embedded a hierarchical form of strong management into all sectors of education. In what has become known by many as the ‘new managerialism,’ during the 1990s the meanings of teamwork in education were shifted, from the ‘c’ words of a professional discourse (such as co-operation, collaboration, collegiality, communication), to those of a market managerial discourse that emphasised competition, clients, choice and chiefs. Principals were reconstituted as Chief Executive Officers of Crown Enterprises (schools) (Education Review Office, 1996).

The background to this shift is now well known. Early arguments of the state reformers stated that an inadequate education system was contributing to a national economic crisis. In their Brief to the Incoming Government, Treasury officials maintained that inefficiencies and the lowering of educational standards had emerged out of a burgeoning education bureaucracy that was buttressed by the self-interested provider capture of teachers and educational professionals in the state department (The Treasury, 1987). These arguments were buttressed by claims that equity concerns had not been adequately addressed in schools and wider arguments for the need to improve the general quality of public service provision to clients. The reformers proposed a market approach in education. This, it was argued, would open up competition between providers (schools), so that parents would be able to choose successful schools for their children. These schools would flourish even further, while lower performing schools would slowly wither away.

³ Within the given hierarchical structures and micro-political contexts of schools, not all teachers may want or be able to become more fully involved in shared decision making (Weiss, 1992; Weldon, 1993). I will discuss in Chapter 6 criticisms of forms of contrived collegiality which have been analysed as being susceptible to forms of managerial manipulation and peer surveillance (Blase & Anderson, 1995; Capper, 1994; Grace, 1995; Hargreaves, 1991; Woods, Jeffrey, Troman, & Boyle, 1997).

⁴ Grace (1995) considers that there is a ‘hidden curriculum’ in English culture that teaches its citizens that there is a leadership class that emerges ‘naturally’ - and as part of this culture, headteachers are the natural and appropriate leaders in schools.

The self management model that was introduced into schools positioned principals as both chief executives, at the head of a staff management line of control, and as middle managers, accountable to parent boards of trustees and the state for the implementation of educational policy in schools. Although it was argued by the reformers that increased partnership between school professionals and their communities would enable schools to better reflect and meet local needs, and despite the claims that power and decision making would be devolved to schools and their communities, what occurred was a paradoxical centralised/decentralisation of educational administration. Control over policy and large resource decisions remained with politicians and the Ministry of Education.

These shifts did not go unchallenged. In 1994, in a New Zealand study of shared decision making and collaborative leadership approaches in schools, Capper summed up a commonly expressed criticism when he said that the reforms used “the rhetoric of partnership and empowerment, but functionally sought to replicate and reinforce management and power relationships which are obsolete and proven failures” (Capper, 1994, p5). In the justification for this Post Primary Teachers’ Association (1994) action research study, Hill drew on an OECD (1990) report on effective schools, to argue that:

Analogous with the current experience of the international and New Zealand business sector, school management structures and processes which are based on the hierarchical model appear to be unable to give schools the organisational flexibility, innovation and responsiveness which continuing and extensive change requires (Hill, 1992, pp.4, 28).

This study maintained that what was needed to improve schools was to develop them as learning organisations, in which power relationships and organisational structures were re-ordered so that more members have a say in each school’s purposes, goals and processes. Thus PPTA aimed to help “principals, boards, teachers, ancillary staff and PPTA officials find ways to deal effectively with wide-ranging changes which are transforming school management and operations” (ibid. p.4).

Two of the findings from the study are important for this thesis. Firstly, the researchers noted that although many staff in the project schools were enthusiastic about the approaches that were tried, there was considerable skepticism and resistance from some, particularly those who were already in positions of power and seniority. Capper reported that the crucial factor in winning staff acceptance of both the purposes and processes of shared decision making, was the maintenance of congruity between what was promised about the levels and limits of delegated authority, and what actually happened (1994, p.7). The legislation⁵ that made the principal accountable as a school’s Chief Executive, in effect giving them power of veto over decisions made in schools, was reported as a constraint on introducing fully shared decision

⁵ The *Education Act, 1989* defines the principal as a Chief Executive (Section 2), with specific tasks and responsibilities, such as the suspension of students (Section 13). Under Section 76, the board of trustees is responsible for governance, while “A school’s principal is the Board’s Chief Executive in relation to the school’s control and management.”

making (Weldon, 1993). The ‘principal’s veto’ was identified as a significant factor in what Capper called “the challenge to fill up the emptiness of the rhetoric of school restructuring and to make it real” (1994, p.5). There were not only difficulties in altering embedded bureaucratic and hierarchical structures of accountability. There were also contradictions between these structures and the reform rhetoric and policies that introduced parental governance as part of increased community input into school decision making. These are on-going tensions in the current practices of school leadership. They have been particularly significant factors impacting on the establishment of the three primary school co-principalships that are the focus of study in this thesis.

The second finding of significance for this thesis drew attention to the educational processes which are implicit, but largely unexamined in management practices in schools. It was noted that “there are powerful ways in which students learn (often unfortunate) lessons from their observation and experience of schools’ administrative practices” (Capper, 1994, p.3). The finding that school management practice is a powerful element of the curriculum was supported in my study of a shared senior teacher initiative in an intermediate school (Court, 1992b; 1994c).

However, rather than acknowledging the links between learning, teaching and leadership/management processes, the restructuring of education in 1988 aimed to separate these processes even more than was already the case. It was argued that to increase effectiveness in schooling, what was needed was a clear splitting of central policy making from the work of school management. The latter should focus on the implementation of policy and the control of teachers’ work in schools. The imposing of this approach on education resulted in a heightening of already existing distinctions between those who lead and manage, and those who teach. Separate contracts for principals and managers further widened salary and status differentials between hierarchy levels in the education profession. As such, introducing more democratic forms of leadership became even more difficult during the early 1990s. In this situation, teachers’ reluctance and/or cynicism about shared decision making, such as emerged in some of the PPTA research project schools, is not surprising.

It is thus particularly interesting, and somewhat paradoxical, that within a climate of an increasing political emphasis on and demand for hierarchical management procedures and practices, initiatives in democratic school leadership have emerged around the country. Shared school leaderships, in the form of co-principalships, were established during the early to mid 1990s in two secondary schools and in three primary schools (and several new co-principalships have begun in the last few years). This study provides case narratives that give descriptive answers to the questions that arise out of this seeming paradox. That is:

- Why did the three primary school co-principalships emerge as they did, going against the grain of ‘commonsense’ understandings of leadership and dominant theories and regulations for ‘efficient’ school management?
- How did they evolve?

- What issues emerged?
- To what extent, and for what reasons, were these forms of school leadership continued or discontinued?

In addressing the more theoretical questions that came to interest me as I carried out this research, the study engages with Greenfield's (1993) call for interpretive qualitative research in educational administration that will explore "power, conflicts, values and moral dilemmas ... and examine the changing role of language and discourse in creating new administrative 'realities' " (Grace, 1997, p.61, citing Greenfield). To assist my investigation of the co-principalship initiatives at these levels of analysis, I draw on feminist poststructuralist approaches to discourse theory (Davies, 1989; Fraser, 1997; Hekman, 1990; McNay, 1992; Middleton, 1993; Weedon, 1987) that have appropriated aspects of Foucault's analyses of the links between discourse, power and knowledge (Foucault, 1972; 1978a; 1980). Chapters 2 and 3 will help to explain why I chose this approach for the study and I will develop a critical account of the concepts I have used in Chapter 4.

In this study I understand discourses as being historically, socially and culturally specific bodies of meaning and knowledge. They offer a range of competing and often contradictory ways of giving meaning to the world, and constitute (historically and culturally specific) ways of *being* in the world through constructing different subject positions that individuals can 'take up' (Davies, 1989). Discourses are not just language, or ideas and beliefs, or theories about the world. While each of these are important elements for analysis in a feminist Foucauldian approach to discourse, what is emphasised is the way that discourses exist in, produce and are produced by, social practices (such as the way we "do things with words" and organise institutions and processes). Nancy Fraser (1997) has characterised this as a "pragmatic" (as opposed to a "structuralist") approach to discourse theory, which examines language as action rather than merely as a representational system of signs. She argued that this approach offers ways of understanding how individual "identities" are formed and reformed, how "collective identities" or social groups are formed/reformed, and how "cultural hegemonies" arise and are challenged through struggles in and over shifting social discourses (Fraser, 1997, pp. 155-167).

Drawing on this kind of feminist poststructuralist "toolkit" (Foucault, 1980), I will argue in this thesis that it was partly the very obviousness of the struggles over whether professional, or market managerial meanings and practices of school leadership should prevail during the 1990s, that opened up opportunities for new ways of seeing and practising the work of principalship. I will show, for example, how conflicting statements, purposes and sets of values and beliefs within review and policy documents such as the *Administering for Excellence (Picot Report)* (Department of Education, 1988a) and *Tomorrow's Schools* (Department of Education, 1988b), opened up gaps in previously taken for granted 'realities' of school leadership that enabled some of the women who are at the centre of this study to draw on understandings of democratic leadership that they had previously developed within

subjugated⁶ feminist discourses, such as those of liberal and radical feminism and/or feminist collectivity and democratic organisation, to initiate co-principalships in primary schools. The thesis also examines how the women and their board members, both women and men, interacted, working sometimes together, sometimes in opposition, during the time that co-principalship was being established, practised and either formalised or disestablished in their schools.

An analysis of intersections between gender, leadership and the initiation of co-principalships in Aotearoa/New Zealand is the second main strand of interest in this thesis. In the next section I explain how I became interested in examining these intersections within my study of the co-principalships

Gender and educational leadership

When I first heard about the co-principalships it seemed significant to me that in each case, women were the main protagonists. My previous research focused on identifying and discussing the nature of gendered power relations and inequalities that have led to women's under-representation in school leadership positions in this country. I was interested therefore, to explore how these factors might impact on women's attempts to establish alternative school leadership philosophies and practices within a neo-liberal managerialism that commentators in other parts of the world have described as masculinist⁷ (Blackmore, 1989; Collinson & Hearn, 1994).

Although there is now a growing body of international research into the incidence and causes of women's under-representation in educational leadership, this area has been largely overlooked in the debates in this country about the 'best' way to administer schools.⁸ For example, gender was not built into the original design for data collection and analysis in the PPTA Shared Decision Making Project, despite requests from women within the union that this be done. This omission was a significant oversight considering that the PPTA's earlier

⁶ Foucault argued that within dominant versions of 'systematising theory,' subjugated knowledges have been historically present, but discounted as irrelevant, 'disqualified' as 'illegitimate' or 'insufficiently elaborated' and consequently, 'confined to the margins' (Foucault, 1980, p. 82). In this way, academic theorising is itself implicated in constituting links between discourse, power and knowledge. I will explore this further in Chapter 4.

⁷ Like Blackmore, I have found Brittan's distinction between masculinity, masculinism and patriarchy, useful. "Whereas masculinity refers to the features of male behaviour that can change over time, masculinism denotes the ideology that naturalizes and justifies men's domination over women. Patriarchy is the structure of unequal power relations sustained through this ideology (Brittan, 1989, pp.3-5, cited in Blackmore, 1999, p.24). I use this distinction in the thesis.

⁸ Notable exceptions include studies by feminist scholars (Middleton, 1990; Pringle & Timperley, 1995; Strachan, 1997). Gender was also mentioned in a study of collaborative decision making in schools by Ramsay and his colleagues, who noted that "women tended to be more open minded than men" and more often initiated collaborative approaches (Ramsay et al., 1990, p.22).

efforts for increased gender equity had made some impact in the secondary sector of education, such as improving awareness of the under-representation of women in middle and senior management and gaining some acceptance for strategies like the Promotion of Women Review (Watson, 1989). It seems that it was only in response to subsequent criticism from within PPTA that women's experiences had not been adequately investigated, that some identification of gender issues was included later. Consequently, in the Part 1 report, Capper (1994, p.82) stated that around 50% of female staff respondents had identified gender bias in decision making in their schools. Two co-educational schools (of the 13 in the study) were reported as particularly problematic in this regard, because of the dominance of men in middle management positions in one (p.85) and the all-male senior management in the other (p.84).⁹ Further gender issues noted in the report included the invisibility of EEO in all the schools and sexual harassment of students in one school. When the researcher said that the latter had not been reported elsewhere, one of the girls commented, "It happens to them so much in and out of school that most of them think that's just the way the world is" (p.83). In his report, Capper asked, "How many other issues... remain unstated because the majority of people think that a destructive pattern is 'just the way it is'?" (ibid). This is a particularly relevant question to ask about women's representation and experiences in educational leadership.

As a group, women have been heavily under-represented in school leadership positions during the last decades. This has been the case in Australia (Blackmore, 1999; Sampson, 1987); in the United Kingdom (Davies, 1990; Hall, 1996); in the U.S. (Sadker et al., 1991; Shakeshaft, 1987; Smulyan, 1999) and in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Boulton & Sturrock, 1996; Ministry of Education, 1999; NZEI Te Riu Roa, 2000; Slyfield, 1993; Sturrock, 1998). In the early 1990s, when co-principalships were first being established in here, although women comprised 78% of primary teachers, only 27% of the principals were women (Slyfield, 1993). They were then mostly in the smaller one to six teacher schools where the principal teaches as well as administering. Few women held the non-teaching principal positions in the large primary schools: only 11% of the Grade 4 schools (6-11 teachers) and 8% of the Grade 5 schools (over 11 teachers) had women principals (ibid). In the secondary service, women made up 51% of teaching staff but only 19% of principals. Only 7% of co-educational secondary schools were led by woman principals. Throughout the decade 1981-1992, the proportion of women who held a principal position in the primary sector had remained as three percent, and this was despite particular initiatives by unions and in legislation (Slyfield, 1993, p.8).¹⁰

⁹ Female staff said that although those three men did their best, "decisions tend to be made by men who often do not pick up undercurrents of feelings among the powerless on the staff. They don't do the grassroots consulting. This is ultimately frustrating and infuriating" (Capper, 1994, p.82).

¹⁰ For example, there have been education union affirmative action initiatives and EEO legislation (State Sector Act Amendment 1989) was incorporated into the school charters during the 1989 administrative reforms. This required schools to produce equal employment opportunities policies and programmes to facilitate (among other objectives) the promotion of women in primary, intermediate and secondary schools.

Slyfield's analysis took into account the increasing feminisation of the primary sector and showed how proportional statistics gave a clear picture of the static situation of women's representation in the principalship.

It has been recently claimed that "the impact of the reforms in the New Right context has been less severe than expected" on women's representation in principalships, and that "between 1989 and 1996, the percentage of women principals in elementary (primary) schools has risen from 19% to 32%" (Harold, 1998, p.352). However, reports of percentage increases need to be considered in comparison with the overall proportions of women in principalships vis a vis their representation as teachers. The feminisation of the primary sector teaching force between 1992 and 1996 increased, with a 7.6% drop in numbers of male primary teachers between these years. This was a persisting pattern over the last decade. The most recent report on the profile of New Zealand teachers indicated that women make up 71% over all of teachers (up from 61% in 1991) and that there has been no significant turn around in the under-representation of women in senior positions in both primary and secondary schools (Ministry of Education, 1999, p.40).

It is worth noting here that trying to identify trends in women's representation in leadership positions has become more complicated over the last decade because of the difficulties around accurately gathering and assessing the meaning of data about gender equity in the educational workforces. Partly as a consequence of the disbanding of the Girls and Women Section within the Ministry of Education, and changes in the way that statistics on the position of women and girls in education have been collected and analysed, the data available for the 1990s is incomplete and somewhat confusing. For example, in the past, Slyfield's reports of the percentage of women in teaching positions included women in part-time and limited tenure positions. However, the Boulton and Sturrock (1996) report compared the percentage of women in principals' positions (32%) with those in regular (full time permanent) teaching positions (76%). The figure of 76% for regular teachers left out the fifth of all women teachers who were in limited term part-time teaching positions and the 8% of women who were in limited full time positions. (Eighty-seven percent of men in the primary service were in full time permanent positions in that year.) Thus, Boulton and Sturrock's report can not be used in a direct comparison with Slyfield's earlier reports to argue for an overall increase in the proportion of women in principals' positions between 1989 - 1995. Indeed, Boulton and Sturrock state that the situation for women in 1995 reflected little change to that of previous years.

The point for this current study then, is that during the time that the co-principalships were being established, there was little change occurring in the overall representation of women in educational leadership. While there were changes in the way that management units were being allocated, the 1996 records show that women's positioning in the secondary sector management allocations remained disadvantaged: 56% of aggregated salary units (for management, reward, recruitment and retention) were held in 1996 by male teachers and 44%

by female teachers, with women still heavily clustered in the lower salary/responsibility levels (Sturrock, 1998). No figures were given in this report for the primary sector, but historically, the proportional representation of women in primary school middle and senior management positions has been worse than that in the secondary sector.

International feminist research during the 1980s argued that statistics such as those I have described reflect the effects of “the reproduction of gendered dominance as a set of power relations ...a significant phenomenon” that hinders the careers and leadership opportunities of many women (Blackmore, 1989, p.114). In her influential account of the experiences of women in the US, Charol Shakeshaft maintained that a male hegemony¹¹ that treats men's experiences, values and practices as the norm, underpins the marginalising of women in educational leadership (1987, pp.195-198). Shakeshaft's extensive analysis of the US research up to the late 1980s identified many of the ways that women who do achieve a position in educational administration were likely to encounter a token status and sexist attitudes towards them, as well as difficulties resulting from their blurring of boundaries between the public and private worlds. New Zealand research has also identified these factors (Malcolm, 1978; Neville, 1988; Strachan, 1991).

Other studies showed how hegemonic links between constructions of masculinity, authority and leadership (Connell, 1987; Blackmore, 1993) and femininity, nurturance and teaching (Grumet, 1988; Bullough & Knowles, 1991) vary and shift over time and place.¹² Blackmore (1993) for example, described how historical constructions of educational leadership in Australia have variously reinforced the notions of a leader as a “benevolent patriarch”, the “rational man” and the “multi-skilled manager.” Significantly, as constructions of gender change and theories and practices of leadership in education (as in wider social formations) also change, new links are forged between the emerging dominant form of masculinity and the metamorphosing ideas about and practices of authority and leadership (Leonard, 1998). Distinctions that place a higher value on so-called masculine characteristics and areas of work over feminine ones, are also recreated.¹³

¹¹ The term hegemony was used by Gramsci (1971) to describe how the dominance of an elite class is achieved through the ‘winning’ of ideological struggles over meaning. While always contested, hegemonic ascendancy is most secure when the elite group's values and beliefs are taken for granted as ‘common sense’ and are embedded into institutional practices. The term has been used by some feminists to describe how male domination is achieved. I critically discuss these analyses in Chapter 3 and Fraser's (1997) re-conceptualisation in relation to a Foucauldian approach, in Chapter 4.

¹² Hegemonic masculinity refers to the ascendancy of a particular construction of masculinity over other forms of subordinated masculinities and all versions of femininity (Connell, 1987). In the field of educational administration, hegemonic forms of masculinity have been powerful, but not always recognised or analysed, components of ‘normal’ practices of leadership (Court, 1989; Blackmore, 1993).

¹³ Cockburn's (1986) study of changes in the newspaper printing industry provides an interesting analysis of how these dynamics occurred in that field of work. When word processing replaced cold press printing processes, male printers secured for themselves computer and keyboard training and won the new ‘printer’ positions over the female secretarial typists. Although the women were already skilled keyboarders, they

Socio-cultural dynamics such as these have been analysed as underpinning the ubiquity of gendered divisions of labour in schools where men are most often the administrators, principals and subject heads, while women are the majority of teachers. Blackmore (1989) demonstrated how within the bureaucratic organisation of the education system, structural factors that have worked against women's promotion in education have emerged out of gendered cultural assumptions and bureaucratic practices. Hierarchical chains of control and command, that have been built into teachers' work relations on the assumption that these are necessary for the co-ordination of subdivided tasks, have cohered with the development of promotion 'rules' that have benefited mainly male teachers' movement into leadership positions. Seniority has been a bureaucratic requirement for advancement and few men have taken time out of their careers for childcare. While shifts to a market environment in education have arguably loosened some of these structural factors, as this thesis will show, the NPM model of market managerialism has not dispensed with hierarchy, but rather re-embedded it within a centralised decentralisation (Blackmore, 1993) and 'new,' far reaching forms of control and accountability.

It was in the light of these kinds of analyses, that Lynn Davies argued that if women's participation and "stake" in educational institutions is to be increased:

... we will probably need a far more flexible, rotational, non-pyramidal style of school administration than is normally the case. Such structures should not of course be decided by men in the interests of women; they must be generated by the thoughts and decisions of the women themselves (1990, p.78).

In 1991, Davies' suggestions for change seemed to me to be very appropriate and my interest in finding new ways of organising the work of teaching was sparked.

Living/learning theory and a research journey

As a woman ex primary and secondary teacher and a feminist academic who teaches in the area of educational leadership, I am, of course, embedded in the situation I have outlined. At this point I want to expand on how my understandings of educational leadership and my interpretations of policy and practice have been shaped by my personal experience as a teacher. They have also been influenced by my exposure as a student in the Massey University educational administration programme to the work of sociologists of education and critical theorists (Codd et al., 1985; Connell, 1987; Foster, 1986; Smyth, 1989a). Although I draw on and discuss these rich sources, not all of them have engaged in analysis of the issues that have been debated in the feminist literature that I have been reading and using since 1987.

A latecomer to feminist theory, my upbringing and schooling was within the dominant

discourses of the ‘cult of domesticity’¹⁴ (James & Saville-Smith, 1989) and meritocracy. I learned that ‘hard work’ could lead me into academic ‘success,’ in the sense of university study and a ‘career,’ but that as a girl, my primary role should be as a ‘good wife and mother.’¹⁵ My movement from a working class background to the middle class profession of teaching was not uncommon for a Pākehā girl who grew up during the 50s in Aotearoa/New Zealand.¹⁶

I entered teaching after marrying and finishing my first degree, accepting a liberal version of the cult of domesticity discourse of the mid sixties that framed teaching as “a good job for a girl” (Buchan, 1980) which would enable me to bring up my children while also continuing with my career, even if this would only bring in some “pin money” (Middleton, 1988b, p.87).¹⁷ When I left teaching in 1970 to bear and care for our two children, I did not

¹⁴ During the colonisation of Aotearoa/New Zealand in the nineteenth century, the ‘cult of domesticity’ was imported with settlers from Britain (James & Saville-Smith, 1989). In this discourse, despite the reality of Pākehā women’s work alongside men in breaking in the land, women were constructed (as a consequence of their biology, their capacity for childbearing) as ‘naturally’ suited to the primary roles of mothers and wives, within dependent and privatised heterosexual relationships with men. Men, on the other hand, were situated in the public sphere, with responsibility to protect and provide for women.

¹⁵ In education, the “gendered curriculum” was planned and taught during the early years of the twentieth century within assumptions that girls needed tuition that would equip them for homemaking and boys for “breadwinning” (O’Neill, 1992; Fry, 1985; Tennant, 1987). These assumptions were endorsed in later policy documents. The Thomas Report (Department of Education, 1944) argued for equality of opportunities for all students, with each individual being given instruction in physical education, language, social studies in history and geography, mathematics, science, music and art or craft. A significant rider was added, however: “An intelligent parent would wish a daughter to have, in addition, the knowledge, skill and taste required to manage a home well and make it a pleasant place to live in” (Department of Education, 1944, p.17). These ideas continued into the 1960s. The pronouncements of the Thomas Report were quoted at length in the 1962 report of the Currie Commission (Department of Education, 1962, p.365) in its comments on what should be the social content of education. Such educational policy statements have cohered with other state policies (for example, on the status of the family and domestic support, on the restricted employment of married women during times of depression, and laws punishing women for prostitution for example) in ways that lend weight to James and Saville-Smith’s assertion that the cult of domesticity has been central in Pākehā constructions of this country’s “gendered culture.” This discourse has advantaged Pākehā men through its “assertion of their superiority in spheres of life concerned with ambition, competition and paid work” (James & Saville-Smith, 1989, p.34), legitimising their assumed authority.

¹⁶See Middleton (1988) and May (1992) for discussions of the socio-cultural factors involved here. Middleton analysed how the discursive opposition between sexuality and intellectuality was embedded in post war education policies and practices. This legitimised the persisting discourse of female domesticity and a commonsense acceptance that careers for women were “a short adventure between school and marriage” (Middleton, 1988b, p.87). She demonstrated how male “manpower planners” selectively used this discourse to pressure women teachers after the war to give up their jobs to returning servicemen. When teacher shortages occurred, however, as a consequence of the 1960s “baby boom,” the planners re-called women out of a “reserve army of labour” back into teaching service (p.88). In the late 80s, remnants of the sexuality/intellectuality opposition can be seen to be persisting in the arguments in Treasury documents (Middleton, 1990).

¹⁷ My use in this thesis of the terms liberal, radical, cultural, socialist and poststructuralist feminisms could give the reader the impression that these are fixed and bounded categories of theory, or that theorists work in only one theoretical area, or that theorists working within a particular strand have the same arguments (Middleton, 1993); none of these impressions is the case. Varying feminist analyses of the relations between and among groups of women, and men, are developing in dynamic interaction with each other and with other

expect to experience, however, “the problem with no name” (Friedan, 1963). For me, this was felt as an increasing loss of self confidence and sense of identity that resulted from my relative isolation in a child rearing role in a Pākehā nuclear suburban family.¹⁸ My dissatisfaction was exacerbated when Germaine Greer’s visit to New Zealand presented a radically different version of ‘womanhood.’ “She was educated and articulate in language of both the gutter and of academia, independent and sexually liberated” (May, 1992, p-.210). Although I was not ready for Greer’s form of radical feminism, I decided it was time to leave the kitchen sink and the nappy bucket and to return to teaching, albeit taking my small daughter with me. Consequently, while the women’s liberation movement was sweeping through our rural community, with some of my friends attending consciousness raising groups and setting up women’s collectives such as Women’s Centres and Rape Crisis, my energies were directed towards juggling career and family - and conducting gender battles with my partner over who did what at home.

My embryonic liberal feminism was re-ignited during the early 1980s when I was working as a head of department in a rural co-educational secondary school. When I was appointed as an acting senior mistress (a position subsequently re-named assistant principal), my principal told me, “The board are not silly men Marian; they know you are a married woman with a family.”¹⁹ I realised (without too much reflection!) that my ability was not the primary consideration for a permanent appointment into senior management. As a woman, moving out of her ‘natural sphere’ of being a wife with child care responsibilities, I would have to prove that I could handle what were evidently impossible competing priorities of

theoretical approaches, as this thesis will demonstrate. Particular feminist approaches are also embedded in and emerge out of complex struggles over meaning, power and resources. For example, struggles over meaning can be ‘won’ by a powerful group (such as white middle class women) and their views can come to dominate the field. As Middleton has commented, theories are “knowledges that have been constructed by particular people in particular circumstances and that are variously and unequally related to the apparatuses of power in which we experience both possibilities and constraints, and plan and live our lives”(Middleton, 1993, p.43). It is partly an awareness that feminist discourses, like others, can become a “regime of truth” (Foucault, 1980), that has encouraged researchers such as myself to develop a critically reflective stance towards our own work.

¹⁸ In her book, *The Feminine Mystique*, Friedan described how (American) women were being diagnosed by their doctors as suffering from “suburban neurosis” as a result of their poor adjustment to their ‘natural’ feminine roles (of a housewife and mother). In her criticism of this evaluation, Friedan distinguished biological sex from gender, which, she said, was socially constructed within oppositional sex role stereotypes of masculinity and femininity. She argued that it was women’s socialisation (through parenting, the media and a host of cultural practices), into narrowly passive and ‘good girl’ forms of femininity, that was causing many women’s distress when they found that they did not get satisfaction from enacting these roles. Her solution was for women to change their attitudes and see careers as not just an “up until marriage” option, but rather as part of their long term development and rights, as human beings, to full involvement in all spheres of life.

¹⁹Although the idea that women’s ‘place’ is in the home was being challenged during the 60s and 70s, attitudes towards ‘working women’ continued to be ambivalent (Middleton, 1988b, p.88).

home, family and school, as well as becoming an efficient school administrator.²⁰ I did become an assistant principal in this school, but I did not learn about feminist explanations of the wider complexities of gender discrimination in the field of educational leadership until much later, almost at the end of my academic study of educational leadership in the late 1980s.

Early in that study I was attracted to the work of neo-Marxist sociologists such as Bourdieu and Gramsci. Their analyses of social inequality as culturally produced (Codd, Harker & Nash, 1985) provided me with many insights about my own experiences during the 1960s as a working class student educated within a middle class culture.²¹ They also threw light on the processes whereby a dominant cultural group (Pākehā) could establish and maintain the marginalising of another culture and people (Māori).

I was also attracted to the work of critical theorists who were raising questions about ethical and moral issues around the links between leadership, power and the control of knowledge. Drawing on the work of educational sociologists such as Bowles and Gintis, Bourdieu and Connell, Foster (1986) argued that school leaders needed to move beyond the parameters of management and control. He maintained that the focus for principals should be on bringing about change in areas of social injustice and oppression. I liked his arguments that educational leaders should attempt, through dialogue and shared critical reflection, “to raise followers’ consciousness about their own social conditions and in so doing to allow them, as well as the ‘leader,’ to consider the possibility of other ways of ordering their social history” (Foster, 1989, p.54).²²

A focus on working towards equity and empowerment of marginalised groups appealed to me. However, I thought that critical theorists’ discussions of these issues remained largely at an abstract, philosophical level. I was disappointed when I found, in a collection of critical essays on educational leadership (Smyth, 1989a), that Jill Blackmore's chapter was the only one to examine the implications of gender on the development of educational administration theory.²³ Like Elisabeth Ellsworth, I found myself (as a member of a highly marginalised group

²⁰ This kind of incident has been described by Middleton as politicising, enabling some women to “interpret experiences of discrimination or oppression as symptomatic of not mere “personal inadequacies,” but as outcomes of the position and status of women in society” (Middleton, 1988a, p.129).

²¹ I found the concepts of habitus, cultural capital, accomodation and resistance helpful here.

²² I discuss later the difficulties I have had since reconciling these arguments with those that call for more radical flattening of control hierarchies.

²³ Feminists have criticised critical theorists’ entrenchment in “gender and colour-blind patriarchal liberalism” (Kenway & Modra, 1992, p.49). Capper has pointed out that, “in spite of occasional nods to feminist work, critical theorists tend to ignore feminist scholarship” (Capper, 1998, p.358). A notable exception is Gerald Grace (1995). A strength of the critical approach, however, is the way it directs us to look beyond what happens within the school and to highlight the links between schools and their wider social contexts. This enables a larger view of questions such as, what is the underlying purpose of a particular policy or set of actions, and who is likely to benefit. Critical questions like these, about collaboration and collegiality, are significant ones for this study, and I take them up again in Part II.

in educational administration - women) asking, “why doesn’t this feel empowering?” (Ellsworth, 1989).

There was at that stage a huge silence about gender issues in the educational administration research literature in Aotearoa/New Zealand. There were only two studies of any substance, Malcolm (1978) and Neville (1988). As part of my degree work, I decided to research this area myself and I began reading the feminist literature that had been beckoning me for years. I devoured some of the developing feminist scholarship, such as the writings of liberal (Friedan, 1963), radical (Firestone, 1971; Millett, 1970; Rowbotham, 1973; Spender, 1982) and socialist feminists (Acker, 1983; Arnot, 1982; Weiler, 1988) and studied the writing of New Zealand feminists working in education (Hancock-Benseman, 1978; Middleton, 1988c) as I designed a study of women in educational leadership (Court, 1989).

A study of women “winning a voice in educational administration”

In 1988, I interviewed six women who were working in middle management and leadership positions in primary and secondary schools to explore their perceptions about the impact of their gendered relationships, within their homes and their schools, on their work as educational leaders (Court, 1989). These women all described experiences of discrimination, both before and after their promotions, and recounted their struggles to find a voice that would be recognised by others as authoritative, yet would also fit with their own beliefs about leadership and the ways that they saw themselves as women. A significant similarity in their accounts and those of the women educational leaders Neville (1988) studied, was the way they downplayed their personal expertise and status, and emphasised instead, the efficacy of a facilitative approach that shared power with others in the school. The strategies that they valued included building open communication and information sharing, encouraging the participation of all teachers in decision making for the school, and transforming the principal/teacher, management/worker hierarchy (by, for instance, teaching for a staff member to enable her to work on a policy or management matter).

It seemed clear to me then that these six women were challenging what the theorists I had been reading had identified as a male hegemony in education,²⁴ manifested in taken-for-granted assumptions that men lead, women follow. I also saw these women challenging the hegemony of the leader/follower dichotomy, and its associated power hierarchies. Their philosophy was one that emphasised the affiliative qualities of leadership. That is, they saw the leader as a member of a team, working with and alongside of others, not as ‘in control’ or as more expert than the other teachers (Court, 1992a; 1994b). They saw an important part of their role as contributing to available pools of talent.

²⁴ For examples, see Hancock-Benseman, 1978; Arnot, 1982; Shakeshaft, 1987; Weiler, 1988. These discussions are examined in Chapter 3.

However, despite their beliefs in equality and collaborative sharing of power, these women's stories revealed that, as principals and heads of department, they were still having to work within the hierarchical bureaucratic structures that have become established as the 'normal' way of organising schools. Consequently, the women were having to confront dilemmas such as other teachers sometimes resisting becoming involved in decision making or the running of the school. One woman was told, for example, "You make the decisions - that's what you're paid to do." It was clear that career and leadership structures that are predicated on promotion above other teachers and higher status and salary differentials, pose difficulties for those trying to establish more democratic and inclusive ways of organising the work of teaching and learning in schools - and this means difficulties for both women and men.

I completed my masterate thesis in 1989 as the restructuring of education was taking effect. Although the fourth Labour government was instrumental in introducing free market ideas and practices into the public sector, it was also committed to equity (Middleton, 1992, p.2). By 1990, EEO requirements for the public sector had been legislated (*State Sector Act Amendment 1989*), the *Employment Equity Act 1990* had been passed and feminist lobbying for change in education had been successful in achieving the inclusion of equity clauses in the school charter frameworks (Watson, 1990). The guidelines for charter development issued by the Ministry of Education required schools to develop equal educational and employment objectives specifically related to ethnicity, disability and gender. Non-sexist role models were to be provided, both in terms of "girls, women and people from different ethnic groups in positions of leadership and authority and boys and men as caregivers, so that children can understand the meaning of equity in behaviour they observe from day to day" (Ministry of Education, 1989, p.9). Alongside the provision of non-sexist curriculum, policies and procedures for the elimination of sexual harassment were also required to be developed. (Both liberal and radical feminist ideas and practices have been invoked in these requirements).²⁵ Despite some critics' concerns about the market leanings of the government, it seemed to me at the beginning of 1990 that a way was opening up for a redressing of traditionally intransigent inequalities in gendered work relations. I left my job as a secondary school assistant principal, therefore, to take up a position as an Equal Employment Opportunities reviewer in the newly established 'auditing' agency in education, the Education Review Office

²⁵ Middleton has provided an excellent analysis of the ways that both a liberal feminist equal opportunities model and a radical feminist advocating of a women centred analysis for change were incorporated into the equity provisions of the school charters. She pointed out that EEO is essentially an individualist approach, but that "equity emphasises the group. Certain groups are seen as having been disadvantaged educationally - through no fault of their own. Compensation is owed, and schooling becomes the site for 'compensatory justice' " (Middleton, 1992, p.2). The National government that came into power at the end of 1990, did not remove the EEO requirements, (they are not incompatible with an individualistic and business approach). Instead, it shifted the emphasis from education as compensatory justice, to education as a private choice and as part of the strategies of an entrepreneurial state and nation in a global market (ibid).

(ERO).²⁶

During the eighteen months that I worked as a reviewer, my observations in a large number of schools confirmed resoundingly for me the New Zealand literature's documenting of men's 'capture' of the work of school leadership and management (Whitcombe & Fenwick, 1982; Neville, 1988). I saw mostly men leading and the majority of women teaching in the primary and secondary schools I was visiting, with this gendered hierarchy being particularly noticeable in the larger primary and intermediate schools.

I was also observing however, the ways that many women (and some men) were working closely together in pairs or small groups, team teaching across their classrooms, syndicates, or departments. These practices were often informal, occurring as a result of private agreements between teachers who were learning from each other and trying out different ways of improving their own teaching and classroom management. Such flexible and collaborative ways of working together have been documented by researchers such as Ramsay et al (1990) in New Zealand and Nias et al (1989) in the UK.

While I was working in ERO, it was also becoming evident though, that increasing workloads and levels of stress were emerging out of the restructuring and its often shifting requirements for change and increased accountability. As studies have since shown, demands for increased documentation were adding to teachers already high workloads (Sullivan, 1994; Wylie, 1995). Hierarchical management was also on the increase, with principals being required to appraise teachers and approve promotions. Along with others, such as Codd (1990), I wondered what would be the effects on teachers' professional collegiality and collaborative leadership practices, of this 'new managerialism' and attempts to redefine and control teachers' areas of expertise and work through such things as task specified job descriptions linked to performance monitoring and promotion.

Women sharing leadership

In 1991, during a review of an intermediate school, I discovered that three women teachers were sharing the responsibilities (and the small amount of extra salary) of the senior teacher position in their syndicate. They had together initiated a collective leadership.

I was excited by this innovation. It seemed to me to be the kind of initiative that Lynn Davies (1990) was envisioning: a flexible, non-pyramidal way of structuring school administration. I thought that this was an approach that had real potential for breaking down bureaucratic management hierarchies in schools. Further, from my knowledge of the team approaches that the women in my 1989 study had been espousing, it seemed to me to be an initiative that other women in particular might like to try. As I also thought it could be a useful

²⁶ I have discussed elsewhere, in a wider analysis of women's employment in education in Aotearoa/New Zealand between 1893-1993, how these positions were disestablished under the National government (Court, 1994a).

professional development strategy for those who had no experience in management beyond the levels of their own classrooms, I asked the women if I could research and write up their initiative.²⁷ They agreed. About this time, I left ERO and moved to a new position as a lecturer in the Education Department at Massey University. Alongside developing a new course on women in educational organisations, I carried out a small case study of the senior teacher shared leadership (Court, 1992b).

This study was a precursor to the concerns of this present thesis in two ways. Firstly, it explored the idea of sharing leadership as a way of challenging the taken-for-granted ‘normality’ of hierarchical single line structures of management, accountability and control in schools. Secondly, what happened to the women’s leadership team made me rethink the viability of Davies’ admonition about what is needed to achieve an increased participation of women in school leadership. Let me briefly describe the study.

When the senior teacher position became vacant in their syndicate, Cathy, Helen and Jennifer (the participants were given pseudonyms) suggested to Barry, their principal, that they all three apply to share the position. They said, “We don’t want a leader - we want to do it ourselves.” They were not motivated by a concern to change hierarchical school structures. Their aim was to ensure that they would be able to continue to work closely together to achieve the goals they had set (with the other two teachers) for themselves and for the children in their syndicate. They did not want someone new to be appointed as leader over them, with the power to change what they were doing.

From the interviews I carried out with the three women, the other teachers in their syndicate and the two principals who had been involved, it was clear that all these people agreed that the initiative was successful. It enabled the women to pool their collective teaching and management strengths and to provide very constructive support for each other and the children and staff in their syndicate. Each of the women also found that the shared leadership built their own knowledge, confidence and skills and enabled them to share the workload and the responsibilities of a middle management position while also having time for their family and friends.

Half way through the year, however, the principal shifted Cathy to another syndicate, replacing her in the team leadership with a male teacher. When I interviewed the three women they had not discussed fully together how this had happened, and the research group interview became a conversation between them about what had occurred. I reported their account and the feelings they shared as follows.

²⁷ Under the previous liaison inspector model in education, I could have recommended that they be seconded to visit other schools to discuss what they were doing. Under the splitting of inspection/audit and advisory/liason roles between the Education Review Office and the Ministry of Education, I was not ‘allowed’ to do this.

Consultation, communication and control: a cautionary tale.

After there were some changes in staffing, in a discussion with the principal it was made clear to Helen that she was to be moved to a different syndicate area where her strengths were needed. Although she did not want to go, she said she was not really given an option - she could either go as an assistant teacher, or she could accept the senior teacher position. It was suggested that Philip act as senior teacher in her place in the shared leadership position.

Consultation and information sharing was not carried out with the three women as a team about either of these decisions. Jennifer said: *Cathy came to me and said, "Philip's taking over Helen's role in the leadership". I thought, though I never said anything, oh - they've gone ahead and organised that by themselves without involving me. But it wasn't that at all. Barry had only just told Cathy that Philip would be doing it. Cathy said she had been told ...out of the blue, and she had mentioned it to Jennifer waiting for her reaction - which didn't come because she was feeling the decision had been already made. Helen thought that Barry had discussed the situation with the other two and they had agreed. She had been very upset about the whole thing, but felt trapped and powerless to change anything.*

It is interesting that the women as a group did not challenge this decision on the grounds that it was breaking up their agreed team leadership. Some explanations for this occurred to me as I was writing up the report. Firstly, Cathy, Jennifer and Helen's comments indicate that they felt excluded from the decision making process, and this kind of exclusion can be disempowering - it can breed silence. (The women confirmed this interpretation when they read the draft report.)

Secondly, there was the women's lack of experience. During the group interview, the women became aware of this factor. Helen said, *We were new at this game and we didn't talk about it early enough.* As a result, in Jennifer's words, *The change just sort of slipped in without us really being aware what was happening.*

A third factor is that within the gendered hierarchies that exist in schools, a male principal has an authority over female teachers that is doubly grounded in the status and legality of the bureaucratic position and in the gendered hierarchies that exist in our culture, where men and masculinity are valued over women and femininity. These culturally developed expectations about what is 'natural' within gendered behaviours and decision-making and control structures in society as well as in schools might well silence many women's questions in a similar situation.

This story illustrates some of the difficulties which might be encountered by teachers who are sharing a position of responsibility which has not been formalised. Unequal power relations within the authority structures of the school can come into play. In their own syndicate the women had flattened hierarchy. However, they were still working within a school structured on a traditional (and gendered) pyramid of control, where, as the three woman said, *"the principal is the boss"*. During the group interview the women said that they hadn't been assertive enough, and that they needed to speak out and support one another in a situation that was affecting them all. Jennifer said, *We should have been there with you at the beginning Helen and explained to Barry why it wasn't on.*

(Court, 1994c, pp.51-53).

During the group interview with me, the women discussed what action they could then take to improve their changed situations. They explored talking about it with Barry and by the time I carried out a second interview with him, they had done this. He had realised some of the implications of his lack of consultation with the women in making his decision to split up their team, but the action was not reversed. Helen remained in the other syndicate and the leadership team of Cathy, Jennifer and Philip split up at the end of the year when Philip won promotion to another school and Jennifer took a year's study leave.

It is striking that, immediately on hearing that Helen would be moved, the women did not discuss it as an issue of Barry's subverting of their collectivity. Perhaps this was because they had not yet evolved an overview of their own innovation as being any thing other than their own three-way personal preference and they did not have access to theoretical discourses that explained their collectivity. It is worth noting here that while some of the women co-principals in this current study did have some theoretical understandings about collectivity and gendered power relations, others did not. Issues around women's position in relation to men in authority positions 'over' them did emerge in some of the stories in the co-principal case narratives, but they were not always remarked upon in this vein. Wider issues around the nature of consultation and information sharing also surfaced as they have in other studies of collaborative approaches to leadership (I discuss this more in Chapter 6). Difficulties around lack of experience in management and insufficient discussion of expectations and responsibilities were also experienced by some of the women co-principals. I do not want to expand here on these links between the two studies of shared leadership however; that will be done later in my analysis. Rather, I want to explain how I moved from the senior teacher study to developing a proposal for the co-principal research.

Thinking about theory and research questions

After I had completed the field work for the study of the women sharing a senior teacher position and written up the report, I continued to reflect on what had happened to them, trying to understand why they had not immediately resisted their principal's action. I wrote another paper in which I 're-storied' this incident through the lenses of four different discourses, constructing some different interpretations that drew on concepts of bureaucratic, liberal, radical theories and the notion of male hegemony.²⁸ I wanted to explore how within each approach, different kinds of power dynamics can be highlighted for analysis. I was becoming increasingly aware of the problems of using the concept of male hegemony through my reading of feminist poststructuralist accounts of how, within different discursive locations, women negotiate shifting possibilities, becoming sometimes powerless, but also sometimes

²⁸A condensed version of this paper was later published as part of a chapter written with my daughter, Helena (Court & Court, 1998).

powerful (Walkerdine, 1987).

It was my thinking about these kinds of complexities around power that led me to reconsider Lynn Davies' (1990, p.78) claim. To what extent, I wondered, is it possible for women teachers to generate, and then maintain, different structures and ways of working within educational organisations that in most cases continue to be led by men, and within an increasingly dominant managerialist discourse that is hierarchical and as some feminists and pro-feminist men argue, masculinist, in its rationale and practice (Blackmore, 1993; Collinson & Hearn, 1994).

When a colleague who knew that I was interested in studying shared leaderships told me in 1994 that a co-principalship had been initiated by some women teachers in a small three teacher primary school, I thought that this initiative could be not only an important example of an alternative to hierarchical school leadership: it could also be a potentially rich source of material for analysis of the complex power dynamics that ensue when old ways of doing things are challenged. I developed a proposal for this study, that, if approved and accepted by the women participants, would use a longitudinal case study to document their progress. It was at this stage then, that the first set of research questions (listed on pages ⁸⁻⁹₈) were decided, along with a fifth question of,

- What part, if any, was gender playing in influencing the initiation and trajectory of primary school co-principalships?

As I got underway, I learned about two more schools who were in the planning stages of setting up co-principalships also. I negotiated their inclusion in the study. (The research design and methods will be more fully explained in Chapter 5).

Not surprisingly, the research problem shifted and changed its 'colour' as I undertook fieldwork over a period of five years and reflected on what I heard and observed in the light of my on-going reading of feminist theory and other studies about educational leadership. As a consequence of my reading of accounts of feminist poststructuralism (Davies, 1989; Jones & Guy, 1992), I wanted to accomplish more than just a descriptive documentation of these three initiatives or an analysis framed only within an exploration of 'women's ways of leading.' During these years, and as I constructed the case narratives, my theoretical orientations and understandings shifted (as they will, of course continue to do). As I read the work of Foucault and feminist poststructuralist theorising of discourse and subjectivity (Davies, 1989; 1993; Jones, 1991b; Weedon, 1987), I became increasingly interested in trying to capture a sense of the emerging:

debates and struggles about how the identities of the participants should be named and thereby constituted, how their needs should be named and thereby constituted, how their relationships should be named and thereby constituted (Yeatman, 1990, pp.154-5).

Thus, although my interest in the questions I had already identified did not change, I developed a further interest in analysing them in the light of feminist poststructuralist understandings about how individuals live their lives and take action within a range of

competing and often contradictory discourses, discourses that are both constitutive of and constituted by individual subjectivity, group identities and the wider socio-cultural hegemonies that shape practices in historically specific institutional sites. My analysis in the later stages of the study thus became more closely focused on the questions of:

- How did the women come to understand and construct their own individual subjectivities as ‘a co-principal’?
- How did they develop, inter-subjectively within each of the three schools, their different collective co-principalship identities?
- What impact did the above processes and understandings have on the different trajectories and outcomes of the three co-principalship initiatives?
- In what ways did the different school contexts and wider socio-cultural processes impact on all of the above?
- Within the co-principalship initiatives could any shifts be identified in the expression/representation of the dominant discourses of educational leadership and management? What issues were significant here?

Overall, in my analyses I have tried to hold in a productive tension some of the macro patternings and micro enactments that have been constructing different approaches to school leadership in Aotearoa/New Zealand in recent times. The two main strands of interest that I identified at the beginning of the study remained throughout my research and the writing of this thesis. Thus, on the one hand, it explores the co-principalship initiatives and their approaches to sharing leadership as ways of challenging the taken for granted ‘normality’ of hierarchical single line structures of management, accountability and control in schools. On the other hand, it explores the influence of gender on women’s initiations of different leadership structures and ways of working within the context of a dominant leadership/managerialist discourses that are not only hierarchical, but also masculinist, in their rationales and practices. The latter focus broadens to encompass considerations of social justice issues around the intersections gender, ethnicity and class. In the next two chapters, I critically discuss literatures in these two areas: in Chapter 2, studies of co-principalships and then, in Chapter 3, feminist analyses of women’s leadership in schools.

CHAPTER 2

CO-PRINCIPALSHIPS: WEAVING LEADERSHIP COLLABORATIONS

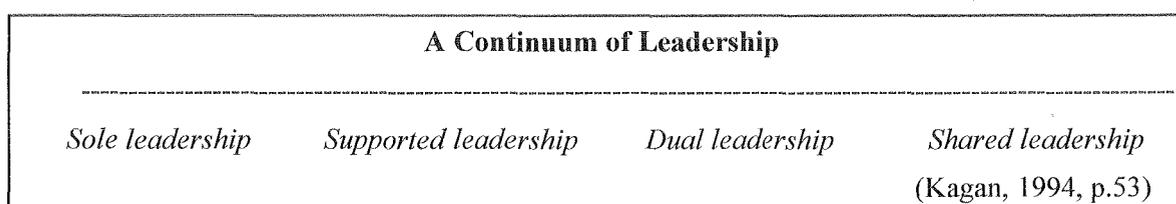
Introduction

The emergence of shared leadership models such as co-principalships can be seen as part of a growing interest in education in changing organisational structures and cultures to enable a more democratic sharing of peoples ideas and talents. The literature about co-principalships is still sparse, however, so in this chapter I provide a fairly detailed account of the reports and studies I have found. As part of an introduction to the discursive interests of this thesis, I also identify traces of professional collaborative, managerial and feminist discourses within different co-principal practices and interpretations of these.

Literature reviews are constituted in academia as discussions of significant findings within a field of knowledge. As part of an ‘expert’ canon of what counts as knowledge, however, literature reviews also contribute to the constituting of particular discourses as “regimes of truth” (Foucault, 1980). Thus, in writing a ‘scholarly’ review of shared school leadership studies, I am engaging in both a discursive and a political act. While positioned in particular ways within a discursive field of academic research that shapes what and how I write, as an academic I am also positioned as a potential expert in the area of my research. As such, this chapter, along with the whole of this thesis, is contributing to the constituting of an emerging discourse of co-principalship and shared school leadership.

‘Defining’ shared leadership and co-principalship

The term co-principalship implies at least a dual leadership. There are many different models of shared leadership however. To help organise and open up my discussion of these, I have drawn on Kagan’s (1994) suggestion that leadership can be viewed on a continuum. She outlined this as follows.



Kagan elaborated that in sole leadership, one person, as the real and titular head, has the dominant voice and leadership is not shared. Supported leadership (characterised sometimes as the “patron” approach, or consultative leadership) exists where the recognised single leader draws on and acknowledges input and advice from a wide range of people. Dual leadership involves a partnership between two people, both recognised as the leaders. Shared leadership is diffuse, “becoming an holistic property shared to some degree by all persons and groups involved in the collaboration” (ibid). Kagan suggested that in fully shared collaborations, some individuals or groups may “rise to prominence” temporarily leading in a particular situation, but this will not destroy the distribution of leadership throughout the organisation.²⁹

As co-principalships involve collaborations between two or more people, the term *sole leadership* appears redundant for this study. Individual, in the sense of *separate*, leadership can also be enacted as part of co-principalships, however, especially in models that are structured around task specialisation where each person holds different responsibilities, but also in models where leadership is more diffused and fully shared. A further point to note is that many of the studies of co-principalships have not made judgements about the extent to which leadership has been shared with, or advice taken from, people outside of the principal partnership. Thus, I have not always been able to discuss the models in relation to the notion of *supported leadership*, though in some cases that kind of leadership may well have been practised. (Only Dass’s (1995) study has given detailed descriptions of co-principals’ daily interactions with each other and other people in their school.)

The chapter is organised as follows. In the first two sections, I discuss co-principalship models which can be placed towards the sole/separated leadership end of Kagan’s continuum. These are task-specialised, dual leaderships where two people hold separate leadership/management responsibilities. Section three discusses job-shared/alternate co-principalships that have involved more integration of administration and instructional leadership responsibilities in the work of both co-principals. These models can be placed between supported and shared leadership on Kagan’s continuum. Section four is dedicated to an analysis of Dass’s study of the Western High School co-principalship, a model that she claims was the only fully shared and integrated co-principalship at the time of her study, and one that aimed to challenge hierarchy and gender stereotyped relations. In section five, I look at other shared leaderships, both co-principalships and teacher team leaderships, which have aimed to diffuse leadership even more fully throughout the school. Like the Western High School model, some of these cases have aimed to be educative through providing sound role models of men and women working together in an effective management team, and/or through giving students, staff and community a wider involvement in democratic decision making. As

²⁹ From her work in early childhood education, Kagan observed that traditional theories of leadership did not readily ‘fit’ how leadership was being conceived and practised in that sector.

such, some have claimed that their models of shared leadership are educating people for democracy.

1. Suggestions for ‘split-task’ co-principalships in the US

During the late 60s through to the 80s in the US, concerns were mounting about the increasing size and complexity of the principal’s job and the ways that administrative responsibilities were taking principal’s time and attention away from instructional leadership (Korba, 1982; Shockley & Smith, 1981; Thurman, 1969; West, 1978). Indeed, because US principals were narrowly trained in administrative processes and technical knowledge, they were having difficulty in providing adequate instructional supervision for teachers. Introducing the position of vice principal had not helped, as too often they had the same kind of training as principals, and this had therefore merely added “one more rung to the administrative hierarchy.” And in Thurman’s opinion, “the more hierarchical the structure, the less the possibility of change” (1969, p.781).³⁰ It was argued that a task specialised form of dual school leadership could alleviate these problems.

Thurman proposed that two co-ordinators could be appointed in a school. The co-ordinator for learning could be freed from managerial tasks to focus on being a “learning counsellor,” to facilitate and encourage teachers’ development, experimentation and creativity (1969, p.282). This co-ordinator would have overall responsibility for the development of school-wide objectives and specific responsibilities for assisting teachers in their planning, classroom practices and professional development, communication with parents and pupil discipline. A teacher without administrative certification could be appointed to this position. The co-ordinator for school wide administration could be a business school graduate, and hold responsibility for supervision of non-instructional staff, buildings and grounds; resource requisitions; student attendance records, managing the budget and making purchases. Thurman described the latter area as part of the “business matters” that could be allocated to the administrator and thus free the co-ordinator for learning from such “managerial tasks.” (p.282). Thurman emphasised that because each person would have specific functions, coordination and cooperation between them would be “essential” (p.783).

Thurman’s model offered a way to break down the ‘principal as leader/teachers as followers’ gap that has been structured into school leadership, by highlighting a role of coordination for the co-principalship, a shift away from the previous ‘direct and control’ functions of traditional principalship. His ideas parallel some aspects of other teacher

³⁰ This is a particularly interesting claim in the light of the emergence of co-principalships in Aotearoa/New Zealand during a time of increasing hierarchy in terms of accountability to the centre. As indicated in my Introduction, this seeming paradox was one of the catalysts for this current study.

leadership models, such as those developed in Norway that I discuss later. Thurman's concluding statement also stills holds true today. He wrote:

The complexity of providing instructional leadership and carrying out the varied aspects of school management is such that no one individual can be expected to do everything in an adequate manner. It will avail little to develop innovative practices in curriculum unless similar advances are made in the instructional and managerial leadership areas (Thurman, 1969, p.783).

A decade later, Shockley and Smith (1981) also suggested that a principal for administration and a principal for instruction could share the responsibility for one school, with a similar division of responsibilities to that outlined by Thurman. While Thurman had drawn primarily on a professional discourse of teacher leadership to support his arguments,³¹ Shockley and Smith argued within a business managerial discourse, stating that reform of the principalship was needed because school were becoming like small businesses. They gave the examples of "a considerable cash flow operates a food service system ... and income from co-curricular and extracurricular activities supports other interest programs," and increases in community education programmes meant that administration of the school buildings had itself become a full-time job (ibid). Thus, because "most businesses have managers in horizontal and vertical arrangements," Shockley and Smith proposed that a co-principalship could use these "better management techniques" to free the instructional principal from excessive "paperwork, payroll and bookkeeping chores" (p.92).

This argument might be one that many educators in Aotearoa/ New Zealand would agree with, especially since the 1988 reforms of educational administration and the resulting increased emphasis on managerial forms of documentation. Shockley and Smith's analysis did not adequately explore, however, the differences between business and school management. Better management techniques were understood as merely the introduction of specifically defined and delineated management positions. Although these writers noted that selectors should look for two principals who were strong in either instruction or management yet had compatible personalities and philosophies (p.92), there was no indication of how the latter would be judged. This is an area that other studies, including this current one, have identified as significant if a co-principalship is to be successful (Glenny et al., 1996; Gordon & Meadows, 1986; Groover, 1989; White, 1991).³²

Responding to the suggestion that schools could move more to a dual responsibility, business management model, Korba (1982) pointed out some schools in the US were already

³¹ Thurman constructed educational leadership as focused on teaching and learning within an orientation towards collegiality, using verbs such as "facilitate," "assist" and "serve."

³² In a separate paper, Shockley, Smith and McCrum (1981) reported that a triad co-principalship had been introduced in Mineral County, West Virginia, where three administrators were appointed to share the leadership of Keyser Primary School and Keyser Middle School. In each school, a principal carried responsibility for instructional supervision, and the third co-principal oversaw the administration in both schools. No evaluation of the model had been done, however.

in the early 1980s doing this. He saw this happening as a consequence of increased demands for improved accountability in education, arising out of linked factors of “rising costs, greater importance of education in terms of employment, increased concern with identifying the proper tasks of schools, the demand for measurable results linked with federal aid programs and the growing concern that modern management techniques should be used in school systems” (p.58). While largely agreeing with these concerns, Korba thought that the concept of accountability needed to be clarified in education, to distinguish between resource allocation accountability and goal attainment accountability (p.59). Although school principals were already being held accountable for the former, there was little emphasis on accountability for improving instruction and learning. Appointing different people to be responsible for different areas could improve this and force “the balancing of accountabilities in terms of overall system goals” (p.59).

Korba’s linking of increased demands for accountability to shifts in US approaches to school management resonates with the concerns around accountability that were evident in Aotearoa/New Zealand at the time that administrative changes were being made here in the late 1980s. There are some interesting differences in the way structural changes were occurring in the two countries, however. While in parts of the US, such as West Virginia and North Carolina, changes to school organisational and management structures were being proposed during the 1980s by academics, and actually initiated by professionals (the latter cases are explored in the next section), in Aotearoa/New Zealand, systemic structural change was largely imposed on schools by the state. In Chapter 6, I will explore how assumptions about the need for a greater accountability from public service providers in Aotearoa/New Zealand, were embedded into the new public management model for education and its restructuring of the principal’s role. Korba’s distinguishing of different kinds of accountability is helpful, but this thesis will demonstrate the limitations in assumptions that it is easy to ‘split up’ in practice school principal accountabilities. The case narratives presented in Part II, and discussed in Part III, will demonstrate how ‘official’ interpretations of accountability as requiring task specialisation and single line reporting, have posed difficulties for the establishing of the New Zealand co-principalships. My study will further show however, that within trusting collegial relationships, people can become empowered to take mutual responsibility and accountability for achieving goals and resolving problems.

2. Co-principalship practised as task specialisation

(a) High Point, North Carolina, US: dual co-principalships in secondary schools

The dual co-principalship model, with a principal for administration and a principal for instructional supervision, was reported by West (a superintendent in North Carolina, US) to have been established in seven High Point secondary schools (West, 1978). Responsibilities of the principal for administration included development of policies and procedures for the management of finances, buildings, plant, student attendance, time-tabling and custodial staff. Responsibilities of the principal for instruction entailed insuring curriculum development and revision in terms of overall planning and goals, course offerings, teaching materials, classroom pedagogy, teaching staff evaluation and development, as well as school-community relations in terms of developing co-operative relations through interpreting board policy to the community, being involved in community affairs and ensuring good communication. The two principals also worked jointly in some areas such as overall decisions about the learning environment, conducting staff meetings, reviewing instruction and administration evaluations of staff, developing long-term plans for the administration and instructional programme of the school, submitting an annual report to the superintendent. Each principal had equal salary and authority, and their roles and responsibilities were clearly defined in specific job descriptions (p.242).

A non-participant follow-up study of those schools that still had co-principalships ten years later was carried out by Groover (1989). This thesis study used a survey/interview methodology to study the perceptions of 1,061 teachers, parents, students and district officials about the split responsibility approach and its strengths and weaknesses.

The High Point model was found by both West and Groover to have some particular advantages for instructional and staff supervision. According to West (1978, p.46) and presumably from his own observations during his work with the schools, in the co-principal schools in 1978 there were fewer discipline problems with reductions in suspensions and expulsions, as well as increases in the number of classroom visits and appropriate follow up; staff participation in in-service development opportunities. Groover's later study also found that instructional leadership was "greatly enhanced because this role and responsibility is assigned to a specific individual, along with the accountability for its accomplishment" (Groover, 1989, p.125). She considered that the High Point Public School co-principalships were successful because of an achieving of a balance of leadership styles that capitalized on individual strengths in administration or instructional leadership (p.114).

Elsewhere in her thesis, however, Groover also reported that while one third of the 24 co-principals kept to their job descriptions, another one-third used those only as guidelines and the remaining one-third either "traded off and negotiated roles based on each others strengths

and interests ... or utilized a combination” (p.71). This situation indicates a weakness in arguments for a dual role approach that assume the often complex inter-locking between instructional and administrative tasks, responsibilities and accountabilities can be easily divided, and that people can and will keep to the divisions. My study will show, through observation and interview material how the realities of teaching principals in particular are quite different to this. A further weakness in the High Point approach is that the co-principals were selected and paired up by the superintendent and district officials; the evaluation showed that the principals themselves wanted input into the choice of their partner. White (1991) later found that this factor was important for a successful co-principalship. In its absence at High Point, some inequalities and power struggles between the co-principals resulted.

Groover noted that to avoid such struggles, co-principals needed to have also “well integrated personalities, good communication and trusting relationships” (p.287). The significance of the place of trust between members of a school community (and of other public and private sector organisations) has been brought into sharp focus in Aotearoa/New Zealand after the 1990s restructuring of industrial relations within what Codd (1999) has since called “the policies of distrust.”

As one of her recommendations for further research, Groover asked, “What insights would be gained from a feminist critique of the backstage behaviours and ‘good old boy’ syndrome that sometimes exists in educational bureaucracies?” While none of the studies I discuss in this review have picked up on this specific question, some have begun to look at the impact of gender factors, as the following discussions will show.

(b) The Netherlands: ‘two-headed’ primary headship

Split role, task specialised co-principalships also exist in the Netherlands. During the last decade it has been possible there for two people to share the primary school headship, with 15% of primary school management shared this way in 1995 and 17% in 1996. Little information about these dual leaderships is available in English, but in a personal communication to me, Imants (1997) reported that studies of the cases (Van de Grift & Kurek-Vriesema, 1990; Vlug & Geerlings, 1990) had found a positive effect of these co-principalships was the opportunity for mutual support. These co-principalships were mixed gender teams, a useful strategy in terms of equity issues. However, indications have been found that:

Although both principals occupy the same position... informally differences in status and task differentiation occur. One principal (mostly the male principal) performs general management tasks including managing financial resources, and maintains external contact. The other principal (mostly the female principal) is primarily focused on student administration and care (Imants, 1997).

Some might argue that there is no problem in a division of roles, such as has occurred in these shared leaderships, but there is a problem when differences in terms of status occur because each area of work is not valued equally. Connell (1987) has described divisions of labour like the above as part of a gender regime in schools, where mostly men have been appointed to the positions of authority and management control while women have been allocated most of the supportive roles. The latter have been typically in areas associated with women's so-called 'nature,' that is, nurturing and child care, while the former have been unproblematised as part of a hegemonic linking between social constructions of rational authority and masculinity. This gendered hierarchy and division of labour has been shown to underpin the under-representation of women in educational leadership (Blackmore, 1989; Court, 1997; Shakeshaft, 1987; Strachan, 1997). I will look at this area again later in relation to Dass's arguments for what she called a "parenting" approach to school leadership.

(c) Stantonbury Campus, England: a triad, then dual co-directorship

A different kind of task specialised three way co-principalship model was established in 1974 at Stantonbury Campus in Milton Keynes, England, when two large secondary schools amalgamated. The headteachers of those schools were appointed with an overall director to lead and manage the Campus. This triad later changed to a dual leadership of two co-directors and in 1992 Lesley King was appointed to join John Wilkins in a mixed gender co-director partnership that was still together when I visited the Campus in June 1997.³³ Stantonbury Campus had then 160 teachers and over 100 associate staff. Each of the four 'halls' (of about 450 students)³⁴ was headed by one of Campus's deputy head teachers, who worked with Lesley and John in the senior management team. This team of six had responsibility for planning and policy, whole-campus management and organisation, staff support and supervision.

Like the other models described in this section, the Stantonbury Campus co-directors each held some different responsibilities. For example, Lesley was responsible for maths, literacy, music, security, premises, theatres and gallery, catering, while John was responsible for budget, policies, staff development, leisure centre and track, external relations, governors. The split between administration and instruction was not as clear cut as in the US approaches, however, and Lesley and John also said that they worked closely together in some management areas, such as preparing for an OFSTED visit, and in overall planning.

A gendered division similar to that reported in the Dutch co-principalships did exist though, with John managing the budget, personnel, admissions, exclusions, strategic plan and external relations (leadership areas that have been the traditional preserve of men in education)

³³ I am grateful to the co-directors, Lesley King and John *Wilkins*, for their willingness to talk to me about their shared leadership and to give me material about their school.

³⁴ There was also another hall for post-16 students.

while Lesley had more curriculum and student responsibilities.³⁵ Together, these co-directors said that factors apart from gender, such as personal leadership and communication styles, past experience and current aspirations had more impact on their co-principalship than gender.³⁶ Yet, as I will explain in the next chapter, research has shown that all of these factors can be experienced by women in leadership as highly gender differentiated. Lesley told me separately that John had been used to a quite aggressive, or macho style of relating with his previous male co-director and she had found that difficult to cope with. This was one of the reasons why she had suggested that they hire a consultant to work with them on communication and team building. She also said that it was perhaps because she was a woman that she was “tried out” by several staff during her first year. John did not comment on her style, though he did make a wry comment about risking being politically incorrect in stating that “we are in a post feminist age now,” in relation to other factors than gender impacting on leadership. In my experience, struggles over gender power dynamics are often expressed in such ways.

At the time of my visit, it seemed to me that Stantonbury Campus was an example of a fairly traditional school structure - a bureaucratic pyramid of teachers, team leaders, middle managers, senior management team and a dual leadership that was, in effect, an expanded two people principalship at the ‘top.’ It must be noted though, that these impressions could not be verified within my brief time in the school, as I did not observe both principals at work or talk with staff about how they perceived the structure working in practice. Further, to my knowledge no evaluation of this co-directorship has been done.

3. Co-principalship as job-sharing/alternating dual leadership

The next two cases are different from the preceding ones, in that rather than working simultaneously in a principal partnership, the co-principals alternated in the principal position, and rather than allocating administration and instructional supervision to different people, each principal at different times carried out all of the principal functions.

³⁵ When Lesley showed me around their campus, I noticed her ‘hands on’ approach (such as her picking up of rubbish as we walked) and her warm personal interpersonal style and interactions -asking staff in the cafeteria about their work situation, greeting students we passed by name and asking them about their exams or job applications.

³⁶ As in the Henry Hudson co-principalship (to be examined next), where the male co-principal wanted to lead a school on his own, John aspired to a headship on his own.

(a) Henry Hudson School, Vancouver, Canada

In October 1989, a 50/50% job-shared co-principalship was established at Henry Hudson Elementary School, Vancouver, to allow the incumbent principal to maintain her position half-time while having some time off for parenting. Another person was appointed to work 50% of his time as principal and the other 50% teaching while the other co-principal was also 'on-the-job.' Some interesting dynamics must have emerged as a consequence of this, but unfortunately neither this aspect, nor the impact of gender dynamics within this mixed gender partnership, were explored in the non-participant evaluation that was carried out four months into the job-share (White, 1991). It seems though, that when both the co-principals were in the school, their partnership worked rather like a traditional senior management team: a teacher commented that "the school had a feeling of having a vice-principal when both principals were on duty" (White, 1991, p.18).

This co-principalship blended the holding of separate responsibility in some areas with a sharing of others. Responsibilities were shared in staff supervision, evaluation and professional development; student assemblies and discipline; communication with parents; the budget and the "reading of all communications," but some specific tasks associated with each of these areas were divided between them. For example, one principal was responsible for the staff special education assistants and the other for the supervision aides; one monitored student council meetings and the primary camp programmes while the other looked after the planning for the spring dance and the intermediate camp programme. The allocation of responsibilities was determined according to whether there was a "critical history" to a project and the particular strengths and workloads of the principals (p.3).

The focus of White's evaluation was on how well the co-principals were maintaining continuity, consistency and good communication, areas of concern to those involved in the initiation of this job-shared collaboration. She carried out interviews with the co-principals, the area superintendent and the director of personnel, and survey questionnaires were sent to 225 parents, 17 teachers, 11 support staff, and a sample of the primary students and intermediate students.³⁷ From the responses, White concluded that:

Consistency and continuity in providing leadership and supervision was enhanced by the principals' shared philosophy and approach as well as by continuous, effective communication between them and by joint attendance at meetings (1991, p.ii).

Constant communication was thought to be "critical to the success of the co-principalship" (p.27). While each co-principal communicated separately with individuals about their particular responsibilities, they regularly updated each other about what they were doing. They also wrote memos and notes and tape recorded messages to each other; met occasionally

³⁷ White pointed out that a low return rate for parents (17%), support staff (45%) and intermediate students (52%) was a limiting factor in her report.

on a Monday evening to review matters and both attended meetings with their superintendent, staff and parents. White concluded that “mutual responsibility for communication expands the possibility that good communication will take place” (p.17). The co-principals also thought that time spent initially in reaching mutual decisions would decrease that required later. They felt that this discussion time, along with a sharing of the same values and educational philosophy (a perception corroborated by the teachers) had enabled mutual trust to develop, such that they could support each other’s decisions when these had to be made sometimes without discussion (p.28). This factor also emerged in the most successful of the New Zealand co-principalships I studied at Hillcrest Avenue School.

Although gender dynamics were not explored in depth in White’s evaluation, she noted that an advantage was positive role-modelling for students of male-female leadership. The woman co-principal also said that she was opening up new ground for women, showing how child rearing and professional responsibilities could be shared and a teacher commented that the co-principalship had shown that women do not necessarily have to choose between career and a family. Taken-for-granted constructions of women as society’s primary care-givers remain unchallenged of course, in this kind of liberal feminist ‘women can do everything’ approach.

Some other advantages were found in the evaluation of this co-principalship, including: better decisions because of two people sharing; reduced stress for the principals; increased access to administration for staff having a choice of administrator to relate to; the opportunity for a new administrator to work with an experienced administrator; principals able to work on more projects than a single full-time principal could; and different personalities presenting a generous “resource centre” (White, 1991, p.iii). Similar advantages had been found by Groover (1989).

Disadvantages included: additional time needed for communication between the co-principals; less contact with staff for the half-time, non-teaching principal; some inflexibility in terms of time and availability that resulted from the half-time scheduled teaching of one principal; and the associated expense of having to employ a substitute to release him for principals’, Board or school-based meetings. The half-time principal also worked longer hours than expected, about 80% of the week instead of 50%, because of such things as meetings scheduled on her ‘non-work’ days. No reference was made here, however, to feminist research findings that have documented women feeling they need to work twice as hard as men to prove they are just as good (Acker, 1983; Shakeshaft, 1987).

Several recommendations were made in the report. The co-principals recommended that: the teaching component should be eliminated for both principals so that it could be “a true 50/50 principalship;” that there should be self-selection of the leadership team (the incumbent principal was not involved in the choice of her partner); that there should be compatibility of career goals (one of them wanted to continue half-time but the other wanted to move to a full-time principalship) and that there should be a commitment to keep the team

together for four or five years (this because of the extra time input at the beginning to set up procedures and establish a good working relationship). They agreed with the superintendent's suggestion that the community should be involved in the decision: he said, "there are schools and communities that would not be ready for this concept" (p.25). This point was made also by both West (1987) and Groover (1989).

Some comments from the Henry Hudson School teachers suggest that the collaboration was focused more within the principal partnership than school-wide. White wrote that "teachers recommended that the co-principals should work collegially with staff ... and one recommended that co-principals should receive input from a staff committee on a regular basis, on the impact of the co-principalship" (p.23). Because of both of these sets of factors, I would place this co-principalship closer to the sole leadership end of Kagan's continuum than the next case I discuss, that of Gordon and Meadows' partnership. However, I would also describe the Henry Hudson School co-principalship as a blend of supported and dual leadership because of the close collaboration and on-going support each partner gave the other and because trust in each other was identified by both partners as a significant factor in what they saw as its success.

(b) Normandy School, Colorado, US.

In 1984 a 50/50 job-shared principalship was initiated by principal Pamela Gordon and assistant principal B.J.Meadows in Normandy Elementary School in Colorado, US. The purpose here was to provide their school with leadership continuity when a falling roll situation threatened the dis-establishment of the assistant principal position. In their participant evaluation of their initiative, Gordon and Meadows reported that they were also wanting to pursue their doctorate study and give more time to their family and community commitments (Gordon & Meadows, 1986).

For the one year that they worked as co-principals, each worked for two months, then took two months off. While each principal worked alone while on the job, Gordon and Meadows designed their rotating leadership to build in a high degree of collaboration particularly for the two days at changeover points. They had consulted widely with staff and parents about possible concerns before their co-principalship was established and they sought on-going input into their decision making and actions.³⁸ Their model can be described then, as a blend of separate, supported and dual leadership, though closer to the shared leadership end of Kagan's continuum than the Henry Hudson School model, because of the more open, consultative style that was described.

³⁸ This judgement relies on the co-principals own report of their model as no external evaluation was carried out.

As in the Henry Hudson example, Gordon and Meadows realised that maintaining continuity in all aspects of their work as principals would be an important factor for the success of the job-sharing. They began therefore, by jointly planning their goals and devising multi-levelled communication strategies. To build and maintain their own partnership, they kept in regular weekly phone contact with each other and attended meetings together, even those some of these were scheduled during one co-principal's time off. To help their communication with staff, students and parents they introduced a Memory Jogger Box (where staff could drop reminders to them about any issues or concerns), a Discipline Box (a card-filing system detailing students' office visits) and a Tool Kit (a folder, containing details of staff and parent meetings, actions taken and any matters that needed follow-up). Each woman kept these boxes up to date for her partner to read through on her return.

While each woman carried out all the functions and duties of the principal in the two months she worked, some task specialisation was also built into this co-principalship, to enable an integration of their "distinctive talents ... and special interests" within a unified overall approach (p.28). It is interesting to note, though, that it was only as Gordon and Meadows worked together that they found they had similar values and a shared educational philosophy. As at Henry Hudson School, this was not considered as a requirement before the collaboration was begun. The emphasis was on maintaining the management systems, rather than on building shared educational values and philosophy. The latter was given a higher priority in the initiation of the most successful of the New Zealand co-principalships that I studied.

Gordon and Meadows reported that they did not aim "to demonstrate a new approach to school administration" (p.29). They found though, that their job-shared co-principalship had many advantages, some unexpected. For example, a staff member told them that it was exciting to work in a new model like this, and a superintendent who did not actually approve of job-sharing, nevertheless agreed that this approach was useful as "an alternative to losing good quality people who risk suffering from burnout" (ibid). He stated that the success of Gordon and Meadows' initiative was due to their own special abilities and "a sophisticated community that could understand and relate to the change, not be afraid of it" (ibid).

For the two women, "the sharing became a time of camaraderie:" it broke down isolation, lessened the stress and "doubled the insights ... two heads are better than one" (p.29). They also thought that supervision of staff was improved because both their skills were shared with staff. Further, they achieved additional short-term goals as a consequence of problems often being solved more expeditiously at times of changeover when they could work on them together. Personally, the women found that they had more time for enhancing friendships and family relationships. Like the Henry Hudson School woman co-principal, Gordon believed that "job-sharing can provide a better quality of life for women who want to advance in their careers and do good parenting at the same time" (p.29). Both women pointed out, however, that men could also benefit from job-sharing and a philosophy that "I am more than my work".

In their summing up of the strengths of their model, Gordon and Meadows agreed that its success was due to careful planning, open and constant communication and, above all, their trust in each other (p.27).

Dass (1995, p.291) described the design of this co-principalship as moving towards an integrating of leadership functions, rather than a splitting up of the work through task specialisation, the feature that she argued was common to all the models she reviewed (that is, Thurman, Korba, Shockley & Smith, West, Groover, Gordon & Meadows). She suggested that a sharing of leadership tasks and functions was the model most able to draw effectively on the resources of each of the partners. This approach also emerged in the aspirations of the women primary school co-principals in Aotearoa/New Zealand. However, it is not clear that it is necessary for co-principals to do all their work together. Indeed, Gordon and Meadows' own account provides evidence of how they were weaving together aspects of both an integrative and task specialisation approach. My review is showing that in most models of co-principalship there is a blending of individual and shared responsibilities, with the importance of good communication and effective co-ordination being underscored. In the next section therefore, I look more closely at Dass's arguments.

4. Co-principalship as an integrative, 'parenting' model of dual leadership: Western High School, Oregon, US.

Dass's 1995 study is the only extensive piece of research into co-principalships that is based on observations and a range of other ethnographic techniques. She observed the co-principals in all aspects of their work for four months, using time studies as well as running records and descriptive accounts. They were interviewed, and so were district officials, school staff, parents and the family members of the co-principals. A questionnaire survey was administered to other teachers, parents and students who were members of the student council. Dass reported that she relied on her observational field data however, using the other material as supporting material for her analysis of the types of functions that were being shared by the co-principals, their respective leadership styles and the merits and demerits of the co-principalship (1995, pp.97-98). In this way her study goes beyond the others I have examined to this point. It is also the only empirical study I found that has attempted to build a theory of co-principalship. Before examining the efficacy of that theory, I will outline and critically discuss Dass's analysis of how this co-principalship 'worked.'

Initiating the co-principalship

In 1993, Western High School (a pseudonym) was the largest secondary school in Oregon, US. When the second principal in two years left the school and the staff listed for the District Superintendent what they wanted for the new principal, she said that "All those

qualities are not found in any one person” (p.110): the idea for a co-principalship was born. She invited Lynne George and Chuck Vaughan (who were then teaching in different schools) to take up a dual leadership and to work out together how they could best work as a partnership. Dass stated that these two people were thus “from the outset... shaping the model with their respective strengths and expertise” rather than the model shaping them (p.294).

The superintendent told Dass that, as well as Lynne and Chuck having strengths in communication and in relating to students, district officials thought that their leadership styles reversed stereotypical gender roles. This would help students to see:

an assertive yet successful female who demystifies and disproves the traditional myths about women and their societal roles... and see that it is okay for a woman to take charge and okay for a male to be gentle and assertive... that women and men can be more effective when they work together ... as a team (pp.116-117).

There are interesting resonances between this interest in challenging traditional gendered stereotypes and the gender equity goals of the New Zealand school charters that were introduced in 1989. These required schools to provide models of women and girls in leadership and authority and men and boys in caring nurturing roles. In the Western High co-principalship model however, the superintendent was arguing not just for a challenge to gender stereotypes. She was also critical of:

the way schools have modelled themselves after businesses and the military which mostly operate on the masculine model ... letting the idea that masculinity is better to pretty much take over the leadership in schools... when teaching and learning is more like child raising than it is like banking, manufacturing or fighting wars (p.118).

An amalgam of liberal and radical feminist ideas about gendered divisions of labour and power inequalities in society and the effects of these on women’s experiences in educational leadership, can be seen in the superintendent’s comments. Dass reported that she talked about how men in American society “have the privilege of being raised to have more confidence in themselves than women do,” giving them a “sense of presence” and an authority in the principalship that is “not conceded as easily to a woman.” In her view, as a consequence, the principalship “takes more work on the part of a woman” (p.117). The superintendent also thought though, that Lynne’s strength was in “her ability to combine the assertiveness of a female change leader and the caring instincts of a mother,” with an emphasis on relationship building (p.120). She saw Chuck, as a man, having an ability to be focused on justice, on outcomes, on achieving results (p.121). Consequently she thought that combining Lynne and Chuck in an administrative team would bring a “diversity of skills” and qualities to the job of leadership and with this, an increased chance of success. The superintendent further argued that as co-principals, Lynne and Chuck could provide what was badly needed high school leadership, a “parenting role model ... where the female and the male, bring their strengths together to nurture and raise their children” (ibid).

I look later at how Dass took up these ideas in her theory for a parenting model of co-principalship. It is worth noting here though, that while the superintendent was on the one hand challenging gendered power inequalities, on the other, her comments re-embed oppositions that have traditionally propped up arguments that women are nurturing/expressive and therefore suited to particular kinds of teaching (the ‘soft humanities) and guidance work, and that men are rational/instrumental and therefore suited to (higher status) administration and teaching in the ‘hard’ sciences and technology. Her comments also gloss these oppositions as ‘natural’ (biological, as in her link between women and mothering). Throughout Dass’s thesis, as I will show, there is this kind of co-existing challenging and re-inscribing of gendered oppositions.

Integrating leadership and management

Apart from arguing that this model was transformative in terms of traditionally gender stereotyped approaches, Dass maintained that the Western High model was a “truly integrative model,” because the two co-principals worked simultaneously with equal authority and shared all aspects of the principals’ work (pp.280-295). She thus saw it as “strikingly different” from the task specialisation approach that she had found (citing Korba, 1982; Gordon & Meadows, 1986; Groover, 1989; Thurman, 1969; West, 1978).

By “fully integrative,” Dass meant that the model was collaborative at its very core; had no pre-determined set of roles for each co-principal; was open, flexible and adaptive in terms of the leadership styles of each person and able to build on individual strengths; was based on shared values and goals; designed on mutual trust and fellowship; incorporated equal responsibility and accountability for decisional consequences in the school and opened up team strategies of administration (pp.294-295). This list is a good description of elements that I have found in some other democratic models (discussed in the last part of this chapter) and in some of the co-principalships I studied in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Dass seemed to want to build, however, an argument that sharing all tasks and functions was the best approach for co-principalships. She suggested that splitting leadership tasks and functions would not enhance leadership potential, but inefficiently develop “one-sided leaders,” and she stated that “no other model ... allowed the principals to co-share and govern simultaneously as co-equals in every aspect of school administration and instruction” (p.308). (Arguably, no division of tasks is wasteful of human talents and time.)

From my reading of her study, it seems that Dass has to some extent ‘squeezed’ her research data to fit this argument. There are several ambiguities and contradictions in her report. For example, she stated that Lynne and Chuck had “no demarcation of personal territories” (p.298), yet had also “categorically chosen their specific fields (of supervision) based on their expertise, previous experience in the field and personal interest” (p.299). Dass reported, but underplayed many of her respondents’ perceptions of the two co-principals as

carrying out different responsibilities.³⁹ She herself also described a splitting of administrative tasks, such as Chuck having responsibility for anything requiring “mathematical calculations” (such as preparing budget reports or student statistics) and “supervising building construction,” while Lynne “performed those innumerable administrative chores pertaining more to verbal communication and interpersonal meetings” (p.298). Lynne was also described as “more involved in curriculum development and in languages, humanities, social studies and fine arts ... AIDS and Drug Prevention programs, multicultural programs,” while Chuck worked on “overseeing science, accounting, computers, physical education” (p.299). Apart from the rather clear divisions of tasks here, it seems to have also escaped Dass’s notice that this is the classic gendered division of labour I noted earlier, one that has been analysed in some depth by feminist researchers in education (Acker, 1989; Blackmore, 1989; Court, 1994a; Shakeshaft, 1987; Watson, 1988).

Dass’s theorising of co-principalship

There are also some ambiguities and contradictions in Dass’s theoretical arguments that the Western High co-principalship provided an intervention in traditional gender stereotypes, yet could be most usefully conceptualised as a parenting approach. In my view, theorising the latter within a functionalist socialisation explanation combined with cultural feminist arguments, weakened her concurrent attempt to explain a movement in the Western High co-principalship towards organisational democracy.

Towards organisational democracy?

Dass reported that an important part of the aim of appointing co-principals at Western High was to enable a wider participation of staff and community in planning and policy making. She described the co-principals’ shifting of decision making power away from the Staff Council (of staff heads of department) to the Site Council (whose members were elected teachers and parents, with representation from all interest groups), as “an attempt to be truly democratic” (p.314). The creation of several ad hoc committees (that sometimes included students) for the making of “micro decisions,” was also reported by Dass as giving a wider group of people opportunities for periodic leadership, enabling them to make recommendations to the Site Council for further action (ibid). Thus, although there was not

³⁹ Teachers associated 40% of the tasks indicated in the questionnaire she gave them, “with primarily one principal or the other” (p296). Parent respondents saw “budgeting, scheduling, sports, busing, custodial work etc” as Chuck’s responsibilities and “instructional, curricular and student related problem resolution tasks were found to be essentially the realms of Lynne” (p. 296). Thirty five percent of the students surveyed perceived the same division of responsibilities. Although 40% of students saw all functions as equally shared, 11% of students had worked with Chuck alone, while 41% had worked alone with Lynne. Dass acknowledged here that “Lynne handles student problems more than Chuck” (p.297).

a complete flattening of hierarchy, the co-principals enabled “equal and legitimate rights for all the participant members (of the Site Council) to veto” and parents on the Site Council were given the opportunity to participate with staff as equals (although Dass did not elaborate on how this worked in practice).

In her discussion of this democratic approach to power sharing, Dass referred to the dilemmas school leaders can face when, after decision making has been delegated, they try to get groups to move in the directions they think will be most effective in achieving the school’s goals. She pointed out that principals need to be more tactful and resourceful in such situations, and reported other researchers’ suggestions that principals needed here to ensure a wide sharing of information, continued motivation of staff, communication between the school and the community, along with program monitoring and provision of resources (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1984). Dass summed up that “such efforts demand a combination of a feeling heart and a calculative mind” (p.317).

Or a functionalist theory of shared leadership as “parenting”?

Unfortunately, in my view, Dass moved from these insights into the qualities and abilities needed for the principalship in the 1990s and beyond, back to an argument based in Parsonian functionalism and sex role theory. While elsewhere in her thesis, she argued that the co-principals were challenging the traditional gender division of instrumental male and expressive female, here she stated that such a combination - of a feeling heart and a calculative mind - is “as Parsons and Bales (1955) would call it, the ‘expressiveness’ of the mother and the ‘instrumentality’ of the father.” She described Lynne and Chuck as like “two well-meaning parents who wanted their family to be an open meeting ground where all their sons and daughters could be contributing members” and argued that in their work together, they aimed to “empower others through love and trust, similar to how parents in an effective family nurture and help their children to growth, success and security” (p.313). In their support of the weakest members of the Site Council, the parent group, they were “like the mother who often sides with the child who is weakest and tries to ensure that that child gets all the attention and help he or she needs to grow into a healthy person” (p.315). Dass can be seen to be drawing heavily here on the superintendent’s views that I reported earlier.

Dass further observed that both co-principals exhibited in their resolution of conflict, “the caring approach” (citing Noddings, 1984) that focused on the problem, not the culpable person. This caring, she argued, was evidence of “how principals, as heads of schools more like the head of a family, contribute to the emotional well-being of the school as a family and influence the affective development of the students” (p.320). She likened the latter approach to “the current feminist approach to school and administration,” citing writers whose analyses have drawn on a cultural feminist discourse (Adler et al., 1993; Dunlap & Schmuck, 1995;

Noddings, 1984; Regan, 1990; Shakeshaft, 1987) and characterising their arguments as follows.

Since women have been traditionally expected to nurture and raise children, the feminist thinkers opine that administration of schools should include more female administrators so that the alternative way of leading marked by inclusion, integration, networking and concern for individuals' feelings can replace the masculine perspective of control, domination and concern for achievement (Dass, 1995, p.321).

The theoretical efficacy of Dass's parenting model of co-principalship suffers, however, from the weaknesses of a cultural feminist discourse. I will expand on these more in the next chapter, but briefly, cultural feminism ignores the ways that women vary in their leadership values and styles, and compares women as a group with men as a group, thus reducing women's variations to a comparison with a narrow 'masculine' norm. The ascendancy of that norm as a regime of truth (Foucault, 1980) is left unchallenged, as is the underlying problem of a binary categorising of male/female, masculine/feminine. In Dass's theorising, the latter is reinforced within a functionalist understanding of gender as a bipolar expressive/instrumental opposition. Although Dass argued that Lynne and Chuck were in their own personalities and practices challenging traditional gendered oppositions, she described this as a useful reversal of the categories, reporting that while Chuck was gentle and facilitative, Lynne was assertive and strong.⁴⁰ Yet, contradictorily, the ascendancy of a hegemonic masculinity that is technically competent, calculative, assertive and instrumental (Connell, 1987) is left unchallenged here, as Chuck was also described as still possessing those characteristics. That is, it was alongside of his form of traditional masculinity that Chuck was enacting the caring gentleness Dass described as 'feminine.' This dynamic does not merely demonstrate a reversal of traditional gendered oppositions. It illustrates how a hegemonic formation, or a dominant discourse, can be 'enlarged' through the co-opting of hitherto opposing or different constructions, without unpicking either the pre-existing discourse of gender difference or the valuing of masculinity over femininity within it.

The ways that such complex and diffuse power relations operate within the links between language, practices and knowledge constructions is evident in the case study descriptions in Dass's thesis. However, her chosen theoretical tools have not enabled her to identify and explore these complexities. In my view, a feminist poststructuralist approach that draws on a Foucauldian understanding of these links and disjunctions, could have provided

⁴⁰ Davies' (1989) work on presenting these kinds of gender reversals to young children in the form of feminist fairytales shows how the children read these reversals negatively. Most of the children thought that the person was acting 'out of role' in ways that were strange and unacceptable, rather than as positive possibilities for themselves. The traditional gender oppositional categories remained intact in their minds with their veracity unchallenged. Blackmore (Blackmore, 1989) has also argued that a woman behaving assertively and strongly in educational leadership is likely to be 'read' negatively in comparison with a male leader behaving in the same way. He is likely to be seen as strong, she as 'unfeminine.' Dass's analysis fails to address these issues.

a more useful ‘toolkit’ to help theorise the Western High co-principalship.⁴¹ A discourse analysis of the superintendent’s constructions of co-principalship as a parenting approach to leadership, could have helped Dass to avoid the heteronormative and ethnocentric exclusions and silences that are constructed within a view of a family that is conceptualised as a nuclear unit of a heterosexual couple who are biological mother and father to their sons and daughters. Instead, these constructions are reinforced by her use of a functionalist/cultural feminist analysis which further embeds a normalising of different gendered behaviours as ‘natural.’ A discourse analysis could have further enabled Dass to explore the diverse micro workings of power that no doubt existed within the co-principalship, as well as between it and other people in the school.

At the end of her thesis, however, Dass’s summing up of the merits of the Western High co-principalship echo advantages found in other studies. She noted an improved school climate with better up and down communication; more principal availability and accessibility; more collaborative decision making and more teacher and parent involvement in school projects (p.307). Dass did not seem to have asked the co-principals what they saw as the advantages, but she did report Chuck’s comment that the co-principalship reduced stress on the job (p.308). Also similarly to other studies’ findings, it was recommended by teachers and parents that when appointing co-principals, care should be taken to choose people who are compatible, equally competent and experienced (p.307). Dass also noted that the school district should be supportive of a collaborative approach if power struggles were to be avoided (ibid).

5. Co-principalships and teacher leaderships: towards organisational democracy

Dass’s study developed some feminist analyses and arguments that the Western High co-principalship was democratic in its extension of participation in decision making, not just to staff, but to parents as well. In some of the cases I discuss in this last section of the chapter, feminist analyses are especially relevant, while in others, gender issues are not explicitly teased out. To varying degrees, though, a quest for increased organisational democracy has been part of the rationale for the widening of leadership opportunities in each of the cases in this section. Some have also aimed to use shared leadership as education for democracy.

It is interesting to remember here the schools in Yugoslavia that were set up as “self-managed communities of interest” (Watson, 1985). Although a radical change to the leadership structure was not part of their aims, it was claimed that in those schools students learnt about democracy first-hand, through observing the election of principals and the rotating of jobs

⁴¹ This is the approach I take in my study. I explain why in the next chapter, and explain the theoretical concepts in Chapter 4.

around all participants, as well as by participating in their own student councils. According to Watson, the purpose of these early examples of self managed schools, was “to form a bond between workers, the community and schools in order to facilitate personal, educational and economic development” (1985, p.21, cited in Rizvi, 1989, p.229). Rizvi (1989) pointed out though, that Yugoslavia encountered the difficulties of guarding against unequal distribution of power with the introduction of ‘managed participation’ as organisations grew in size. Hargreaves (1991) later described a similar approach in the UK and US as “contrived collegiality.” Both these scholars maintained however, that the existence of such approaches was not an argument against the search for effective forms of organisational democracy.

In the following cases, the way that leadership is conceptualised and enacted moves closer towards the shared (diffused throughout the organisation) end of Kagan’s continuum: that is, leadership is becoming understood as “an holistic property shared to some degree by all persons and groups involved in the collaboration” (Kagan, 1994, p.53). In each there is an explicit challenge to hierarchy and arguments for a wider sharing of power.

(a) Penrose High School, Aotearoa/New Zealand: a co-principalship as “a very feminist thing to do”

Although studying co-principalships was not the focus of Strachan’s (1997) study of three feminist principals, she gave some details about this model in her analysis of Ann Dunphy’s leadership at Penrose High in Auckland, Aotearoa/New Zealand. After ten years as the sole principal of this multi-ethnic, co-educational secondary school, Dunphy remained committed to changing attitudes in areas associated with race, class, gender and ethnicity, and to improving the life chances of students who were ‘at risk.’ She was described by staff members as a feminist leader who had “passionate commitment to the under dog” (Strachan, 1997, p.152). Since the 1989 educational administration reforms, however, “no matter how hard she worked, she was unable to meet all the demands of the job” (p.166). Dunphy’s decision to invite her male deputy principal (with whom she had worked for six years) to join her as a co-principal, was a way of sharing the load of a job that had become “too big for one person” (p.156). This motivation resonates with those articulated by the advocates of split responsibility co-principalships in US.

Strachan’s thesis gave few details about how the Penrose High co-principals divided up their work, beyond mentioning that they shared committee responsibilities between them according to their personal strengths and interests (p.157). Strachan reported that both the co-principals and staff perceived that there was a balance of skills between the co-principals and that their relationship was “warm and collegial and based on the same vision of education and commitment to social justice” (ibid). Strachan also described, how Ann, like the other two feminist principals she researched, fully endorsed the increased requirements within the restructuring of educational administration in the late 1980s, for community accountability.

She wrote that they “welcomed the closer partnerships with their school governors and all worked to build closer working partnerships that would empower their communities” (p.198). This sense of accountability was “personally driven ... and often went far beyond what was ‘officially’ required,” especially in relation to providing the best possible learning environment for students (p.198). This certainly challenges the Treasury’s assumptions about educational professionals being self serving. (I will examine this argument more in Chapter 6).

Overall, though, it is not possible to make any definitive judgements about the effectiveness of this co-principalship, as Strachan’s study did not examine this area explicitly. Advantages described by staff reflect those found in other studies, such as the reduction of the stress of a large workload for a sole principal; a balance of skills and styles of two people; increased opportunity for staff to relate to the leadership and similar educational vision and commitments enabling this co-principalship to work well. Strachan herself described this co-principalship as a “flattened, open leadership.” She reported that a male staff member doubted that a man would have initiated the idea as they would not have been so willing to share power. In his view, “It was a very feminist thing to do” (p.157).

Ann described power sharing like this: “Power is like a socket in the wall. You plug it in to do the job that must be done.” Power is reflected here as a force that circulates, not owned by an individual or a group, but rather exercised by them, as Foucault (1980) argued. This interpretation is inconsistent though, with the liberal feminist understanding of power as a personal property, reflected in Ann’s next comment. “Power is also like a garment that you put on when it is time to take the role. You hand it over when it is time.” She added, “By giving away some power and becoming a co-principal, the school and the cause (of social justice) will be better served. Now that, to my mind, is classic feminism” (pp. 156-7). Although this personal power sharing may be perceived by a feminist principal such as Ann to be empowering of others, as Strachan pointed out, teachers may find at times that because of her own energy and passion, she is “somewhat scary to approach” (p.213). Despite their acknowledgement of Ann’s commitment to inclusivity, some staff saw her as forceful and overpowering (ibid). Strachan noted too, that both Ann and some staff were finding it hard to make the shift from a single to a co-principalship. Several staff said that Ann was still seen as “the chief co-principal” and Strachan noticed during a planning meeting that Ann took “a leading rather than a shared role” (p.158).

Thus, although this co-principalship was described by Strachan as a “high profile example of power sharing” (p.215), it seems that the personality and particular feminist orientations of this co-principal may have been limiting the extent to which others felt they could ‘have a say.’ It is not clear that a wider diffusing of leadership was occurring throughout the school.

(b) Selwyn College, Auckland, A/NZ: co-principals flattening hierarchy

In contrast, at Selwyn College in Aotearoa/New Zealand, according to a participant evaluation study completed in 1994, attempts to develop a devolved management structure and strategies were largely successful in sharing power over decision making across a wider group of people than just the two co-principals (Glenny et al., 1996). Selwyn College was then a large co-educational secondary school, with a student roll of 1,100 students and a staff of 65 teachers and 15 support staff. When the principal retired in 1991, neither Carol White nor John Kenny, who were then the deputy principals, wanted to apply for a sole principalship, because they associated this with “hierarchical power, inevitable loneliness and inevitable stress” (Glenny et al., 1996, p.32). Instead, they suggested to their board that they initiate a co-principalship, arguing that there were sound educational and equity arguments for such a model.

Since a major distortion of power is a lack of gender equity, co-principals (male and female) and a gender balanced management team are educationally sound structures that can provide good role models for both young men and young women (ibid).

Although the State Services Commission (SSC - the then employing agency for teachers) told the board that legally the school had to appoint a principal (meaning, one person), a lawyer on the college board found a loophole in the legislation and proposed that a rotating system would be legal. Carol and John were subsequently interviewed (along with several other applicants) and appointed on the understanding that each year one of the principals would hold the legal role and sign the (comparatively) few special returns and documents which have to have a principal’s signature. White later wrote that this was “a technicality. Kenny and White have worked in tandem throughout their appointment” (White, 1995).

Despite some differentiation between the co-principals and the rest of the management team, and the college’s structure within the traditional tiers of teachers, middle management group (heads of department) and senior management, the evaluation of Selwyn College co-principalship model suggests that it is closer to Kagan’s definition of shared leadership than either the Stantonbury or Penrose High co-principalships. A majority of staff reported that under their co-principalship there was an increased unity and cooperation between middle and senior management and they saw leadership and participation in decision making spread throughout the school through strategies such as the following.

Firstly, White and Kenny worked as “a sub-group of two” within a senior management team of six people. This had three permanent and three rotating positions, with the latter appointed for three years from within the school’s staff. Responsibilities were negotiated within the team, but each team member was responsible for at least one ‘principal function,’ such as resources, systems, curriculum, assessment, community relations, professional development, guidance. Secondly, a budgetary formula to ensure that money was distributed

fairly between departments, was negotiated with middle and senior management staff. Thirdly, a project team approach was initiated, in which interested staff formed a small committee, investigated the area and made a decision, on which a significant majority of the total staff had to agree. If this did not happen, the committee reconvened (encompassing if possible the dissidents) to find a variation which would win majority approval. And last, but not least, students were included on many committees, invited to staff professional development meetings and had their own council that also had a “shared presidency” (Glenny et al., 1996, pp.32-33).

There are some similarities between the project team approach here to that used in the Western High School co-principalship, although at Selwyn College there was no referring ‘up’ to a higher committee for final decision-making, but rather an involving of all the staff at this stage. The co-principals were thus ‘giving away’ much of the decision veto power usually vested in the principalship. This approach was described as borrowed from Tikipunga High School in Northland, New Zealand. It is worth noting here that Edna Tait, a self-professed feminist, was the principal who introduced that model, and that another feminist, Karen Sewell, reported in 1989 that Green Bay High (also in Auckland) had been working for five years within a staff decision making model that meant that she, as principal, had no power of veto. Sewell reported that at Green Bay High, staff meeting agendas were determined by staff and decisions were made together; thus responsibility for putting decisions into practice was shared. She wrote, “Our aim has been to develop a spirit of mutual responsibility and a commitment to collaborative action” (Sewell, 1989, p.14). It would be fair to assume that these ideas and practices were influential in the development of the Selwyn College co-principalship model.

In the 1994 evaluation study, when teacher and student perceptions of the school culture and the values underpinning the management were investigated through survey and interview, students identified “accessibility and teamwork” as features of this culture. They commented that “the notions of equity and representation are important in the culture of the school.” Teachers identified “systems that encourage participation, a flattened hierarchy, an emphasis on consultation and structures that encourage teamwork and model shared decision making” (Glenny et al, 1996, p.33). The writers summed up that “changed management structures have produced a changed culture ... one in which each individual person participates and in which their views are valued.” This culture was described as characterised by power sharing and relationships between people that exhibited collegiality, integrity and honesty. It was seen as based on the “relationship of total trust that exists between the co-principalship ... and that is echoed throughout the organisation” (ibid).

These are strong words indeed, particularly at a time and in a country that was espousing a public management discourse that saw society and organisations as made up of self-interested individuals, who in effect, could not really be trusted to work for the good of the organisations of which they are members. As will be described in Chapter 6, the New

Zealand model of New Public Management (NPM) is informed by theories that construct individuals as motivated by acquisitiveness and a desire to increase their own power and status, motivations that, in NPM discourse, are seen as likely to result in provider capture. That outcome was argued as inevitable when such individuals work together in organisations that have no ‘appropriate’ management checks and controls (Boston et al., 1996). The NPM model employs a task differentiated and single line accountability management model, along with tightly specified individual contracts (now tied to performance pay), as the most efficient and effective way of ensuring increased productivity and accountability (ibid). The Selwyn College co-principalship did not take up these discursive arguments however. Instead, Carol White and John Kenny developed with their staff a flattened structure and teamwork strategies that aimed to give all the school’s staff and its students, “direct experience of participating in a social group and of influencing it” (Glenny et al., 1996, p.25). As a result, in the views of its members it modelled for all in the school, especially for students, “responsible citizenship in a democratic society” (ibid). The writers argued that a co-principalship developed and enacted within democratic decision making structures and strategies, was a thus a model that could contribute to educating staff and students for democracy.

No external evaluation of these claims has been carried out however, and the views of parents and the wider school community were not reported in the study discussed here. This kind of follow-up research would be very useful. The study does illustrate, however, Foucault’s contention that contradictory discourses can co-exist and do not cancel each other out. Indeed it suggests that the circulation of contradictory discourses can become a generative force. In this thesis I take up these ideas in my exploration of the primary school co-principalships that were initiated in Aotearoa/New Zealand 1993 and 1994/5.

(c) Independent School District 2, Minnesota, US: a teacher team management

The modelling of democratic citizenship and the challenging of gendered power hierarchies were not described as the aims in this next case. In another way, however, this teacher team leadership model was quite radical: it did away altogether with the principal’s position.

In 1988, when the principal resigned at Independent School District 2 (a year K-12 school of 319 students in Minnesota, US), a proposal for a teacher team leadership was given unanimous approval by the school board, which negotiated a three year waiver to the state requirement to have a principal to allow the experiment to go ahead (Gursky, 1990, p.35). A guiding principle for this initiative was the belief that decisions are best made by the people closest to the situation. Gursky reported that the school’s teachers were already used to being consulted on a range of issues and therefore, “the necessary practical and philosophical framework was already in place” (p.35).

This teacher shared leadership involved six of the 28 staff, who made up what was called the SHARE (Staff Helping Administer Responsible Education) team. Each person was paid a \$4,400 annual stipend for sharing between them all the traditional principal functions and tasks, including “curriculum changes and budgetary decisions, student discipline and teacher evaluations” (p.35). At the time Gursky’s report was written, the team had been working together for a year from a base in a shared office. His article did not describe in any detail how responsibilities were shared among the teachers, though it seems that they were evolving systems to enable the team to work together on most things. Gursky noted that all the team were comfortable with working with the budget and in the case of student discipline, the only area where some details were given, “when students are sent to the office, they fill out a form that provides information about the particular offense. The student then goes in front of the SHARE team, usually before school next day” (p.37). Unsurprisingly, the teachers found that “communication is the glue that holds the system together” (p.36).

Benefits reported included: improved morale; better communication; a more comfortable atmosphere and greater teacher control over the issues that affect them (p.35). Gursky also stated that grievances between the management and teachers, as had occurred between the previous principal and staff, had disappeared. One staff member said that “there’s a little less peeking over your shoulder to see if someone’s watching - it’s more professional” (p.36). Another said that all teachers had become more aware of the needs of the whole school, and were taking more responsibility, with the perception that discipline had improved. This is perhaps not surprising; once all teachers feel more involved they are less likely to ‘pass the buck’ up a control chain. It is perhaps also not surprising that in this situation, the student president reported that: “It feels like you are being watched the whole time” (p.36). This comment and the staff member’s comment about feeling watched resonate with Foucault’s (1977a) argument that currents forms of disciplinary power have become dispersed to the extent that individuals can internalise surveillance, regulating their practices as if they were being constantly watched. I will examine this dynamic in more depth in Chapter 4, where I will discuss also Foucault’s analyses of how power is exercised through strategies and tactics that can challenge, resist and subvert oppressive uses of power (Foucault, 1982). As Gordon commented, “Power is never a fixed and closed regime, but rather an endless and open strategic game” (Gordon, 1991, p.5). My later analyses of some of the New Zealand primary school co-principals’ experiences will explore how “at the very heart of the power relationship, and constantly provoking it, are the recalcitrance of the will and the intransigence of freedom” (Foucault, 1982, p.221).

In the SHARE team initiative, there was some student discontent that was not grounded just in issues of control and surveillance, however. One of the SHARE team acknowledged that because the team was dealing with so many issues in their first year, communication with students was “less than adequate” (Gursky, 1990, p.37). Although students could participate in SHARE meetings, they had not been attending and misunderstandings arose. When students

staged a walk-out, this brought matters to a head, with parents becoming involved and putting SHARE team members “in the hot seat” at a meeting called to resolve the issues. This meeting improved general communication and understanding about what the team was doing.

A further negative reported by Gursky was that “time-consuming decision by committee” was experienced by some as a frustrating aspect of the team management. One team member thought that some staff might be reluctant to volunteer for the team because of perceptions about the energy required. Another staff member was more optimistic, however. She thought that within five years, this (approach) would be “commonplace” (p.38). While that prediction has not eventuated, there have certainly been more experiments with co-principalships in the US. Several were begun in the Los Angeles area, for example, during the mid 1990s.⁴²

The SHARE team themselves considered that the only way the experiment could be considered a real success, was if every teacher served at some stage on the team. Their goal therefore, was to select two new members (to replace two of the original team) in the following year. Despite the worries of some, a question asked by Gursky, ‘Can teachers run a school by themselves?’ was answered in the affirmative in this Minnesota school.

(d) Norway: alternative leadership models (ALM) of ‘headless schools’⁴³

Norway has had the least well known but longest persisting examples of ‘skole uten rektor’, schools without a head, or principal. An Alternative Leadership Model (ALM) was first introduced there with the initiation of a teacher collective leadership at His School⁴⁴ in the province of Hisøy in southern Norway, in 1973.

Prior to the 1970s in Norway there was a long standing tradition of trust in teachers’ ability to manage all aspects of their own work. Teachers decided the curriculum for their own classes and were not inspected by external officials, submitting instead regular reports on their students’ progress, marks and attendance to their local municipality school council (Skolesjef). In 1969, however, in response to union campaigns to reduce teachers’ administrative workloads and to provide a teaching career structure, the Basic School Act required bigger primary schools and lower secondary schools to appoint a headteacher. The headteacher remained primarily a teacher, but also carried out the administration previously done by teachers. During the 1960s there were also calls for more parent input in to decision making. These resulted in the 1974 passing of a new Model Plan (*Mønster planen*), that required local

⁴² Although I could find no documentation of these, a colleague, Theresa Saunders, was researching them for her doctoral dissertation during 1998.

⁴³ This section draws on a collaboratively written analysis of the initiation of shared school leaderships in Norway and New Zealand (Hagen & Court, 1998).

⁴⁴ His is the name of a small town in Hisøy.

education authorities, schools and teachers to work together to determine the curriculum (Tangerud, 1980). It was in this kind of environment, that the His School collective teacher leadership emerged.

Initiating collective leadership at His School

When a new open plan school was established in Hisøy, Arne Bergersen, the Chief Education Officer, suggested that rather than appointing a headteacher, it could have “an open managerial and educational leadership model,” a collective teacher leadership that would include all of the staff in a “Steering Committee with responsibility and authority for the running of the school, both managerially and educationally” (Tjølsen, 1978, column 5900-5901). Bergersen argued that this would enable the development of decision making practices that would fit the democratic principles of the 1974 Model Plan. It could expand also teacher responsibility, by requiring the teachers to move from their commitment to an individual professional autonomy to full co-operation in teaching and administration (Bergersen & Tjeldvoll, 1982). Co-operative attitudes, skills and practices and democratic ways of thinking among the teachers could also influence students and other people in the school community, acting as a form of education for democracy (ibid).

Although the local authority responded positively to these ideas, the teachers' union, *Norsk lærerlag*, initially urged all its members not to take on any new responsibilities without centrally negotiated financial compensation. The union finally agreed, however, to allow the His School collective leadership as an experiment (Lie, 1979, p.4).⁴⁵ Similarly to SSC's initial objection to the Selwyn College co-principalship, in Norway the County Director of Education pointed out that there was a legal requirement for all schools to have a headteacher. He stated that approval could not be given for a teacher shared leadership at His School before the Parent Council (*foreldrerådet*), and the highest authority of the school, the Co-operation Committee (*samarbeidsutvalget*), had consented. It is perhaps ironic, given the stated democratic aims of the initiative, that, before that happened, the local education authority decided to go ahead. To get around the lack of formal approval, the Chief Education Officer (Bergerson) was asked to act as headteacher - in name only. (It is interesting that Selwyn College also found a legal loophole to get around regulatory requirements.) His School thus operated with a collective leadership model from the day it was opened on 1 August 1974, with all six teachers, 4 women and 2 men, (who had responded to a general invitation from Bergerson and the local education authority to transfer into the school) sharing the leadership.

⁴⁵ In Aotearoa/New Zealand, the primary teachers' union (NZEI) also had some reservations about the initiation of co-principalships because of the potential breaking down of hard won career structures and conditions of employment.

Teamwork in the shared leadership

At the beginning, the teachers were concerned about whether they would have enough time to both teach and develop a shared leadership. They worried also that their different interests and backgrounds would mitigate against finding a common focus for the work of the school (Bergersen & Tjeldvoll, 1982). The latter concerns have been reported also in feminist analyses of women in educational leadership (Strachan, 1997; Waitere-Ang, 1999) and in literature on feminist collectives, as I will show in Chapter 7 (Coney & Cederman, 1975; Sirianni, 1994; Vanderpyl, 1998). Despite their worries, however, the His School teacher collective developed within their Steering Committee structure, an approach that usefully combined some task specialisation with an integration of all members into sharing leadership and decision making. They agreed that each teacher had a responsibility to initiate discussions and initiatives and to make sure that ‘things got done’ within the administrative duties and functions they had allocated between them. These included timetabling, acquisitions of schools materials, representation on the school council, contact with parents. To enable each person to gain experience and expertise these responsibilities were rotated.

The teachers also agreed that the centrally negotiated administrative allowance normally paid to a headteacher, would pay for clerical assistance and an extra teacher to release each of them from teaching for two hours per week while they carried out their administrative responsibilities. Thus the project cost no more than if the school had a single principal.⁴⁶

Communication was once again highlighted as significant. The teachers recognised that if each of them was to fully participate in policy making and planning, they needed to have access to information about all the issues, so information sharing became very important. When agreement over minor things could not be reached, a decision would be made by casting a vote. However, in important issues, time was taken to talk through until consensus was reached. In their first annual report, the teachers noted that although collective leadership had been to that time a very time consuming process, the original goal of developing more collaborative and democratic working practices was achieved. They wrote:

We have experienced a degree of solidarity in the work place previously unknown to us. We have had to pay attention to each other, pay respect to each other's point of view and individual differences. Because we are all equal members of the steering committee everyone's opinion is genuine and important. To accept this has not always been easy. We have encountered a few contrasting opinions, but we have managed to work our way through them, and have appreciated how much we have learned about each other. We have grown as individuals and as a group (Løddesøl, 1976, p. 255).

⁴⁶ The rationale and these decisions were formally recorded in the agreement signed in 1975 by the chairperson of Hisøy Education Council and *Norsk Lærerlag*. This agreement also stated that an external spokesperson, representatives to the municipal Education Council and the school's various councils were to be elected for a one year period. The Steering Committee had discretion to define the period for the other areas of responsibilities (Tjølsen, 1978).

Although they felt that individual autonomy in one's own work should not be lost, the teachers now also thought that collaborative work was valuable. They described their development of a stronger sense of community, through getting to know all 170 pupils and their parents and developing an increased sense of responsibility for them. They thought that as a consequence, the students often contacted the nearest teacher when they wanted help. They also found that collaborative teaching plans had been easier to develop within the open plan and collective leadership model and that this had given students a wider exposure to different teachers' skills and strengths. Wherever possible, tasks and responsibilities were shared among the students, as they were among the teachers. The teachers believed that children learn best from experience, so they had tried to involve the students in tasks that would enable them to develop responsibility for each other and for their school. Although no external evaluation of the students' and parents' views about the gains for students and the wider school community was undertaken, the teachers' own perceptions were that the collective leadership model was contributing positively to students' development of a strong sense of personal and community identity. They noticed that students made increased efforts to work in common with others rather than on individual projects, and that they developed more generous, helpful attitudes to others while yet retaining their own individuality.

A rather unexpected gain was made in relation to the teachers' accountability for management of resources. All had become more aware of the importance of taking responsibility in the buying and maintaining of school materials and resources. Learning about the need to prioritise in this area was a significant development for the teachers. In summing up, the teachers thought that the model could be developed further.

Further ALM (Alternative Leadership Model) schools in Norway

The collective leadership model at His School was finally given a permanent status by the government in 1980. This opened up the possibility for schools to experiment with alternative leadership models and in the following year seven schools joined the scheme. Over the following decade over 30 schools across the country were given ALM status (Hovland, 1991, p.22).⁴⁷ More recent figures are not available, but the His School collective leadership was still running in 1999 when Unni Hagen and I visited it.

The main reasons given by schools applying to become an ALM school have been increased participation in decision making and closer teacher involvement in the school's overall educational development (Tjeldvoll, 1985). Teachers working in ALM schools have reported that such models facilitate the necessary environment for change and development for the whole school by allowing everyone (i.e. regular teaching staff) to: take responsibility

⁴⁷ From 1988, schools were able to adopt an alternative leadership model if there was a change of headteacher and the majority of the teaching staff wanted it, and the school's Co-operation Committee, the local Education Council, the Ministry of Education and the teachers union all agreed.

for planning, implementing and evaluating school policies; engage continuously in co-operation and cooperative labour; integrate educational theory and practice; demonstrate democratic practice and gender equality awareness, serving as a role model for pupils; and continue professional upgrading of skills and knowledge base (*ibid.*).

Although gender equality was not initially among the reasons for schools to adapt ALM-status, observers have suggested that this approach increases opportunities for female teachers to gain leadership experience (Øverbye, 1984, p.58).⁴⁸ In the nine ALM schools in 1984, where women constitute about 70 per cent of the overall teaching staff, it was primarily women who took responsibility for what is traditionally seen as key leadership functions (Tjeldvoll, 1985, p.72).

e) Teacher leadership: Anzar High School, California, US

The most recently documented collective teacher shared leadership that I found in my search is that at Anzar High School. This school of 450 students has been operating now for seven years (1994-2000) without a principal. Its model is very similar to that at His school in Norway. It uses a site council, lead teachers (who rotate and have release time for administrative work) and a “strong staff role in decision making” (Barnett et al., 1998, p.48).

In a brief article written by two of the teachers and the local superintendent, the authors state (once again!) that communication is the key for this school’s culture of shared leadership. Some initial failures in communication that caused difficulties of some “harmful proportions” (*ibid*) resulted in the staff committing themselves to developing the Anzar Communication Guidelines. These recorded that “We are all part of the same team; we collectively own the problems and we collectively solve them. We will allow conflict/differing ideas to exist. Tension is normal. I will be accountable for speaking my ideas. We will help and support others. I will be honest” (Barnett, McKowen and Bloom, 1998, pp. 48-49). The commonly faced problem of more time being needed for consensus decision making was addressed by the development of clear meeting guidelines and the delegation of some decision areas to subcommittees.

The writers were enthusiastic about their shared leadership. Their comment that for this model to endure, there is a need to educate the community about its viability and success, resonates with the US articles about co-principalship I discussed earlier, suggesting that shared school leadership is still not accepted easily in that country. (My study suggests a similar situation exists in Aotearoa/New Zealand.) In 1999, though, the Anzar teacher leadership was still working well. It will be interesting to see how it fares in the future.

⁴⁸ During the 1980s in Norway, less than 10% of all leadership positions were held by women (Østerås, 1985, p.3).

Conclusion

Most of the articles and research studies that I have reviewed in this chapter remain at the level of descriptive proposals (Korba, 1982; Shockley & Smith, 1981; Thurman, 1969) or evaluations of how shared leaderships can be conceived or practised. Several of the latter accounts have been written by participants (Glenny et al., 1996; Gordon & Meadows, 1986; West, 1978) and some in collaboration between participants and a closely affiliated academic or educational official (Bergersen & Tjeldvoll, 1982; Barnett, McKowen & Bloom, 1998; Gursky, 1990).⁴⁹ I could find only three external evaluations that focused on co-principalship. All three researchers used perceptual survey and interview methods, and canvassed a quite wide range of people, including parents and students as well as staff and local education officials (Dass, 1995; Groover, 1989; White, 1991). Only Dass, however, also observed the co-principals at work. She focused not just on what systems and structures were put in place, but also on how the co-principals interacted with each other and other people in their school and community. The resulting rich descriptions she provides are marred unfortunately, by some ambiguous and sometimes contradictory interpretations. As I have explained also, Dass's study was the only one I found that made an extended attempt to theorise a co-principalship. In my opinion, however, she drew on flawed sociological and feminist concepts that limit the explanatory potential of her analysis. There is, then, a great need for more extensive qualitative studies of co-principalships, and a need to find theoretical tools that can help us to understand more adequately the kinds of power struggles and dilemmas that people who want to share leadership can experience, especially within restructured educational systems. My study aims to make a contribution in both of these areas.

Further, while participants in the co-principalships and shared teacher leaderships have made recommendations about what is needed to help initiatives to succeed, no studies in this emerging field have identified why some shared leadership initiatives do not persist. Consequently, I decided to follow the three primary school co-principalships long enough to identify and analyse factors that may be significant.

As can be seen from the variety of cases that have been deemed to be successful, there appears to be no one best way for a co-principalship to be established and practised in a school. Despite Dass's emphasis on the importance of a fully integrative approach, in my view she has not shown conclusively that a simultaneous and on-going sharing of all the principal tasks and functions is the ideal model for a co-principalship. What emerges from this review of the co-principal research is that people who are interested in setting up dual and shared leaderships, tend to respond to their own contextual factors relating to their school's and their community's needs as they decide how to develop their initiative. However, while some of the

⁴⁹ I described one case from my own brief visit to the school (Stantonbury Campus), and the Netherlands examples from brief comments supplied to me by a colleague.

studies have noted how shared leaderships are shaped by particular local education authorities' requirements for principals' work, none considered the influence on co-principalships of wider discourses about the purposes of education and its governance and management.

These points validate my choice of a Foucauldian feminist poststructuralist approach for analysis. As I will explain in Chapter 4, these theoretical ideas emphasise the importance of investigating local situations to understand how particular kinds of knowledge and practice are being constituted by, while also being constitutive of, wider discursive fields and socio-cultural hegemonies. My research explores in particular, the ways that three discourses of educational leadership (professional collaborative leadership, the New Public Management (NPM) version of market managerialism and feminist collective organisation) were significant in the shaping of three primary school co-principalships. My study also explores how the co-principalship initiatives were variously incorporating and contesting elements of the discursive contexts in which they emerged.

Although I have not focused on these discursive themes in any depth in this chapter, because I wanted to prioritise in each case the issues that the participants and authors saw as central, their presence can be detected in several of the reports and articles. A *professional discourse of collaborative leadership*, constructed as leadership that is focused on teaching and learning and uses various forms of collegial or shared decision making, is most evident. In some accounts, this discourse has been expanded to mean that the practice of collaborative leadership can itself be educative, in the sense of educating teachers about co-operation and/or of demonstrating to young people that shared forms of leadership can help to build more democratic organisations. In the Norwegian case, it was argued also that shared teacher leadership could have wider positive effects in educating communities about democracy.

Market managerialism also appears in some of the cases of co-principalships I have reviewed. This discourse underpins Shockley and Smith's (1981) and Korba's (1982) references to the appropriateness for education of a "modern business management" approach. Korba argued that a splitting of two forms of accountability through dual leadership responsibilities and line management strategies could "balance" and improve overall accountability within the principalship. A similar kind of emphasis on increasing accountability is significant in the NPM discourse that has become dominant in education in Aotearoa/New Zealand over the last decade. Strachan's (1997) study gives a full account of the impact of the new right management reforms on her feminist principals' aims, but a discourse analysis is not applied to her discussion of the co-principalship one of these feminists initiated at Penrose High School. This thesis, however, will look at how neo-liberal discourses underpin the narrowly linear requirements for principal accountability that have created difficulties in the initiation and establishment of co-principalships in this country.

The more marginalised *feminist discourses* of gendered power inequalities, emancipatory leadership and collective organisation appear in some of the reports that I have reviewed. In a few cases, co-principalship is interpreted within a liberal feminist reformist

approach, being seen as providing a way for women to have both a career and a family (Gordon & Meadows, 1986; White, 1991) and/or providing a good role model of women in leadership (Dass, 1995; Glenny, Lewis & White, 1996). In the latter two studies there are also some indications of a more radical understanding of gendered power and hierarchies of authority, while the power sharing approach of a co-principal was described as “classic feminism” (Strachan, 1997).

Within my discussions in this chapter, I have touched on the limitations in particular authors’ conceptualising of gender and power and given some indications of the ways that Foucauldian and feminist poststructuralist approaches go beyond treating power as merely structural or systemic, or as something that can be owned by an individual. In the next chapter I want to expand on how earlier feminist theories have understood gender, power and difference as part of explaining my choice of the former poststructuralist approach for analysis in my study of co-principalships.

CHAPTER 3

RE-VIEWING FEMINIST ANALYSES OF WOMEN IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Introduction

As I argued in Chapter 1, a researcher's own background and experiences interact with the theories and critiques that she has been exposed to, influencing both her choice of a research problem and her approach to its analysis. In this chapter, therefore, I explain my theoretical journey towards this study and towards my choice of its feminist poststructuralist 'toolkit,' by critically re-viewing my earlier engagements with feminist scholarship and research about women and educational leadership.

Liberal and radical feminisms and feminist analyses of difference are the focus of my review. These approaches have been chosen not just because of their significance for developments in my own thinking, but also because I found that they had been influential for several of the women co-principals who are the centre of this study. As such, these feminist approaches are part of the discursive context in which the co-principalships emerged. The discussions in this chapter need to be kept in mind, therefore, when reading Chapters 6 and 7, which examine professional, managerial and feminist collective discourses.

A liberal feminist approach to women's careers in education

In 1988, when I was beginning my academic study of feminist theorising and women in educational leadership, I read Sue Middleton's chapter that 'mapped' the development of different feminist theories (Middleton, 1988c, pp.174-197). She later called this an "imported ... Northern typology" of "feminist grand theories" (Middleton, 1993, p.32) and argued that "American liberal feminist portrayals of girls' socialisation in a sex-role stereotype of simpering passive, suburban femininity (Friedan, 1963) did not describe the reality of the boisterous, tomboyish New Zealand girl" (ibid). As I indicated in Chapter 1, however, I found that some elements of liberal feminist analysis did fit my own situation. For example, Betty Friedan's (1963) description of American women's experiences helped me to see how many women such as myself, had constructed themselves within heterosexual partnerships that were based on the stereotypical roles of female full-time housewife and caregiver and male breadwinner. A liberal feminist emphasis on the justice of women being treated equally, meaning the same, as men, also resonated with aspects of my own experience of past discrimination and what I saw as unfair exclusions of women, from the right, for example, to

be able to apply for promotion without having to justify how they were going to manage their family obligations. (A decade later, some of these ideas resonated still for some of the participants in this current study of women's co-principalships, as the case narratives in Part 2 will show.)

A rational 'rights and justice' classical liberal approach to identifying structural forms of discrimination (Middleton, 1988c), combined with a focus on identifying the effects of sex role stereotyping on women as individuals and as a group, informed the New Zealand research on women in educational leadership in the 1970s and 80s.⁵⁰ Malcolm (1978) surveyed the representation of women in leadership positions and from interviews with a small sample, described personal barriers to women's advancement that were grounded in social expectations about women's role in the family.⁵¹ She argued that these were working alongside discriminatory factors in promotion structures (such as requirements for continuous service) and in career development training, to constrain women's aspirations (Webster, 1975). The Teacher Career and Promotion Study (TECPS), (Whitcombe & Fenwick, 1982) identified where women were placed nationally within teaching/management hierarchies and stated that although many women might be reluctant to apply for promotion, they "aspire to what they know is attainable" (p.102).

Liberal feminist affirmative action strategies were implemented to turn around this situation. Assertiveness, career development and management training courses for women, were held at both national and local levels (Court, 1988; Steele, 1981; Thomson, 1988), aiming to equip individual women with knowledge and skills that would help them succeed within the system. In 1991, this kind of liberal reformist intervention was repeated when women in the primary teachers' union developed an education programme to encourage women to apply for deputy principal and principal positions (NZEI (New Zealand Educational Institute), 1991). This drew heavily on legislative rationales, such as the State Sector Amendment Act 1989 "good employer" and equal employment opportunities requirements for policies and programmes in schools. The NZEI's aim to "promote attitudinal change by many women in the primary teaching service was indicated in its title: *Don't count yourself out before you've begun the race*. (Two of the women in this current study had themselves tutored in a middle management course for teachers.)

In 1988 I myself had participated in a district level training course for women teachers aspiring to management, and as part of my university study, I carried out a small case study

⁵⁰ During the 1890s and early 1900s in Aotearoa/New Zealand, 'first wave' liberal feminist teachers were agitating for equal pay with their male colleagues (Bain, 1893; Arnold, 1987). Issues around gender inequalities in educational workforces surfaced sporadically throughout the first half of the 1900s (Roth, 1985; Yee, 1985). However, women's under-representation in educational leadership only gained sustained in-depth analysis in this country from the mid 1970s.

⁵¹ Malcolm (1978) found that for the great majority of the women in her study (who were married), "marriage and home took precedence over any career aspirations, and it was considered natural that women teachers of child-bearing age would not be interested in promotion or career opportunities" (1978, p.2).

evaluation of that course (Court, 1988). These experiences highlighted for me the limitations in liberal feminist individualist interventions and assumptions that women need help to develop more assertive attitudes. I agreed with Acker's (1987) criticism of the latter as a form of psychological reductionism that blames the victim. Further, while evaluations of women-only management courses found that the women participants benefited from their attendance (Court, 1988; Thomson, 1988; Steele, 1981), such courses can have an elitist effect. That is, they enable only a few token women (usually white and middle class) to achieve career success while "the structures of oppression" remain unchanged (Acker, 1987p.422).⁵² (There were no Māori women participants in the course I attended and evaluated, for example.) Fenwick (1983) pointed out that a hierarchical school promotion system and male career norms were left untouched by the TECPS investigations. She drew on a radical feminist analysis to argue that the impact of patriarchy and power was ignored in liberal feminist reformist approaches.

I read Fenwick's paper while I was carrying out my evaluation of the 1988 women's management course. At that stage I had decided that I agreed with liberal feminist arguments that systemic discrimination against women had been embedded through narrow sex role expectations and practices into institutions and in law, and therefore, both sex role stereotyping and the law needed changing. I also knew though, that individually and collectively, men's attitudes about women's 'natural' roles could be powerful constraints on women's advancement into positions of authority and leadership.⁵³ I also knew, from teaching in a rural school with a high number of Māori students, how historical factors of assimilatory policies and institutional racism intersected with socio-economic factors to impact on those students educational opportunities, life trajectories and access to leadership positions. I was interested particularly then, in examining more closely radical feminist analyses that could take account of gender power inequalities, and feminist analyses of difference that could illuminate inequalities grounded in ethnicity and class. I explore these approaches in the rest of this chapter, beginning with radical feminisms.

⁵² Interpreted within a poststructuralist lense, this effect is not surprising. A liberal feminist EEO discourse, as a counter discourse, is constructed within the 'terms of reference' of liberal humanism, which assumes it is individual talent and effort that merits appointment, promotion and reward. Built on an abstract theorising of the individual (as disembodied) and on abstract ideas of justice and merit (Frazer & Lacey, 1993) liberal humanism conceals how what counts as valued work and 'normal' career paths, has reflected masculinist viewpoints and practices. Arguments for treating women the same as men could have no impact on this 'hidden' discursive legitimization of the masculinist structuring of careers.

⁵³ Apart from my experience with the male board of governors, I remembered my frustration and disbelief when I found after my marriage in 1965, that I could not draw money out of our shared account without my partner's signature on the cheque. The bank did not require me to countersign his cheques!

Radical and cultural feminisms

Radical feminist analyses had been developing overseas since the 1970s, describing the links between sexuality, psychology and male domination within patriarchy (Middleton, 1988c). Although there are different strands of thought within this approach, it has been characterised as insisting on the points that:

women as a social class or as a social group are oppressed by men as a social group, as well as individually by men, who continue to benefit from that oppression and continue to do nothing to change it; the system through which men do this is termed patriarchy. Radical feminism is women-centred and stresses both the personal as political and the need for collective action and responsibility; it is 'power' rather than 'difference' which determines the relationship between men and women (Rowland & Klein, 1990, p.275).

First developed by American feminists, this approach has been very influential in feminist theorising in education in Aotearoa/New Zealand, particularly during the 1970s/80s (Jones & Guy, 1992; Middleton, 1988c, p.188). Certainly, when I began reading American radical feminist writers (Millett, 1970; Firestone, 1971), their analyses provided me with an illuminating explanation of what some New Zealand women's studies writers were describing as women's subordination in "a male world" (Craven et al., 1985, p.11).

Following Friedan, Millett (1970) distinguished between sex (biological anatomy) and gender (culturally and socially developed sets of attitudes, attributes and behaviours that are assigned to the category of male or female). She described also, however, how gender roles had been socially developed in ways that not only differentiated women and men, but also advantaged men in terms of gendered *power* relations in most areas of life. She argued that a pervasive male domination was underpinned by the socialising of women within sex role stereotyping to accept a subordinate status to men as 'natural' and 'normal.' Social psychologists had defined normal traits for females as passive and expressive (for example, affectionate, kind, obedient), and for males, active and instrumental (for example, curious, aggressive, ambitious). This was critiqued by Millett as prescribing, rather than describing, expectations about what were appropriate gender qualities and behaviour. She further argued that these prescriptions were working alongside patriarchal "sexual politics" to keep women in their place: in the bedroom and obedient to men. (I will look in the next chapter at how Foucault's understanding of discursive power differs from this radical feminist conceptualising of patriarchal domination.)

Taking a different approach to Millett's, Firestone (1971) argued that women were an oppressed "sex class." She critiqued historical materialism's analysis of economic class as the primary form of oppression and argued that, rather than women's oppression emerging primarily out of capitalist reproductive relations, it had arisen within patriarchal ideologies and cultural practices built around women's reproductive biology. She maintained that these had legitimised sexual divisions of labour within which men were able to exploit and simultaneously devalue, women's work in both the private world of the home and the public

area of paid work. Following Weber, Rosaldo (1974, p.35) further distinguished between authority, and power and influence, arguing that although women have some influence over decision making, authority and its associated power, lay with men.⁵⁴

From critiques of androcentrism in educational leadership ...

Reading the arguments I have just outlined, alongside analyses of sexism in education (Acker, 1983; Spender & Sarah, 1980; Watson, 1988), turned me into a radical feminist almost overnight! Watson combined liberal and radical feminist arguments in her analysis of the New Zealand education system, arguing that the positioning of “European male conservatives” in the top echelons had resulted from a “promotion structure designed on the premise that men would use it, and designed to suit them” (Watson, 1988, p.99). Stating that this male hierarchy was “very difficult for women to penetrate”(p.100), she argued that:

(u)ntil women are seen holding their rightful percentage of senior positions in both primary and secondary schools, there will be no equality of the sexes in schools. There is little point in talking about such issues in classrooms, or changing curricula, if the message given to pupils from the positions held by women, is that men give orders and hold power, while women take orders and do not hold power” (p.107).⁵⁵

Jones and Guy have argued that radical feminist analyses in Aotearoa/New Zealand have presented women as an embattled sisterhood, needing to support each other against men as the “enemy” (Jones & Guy, 1992, p.305). This stance can be detected also in some feminist analyses in the field of educational administration in the US and the UK, in which traditional constructions of leadership were challenged on the grounds that they were patriarchal and did not allow any space for women's values and practices (Shakeshaft, 1987; Al Khalifa, 1989). These analyses also shifted, however, a previous focus in the few studies of women in education that had defined them as ‘deficient’ (Acker, 1983).⁵⁶ In Shakeshaft's ground-breaking book, *Women in Educational Administration* (1987) the androcentrism of existing theory and research was problematised, through a demonstration of how theories of educational administration had been developed from research carried out by men, on men, for

⁵⁴ She commented that change that involved men “in domestic labour, in child care and cooking;” would limit their ability to establish “an aura of authority and distance” (Rosaldo, 1974, p.39).

⁵⁵ Watson was a member of the working group that developed the school charter ‘role model’ goal, that schools should provide models of women and girls in positions of authority and leadership and men and boys in caring, nurturing roles.

⁵⁶ In the British sociology of teaching during the 60s and 70s, for example, it was taken for granted that women teachers were well ‘suited’ and ‘happy’ to work under the control and direction of male supervisors, principals and inspectors. One study argued that: “A woman's primary attachment is to the family role: women are therefore less intrinsically committed to work than men and less likely to maintain a high degree of specialised knowledge ... because they often share the common cultural norm that women should defer to men, women are more likely than men to accept the bureaucratic controls imposed upon them” (Simpson & Simpson, 1969, cited in Acker, 1983, p.125). In her incisive critique, Acker slated this description as a caricaturing parody.

men. Shakeshaft asserted that leaving women out had created “imprecise, inaccurate and imbalanced scholarship” (1987, p.150).

... to constructions of ‘a female culture’ in schools

Shakeshaft used a woman-centred focus to document differences in women’s and men’s work environments and styles of leadership, communication, decision making and conflict resolution (1987, pp.171-191). Drawing on Gilligan’s (1982) analysis of men’s and women’s different moral developments, she posited that a female culture based in an ethic of relational response and care was characteristic of the experiences of women in educational administration (in contrast to an ethic of rights and justice followed by men). She conceptualised a “female world in schools” as having five main features: relationships with others were central to all actions of women administrators; teaching and learning were their major foci; building community was an essential part of a woman administrator’s style; sexism marginalised her; and in her daily work the line separating the public world from the private was blurred (Shakeshaft, 1987, pp.197-198). This conceptualising combined a cultural feminist ‘female difference’ argument with a radical feminist analysis of male domination.

In her New Zealand study of 16 successful women educational leaders, Neville (1988) also developed a cultural feminist woman-centred focus, but argued that research needed to stop focussing on constraints and study instead women who had overcome these and were demonstrating new effective ways of working in leadership positions. In Neville’s view, the management approach of these women was congruent with their ‘feminine identities.’ She reported that they were “emphatic about the necessity to retain their sense of gender and to take their love and care of people into their managerial roles” (p.144).

These two analyses that centred a notion of a female culture, seemed to me when I first read them, to be a positive and potentially productive way of identifying the strengths women could bring to improving school management practices, and thereby help to change women’s under-representation in school leadership positions. My own study of women in middle management and teaching principalship and my conceptualising of their “affiliative” approach to leadership, was influenced by these ideas (Court, 1989). In the face of the persistent historical silencing of women’s experiences and contributions in leadership in most Western societies, it is understandable that some feminists are still very attracted to studies that present women as a unique and strong sisterhood, with their own distinctive and effective ways of seeing and working (that some argue justify a revolution in their favour in the ‘male’ scheme of things). As I was beginning this current study of women co-principals, I was interested to investigate whether a cultural feminist approach was influential in their thinking and whether people in their school communities would see their shared leadership initiatives as an approach that ‘suited’ women. The co-principalship narratives in Part II provide some evidence that this was indeed the case for several people.

There are limitations, however, in cultural feminism as it is currently expressed in the discourse about ‘women’s ways of leading’ or ‘feminine leadership.’ To explain these, I need to look at the wider literature on cultural feminism.

Cultural feminism and ‘women’s ways of leading’

Cultural feminism (as it has developed in the US, Australia and New Zealand)⁵⁷ is an ‘offshoot’ of radical feminism, following its arguments that within patriarchal constructions of men and women as different, male domination is the fundamental cause of women’s subordination. Cultural feminism has added the further arguments that male domination stunts women’s creativity and contribution to political life, and what is needed to bring about change is a focus on and revaluing of women’s ‘special’ qualities that are distinct from men’s. Some cultural feminists have maintained that women are not only different from men: they are creatively and morally superior to men. Such arguments “seek to assert allegedly ‘life-giving,’ innately female values over allegedly innately male, destructive values,” stated James & Saville-Smith (1989, p.60). They identified an early expression of these views in Aotearoa/New Zealand within the social unrest of the late 1890s, when the notion of woman as moral redemptress (imported with settlers from Britain) was taken up by women suffragettes in their struggle to win the vote, and by the State within the promotion of the cult of domesticity.

In her discussion of American cultural feminism, Code (1991) identified four strands of conceptualising: Firestone’s (1971) analysis of a gendered expressive/technological dichotomy; Daly’s (1979) discussion of the spiritual/creative powers of women; Ruddick’s (1989) construction of the notion of a maternal thinking that is developed within care giving responsibilities; and Gilligan’s (1982) treatment of women’s different moral development based in care, connection and contextual thinking. Blackmore (1999, p.53) also noted Nodding’s (1992) development of the ethic of care and Belenky et al’s (1986) analysis of women’s ways of knowing as strands of work that, along with Gilligan’s theorising, have been particularly influential in the field of women in educational leadership. The centring of an ethic of care is now evident in the work of many feminist studies of educational leadership (Beck, 1994; Regan & Brooks, 1995; Strachan, 1999). It appears also in the thinking of some of the women co-principals in this study, although not necessarily constructed within a feminist discourse.

⁵⁷ Writing in England, Frazer and Lacey (1993, p. 227, n. 7) defined cultural feminism as designating “those feminists who reject biological essentialism, economic reductionism, and traditional psychoanalysis. Instead, they emphasis how all social reality (including our sexuality) is socially constructed.” In this thesis I use Code’s (1992) and Blackmore’s (1999) depictions of cultural feminist analyses and I show how both biologically essentialist and social constructionist arguments appear in US, Australian and New Zealand analyses.

Studies of women's leadership styles framed within these strands of cultural feminism have helped to popularise a discourse of 'women's way's of leading' or 'feminine leadership,' constructing a set of common factors as women's 'special' leadership qualities. This "female ethos" Rogers (1988) includes orientations towards caring, nurturing and inclusive participatory management practices (Rosener, 1990). Some researchers have made the claim that this approach is peculiarly women's, within a biological difference framework. Porat, for example, stated that "(f)emale administrators are different from the traditional male administrators, if for no other reason than their very femaleness" (Porat, 1991, p.412). Helgesen (1990) argued that women's biology gave them a "female advantage" in management. Consequently, women educational leaders have been advised to "use their naturally collaborative and supportive style to elicit other's feelings about their ideas" (Albino, 1992, p.35, my emphasis).

A cultural feminist discourse of women's ways of leading may be built alternatively on an argument that gender differences in management and leadership styles emerge out of socially constructed and learned roles for men and women, particularly those of care giving responsibilities in the home for women and authoritative, decision-making roles in the public sphere for men. An example here is Robins' and Terrell's study, which states that "Women learn to share, show compassion, be caring and nurturing ... to co-operate through networking and sharing resources. Men learn to win at all costs ... to compete according to the "old boys' club rules" (Robins & Terrell, 1987, p.207).

Although they may give varying explanations of the origins of differences, cultural feminist analyses of women in leadership generally assert that women, as a group, are different from men, as a group. What emerges is an oppositional model of masculine versus feminine leadership, such as that given by Loden (1985). She constructed masculine leadership as competitive, hierarchical, rational, unemotional, analytic, strategic and controlling and feminine leadership as cooperative, team working, intuitive/rational, focused on high performance, empathetic and collaborative.

There are difficulties in such a discourse for a feminist politics of change. These constructions of 'women's ways of leading' privilege gender over other modes of difference through reinforcing a view of "the feminine as a monolithic, universal category" (Hennessy, 1993, p.130). Consequently, they do not enable any effective challenge to the practice of constructing and universalising gender dichotomies, which in Western cultures have devalued and marginalised woman as 'other' to man as 'human.' In her discussion of what is needed for a useful feminist theory of change in educational administration, Blackmore (1999, pp.55-61) has provided a helpful summary of the "dangers" of cultural feminist "women's styles of leading" research and theorising. She stated that this not only solidifies gender difference, but creates a "reverse sexism" in which female values and ways of talking and working supplant male values and practices. Further, the significance of social contexts and "communities of practice" that shape for example, language patterns, recedes in analyses that slide into treating

these as somehow ‘natural.’ The focus on women’s styles of leadership also “diverts attention away from the politics of workplaces and labour process research on teachers’ work or administration” (p.60), meaning that political differences between women are overlooked, as well as differences in class, ethnicity, sexuality, personality, values (Smulyan, 1999; Strachan, 1999; Weiner, 1995).

Drawing on Acker (1995), Blackmore further argued that “the dominance of feminist discourses of caring and sharing has set up new universalizing norms ... that can become a guilt trap for women teachers, in that they put the interests of others (students and colleagues) first and their own welfare second” (1999, p.55). (I add here the irony that in ‘counting out’ the practices of men who care and share, these norms also work against the wider feminist goal of facilitating men’s taking up of caring responsibilities and sharing of power.) Blackmore concluded that the “seduction of feminists by the ethics of care has diverted attention away from the issue of rationality” and the ways that rationality has been constructed within a gendered opposition to emotionality (1999, p.55). This issue has been extensively analysed in her own work, and I will expand on that in relation to an analysis of masculinist versions of ‘rational’ authority and leadership, in Chapter 7.

Here though, I want to discuss a concept developed and used within both cultural and socialist feminist⁵⁸ analyses of women, education and leadership, one that was particularly influential on my own earlier thinking and work in this field (Court, 1989; 1992a; 1994b). This is the concept of male hegemony.

Male hegemony

In 1989, when I was researching women in middle management positions, I thought that male hegemony was a theoretical tool that could help me to avoid the limitations of essentialising/universalising approaches to theorising gender differences. I thought that it could open up an analysis of patterned power dynamics that work at structural and material levels, while also enabling an analysis of individual negotiations of these power dynamics. Although I have continued to find some readings of Gramsci’s (1971) theory of hegemony useful for this study of co-principalships, feminist applications of a conceptualising of male hegemony pose difficulties for analyses of women’s initiatives in leadership. These problems emerge out of the linking of two contradictory theoretical strands within the concept.

⁵⁸ Socialist feminism developed out of a ‘marrying’ of Marxist feminist ideas with parts of radical feminism. Early Marxist feminists critiqued the gender blindness of historical materialist analyses of class, showing how sexual divisions of labour exploited for capitalism, women’s labour and unpaid production in the home. Some socialist feminists discussed these issues in relation to a radical feminist understanding of patriarchy, but criticised the latter’s class blindness. They focused on the intersecting power relations of capitalism and patriarchy (Eisenstein, 1981; Walby, 1986). Most examined the different material ‘realities’ of working class and middle class girls and women; some how women have been used as a reserve army of labour and relegated to lower paid, ‘feminised’ areas of paid work (Court, 1994a; Yee, 1985) and some included the ways ethnicity cut across class and gender (Jones, 1991a; Middleton, 1988a; Weiler, 1988).

'Male hegemony' as a universal male domination: radical/cultural feminist readings

Shakeshaft's review of the literature on women's 'failure' to advance in educational administration concluded that all the barriers they were experiencing could be traced to male hegemony. By this, she meant male domination in a "male-defined and male run" world (1987, pp.82-83). She argued that this "male world" is supported by a patriarchal ideology that elevates "the masculine to the level of the universal and the ideal," creating a belief in male superiority and legitimising sexual divisions of labour that value male tasks over female "in all societies" (pp.93-4). In her view, "it is this ideology of patriarchy that explains why men, and not women, occupy the formal leadership positions in schools and society" (p.95).

Shakeshaft's arguments can be placed within radical/cultural feminist analyses such as those I have been discussing. They can be traced back also to the work of a German sociologist, Georg Simmel (1977, first published in 1911), who maintained that "all existing culture is male defined" because "man's position of power ... assures that his standards become generated as generically human standards that are to govern the behaviour of men and women alike." Rowbotham (1973) drew on this argument to assert that women are blinded by patriarchal ideology to the realities of their oppression in a man's world.

These lines of argument are reflected in Shakeshaft's presentation of male hegemony as an oppressive male domination that works through patriarchal structures and through cultural processes of socialisation. Education is seen as playing a significant part here, teaching women how to lose and to accept that "the masculine man is one who achieves, who is masterful, the feminine woman is one who underachieves, who defers" (Brewster, 1980, p.11). Weiler (1988) argued that there are some similarities between this understanding of male hegemony as oppressive power relations and the approach of some Marxist reproduction theorists in education. In Apple's (1979) analysis, for example, there was a focus on "the mechanisms of domination," such that hegemony became "both *overpowering and static*," as something "successfully imposed by a ruling class on subordinate groups" (Weiler, 1988, p.17, my emphasis). In both forms of conceptualising, the existence of resistance tends to recede from view. Thus, maintaining a focus on change and agency (such as I want to do in this current study of co-principalships) can become difficult.

'Male hegemony' as class fractured relations of struggle: socialist feminist readings

Hancock Benseman's (1978) discussion of male hegemony in New Zealand education developed a more useful combination of theoretical tools. She used Marxist feminist as well as radical feminist ideas, alongside Simmel's analysis and Gramsci's (1971) theory of hegemony. The latter was understood to mean that in any society there is an organised and

lived central system of practices, meanings and values, which so deeply saturates the consciousness of its members that it is difficult for most people to move beyond its framings (Hancock-Benseman, 1978, p.43) Hancock-Benseman argued therefore, that the effect of a male hegemony that was grounded in patriarchal ideology, male constructions of knowledge and male dominated culture would be “profound” for both women and men (p.45). Drawing on a Marxist feminist understanding of women’s oppression as constructed in western societies within the capitalist mode of production, she further maintained that in modern western society there is “a capitalist patriarchal structure which is reflected in a male dominant hegemony and ideology,” which was in turn reflected in education’s transmission of the dominant culture (p.46). Hancock-Benseman investigated whether Women’s Studies courses were a useful strategy to combat these interlocking structural and cultural oppressions. While she found that there was some success in raising individual consciousness, she warned that further change would require behavioural shifts and broader changes in curriculum and in social structures.

Hancock-Benseman’s work interested me because of its focus on understanding how initiatives for change in gender relations need to consider complex intersections between individual consciousness and broader structuring forces of both gender and class. These intersections have remained a part of my analysis in this current study, although the theoretical tools I am using now conceptualise the individual, power and social structures in quite different ways, as I will explain in the next chapter. The work of socialist feminist researchers Arnot (1982) and Weiler (1988) contributed some other insights about agency and power that have remained significant for this study.

Arnot’s (1982) analysis of the dominant bourgeois form of male hegemony in the UK of the 1980s, moved well beyond a radical and cultural feminist essentialist universalism, in that it was carefully *located* in both time and place and drew attention to how individuals’ class and gender differentiated struggles occur within *shifting* patriarchal and capitalist power relations. She drew also on a Gramscian understanding of hegemony as the political processes through which elite groups establish and maintain their ascendancy by gaining legitimate consent and control of consciousness. As Boggs put it, elite groups attempt “to popularise their own philosophy, culture, morality and render them unchallengeable as part of the natural order of things,” that is, as part of commonsense (Boggs, 1976, p.39). Arnot highlighted the *active* nature of these processes: she wrote, “Cultural hegemony is a weapon which must be continually *struggled for*, and won, and maintained” (Arnot, 1982, p.119, my emphasis). Weiler’s (1988) analysis of how some women teachers and administrators in the US were responding to male hegemony, also demonstrated “the power of individuals to contest hegemonic control, and the resultant need for dominant classes to struggle to reimpose an hegemony in constant danger of being resisted and contested” (Weiler, 1988, pp.14-16).

From my reading of these accounts, I began to question the ahistorical and universalising radical and cultural feminist analyses, that were presenting power as always

‘possessed’ by the same elite group and used only one way, repressively, to subordinate less fortunate groups. Arnot’s and Weiler’s work highlighted for me the significance of individual resistance and agency in gender and other power relations. As Connell put it, hegemony was not cultural dominance in the sense of “obliteration of alternatives. It means ascendancy achieved within a balance of forces, that is, a state of play. Other patterns and groups are subordinated, not eliminated” (Connell, 1987, p.182).

Weiler also argued that Gramsci’s analysis of the “power of hegemonic ideas to shape consciousness” did not negate his belief in the power of critique and political activism; coupling these points “allows us to begin to see individuals as both shaped by history and shapers of history” (Weiler, 1988, p.17). This argument stayed in my mind, as I began reading feminist poststructuralist approaches to theorising this dynamic and influenced my later thinking about the emergence of the co-principalships in an environment that could seem to some to negate the very possibility of initiating shared leaderships. My discussion in the next chapter will show how these socialist feminist discussions of individual and group struggles over what counts as knowledge, within wider social structuring forces that can shape consciousness and practices, can be seen to have some overlaps with a feminist poststructuralist approach to understanding the links between discourse, knowledge and power.

Problems in the concept of male hegemony

Despite the insights socialist feminist discussions of male hegemony offered me, I encountered some problems when I used the concept. I will illustrate these by drawing on my earlier study of six women’s perceptions about how their relationships at home and at school were impacting on their work as women educational leaders (Court, 1989; 1994b). As I indicated in Chapter 1, in this study, I wanted to find out whether these women were experiencing gendered discrimination. The women all identified themselves as Pākehā, middle class, heterosexual professionals and they were working in either primary school teaching principalships or secondary school head of department positions, so they seemed to be a fairly homogeneous group. I wanted to avoid, however, developing a universalising and/or essentialising analysis of their experiences. I foregrounded the women’s differences in terms of their ages, up-bringing, personalities and locations in different home and school contexts in my interpretations of their experiences and the constraints they described. I used qualifying statements such as, “this study can not speak for all women,” and “not all men or women work in the same ways.” Despite my best intentions, however, running beneath my references to “the forces of male hegemony” was an implied systemic male domination maintained through ideological control and individual acts of discrimination, thus weaving into my text a radical feminist reading of hegemony. I did identify in what I described as the women’s struggles some contradictions in their responses to hegemonic views and practices of leadership and this

opened up some insights into the complexity of the processes I was analysing.⁵⁹ However, for me, no satisfactory explanation of why women engage in such seemingly contradictory dynamics was enabled.

I realised later that some of the problems I encountered could be traced to the mixed theoretical 'parentage' of male hegemony. Through the word 'male,' a 'fossil'⁶⁰ of biologically essentialist sex role theorising is embedded into the concept. That is, it incorporates the notion that gender differences emerge out biological sexual differences between male and female and that men's and women's different 'roles' in society are 'natural' outcomes of their 'maleness' or 'femaleness.'⁶¹ As I showed earlier, some cultural feminist analyses have picked up this line of argument. Dass's (1995) attempt to theorise a mixed gender co-principalship as a "parenting model" also fell into this trap. It is an easy slide from here into universalist discussions that suggest dichotomous and apparently immutable male and female cultures, male domination and 'women's ways of leading.'

These kinds of discussions are, of course, incompatible with readings of hegemony that focus on the complexities and contradictions that emerge within politically and materially fractured and shifting struggles over power. Arnot had argued that "by putting the concept of hegemony (rather than 'reproduction') at the fore of analyses of class and gender, "it is less easy to forget ... the existence of dialectical relations, power struggles and points of conflict" (1982, p. 66). I found, however, that the concept of male hegemony was a slippery one, lying a little like glistening quicksilver in the palm of my hand until I used it in my analysis, when it slid off in an unexpected direction and embellished the functionalist and radical feminist strands of thinking that I was trying to avoid.

When I had completed my 1989 study, significant questions remained. Why, when many women do become aware of how common understandings and practices of gender differences are acting against their own best interests, does more wide reaching change not occur? How is power 'working' to maintain elite groups' views of the world as 'reality,' and to reinforce perceptions that their positions of privilege and status are somehow 'natural'?

⁵⁹ Dorothy decided she was sick of being a "good girl" and stopped being so nurturing and supportive of her male HOD when he passed her over to give a younger woman more responsibility. But when her husband shifted with her on her promotion, she took over some of "his jobs" on top of her own increasingly heavy workload at school, in the union and in her home. She did this, she said, because she was grateful for his support. Nicola continued to carry the main responsibility for housework in her home, even though her husband Peter said he would do more. She said she liked doing things like wiping up the bench because it was "peaceful" after a hard day of doing "principals's work" (Court, 1989).

⁶⁰ Gosetti and Rusch (1995) used this evocative metaphor to describe how traditional androcentric and ethnocentric theorising persists in current ways of thinking about leadership.

⁶¹ Within this functionalist view of social relations, people who did not 'fit' into their 'natural' roles were seen as deviant or neurotic, and in need of re-socialisation or therapy (Parsons, 1951).

Hegemonic masculinity

Connell's (1987) development of the concept of "hegemonic masculinity" offers some insights into the formation of links between masculinity and power, while also avoiding some of the problems I have been discussing in relation to male hegemony. Connell cut the link between hegemony and biological essentialism (in the term male hegemony) through an incisive critique of sex role theory. He then argued that Gramsci's analysis of hegemonic power could be used in an explanation of the ways that gender characteristics and oppositions are socially constructed, learned, resisted and changed within culturally specific struggles over what it means to be masculine or feminine. In these struggles, which involve both representations and practices of gender, some forms of masculinity become hegemonic by winning ascendancy over other masculinities and all forms of femininity. "Emphasised femininity" (the most common form of femininity, constructed in opposition to and "around" hegemonic masculinity) can never win hegemonic status, according to Connell, because all forms of femininity are constructed within institutionalised gender relations that concentrate power in the hands of men. Further, while individual men may not fully fit the images and practices of the currently hegemonic masculinity, that masculinity is associated with power and is supported by "large numbers of men ... as most men benefit from the subordination of women" (ibid).⁶²

Blackmore (1993) usefully wove this conceptualising into her analysis of historically constructed connections between hegemonic forms of masculinity and particular kinds of administrative leadership. In particular, she argued that socially constructed links between masculinity and rationality, opposed to a construction of feminine irrationality and emotionality, have significantly worked against the acceptance of women's leadership capabilities. Blackmore analysed these dynamics as part of a '*masculinist* hegemony,' thus also avoiding a limiting link back to sex role theory and drawing instead on social constructionist accounts of gender formation and power.

These applications of a Gramscian understanding of hegemony to an understanding of the links between masculinity, power and leadership, are I think, still useful and I have retained them for use in this thesis. While I agree with Smart's (1986) opinion that Gramsci's theory of hegemony has little to say about how hegemony is established and that Foucault's work on the links between discourse, power and knowledge in constructions of 'truth' are more useful here, I will explore in the next chapter feminists have engaged with the work of both theorists to produce what Fraser (1997) has called a pragmatic approach to discourse theory.

Before that though, I want to discuss some other feminist analyses that have moved beyond radical/cultural feminist analyses of patriarchal distinctions between men/women and masculinity/femininity. Although the latter have provided some valuable insights into how

⁶² A poststructuralist argument could suggest here, that the representations and practices associated with a hegemonic masculinity form part of a patriarchal truth regime.

gender has become positively ‘weighted’ on the side of men/masculinity, I have been showing how an unintended consequence of a critical focus on differences in gendered characteristics and processes is that sometimes this can knit those oppositions back into our ways of thinking about power relations and change. Further, as socialist feminist analyses have pointed out, women are not a homogeneous group. Davidson and Burke (1994) have noted how most women in management are privileged in comparison with many other women, and how many of them do not ‘fit’ the categories and analyses of stereotyped femininity. In Aotearoa/New Zealand, educated, Pākehā, middle-class, heterosexual, professional women are those who have most chance of pursuing their goals “in ways that converge with the practices of their peer group of men ... This group confuses the simple and totalising binary division between women and men” (Armstrong, 1997, p.33). While earlier studies of women educational leaders have tended to treat them as a homogenous group (Neville’s (1988) study was an exception here), recent work is paying more attention to the significance of dimensions of difference in this field.

Re-conceptualising difference and power

As indicated earlier, researchers of women’s leadership in education are now drawing attention to the ways that varying styles of leadership emerge out of complex interactions between individuals’ personal values and beliefs and the cultural values and practices that exist in different school contexts (Smulyan, 1999; Strachan, 1997; Weiner, 1995). In her study of three feminist principals of large co-educational schools in Aotearoa/New Zealand, Strachan examined intersections between ethnicity and gender in the experiences of one woman who was Samoan. Strachan noted that “in Samoan culture it is not done to question the motives and decisions of those in authority and yet the same constraints are not there for feminists” (1997, pp.145). For Lili there was a further “twofold” difficulty: “as both a woman and a Samoan she spoke with a different voice to her predominantly white male colleagues” (p.146). While the traces of a cultural feminist construction of binary gender difference can be seen to be persisting in this analysis, Strachan showed that among these three feminist principals there was “a wide range of personal responses, dependent upon school context, the personality of the women, their ethnicity, their personal educational vision and whether there was agreement between that and the reforms” (1997, p.12). Her study and Smulyan’s (1999) study of three women principals in the US, have illuminated also the ways that individual women’s different personal values, political agendas and practices can interact with and be shaped by their different local school and community contexts.

Strachan’s interpretations of different political commitments provide some further interesting insights in relation to Blackmore’s (1993) worry that some that feminists could be “seduced” by a “New Right” agenda. Strachan pointed out that while one of her feminist principals “agreed with the philosophy underlying the reforms, she appropriated opportunities

offered by the reforms to help her deliver her educational agenda” which included a “commitment to social justice and equity, sharing power, caring and improving student learning outcomes” (Strachan, 1997, p.218). I was particularly interested by this, as I was finding in my own co-principal study that, despite the constraints the co-principals were encountering within the reformulated requirements for educational administration, they also were “appropriating opportunities” (ibid) that the new environment had opened up. Strachan’s analysis of the women’s different responses resonated for me with the arguments advanced by Arnot, Weiler and Connell about the nature of individual resistances to and struggles over particular socio-cultural hegemonies. In its illustrations of how individuals can not only resist, but also co-opt the intentions of others to advance their own agendas, Strachan’s study moves also towards a focus on analysis of strategic and tactical struggles over power. This resonates with the feminist Foucauldian approach that I will explain in the next chapter.

I have some concerns, however, about how distinctions between feminine and feminist leadership are being constructed in the literature on women in educational leadership and I will draw now on Strachan’s study to explain these.

Feminine or feminist leadership? Raising questions about power

Interest in conceptualising feminist leadership as different from feminine leadership has informed studies such as those of Grace (1995) and Hall (1996), both of whom reported that some of their women leaders specifically disclaimed any feminist affiliation.⁶³ In her earlier ground breaking work on conceptualising feminist leadership, Blackmore (1989) focused on issues of power and a politics of change. She argued that “Feminists demand not just equality, but that they become the subjects of an alternative, autonomous discourse which chooses its own measures and criteria” (Blackmore, 1989, p.120). Such a discourse should explain gendered oppositions and power inequalities in ways that avoid universalism and provide strategies for change. It should also enable “a more egalitarian view of community and participation ... a relational morality which emphasises attachments and responsibilities to others as well as to self” (ibid). In drawing on Gilligan’s analysis of women’s “different moral understanding,” Blackmore linked relational and participatory interests to “women’s interests” that emerge out of their “centrality to the family and as principal childrearer” (p.121). Again, a trace of cultural feminism is woven through this argument, which could be read as knitting up again the gendered binaries that were critiqued elsewhere in this same article. This illustrates, in my opinion, the difficulties we encounter when we try to talk about gendered practices in ways that do not re-inscribe such oppositions.

Blackmore’s conceptualising of power in the 1989 article also articulated, however, a distinction between leadership as *power over* others, to a form of leadership that *acts with*

⁶³ Hall’s women headteachers eschewed the label feminist because they felt it would attach them to “unwelcome stereotypes” (1996, p.193).

others (1989, p.123), extending her argument into a relational view of power and moral development. Drawing on Hartsock (1983) and Ferguson (Ferguson, 1984), she maintained that feminist leadership would be empowering of others because, in Hartsock's (1983, p.8) words, it would be "at the centre of the group rather than in front of the others." In Blackmore's view, this required a shift from

the individual to a collective focus in terms of what is meant by leadership ... going against the renewed push towards more masculinist notions of leadership embedded in corporate managerialism which equates efficiency and effectiveness with organisational rationality and hierarchy" (Blackmore, 1989, p.124).

As I will show in Chapter 7, these arguments about relational collectivity are similar to those underpinning the constituting of a feminist collectives discourse and practices. Unlike that discourse however, which, during its early stages of formation prioritised the *eschewing of leadership* within a radical change to bureaucratic hierarchical structures, the theorising of feminist leadership by Blackmore (1989; 1995; 1999) and by Strachan (1994; 1997; 1999) has focused on *re-conceptualising leadership*, changing the exclusionary nature of particular (mainly masculinist and white) leadership theories and practices and re-focussing these on to emancipatory practices. When I was beginning this study of co-principalships, I thought that the women may have been understanding their leadership within this feminist leadership discourse and I engaged in its arguments. As I reflected on how this discourse was being constructed however, I became concerned about some issues it evokes.

In Strachan's (1997) review of the albeit "meagre" literature on feminist educational leadership, political agendas for empowering women, both those in leadership positions and those with whom they work, are pivotal. Studies argued that views of feminine, 'web' styles of leadership (for example, Helgesen, 1990), which have stressed inclusive and caring approaches, are not necessarily feminist. Hall (1996) stated that women who practice 'feminine' leadership may be supportive of equal opportunity, but their focus was not to further the cause of women's and girls' rights: indeed, she suggested that such 'feminine' leadership may "fail the test" of a feminist emancipatory praxis (1996, p.124). Strachan elaborated that while feminist leadership might emerge out of women's beliefs and experiences, it goes beyond these and a focus on sharing power or decision making, to encompass anti-racist as well as anti-sexist politics (Gosetti & Rusch, 1995) and to prioritise "an emancipatory agenda" (Strachan, 1999, p.121).

An emancipatory agenda was defined by Strachan as the goal of bringing about "improved social justice and equity for all members of the school community" (1997, p.25). Following Blackmore (1995), she drew on Grundy's (1993) distinctions between technical, practical and emancipatory interests to distinguish this emancipatory leadership from other approaches, such as managerialism. Grundy followed Habermas's analysis of three types of cognitive interests in her argument that leadership which prioritised *technical* interests assumed the efficacy of splits between those who plan and control the overall direction of an organisation, and the work of subordinates who implemented those plans. Hierarchical

structures and control were the likely result of this approach. Leadership that was more inclusive of organisational members was informed by *practical* interests that take account of clients' needs as well as those of the organisation. This approach was likely to be facilitatory and to use participatory decision making. *Emancipatory* practice moved beyond practical action when it used critical reflection to "assist in identifying unjust practices and unequal relationships ... and open up possibilities for change" (Strachan, 1999, p.122; Grundy, 1993). Strachan concluded that 'feminine leadership' did not necessarily prioritise these areas of action.

Following Blackmore and Hurty (1995), Strachan characterised feminist educational leaders as aiming to empower others in the school community through using a "power with" approach. This would include an interest in examining institutional structures for "practices that perpetrate unequal power relations" as well as including an honest and open use of emotional energy; an ability to nurture others; listening to and learning from others; keeping others in mind when making decisions; and collaborating with others in working for change in schooling (Hurty, 1995, p.385, in Strachan, 1999, p.122-3). (There are strong resonances here with both radical and cultural feminist approaches.) The use of an ethic of care was the other element which Strachan identified as significant in feminist educational leadership. She drew attention to its characterising in the literature as "connectedness" and a sense of responsibility (Bensimon, 1989), compassion and empathy (Regan, 1990), and a concern to address "needs that arise out of being oppressed and repressed" (Beck, 1994). Caring could thus be "liberatory," she wrote (p.122). In these ways, Strachan argued that feminist leadership "goes beyond" feminine leadership.

Although she acknowledged that other people may also have these kinds of empowering and caring goals, and although we can acknowledge that feminism does have some explicit political aims that may not be shared by all women, we need to think carefully about the possible effects of this development of theorising differences between feminine and feminist leadership. It seems to me that there are several risks here. Firstly, there is the risk of reifying one way of practising leadership as feminist. Given that there are many different feminisms, which kind of feminist will qualify? Secondly, there is the risk of valorising and promoting feminist leadership as ethically and politically better than feminine leadership (that is, leadership practised by those women who do not identify primarily with specific feminist goals and values). Given that women's political affiliations and ethical values are as diverse as women themselves, how are each of these judgements to be made? Thirdly, if feminine and feminist are constructed as different in a binary contrast, this dichotomy could itself easily become rigid and exclusionary. For example, although Blackmore has argued that feminine and feminist leadership need to be distinguished for a post-masculinist politics of educational leadership, because "social justice is a basic tenet of feminist practice of educational leadership" (1999, p.221), the linking of social justice with feminism runs the risk of

marginalising the social justice concerns and work of other groups, such as non-feminist Māori women educational leaders.

Code (Code, 1991, p.29) has highlighted the problems in thinking in opposed terms where there is “an excluded middle. Everything has to be *either A or Not-A*, for A and Not-A exhaust all possibilities.” Questions that need to be posed here are, whose ways of knowing counts? Who is silenced? These are questions about inclusion and exclusion. They are questions about power, ones that need exploring some more in relation to developments in theorising women’s approaches to leadership. We need to avoid the ever present danger of constructing an emancipatory discourse which is then made into a new regime of truth (Foucault, 1980), with its own new versions of controlling practices.

I want now, therefore, to re-visit some of the earlier feminist debates about the links between difference and power, to consider what they can offer here.

Feminist debates about power, oppression and identity politics

Within structuralist accounts such as those of radical and Marxist feminisms, social relations have been understood as constructed within hierarchical and repressive forms of power that emerge out of rather fixed “monolithic structures (patriarchy and capitalism), which uniformly benefit some groups rather than others” (Jones, 1991b, p.4). It has been argued also that educators working within neo-Marxist/critical approaches in educational administration similarly tend to assume that:

power is an all-or-nothing phenomenon. That is, a person either possesses power, or does not; a person is either an oppressor or a member of an oppressed group. Power is viewed as a seamless entity, in which the power elite, typically viewed as occupying the upper echelons of organisations and institutions, are in control of all the power and typically hold it beyond the reach of marginalised persons (Capper, 1998, pp.356-57).⁶⁴

Jones and Guy have pointed out however, that a radical feminist conceptualising of the term “oppression” (as a “feudal understanding that particular groups personally oppress others”) can be distinguished from a Marxist understanding of oppressive power (as a relatively impersonal outcome of the working of capitalism) (Jones & Guy, 1992, p. 308). They described how during the 1970s women’s liberation movement in Aotearoa/New Zealand, the former view prevailed over Marxist, socialist and lesbian feminist analyses,⁶⁵ in

⁶⁴ Some critical studies in educational administration have looked at how challenging conceptions of power as top down control relations that are embedded in the bureaucratic structuring of management/ teaching workforces (as necessary for efficient and accountable organisation), can give rise to significant dilemmas for those who wish to share leadership equally with their colleagues. The case narratives will illustrate some of these dilemmas.

⁶⁵ Lesbian feminists were pointing out how conceptualising power as women’s oppression embedded a simplistic binary between women and men that underpinned the widespread social structure of “compulsory heterosexuality” (Rich, 1976). The disastrous effects of heterosexism and homophobia on lesbian women’s and girls’ experiences and lives are now well documented (Quinlivan, 1996; Shaw, 2000).

debates over women's supposedly shared position in an oppressed 'sisterhood.' When women's differences from each other were highlighted within (often bitter) discussions about the intersecting power relations of race, class and sexuality with those of gender, in Jones and Guy's view, radical feminism achieved "a kind of settlement" of the divisions that ensued, through "the idea that 'all women are oppressed, but some are more oppressed than others'" (1992, p.306). Jones and Guy criticised this "ultimately unsatisfactory solution ... of a hierarchy of oppressions" because it resulted in "a depressing view ... of units of power unequally distributed on the basis of your gender, race, class and sexuality" (p.309). Some women, they said, could end up (theoretically) with no power at all. This view of power/lessness was overly simplistic, moralistic, ahistorical in its analysis of women's lives and narrowing in its focus on power as delimited within a form of identity politics (pp.307 ff.).

Alice (1996) later argued that despite what seemed to be the early usefulness of the sex/gender distinctions, when gender as socially constructed is posited in an opposition to sex as biological, an adequate theorising of different sexual orientations is made difficult. She elaborated that although by the mid 1980s gender was being theorised as a set of processes that are shifting and intersecting with other variables, those variables remained largely conceptualised as a "networking" of unitary categories of "'gender,' 'race' and 'class' wherein each of these sets up ideological and structural parameters for the operations of the others in various historical and social contexts" (Alice, 1996, p.89). Within feminism, contestation over these unitary categories has led to an emphasis on "the constituent parts of identities, imaged as multiple and contradictory" (ibid).

This kind of multiplicity and contradiction has been analysed particularly effectively by Māori women in Aotearoa/New Zealand, who have challenged white feminist accounts of difference grounded in patriarchy and capitalism. These are criticised for their inability to account for Māori women's multiple positionings and often contradictory experiences within intersecting power relations that centre around racism and colonisation. Smith pointed out that "(w)hile white feminisms may help to gain insight into 'Otherness' at one level, at another level, these forms of feminism may perpetuate otherness further," particularly in their "smothering" of Māori women's views and experiences of the world (Smith, 1992, p.34). As she later noted, "indigenous women hold an analysis of colonialism as a central tenet of indigenous feminism" (Smith, 1999, p. 152).

The emerging theorising of difference and power in examples of Māori women's scholarship is multi-levelled and rich. There is a focus on a conceptualising of differences between individuals while not losing sight of group experiences, identities and connections, such as connections between women, between women and men, between members of whanau, hapu and iwi, between people and the land. For example, Durie emphasised the importance of analysis of "a Māori identity" that is shaped by "Māori philosophy, norms, values, attitudes, and the right to hold it" (Durie, 1989, p.15). In her holistic approach to theorising identity, individuals were seen in relation to the group, and the group in relation to the wider physical,

political, social and spiritual environment. Johnston and Pihama (1993) have aimed to identify “differences which count” for Māori women in a range of whānau (extended family), hapu (subtribe) and iwi (tribe) locations that are intersected by the complexities of age interrelationships, kawa (protocols), differences in labour market participation, education, sexual orientations and so on (1993, p.18).

Following Young (1990b), Johnston (1998) has also highlighted the normalising effects of the processes that have been used in the defining of difference by a dominant group. She pointed out that while subordinate groups are each identified as having a set of attributes that are not shared with ‘other’ groups, the dominant group’s attributes are not remarked upon. These are taken for granted as neutral. Further, while subordinate groups are “limited by, and subsequently imprisoned within a given set of possibilities defined by the dominant group,” they are also devalued, because a particularly “nasty” consequence of a normalising discourse is that “valued characteristics are attributed solely to the dominant group” (Johnston, 1998, p.30). This analysis reflects a Foucauldian understanding of power as emerging out of, and exercised within, links that are constructed between particular discourses and valued forms of knowledge (Foucault, 1980).

The work of Waitere-Ang (1999) has moved beyond critique to subversion of the normalising discourses of the “white Western archive.” Her discussions of six Māori women educators’ accounts grounded these in a Māori cosmology and local narratives of whānau, iwi and hapu, reclaiming, reconstituting and re-centering knowledges that have been largely ignored within white academic analysis. Waitere-Ang and her research participants brought to the fore what Foucault would have described as their subjugated knowledge, “a historical knowledge of struggles ... against the claims of a unitary body of theory which would filter, hierarchise and order them in the name of some true knowledge and some arbitrary idea of what constitutes a science and its objects” (Foucault, 1980, p.82). These accounts challenge those that represent Māori women as deficient or ‘not normal’ within the leadership terrain. Waitere-Ang wrote that:

Māori women have an archive of knowledge that both centralises and normalises the participation of women in a number of diverse roles across numerous terrains ... as respected leaders, as fearless and compassionate community members, remembered for their intellect and noted for displaying self determination (1999, p.238).

A feminist poststructuralist understanding of how power can be exercised through individual agency and discursive acts of naming/renaming resonates with this work of Māori women educators and academics, who have focused on “creating our own spaces, our own ways of knowing and representation, creating and crafting our own differences” (Johnston, 1998, p.35). Waitere-Ang showed that while they engage in this work, Māori women educators “must confront and contend with complying with assimilative ideologies that are culturally incongruent with their primary identity” (1999, p.241). For those who challenge and expose the myth of egalitarianism, she wrote, the cost can be that they are “placed at odds with a

system,” having to find strategies to cope with multi-levelled “borderlands” and binaries that can constrain and delimit their agency. It is up-lifting, however, to see how for several of the women in Waitere-Ang’s study, discrimination and constraints acted for them as “a catalyst to succeed ... Silent pledges *I’ll show you*, (were) explicitly made by six of the women” (p.243). Success was re-defined as a form of resistance and these women consequently worked from their positions of responsibility and authority to change the status quo (p.235). Waitere-Ang reported here, that the women used “a mix of holding silence and breaking silence” as a strategy of resistance and change. “By being silent, safe spaces were created in which contrary views and their oppositional forms of social critique could be safely held without evoking the antagonism of those in influential positions of power” (1999, p.242). My study of the Telford School co-principalship will reveal how for some Māori, such a strategy is necessary even in a school which has a collaborative “Māori friendly” approach (Johnston, 1999).

While Māori women academics have taken different approaches in their theorising (because they, like other women, are not a homogeneous group), analyses of institutional racism and its negative effects on Māori aspirations, life trajectories, and tino rangatiratanga (Māori self determination) have remained central in their critiques of educational provision and leadership practices in Aotearoa/New Zealand. These analyses drew my attention as I was thinking about the initiation and practice of co-principalships in state schools. In the light of their accounts, it seemed clear to me there were likely to be some thorny problems to resolve between tino rangatiratanga (cultural sovereignty and self determination) aspirations and rights of any Māori participants and the wishes of other participants, in co-principalships that may attempt to fully share leadership and power. The Telford School narrative will describe how such problems did emerge in that school.

To sum up these parts of my discussion, during the last two decades, feminist and wahine Māori analyses have attempted to clarify how the constituting of difference(s) is linked to the construction and maintenance of power inequalities. Finding ways to analyse these links without losing sight of the ubiquity of patterned similarities in the experiences of both individuals and different groups is a current focus of much work in feminist research (Du Plessis & Alice, 1998). This problematic is a central one for this current study

Towards a feminist poststructuralist approach

In her earlier analysis of ‘difference,’ feminist theorist Barrett (1987) examined a Foucauldian approach in comparison with feminist theorising of this issue. She argued that feminist analyses needed to not only pragmatically register difference among women (in terms of class, race, age, sexual orientation, disability, religion) but also carefully identify separately “sexual difference, positional difference and experiential diversity” (p.39). Barrett further argued that, while “the specificity of each woman's experience guarantees its authenticity and political value,” pluralist analyses “do not necessarily strengthen feminism in relation to the

world in general because “the gesture of pluralism on the part of the *marginal* can only mean capitulation to the centre” (Spivak cited in Barrett, 1987, p.32). Thus Barrett concluded that, while she had initially thought Foucault’s conceptualising of power seemed to resonate with feminism’s concerns and “signalled a consideration of oppression, coercion and violence that is extremely difficult to mobilise under the rubric of ‘difference’” the micro-politics that emerge within a Foucauldian approach would be “scarcely likely to transform any major institutions overnight” (p.34).

I agreed with the first part of Barrett’s argument, but I was less convinced by the latter point. Swift ‘overnight’ changes in the socio-cultural attitudes and practices of the kind challenged by feminists, are probably impossible to achieve and even if they did eventuate, would be unlikely to endure. Despite Barrett’s concerns, it seemed to me that the feminist poststructuralist analyses (Davies, 1989; 1993; Fraser & Nicholson, 1990; Hekman, 1990; Jones, 1991; McNay, 1992; Weedon, 1987) were potentially more useful for my study of women’s leadership initiatives than previous conceptualisations of gender, power and difference. In a shift away from the centralising of gender as a primary analytical category, poststructuralist feminism resonates with a strategic analysis of inter-dependencies of the kind advocated by Code and demonstrated in the wahine Māori approaches that I have just discussed. I was particularly attracted to Fraser and Nicholson’s argument that a feminist poststructuralist approach should be “comparativist rather than universalising ... and replace unitary notions of woman and feminine identity” (and, one could add, feminist identity) “with plural and complexly constructed conceptions of social identity ... recognis(ing) the diversity of women’s needs and experiences” (1990, p.35). These writers suggested that feminist research and political interventions could be developed within an understanding of feminism as a “patchwork of overlapping alliances” (ibid). As I was embarking on this study, this seemed to me to be an approach that could be fruitful for an analysis of the construction of complex intersections between agency and structure, commonality and difference. I will survey its main features in the next chapter.

Conclusion

I have argued in this chapter that there are limitations in liberal feminist explanations of the marginalising of women in educational leadership and problems in the use of the concept of male hegemony to explain discriminatory processes that have worked against women aspiring to work in, and change, practices of educational leadership. These limitations and difficulties have been analysed as linked to biologically essentialist and universalising forms of theorising. I have showed how similar problems, along with some other limitations, can be identified also in a cultural feminist discourse of ‘women’s ways of leading.’ I have noted that Connell’s conceptualising of hegemonic masculinity and emphasised femininity is

a more useful approach to examining the cultural processes involved in constructing gendered identities and inequalities, and one worth retaining for use in this study.

In my examination of recent theorising of ‘feminist leadership,’ I explained how Strachan’s study of the complex ways three feminist principals were resisting, agreeing with and/or appropriating varying constraints and possibilities for emancipatory leadership within a New Right context, has provided a useful analysis of a strategising approach in feminist work in educational leadership. I have raised some questions, however, about the efficacy of theorising feminist leadership as opposed to ‘feminine leadership.’ I have argued that through re-inscribing a binary analysis, this approach could ‘fence in’ feminist efforts to bring about change in systemic forms of inequality. Code’s warning that feminists need to “avoid fixing rigid, hierarchical boundaries around the distinctions we identify” has been shown to be salient here (Code, 1991, p.28). The insights about the nature of individuals’ strategic negotiations of dominant power systems run the risk of being blunted if analyses of women’s experiences of leadership continue to be bifurcated into a feminine/feminist binary. This is because differences are not unitary (for example, the subject position of feminist intersects with other subject positions such as mother, unionist, lesbian, Māori and so on), and not stable (the ways that different positions are constituted in discourse, and are variously recognised and negotiated by individuals, shift and change.)

As a way forward for analysis of these complexities, Code advocated seeking out “reciprocal interactions between and among ... constructs” (and, I would add, practices), to find interdependences between and among differences and to identify how these may be complementary and “shade into one another, or function as ‘mixed modes,’ rather than as absolutes” (Code, 1991, p.28). My re-viewing of some of the earlier feminist debates about the nature and effects of social forms of difference, has highlighted the value of adopting for my study a theoretical approach that will provide a “logic” and a “toolkit” for analysis (Foucault, 1980) that can assist me to tease multiplicity, complexity, change and contradiction within persisting, albeit shifting, wider ‘patterns’ of social relations. Some Maori women’s theorising of individual and group strategic negotiations of shifting identity ‘borderlands,’ have suggested the usefulness of a focus on intersecting discursive relations of power (Waitere-Ang, 1999; Johnston, 1998).

I explore these ideas further in the next chapter, where I explain the feminist poststructuralist ‘toolkit’ that, after reading, using and reflecting on the theoretical accounts I have described here, I have assembled for my analysis in this study.

CHAPTER 4

“THEORY AS A TOOLKIT”

DISCOURSE, POWER AND SUBJECTIVITY

The role for theory today ... is not to formulate the global systematic theory which holds everything in place, but to analyse the specificity of mechanisms of power, to locate the connections and extensions, to build little by little a strategic knowledge (*savoir*). The notion of theory as a toolkit means: (i) the theory to be constructed is not a system but an instrument, a *logic* of the specificity of power relations and the struggles around them; (ii) that this investigation can only be carried out step by step on the basis of reflection (which will necessarily be historical in some of its aspects) on given situations (Foucault, 1980, p.145).

Introduction

As I explained in my Preface and Chapter 1, the questions this study explores revolve around a central problematic: why and how did the three primary school co-principalships emerge as they did, going against the grain of ‘commonsense’ understandings of leadership and dominant theories and regulations for ‘efficient’ school management? This thesis is building an argument that while particular theories of leadership can cohere in broadly pervasive discourses that appear to ‘smooth out’ contradictions and opposing viewpoints, practices of educational leadership remain localised and contested within struggles over meaning, socio-cultural hegemonies and material resources. In this chapter I explain the feminist poststructuralist toolkit I have assembled for analysing how these dynamics impacted on the introduction of primary school co-principalships in this country within what Foucault called a discourse/power/knowledge nexus.

In the previous chapter, I explained how shifts in my thinking led me to feminist theorists and researchers who have variously critiqued, appropriated and/or elaborated elements of the work of Foucault as part of developing their own post structuralist approaches (Blackmore, 1999; Davies, 1989; 1993; 1997; Jones, 1991; 1997; Hekman, 1990; Middleton, 1993; Weedon, 1987). I argue here that these approaches can be usefully supplemented by a reformulation of Gramsci’s notion of hegemony (Hennessy, 1993; Fraser, 1997) to assist analysis of the ways that social differences can become patterned forms of social inequalities. Hennessy argued that her materialist feminism⁶⁶ is a “way of reading that

⁶⁶ Materialist feminism has been defined by Hennessy (1993) as having been built on British socialist feminist critiques of patriarchy and capitalism and a poststructuralist conception of subjectivity as discursively constructed. She defined Gramsci’s concept of hegemony, as “the process whereby a ruling group comes to dominate by establishing the cultural common sense”, p.76) and elaborated on how it can be an important tool

need not shrink from naming social totalities in order to address the complex ways in which subjectivities are differentiated” across intersecting gender, race, class, sexuality divides (1993, pp. xii, 5). In her suggestions for a way to theorise similar concerns, Fraser (1997) proposed a pragmatic approach to discourse. In taking elements of the work of both of these theorists, the poststructuralist toolkit that I am adopting is thus one that has “a strong materialist bent,” as Blackmore (1999, p.16) recently put it when describing her own theoretical orientation.

I begin my discussion by introducing the main arguments of a feminist poststructuralism that focuses on language as the core of discursive practices. This focus has emerged out of engagements with Foucault’s understandings of discourse as interconnected with social practices, power and knowledge. In the next section, therefore, I introduce his genealogical approach and his analysis of governmentality for this study. I then explain how feminist materialist analyses can be used to expand on a Foucauldian approach. In section four, I describe feminist poststructuralist debates around the concept of subjectivity, and discuss how Foucault’s later work on the subject and power could be useful for my later analysis of how the women in this study were constituting, within available discourses, a ‘new’ way of being and enacting leadership as a co-principal. I conclude the chapter with a summary of Fraser’s (1997) formulation of a pragmatic approach to discourse, which I will draw on to facilitate my examinations of how individual and collective identities are formed and re-formed within fields of circulating discourses and contested socio-cultural hegemonies.

Introducing a feminist poststructuralist approach

The form of feminist poststructuralism that I use in this thesis uses the term ‘discourses’ to mean historically, socially and culturally specific bodies of meaning and knowledge that exist in and are shaped by language, practices and representations (see, for example, Davies, 1989; 1993; Fraser & Nicholson, 1990; Hekman, 1990; Jones, 1991; McNay, 1992; Weedon, 1987). As such, discourses are understood as constructing a range of competing and often contradictory ways of giving meaning to the world, of organising social institutions and processes, and of ‘being’ and acting in the world. Powerful discourses are those that have a firm institutional base, having become embedded in law, for example, or in education or the family (Weeden, 1987, pp.35, 109).

In this approach, individual subjectivity is understood as constituted within discourses that ‘offer’ a range of subject positions which individuals can take up as part of their own ways of being (Davies, 1989; MacNaughton, 2000). Some subject positions may seem more obvious, or ‘natural’ than others, depending on the widespread acceptance (or normalising) of particular discourses, a normalising that can limit, or ‘regulate’ our understandings of possible ways of being and interacting with others within particular social orders. Foucault’s

for feminist analysis of the formation of discursive regimes of truth (Foucault, 1980).

theorising of the politics of truth has been drawn on to illuminate these normalising, regulating processes and the accompanying links between discourse, knowledge, power and subjectivity. I will explain more in the last part of this chapter how feminist poststructuralists such as Davies (1997), Jones (1997) and MacNaughton (2000), have responded to the implications of these ideas for developing understandings about the way that subjectivity as “thinking” agency, is shaped within discourse. I will look at these ideas in relation to Foucault’s later theorising of individual autonomy and freedom, and explain how a shift away from his earlier thinking about the power of disciplinary practices to form “docile bodies,” is useful for the theorising of resistance and individual agency. At this point though, I need to examine in more detail how I understand and use the term discourse.

Language as discourse: discourse as social practices

As Weedon pointed out, most forms of poststructuralist theorising have built on Saussure’s insight that “meaning is produced in language, rather than reflected by language” (Weedon, 1987, p. 23). Saussure’s theory sees language systems as chains of signs, in which each sign is made up of an arbitrarily assigned link between a signifier (a word, a sound, a symbol) and the concept it signifies, the signified. The meaning of each sign is acquired through its distinction from other signs, that is, in the relationships between signs in a language “chain”. In Weedon’s view, this theory is useful for feminist poststructuralists because it exposes how the meaning of ‘woman,’ for example, is not fixed by a ‘natural’ world, but socially produced within language. She further argued though, that feminists needed to understand how language is used within historically specific social relations of power that have constructed woman as ‘other’ to, and ‘less’ than, man. That is, tools were needed for examining how language is “part of the power relations of everyday life” (Weedon, 1987, p.25; see also, Frazer & Lacey, 1993). Saussure’s approach to studying language as a unified system of signs abstracted it from its historical context however (Fraser, 1997). Fraser argued that it is thus a structuralist approach that has “limited utility” for feminist theorising of discursive practice, the construction of the subject, power and social change (ibid). Feminists needed to be able to exploit, she argued, the implication that if meanings are socially produced, they are also open to change.

Weedon, along with other feminist poststructuralists such as Davies (1989) and MacNaughton (2000), found Derrida’s textual deconstructive approach useful here. Derrida (Derrida, 1978) built on Saussure’s ‘relational’ idea of language to develop the concept of differance. This explained how the meaning of any signifier (word, sound, representation) always depends on how it is used in a particular discursive context. This context will shape how a sign is being placed in relation to another sign, and hence how it is able to be ‘read.’ Derrida argued that binary oppositions between signifiers, for example man/woman, white/black, leader/follower, are particularly significant, in that the emergent meaning of both

signifiers in the 'pair' depends inherently on a relationship between them. Derrida explained how such oppositions could be deconstructed to reveal that a signifier like 'man,' 'white' or 'leader,' depends on its inverse signifier, 'woman,' 'black' or 'follower,' for its meaning. That is, 'man' only has meaning in relation to 'woman,' from which it is different. Deconstructing how oppositions appear in particular discourses, can also reveal the embedding of different social values into the oppositions. Within particular discourses, one side of the opposition will be privileged over the other, with the less powerful term being defined in relation to the more powerful. For example, in positivist research discourse, 'subjectivity' can be seen to be defined as 'not objectivity' in ways that devalue subjectivity.

Derrida's approach to language analysis is promoted in Weedon's and Davies' (1989; 1993) work as enabling analysis of multiple meanings that are made possible in different discourses. Other feminist researchers have found deconstruction a particularly useful method in their challenging of language embedded power relations. For example, they have deconstructed the subjectivity/objectivity relation (wherein subjectivity has been further linked to femininity and objectivity to masculinity) to reverse the denigration of so-called feminine subjectivity by showing how all research is subjective and total objectivity is a myth of a masculinist rationalism (Jones, 1991b; Lather, 1991). They have also found useful, Derrida's argument that, as a consequence of the ways that discourses develop over time, meaning is never fixed. Thus the meaning of a signifier like 'woman,' can shift from ideal to victim to political agent, depending on the discursive context in which it is being used (Weedon, 1987, p.25).⁶⁷

Feminists have linked such ideas to analyses of how such processes of meaning making are sites of struggles over social power. As I explained in the last chapter, Weiler (1988) drew attention to the point that, although these struggles may result in the meanings of a dominant group becoming accepted for a time as commonsense, such a hegemony is never fully achieved or maintained as a total control of consciousness: it is always open to contest.⁶⁸ In Weedon's poststructuralist language, this idea could be expressed as an on-going "battle for the signified - a struggle to fix meaning temporarily on behalf of particular power relations and social interests" (Weedon, 1987, p.98).

Weedon further argued that discourses are not just a set of language patterns, but are linked also to social practices (along with representations and such things as the layout of institutional spaces). Foucault's analyses of the ways that social practices produce, and are produced by, discourse, thereby constituting links between discourse, knowledge and power, are particularly significant for the form of feminist poststructuralism that I am using in this

⁶⁷ He further pointed out that meaning can never be completely achieved. It is partial and tentative, with 'other' meanings always just beyond our grasp as it were: as Derrida put it, meaning is constantly "deferred."

⁶⁸ In his discussion of hegemony, Connell expanded that cultural dominance may be achieved for a time, but this does not mean "the obliteration of alternatives. (Hegemony) means ascendancy achieved within a balance of forces, a state of play. Other patterns and groups are subordinated, not eliminated (Connell, 1987, p.182).

thesis. In the next section, therefore, I explain these ideas and how Foucault shifted from an early structuralist form of analysis of language/discourse to a genealogical approach that was more explicitly concerned with theorising power.

Foucault's analyses of discourse/power/knowledge

In his archeological studies of the historical development of ideas, Foucault developed his concept of discourse as meaning sets of statements that represent particular topics and knowledges in particular ways, cohering in "*discursive formations*" that make some ways of speaking and knowing possible, while excluding others (Foucault, 1972). He argued that in a discourse, there were "rules for formation" of objects, concepts, theories (Foucault, 1978b). Examining how such rules were developed in particular discursive practices could help to explain "why a certain thing is seen (or omitted); why it is envisaged under such an aspect and analysed at such a level; why such a word is employed with such a meaning and in such a sentence" (Foucault, 1989, p.52, cited in McNay, 1992, p.26). In his archeological studies, Foucault saw discursive formations as relatively autonomous and determining what knowledge and subject forms were possible. Everyday events and events associated with "an institutional field ... political decisions, a sequence of economic processes" were considered as secondary to discourse (Foucault, 1972, p.157).

While he continued to accept that all knowledge was the effect of statements made within sets of linguistic rules, Foucault came to place an increasing significance on the ways that socio-historical practices contribute to the discursive production of both knowledge and power. In doing this, he challenged the value of a Saussurean focus on language as a fixed system of signs. He argued that this was not an adequate tool for analysis of "the problem of the 'discursive regime' - of the effects of power peculiar to the play of statements" (Foucault, 1980, p.113-114).⁶⁹ He argued there that the link between discourse and power is forged in the ways that things and subjects are divided into categories and hierarchies, with particular speaking positions and topics being authorised or excluded, and 'true' statements distinguished from 'false' (ibid).

A question that particularly interested him was how an "organised scientific discourse" could rise rapidly to the status of a "truth," sometimes within the space of a few brief years (Foucault, 1980, p.83). In his genealogical studies he aimed to identify and describe, "down to the smallest detail," how this could occur, how power/knowledge connections could be constructed and brought into play within specific sets of socio-historical practices (ibid). He analysed archival records of everyday practices, institutional arrangements, economic

⁶⁹ According to McNay, he first signalled a shift from looking at the internal rules of formation for discourse, to examining how external social forces of control, selection, organization and distribution are involved, in the lecture, *The order of discourse* (McNay, 1994, pp.86).

processes and political struggles for his studies of, for example, psychiatry, the penal system and sexuality (Foucault, 1973; 1977a; 1978a). His aim was to describe how each discursive regime had its “own distinctive objects of enquiry; its own criteria of well-formedness for statements admitted to candidacy for truth or falsity; its own procedures for generating, storing and arranging data; its own institutional sanctions and matrices” (Fraser, 1989, p.20). From this work he later argued that it was within a broad social network of “relations of force, strategic developments, and tactics,” rather than in a top-down control by a sovereign or state, that modern power was being exercised and individuals governed (Foucault, 1980, p.114; 1982).

The genealogical studies involved Foucault in examinations of the “microphysics” of what he called “bio-power,” in which the human body was at the centre of a field of power struggles. He argued that it is through “techniques of surveillance” at local levels, that power becomes linked to disciplinary practices which effect the production of “docile bodies” (Foucault, 1977a). Schools, barracks and hospitals were examples of sites where “integral surveillance was carried out” (1980, p.71). He argued that in these places, “people learned how to establish dossiers, systems of marking and classifying, the integrated accountancy of individual records... and at a certain moment in time, these methods became generalised” (ibid). Such sets of rules and classifications enabled the distinguishing of “true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what is true” (p.131). Thus, he argued, in every society there is “a ‘general politics or a *régime of truth* ... the types of discourse which it accepts and makes to function as true ... and specific effects of power are attached to the true” (p.132). Foucault’s characterising of power effects as disciplinary, meant that certain practices effect the “subjection of the human body in such a way as to provide a submissive, productive and trained source of labour power” (McNay, 1994, p.92).⁷⁰

In *Discipline and Punish* (1977) Foucault expanded on how the institutionalising of disciplinary practices in schools, in prisons, factories and barracks, involves the “insertion of bodies” into controlled spaces that are functional sites for surveillance. This surveillance occurs not just through overt regulatory practices, however (such as in schools, the giving of detentions for breaking rules). He maintained that it occurs through more subtle partitionings and rankings of individual activities and positions, along with delimiting of possibilities achieved through the power of the norm to shape individual ways of thinking and being, to the extent that individuals discipline themselves through internalised ‘self’ regulation. Foucault illustrated these points by describing Bentham’s Panopticon. This design for an ‘ideal’ prison placed an observation tower centrally within surrounding cells that had windows opening onto

⁷⁰ McNay (1994, p.92) pointed out that while in these analyses, Foucault was not according to the economic realm a causal priority, he was arguing that disciplinary power is fundamental to the expansion of capitalism.

it and to the outside, meaning that prisoners in their cells would be clearly visible to a guard in the central tower. Bentham argued that there would not need to be a guard in the tower at all times, as prisoners would know that they could be watched at any time, and consequently would 'discipline' themselves. Surveillance and self regulation was further analysed in the *History of Sexuality*, where Foucault explored how sexuality became medicalised and constructed as an object for scientific inquiry, knowledge and regulation through practices such as confession. The recent explosion of television documentaries and 'reality' programmes that involve 'voluntary confessions' of intimate details of lives endorses Foucault's argument that such practices do not 'free' the self, but work to constrain the subject, folding him/her into a network of ever-increasing disciplinary power relations. Foucault argued that power and control is not merely repressive, but produced in and through people's bodies and ever more invisible strategies of normalization, self introspection and reporting on the self - 'confession.'

Thus the idea of power as only juridical is challenged in these arguments. This is a particularly significant point for my interest in studying women's agency in constituting shared leaderships within a discursive regime that defined these as not only "illegal," but also impractical in schools. While a 'top down' view of repressive power might seem to offer ready answers for the difficulties that were encountered in the establishing of the co-principalships, Foucault pointed out how techniques of power do not work only at the level of the law, the state or institution. He emphasised the circulation and contestation of power within a broad network of social practices in which individuals "act as the vehicle for transmitting a wider power" (1980, p.72). He thus challenged a structuralist notion of power as somehow static or owned by a particular individual or group, arguing instead that power is "never localised here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or as a piece of wealth" (1980, p.98). Rather, all individuals are "always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. They are not only its inert or consenting target; they are always also the elements of its articulation" (1980, p.72).

Foucault insisted however, that these social relations of power "cannot be established consolidated, nor implemented without the production, accumulation and functioning of discourse" (1980, p.93). That is, individual and group exercising of power cannot occur without the evoking of particular discursive configurations of "truth," that shape what can and can't be said in particular situations, who is authorised to speak and who is excluded.

To identify who is being affected by particular claims to the truth, and how these claims are being enacted, Foucault argued that an "ascending" analysis of power is needed. That is, rather than starting at the centre of "regulated and legitimate forms of power" and attempting to trace how its mechanisms permeate down into the most "molecular elements of society," analysis should look at the "extremities... the ultimate destinations ... those points where (power) becomes capillary" (p.96). This much quoted image effectively encapsulates the idea of power coursing through an increasingly fine network of practices, interactions, regulations and so on, with its effects 'seeping' into people's daily lives and becoming

institutionalised as a consequence of sets of reoccurring practices. In the same ways that we are mostly unaware of metabolism processes in our own bodies, we can also be unconscious of how we are exercising power or how techniques and instruments of power are working 'on' and through us. It was partly as a way of becoming more aware of these processes and effects, that Foucault suggested that an ascending analysis could start with "infinitesimal mechanisms," trace "their history, their own trajectory, their own techniques and tactics" and after demonstrating these, see how these mechanisms of power have been "colonised ... annexed ... and altered" by ever more global forms of domination that transform, displace and extend them (p. 99). Such an approach, he argued, could illuminate how economic interests, for example, are able to "engage" with technologies of power and annex these to their own purposes.

These arguments opened up for me a way of thinking about how in my study of the co-principalships, I could investigate the working of power through the co-principals leadership practices. While on the one hand these might be resisting a set of dominant discourses about managerialism, on the other, the co-principals' arguments and practices might be open to being colonised and annexed into the building of another "hegemonic bloc," as Hennessy (1993) put it. As I will explore further in Chapter 6, the "new right revolution" in this country in the late 1980s led to the imposing of a new discursive regime, the New Zealand model of the New Public Management (Boston et al., 1996), on the public service. Since then, market managerialism has become, arguably, a truth regime across both the public and the private sector of paid employment (as it has in many other Western countries). Within these discursive regimes, the development of surveillance techniques such as performance management can be seen to be extending the power deployed by state policy makers, employers and auditors within managerialist strategies, which are themselves integrated with 'global market' industrial relations that are increasing the power and wealth of multi-national corporates. This part of Foucault's work thus provides tools for analysing how the co-principalship initiatives have been viewed and responded to within these powerful discursive contexts.

As already explained, Foucault called powerful discourses, discursive regimes of truth (1980). He argued that within sets of tactics and struggles over what counts as meaning, social organisation and practices, truth regimes are formed in ways that 'count out' marginalised groups' experiences and knowledges. He described these "subjugated knowledges" as:

blocs of historical knowledge that were present but disguised in systematising theory, disqualified as inadequate to their task, or insufficiently elaborated ... illegitimate ... beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity (of) a unitary body of theory that would filter, hierarchise and order them in the name of some true knowledge and some arbitrary idea of what constitutes a science and its objects (Foucault, 1980, pp.82, 131).

It was likely, it seemed to me, that shared leaderships would be filtered out as inadequate to their task in a discursive regime that was emphasising single line management control and accountability as the way to improve schooling. The questions this possibility

raised for my analysis was if this was occurring, how was it being enacted, and with what effects? What responses and counter strategies were being mounted? What were the effects of these?

Foucault saw his genealogical research approach as enabling analysis of these kinds of historically specific struggles over meaning and resources (struggles that are to do with achieving and holding on to control over both these dimensions), to identify who was being served by particular discourses. In his view, this approach would not set out to construct a new systematising theory, such as was done in Marxist theorising of class, or early radical feminist theorising of male domination, for example. (Such theories claimed that social inequalities could be traced to a primary cause, capitalism and patriarchy respectively.) Foucault argued that power relations are too complex, fluid and dispersed to be explained in a single cause theory, that “holds everything in place” (1980, p.145). He suggested instead using a notion of theory as a “toolkit”. By this he meant using “varying tools” (p.89) that would be consistent with a “logic” or set of arguments that power is produced and exercised within social relations of every kind. In his opinion, useful theoretical tools should be instruments that, within a focus on specific social situations, could assist the identification of particular techniques and mechanisms that connect and extend the exercise of power, integrating it into “grand” or “global strategies” (pp.142- 45).

In these ways, a ‘bottom up’ genealogical analysis could reveal the nature of shifting historical constructions of links between truth, knowledge and power, and build understandings of the co-optive power of dominant discourse. It could also, however, contribute to the building of strategic knowledges of resistances to combat the ways that dominant or elite groups can accumulate power through political power-knowledge processes. Foucault maintained that there are “no relations of power without resistances; the latter are all the more real and effective because they are formed right at the point where relations of power are being exercised” (1980, p.142). Thus a focus on identifying, analysing and understanding local instances of the exercise of power could help us to understand how resistance is exercised at those points and with what effects. Such work could contribute to the building, “little by little,” of knowledge that could itself be deployed strategically in work against oppressive exercises of power.

Foucault’s suggestions about the possibility of resistance and an approach for its analysis, formed part of his thinking about “governmentality” (Foucault, 1982; 1991). The questions he was considering in this work are highly relevant ones for this current study of co-principalship. They are questions such as, “How to govern oneself, how to be governed, how to govern others, by whom the people will accept being governed, how to become the best possible governor” (Foucault, 1991, p.87).

In exploring these, Foucault’s genealogy of government traced how there has been a shift in modern times, from the exercise of sovereign power through “the prince” with the primary aim of holding on to territory, to a much more diffuse set of interlocking techniques

of control for the efficient, productive management of “men and things,” the latter including wealth, resources, fertility, customs, habits (Foucault, 1991, p.93). He argued that in the sixteenth century, “Government did not refer only to political structures or to the management of states: rather it designated the way in which the conduct of individuals or groups might be directed ... To govern, in this sense, is to structure the possible field of actions of others” (p.221). He traced how this idea of governmentality developed in ways that related not just to juridical or police power, but also to methods of controlling a population that aimed to increase its health and happiness, as well as its productivity.

In the latter sense, governmentality can appear as benevolent, in that it employs a “pastoral power” (ibid). McNay (1994, p.120) has drawn out, however, how Foucault’s work on modern forms of governmentality identified a two way dynamic between the state as a form of centralised and centralising power, and the pastoral as a form of individualising power. While in the latter there is a link between the king, or leader, and the Christian idea of the pastor as a shepherd, who pays individual attention to each member of his flock, unifying them and looking after them, there is also a dependence between individuals and the shepherd pastor, a dependence grounded in obedience, knowledge and confession of self. As McNay pointed out, such practices are linked to the disciplinary practices already discussed. While in his early work Foucault saw disciplinary power as somewhat deterministic, as working on individuals and “objectivizing” or transforming them into objects or docile bodies, his work on governmentality examines power more explicitly as “subjectivizing” (McNay, 1994, p.122). That is, it focusses more on “the way a human being turns him - or herself - into a subject” (Foucault, 1982, p.208). The exercise of pastoral power is significant here he argued, working to make someone a “subject of someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge” (ibid, p.212).

Governmentality in modern times is thus the exercise of power both within and outside of the state, at both centralised and individualised levels. In terms of the latter, individuals can internalise regimes of truth in ways that mean they carry out surveillance on themselves, policing themselves against standards and rules of behaviour that have been normalised within dominant discourses. The ways that government has become in recent times increasingly (re)centralised in state agencies and institutions, however, will be evidenced in this current study. Surveillance techniques constructed within New Public Management discursive practices such as performance management, are tightening boundaries around professional ways of working in educational organisations, for example.

Despite this rather ominous turn of events, a significant further move made in Foucault’s theorising of governmental power needs to be drawn out. He made the point that when the exercise of power is characterised as “a mode of action upon the actions of others,” what is implied is the existence of freedom (Foucault, 1982, p. 221). That is, power understood as an action on another’s actions can only be exercised over “free individuals,” because if individuals are not free to take action in response to an exercise of power aimed to control or

direct them, then there is only slavery, or violence. In making these distinctions in different understandings of power, what is opened up is a way of understanding resistance as “freedom’s refusal to submit” (ibid). As Foucault argued, “the crucial problem of power is not that of voluntary servitude (who would choose to be a slave?) but of the recalcitrance of the will and the intransigence of freedom” (pp. 221-2).

He was not suggesting here an analysis in terms of an “essential freedom,” but rather one in terms of “reciprocal incitation and struggle; less of a face-to-face confrontation which paralyzes both sides, than a permanent provocation” (1982, p.222). Once again, to analyse these kinds of “agonistic” (combative) relationships, he advocated focussing on particular, carefully defined institutions, at points where resistance was occurring, with the aim of identifying the mechanisms, strategies and struggles that were being brought in to play. In his view, “a relationship of confrontation reaches its term (and the victory of one of the two adversaries) when stable mechanisms replace the free play of antagonistic reactions” (1982, p.225).

These ideas have offered me particularly helpful tools for my study of how the three primary school co-principalships were initiated, and either established or dis-established, during the 1990s instituting of new forms of governance and management in Aotearoa/New Zealand. I will draw on them in particular, in my final analytical chapter which examines struggles over the meanings and practices of school governance, management, and accountability.

At this point, I want to look at how feminist theorists and researchers have engaged with Foucault’s analyses.

Feminist critiques and appropriations of a Foucauldian view of power and resistance for a politics of change

The feminist poststructuralist writers I have drawn on for this thesis, have used a Foucauldian view of power as being produced in interactions between people, within shifting and fluid social networks and struggles over meanings and practices (Hekman, 1990, p.18; Jones & Guy, 1992). Davies (1989) argued that because individuals use language in practices that form the social structures in which they live, such structures can be changed. This theoretical approach, she stated, produces for feminism a way out of the impasse of seeing individuals as powerless within systemic relations of domination and subordination (emerging out of capitalism, patriarchy and ethnicity for example). Power is recognised as *variously* available within particular discursive formations (McNay, 1992). Thus, individuals can be placed within different discursive formations as sometimes powerless, sometimes powerful (Walkerdine, 1987). As Weedon put it:

Social meanings are produced within social institutions and practices in which individuals, who are shaped by these institutions, are agents of change, rather than its authors, change

which may either serve hegemonic interests or challenge existing power relations (1987, p.25).

These feminist Foucauldian accounts of discursive power relations as being exercised in complex and shifting dynamics between individuals, and between individuals and collective social interests, are useful for my analysis. They enable a focus on identifying social struggles over particular meanings of, and resources for, shared leadership in schools, while keeping in play the influence on these of wider hegemonic configurations of 'truth' and knowledge. Importantly for my interest in a feminist politics of change in the area of leadership and management, this approach could help me to analyse how the co-principalship ideas and practices were being enacted in ways that could either "serve hegemonic interests or challenge existing power relations" (Weedon, 1987, p.25).

While feminists have found Foucault's work enormously generative for their analyses, there have been criticisms of parts of his work, not the least his gender blindness (Sawicki, 1991; McNay, 1992) and what Frazer & Lacey have called his "woefully under-developed" conceptualising of resistance (1993, p.34). The latter is a fair point in relation to the limitations of Foucault's theorising of disciplinary power in his genealogical studies. When working with these analyses of power for a feminist politics of change, McNay's arguments about their tendency to slide back into bleak depictions of an increasing normalising of disciplinary practices as a "monolithic force," provide some salutary warnings (1994, p.104). McNay argued also, however, that Foucault over-estimated the repressive effectiveness of such practices because he did not pay sufficient attention to the views of those being "disciplined." This last point can be placed alongside arguments that Foucault's conceptualising (in his genealogical works) of subjectivity did not take enough account of individual's capacity to think, be critical and take action (McNay, 1992; Fraser, 1997). McNay maintained though that Foucault's later work on governmentality opens up understandings that are more useful for a feminist politics of resistance and change, particularly in the areas of thinking about agency as freedom's "intransigence of the will" and refusal to submit to the coercion of others (Foucault, 1982).

Thus, in developing her argument for a feminist politics of change, Hekman advised feminists to describe and analyse the categories of knowledge/power that oppress us so that we could "disturb, disrupt and explode" them and develop local solutions to particular regimes of repressive power (Hekman, 1990, pp.180, 182). As moral and ethical codes are historically and culturally contextual, she argued, then critique and resistance to oppressive codes must also be specific and contextual, "locally, not universally grounded" (p.182). In concert with Hekman's arguments, Fraser and Nicholson (1990) maintained that feminist studies and analyses should focus on specific people, contexts, situations and discourses and through the documenting of resistances at that level, build a "patchwork" of overlapping alliances. In this way, they argued, more global strategies of resistance could be mounted.

Not all feminists have agreed, however, that analyses must focus like this on local levels. Indeed, some have queried the efficacy of Foucault's approach for an analysis of systemic domination, such as has developed within social relations of inequality (Fraser, 1989; 1997; McNay, 1992; Hennessy, 1993). Fraser pointed out that while Foucault "did not shrink from frequent use of such terms as 'domination,' 'subjugation' and 'subjection' in describing the modern power/knowledge regime," his analysis of power as everywhere and produced in positive as well as negative ways, gave rise to some normative confusions in his work. In places, she argued, it appeared "normatively neutral" (Fraser, 1989, pp.28-33). In her view, the problem was that "Foucault tends to call too many different things power, and leaves it at that" (p.32). She argued that it did not follow, that all forms of power are "normatively equivalent" and insisted that it was essential for an ethical social theory and practice to be able to distinguish between better and worse forms of social practices (p.2). McNay also warned that "Whilst feminists must remain alert to issues of difference and specificity, it is also necessary for them to retain theoretical tools capable of analysing general structural tendencies in order to understand how difference becomes inequality" (1992, p.155).

Both Fraser and Hennessy drew on reformulations of Gramsci's concept of hegemony as one way to address this issue. I look at their arguments next.

Reformulating the concept of hegemony within a discourse approach

To address the question of how difference becomes inequality, in Hennessy's view, what was needed was the linking in empirical and theoretical work of an "analysis of struggles over meaning with an analysis of struggles over other resources, (as) modes of intelligibility (including theory) are closely tied to economic and political practices" (Hennessy, 1993, p.8). Taking up Hennessy's argument, Kenway (1995) argued for including alongside an analysis of discourse, an account of "the ways in which social groups and collective identities and socio-cultural hegemonies are formed and reformed through discourse" (1995, p.45, my emphasis). She considered that investigating and describing how these links are effected in analyses that take account of historical and material bases of particular forms of power, could help feminists not only to develop understandings of inequalities but also to develop strategies for change through a form of cultural politics that would shift and change according to varying coalescences of particular interests.

Fraser's formulation of the notion of hegemony was being drawn on here. In a later discussion of her earlier arguments, Fraser explained that:

Hegemony does not entail that the ensemble of descriptions that circulate in society comprise a monolithic or seamless web, nor that dominant groups exercise an absolute top-down control of meaning. Hegemony designates a process wherein cultural authority is negotiated and contested. It presupposes that societies contain a plurality of discourses, a plurality of

positions and perspectives from which to speak. Of course not all these have equal authority. Yet conflict and contestation are part of the story (Fraser, 1997, p.154)

There are indeed continuities between a Gramscian understanding of power as grounded in economic power and enacted through the shaping by elites of everyday commonsense, and a Foucauldian analysis of the normalising effects of regimes of truth. Fraser's formulation of hegemony as won and challenged within discursive fields of struggle is a helpful approach to thinking about these connections in a more positive way that has been done in some studies of discursive power in education. For example, Anderson and Grinberg (1998) have applied a Foucauldian view of the panopticon (as presented in *Discipline and Punish*), to an analysis of school administration theory and practice as a set of repressive disciplinary practices that normalise the exercising of power in "institutional relations that discipline our ways of thinking and acting through self-regulation" (p.334). While my study of the primary school co-principalships will provide some examples of this kind of regulatory disciplining power, Fraser's account presents a more open view of discursive power as enacted and contested within shifting "states of play" (Connell, 1987). Within the latter view, I could analyse the co-principalship initiatives as part of individual and local struggles over what should count as practices of leadership and management, while also maintaining a 'hold' on the simultaneous but uneven sedimenting into commonsense, of liberal market managerialist discursive constructions of leadership. In this approach, investigation of how gendered discourses around educational leadership are being layered into particular discursive formations, at the levels of the state, institutional and individual practices, could also be enabled. Moreover, as both Smart (1986) and Fraser (1997) have pointed out, although Gramsci's theory could not explain how a particular hegemony becomes established, using a Foucauldian analysis of power as produced within discursive struggles could assist analysis of both the emergence, and challenging of a socio-cultural hegemony.

Perhaps even more significantly for my study of the women's co-principalships, however, combining Fraser's formulation of discourse and hegemony within a feminist emphasis on a politics of change offered me helpful ways of thinking about how a field of contesting discourses and interests might open up spaces for new knowledges (Hennessy, 1993, p.xiv), despite simultaneously closing some doors to different ways of 'being' and acting. This seemed to be a potentially fruitful way in then, to analysis of the emergence of the co-principalship initiatives.

Hennessy's work also offered me some other ideas.

Contesting power through articulating discursive formations

Hennessy's approach attempted a marrying of elements of a Gramscian and a Foucauldian approach in what she called a post-marxist reading of discourse as ideology alongside of a poststructuralist understanding of subjectivity as it is "constructed out of the available knowledges in a culture as they circulate in discourse and in institutional practices" (1993, p.37). The commonsense and universal appeal of a hegemonic formation emerges as a consequence of the ways that elements from a wide range of discourses are appropriated and reshaped into a "coherent frame of intelligibility," she argued (1993, p.76). The cultural power of these processes depends on how successfully the previous ways of understanding and doing things are challenged. This is an important part of the struggle, if elements of opposing understandings and arguments are to be detached and then incorporated into a new formulation. If these processes are successful, that formulation will accrue some legitimacy by seeming to acknowledge and take on board the claims of the opposition, or counter discourses. The particular contents of a hegemonic formation "can never be determined in advance" however, as these are "specific to the forces at work in the struggle for hegemony at any historical moment" (ibid).

Hennessy's explanation of hegemony illuminates how during the rise of the 'new right'⁷¹ in education in Aotearoa/New Zealand, previous arguments from wide ranging groups (such as Māori, women, the Special Education service) that the education system was failing particular kinds of students were appropriated by the Treasury (1987). These arguments were then re-articulated by the Treasury alongside their own claims, as proof that the system needed reform. The Treasury claimed that the best way to improve equity for disadvantaged groups was to increase opportunities for individuals to choose their own forms and providers of education. The fourth Labour Government's taking up of these arguments in somewhat contradictory ways (such as in the *Tomorrow's Schools* policy for the reform of educational administration) also illustrates Foucault's arguments that "usually a discursive practice assembles a number of diverse disciplines or sciences or crosses a certain number among them and regroups many of their individual characteristics into a new and occasionally unexpected unity" (Foucault, 1977b, p.200). However, it could also be argued that contradictions such as that between opposing views of equity as meaning fair and just outcomes for previously disadvantaged groups, and equity as meaning fair opportunities for individuals to pursue their own interests unfettered by unjustifiable interventions from the state, remained unresolved

⁷¹As Strachan (1997, p.37) and others point out, "defining the 'new right' can be problematic." It has "several manifestations: economic, social, moral" (Jesson, 1988, p.1), but common themes included a return to classical liberal individualism and social contractalism, within a minimalist market state. Conservative versions of a familial private sphere have been evident also in the US and in Aotearoa/New Zealand under the previous National/New Zealand First coalition government, ironically promoted here by a woman prime minister, Jenny Shipley.

within educational policy and practice in Aotearoa/New Zealand. This meant that the new right discourse has remained open to opposition, rather than achieving a hegemonic ascendancy.⁷²

As I have been explaining, within a Foucauldian view of social power relations, as a dominant discursive formation never exists alone, but always within a field of contesting and contradicting discourses, there are always in circulation spaces for resistant ways of being and seeing the world. Hennessy thus asserted that emancipatory knowledges, practices and institutional forms are produced “through contestation among discourse and not by sheer self-assertion” (1993, p.37). That is, it is not just through an individualistic liberal assertiveness training intervention for example, that we can learn different ways of being, working and organising. Rather, new understandings are likely to be sparked through processes of critical readings of the inconsistencies within and between discourses. Fraser’s (1997, p.154) point that a hegemonic “ensemble of descriptions that circulate in society” does not weave a “seamless web” echoes Hennessy’s characterising of a hegemonic discourse as stitched together from parts of other discourses, an image that enables an understanding of how the lines of discursive suture are vulnerable. Cracks and splits may open up, and it is these spaces that can give rise to what Hennessy conceptualised as ideology critique, through allowing recognitions of states of struggle and contesting interests. As Fraser put it, “conflict and contestation are part of the story” (ibid).

As I thought about how I could approach the study of the emergence of the women’s co-principalships as within a field of conflicting discourses that might be working simultaneously for and against their initiatives, I found Hennessy’s arguments for a new form of ideology critique initially very insightful. However, in the light of a Foucauldian analysis of the ways power is exercised through social constructions of truth and knowledge, there is a weakness in her approach. Let me first of all explain her argument.

Ideology critique?

In Hennessy’s conceptualising of ideology critique, there is a clear shift away from notions of ideology as a grand narrative that can brainwash individuals into an on-going state of false consciousness. She conceptualised ideology as “no longer a monolithic determining force, but rather an articulated ensemble of contesting discourses which produce what comes to count as “the way it is” (1993, p.76). (This is close to Fraser’s definition of hegemony,

⁷² The National government that came into power in 1990 attempted a resolution through attack, for example, on the equity goals of the school charters, which had been developed in 1989. It was argued that these were part of the Labour government’s “‘Orwellian’ social agenda” (Lockwood Smith, National Education Minister, 1990, cited in Middleton, 1992, p.2) and attempts to implement forms of “social engineering.” Such “interference” was framed by the National party, as detrimental to the need for New Zealand to develop a self-reliant and skilled workforce that would enable the country to advance as an “Enterprise Nation” within a competitive global market (NZ National Party, 1990, in Middleton, *ibid*). A market view of education was accelerated under this government after 1990, but with the election in 1999, Labour was returned to government within a coalition with the Alliance party.

given earlier). Hennessy's approach to analysis and critique focused therefore on looking at meaning making practices that are constantly in flux. To reach this point, she acknowledged that within earlier Marxist uses of the concepts of ideology and hegemony, accounts of social relations are reduced to seeing all of these as being "determined only by the requirements and relations of capitalism" (p.6). Recognising the limitations of this view, she attempted a re-writing of these concepts within an analysis of the place of language in the discursive formation of subjectivity (p.37). Drawing on Foucault's understanding that something is formed in language, she argued that "(a)s the medium of social action and the mechanism through which subjects are constructed, ideology produces what can be seen, heard, spoken, thought, believed" (p.75). For her, then, ideology could be understood as a material force, not something that is somehow outside of an objective 'reality.' Rather, ideology:

helps produce and in turn is produced by the economic and political arrangements ... Understanding the practice of meaning-making as ideology implies that this activity is the effect of struggles over resources and power that are played out through the discourses of culture and the modes of reading they allow (p.14).⁷³

Thus, for Hennessy, ideology critique is "a mode of reading that recognises the contesting interests at stake in discursive constructions of the social" (p.15). She advocated that when undertaken from a feminist position, such readings are made from "a committed position within a social analytic" whose legitimacy is argued for, not just "on the grounds of its scientific Truth, but on the basis of its explanatory power and its commitment to emancipatory social change" (ibid, my emphasis). This feminist standpoint should itself be recognised as always provisional and always being redefined, she stated: it is historically situated and constructed in relation to other challenging discourses (p.138).

While I thought that these ideas could be useful for my study and its critical readings of constructions of leadership and management, I also thought that trying to disarticulate the notion of ideology from its use in common parlance as a form of misrepresentation concealing an abiding 'true' reality, (and in Marxist analysis, of its part in the development of false consciousness), was likely to be difficult to achieve without embedding into my analysis notions of a somehow false position.⁷⁴ As Foucault pointed out, "effects of truth are produced within discourses which are themselves neither true or false ... ideology is thus a notion that cannot be used without circumspection" (Foucault, 1980, p.118). He further argued that a regime of truth "is not merely ideological or superstructural," because it includes both statements and practices, and through these and the institutions where they are found, power

⁷³Hennessy explains in this way a gap in Foucault's writing about the link between discursive and non-discursive practices, an unexplained distinction in his description of the circulation of discourses "in their particular/material/institutional contexts" (p.41 referring to Foucault, 1978, pp.7-26). These two spheres are mutually imbricated, or folded into one another.

⁷⁴'Truth' is a contested concept that is used in different discourses in different ways. I am using it in this thesis in a Foucauldian sense, that is, as constructed and associated with exercises of power.

is circulated (p.133). In this way, as McNay put it, "the discursive and the material are linked in a symbiotic relationship" (1992, p.27).

Thus, while Hennessy argued for a retention of the use of the term ideology (as meaning "the array of sense-making practices which counts as 'the way things are' in any historical moment ... that helps produce and in turn is produced by the economic and political arrangements" (1993, p.14), I decided that within the approach to discourse analysis that I am engaging, this idea could be less contradictorily expressed in terms of a dominant discourse. There is no need to talk about ideology in processes of meaning making, as to some extent all discourse contains elements of what I would call truth making. It is when particular discourses become accepted into commonsense and embedded in institutionalised practices, that power inheres in their constructions of reality more than other presentations. In this sense they have won hegemonic ascendancy, have become a hegemonic discourse. I have chosen therefore, to use these terms, or dominant discourse, normalising discourse, to mean sets of statements, representations and practices that have won widespread acceptance as encapsulating 'the way things are.'

I did find helpful, however, Hennessy's suggestions about the ways that language practices contribute to the perpetuating of particular dominant versions of, and social arrangements in the world. Combining elements of Gramscian and Foucauldian conceptualising, she argued that hegemony, as "the domination of the dominant form of discourse" (p.77), is established through contested and negotiated processes of discursive articulation. Elements of varying discourses in circulation are sifted to find ones that can be drawn into "a coherent frame of intelligibility," reconfiguring them into the prevailing regimes of truth (p.76). This is a process of disarticulating discursive elements from one frame of argument and rearticulating them in another, to constitute an "ensemble of contents" that is particular to the interests involved in the struggle for hegemony in any historical moment (Gramsci, 1971, p.333).

Hennessy (pp.77-8) further drew on Pecheux's (1975) arguments to explain that the connection between language practices and the perpetuating of particular dominant social arrangements is not always recognised. The language constructing and "repairing" processes that maintain commonsense understandings of reality are not seen for what they are, but taken for granted as unproblematic linguistic practices. Pecheux argued however, that within a discursive field (the interdiscourse), there exists *preconstructed discourse*, the "always already there" that conveys the sense of "what everyone knows." He expanded the notion of articulation to mean not only the way that a dominant discourse is formed, but also the means by which the subject is constituted within it. This occurs through linkages that are spoken within discourse, intradiscourse, and between discourses, transverse discourse, that links parts to a whole, cause to effect. Let me illustrate my understanding of these ideas.

In *preconstructed discourse*, the 'what we all know' about 'how things are,' so-called simple phrases maintain traditional oppositional (and hierarchically ordered) meanings as base

patterns of understandings. For example, in a preconstructed discursive statement such as, 'boys will be boys,' the subject position of boy is constructed 'as we all know' - as adventurous, rebellious, or whatever the current meaning of masculinity is. Although it is unspoken, underpinning this statement is a base pattern of meanings about sex/gender differences, an eternal opposition between boys as a group, and girls as a group. Although girls are not mentioned, the inferred statement is boys will be boys, as opposed to how girls are. There is also a discursive hierarchical ordering of gender at work here: a normalising of 'boyiness' occurs through the silencing of 'girliness.' Girls are 'othered' in this opposition that seems not to be one. This preconstructed 'what we know' about gender can be illustrated more clearly perhaps in a different phrase, (one not heard so much now since feminist challenges of such statements). In 'she's such a little tomboy,' girls' behaviour is more obviously measured against boys and a threaded-on (unspoken) set of meanings question the girl's behaviour as inappropriate. What is implied is that she should be more feminine, that is, not masculine (in the form of an adventurous, assertive, active Tom/boy). The hierarchical valuing and approving of masculinity over femininity, and boys over girls is more obvious in this statement. (It could also be seen to reflect a heterosexual discourse; that is, girls and boys are a 'natural' opposition - and pairing.)

My examples also illustrate what Pecheux called the *transverse* in discourse, which establishes the relation of the part to the whole, cause to effect. In my example, girls are compared to boys who are implicitly positioned as the norm, the 'whole.' And by being 'such a little tomboy,' a cause (inappropriate gendered behaviour) is implied for consequences for this girl that can only be imagined (but which we all 'know,' could include withdrawal of approval, resistance from those who would see her as 'pushy' or 'stroppy,' or she might get 'left on the shelf' - who would want to marry such an unfeminine girl?) As another example of the transverse in discourse, in Chapter 7 I discuss historical discourses that have marginalised women in leadership and I look at how Maslow's masculinist discourse constructed women's nature as part of man's. He argued that, after having her family, a woman could advance "beyond femaleness to the full humanness she shares with males; for example the full development of her intelligence, of any talents she may have, and of her own idiosyncratic genius" (Maslow, 1970, p.xiv).

Finally, the *intradiscourse* is the language practice that "crosses and links together preconstructed discursive elements. It appears as intradiscursive reminders, "as I have said", that provide subjective coherence and universalizing gestures - "as everyone knows," or "as anyone can see" (Hennessy, 1993, p.78). In my examples, these reminders are unspoken, but evident in the ways I have suggested.

Hennessy summed the value of these concepts for feminist analysis as follows.

As the discursive space where the 'always already there' secures a hierarchical social arrangement through an 'obvious' set of oppositions, the preconstructed serves as an anchor in the symbolic order for the articulation of subjectivities across race, class, gender and other salient differences ... (A)s such, the preconstructed constitutes one mechanism by which

hegemony operates across social formations ... (and) is a powerful site for critical intervention (1993, p.78).

There are continuities between these ideas and Foucault's (1980, p.82) argument that within dominant versions of systematising theory, subjugated knowledges have been historically present, but discounted as irrelevant, disqualified as illegitimate or insufficiently elaborated, and consequently, confined to the margins. He maintained that these knowledges are not just commonsense, but local, specific knowledges that are "in some fashion allowed to fall into disuse whenever they are not effectively and explicitly maintained in themselves" (ibid). Feminist and Māori knowledges have been like this, "confined to the margins" and both feminists and Māori have engaged in what Foucault called genealogical researches that are "a painstaking rediscovery of struggles together with the rude memory of their conflicts" (ibid).⁷⁵ Struggles also occur within marginalised groups, of course, over what will count as their 'new' authoritative account, as the case narratives of the co-principalship initiatives will show.

There is one more feminist poststructuralist concept I need to explain at this point, before I introduce Fraser's (1997) pragmatic approach to discourse theory, and that is the notion of subjectivity.

Subjectivity

As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, the theorising of discourse as a structuring force in society has informed feminist poststructuralist conceptualising of the ways individuals constitute their subjectivity, (sense of who they are) within varying constraining possibilities. Rather than understanding identity as being fixed for life, as previous humanist notions of a core self suggest, a feminist poststructuralist approach argues that a person's subjectivity shifts and changes as she encounters new discourses, has new experiences, and takes up different ways of being (Davies, 1989; 1993). Subjectivity is thus theorised as multiple and fragmented within a particular moment, and understood as marked at times by conflict and contradiction as an individual negotiates the differing positions available to her (Court, 1995). For this thesis' exploration of why and how the women's co-principalships were initiated and practised, a useful insight of feminist poststructuralists is that it is "the range and social power of existing discourses, our access to them and the political strength of the interests they represent" that shape our lives and practices (Weedon, 1987, p.26). This point will be drawn

⁷⁵ Jill Blackmore has employed this approach in her most recent analyses of the shifting ways in which women's varying knowledges and aspirations within the field of educational leadership have been silenced within and by shifting masculinist versions of a leadership that have become regimes of truth in education (Blackmore, 1999; see also her earlier articles, 1989; 1993; 1995). Hine Waitere-Ang (1999) presented Māori primary educators' views of their experiences and knowledge bases within a tracing of a Māori cosmology that has been confined to the margins of 'legitimate' knowledge about educational leadership.

on for exploring how the women thought about and worked on their differing and on-going constructions of a 'new' subject position a primary school co-principal.

While Foucault's earlier work argued that discourse constitutes subjectivity in the sense of determining possibilities for different subject positions, Weedon's (1987) Davies' (1989; 1993) and Hennessy's (1993) conceptualising of an individual's subjectivity, has placed more emphasis on possibilities for agency. I have discussed at some length McNay's (1994) defence of Foucault's later suggestions within his work on governmentality, that the individual has capacities of autonomy and agency. Despite these points, however, "the vexing question of 'agency' has remained a key theoretical debate among feminist appropriations and constructions of poststructuralist theory" (Armstrong, 1997, p.43).

In recent discussions about the possibility for individuals to both recognise and consciously choose a discursively constructed subject position for themselves, Jones (1997) and Davies (1997) have disagreed. Jones contended that individuals can not do this as the subject is the "discursive practices which produce it" (1997, p.263). She argued that taking the view that the subject is formed in discourse/language seems to throw us "back into determinism; everything is determined - not by social structures this time, but by language" (p.263). Jones seemed to be downplaying here, an analysis of the place of social practices in the formation of discourse, and reverting to an earlier Foucauldian analysis in his archeological studies of discourse as determining subject positions and hence subjectivity.

In her work, however, Davies worked from Foucault's later emphasis on the ways that individuals use language in practices that form the social structures in which they live, to argue that:

it is in the constitutive force of discourse that agency lies ... The fundamental difference between structuralism and post-structuralism, is the room for movement that the reflexively aware subject has once the constitutive power of discourses is made visible (Davies, 1997, p.272 - 276).

That is, discourses construct different ways of viewing and being in the world, and although an individual may not always be consciously aware of the ways that her subjectivity is being shaped by these different discourses, through the conflict between discourses she can become alerted to the "possibility of new ways of thinking and new forms of subjectivity" (Weedon, 1987, p.39). Weedon argued,

Although the subject in poststructuralism is socially constructed in discursive practices, she none the less exists as a thinking, feeling subject and social agent, capable of resistance and innovations produced out of the clash between contradictory subject positions and practices (1987, p.125).

Building on these points, Davies maintained that within a poststructuralist approach, a subject can develop understandings of their own subjectivity as being not fixed, but "in process;" engage in reflexive readings of "the texts of their selving;" recognise the constitutive power of discourse to construct particular and contradictory ways of being and consequently "play with the possibilities that have been made observable through poststructuralist analysis"

(1997, p.274). These arguments maintain therefore, that while they may not be totally free agents, people can be “active players” in constituting their own ways of being within the range of discourses that are available to them (MacNaughton, 2000). It is useful to consider these arguments in relation to Foucault’s discussion of power defined as “a mode of action on the actions of others” (Foucault, 1982, p.221). In analyses of social struggle, what must be included is the element of freedom, he argued, as power is “exercised only ever over free subjects and only insofar as they are free.” He elaborated that, “By this we mean individual or collective subjects who are faced with a field of possibilities in which several ways of behaving, several reactions and diverse comportments may be realised” (ibid).

These discussions raise interesting questions for my exploration of the primary school co-principalships. They suggest questions for an analysis of the making of a new subject position of co-principal and practices of primary school shared leadership, and of the multiple ways in which individuals may have been influenced and shaped by these discursive possibilities, while simultaneously acting on them in return. Did these processes occur as a consciously resistant practice, against a dominant set of understandings of singular and hierarchical managerial leadership? If so, where did the idea ‘come from’? Out of a critical set of reflections on existent discourses, or within these discourses, in the sense that it was ‘already always there’? An argument that to be *constituted* by discourse is to be *determined* by discourse, would seem to suggest that the women had no individual agency in constituting themselves as co-principals; that is, no agency in the sense of a free will choice from a range of possibilities, or in the sense of ‘thinking up the idea from nowhere.’ Rather, the possibilities were already there within existing discourses, and the resultant co-principal ‘subject’ is the “discursive practices which produce it” (Jones, 1997, p.13). If this is so, what were the discursive influences that have ‘made’ the co-principalships? Could these be identified and traced in the language of individuals and/or texts? On the other hand, if, as Davies suggested, there is an (albeit complex, shifting and contradictory) two-way dynamic that occurs between critically reflexive subjects and the discursive context within which they act, can any impact or shaping of the discursive contexts by individuals be detected? In other words, within each co-principalship initiative, can any shifts be identified in the expression/representation of a dominant or a resistant discourse?

In these ways a structure/agency debate persists within a poststructuralist enquiry and its questions underpin the other questions that I have been asking in this research. The shadow of the debate can be traced in the question asked by one of the women at the beginning of the study of her co-principalship, when she said, “What I want to know is, is it the people or the model that is most important?” The questions it engages have underpinned the way I carried out the research, beginning in the field and looking, watching and listening to the ‘doers’ of these practices of shared leadership, but going backwards and forwards through other texts, looking, in Elbaz’s words, “at the praxis of a given community or cultural group through the various forms of discourse which make up the social text of that group” (Elbaz, 1990p.15).

The debate is embedded in the ways the thesis explores whether, during the mid 1990s in Aotearoa/New Zealand, within a particular network of power and discourse, there can be identified “junctures where discourse is renewed” and where agency can be found, in “resignification, redeployment, subversive citation from within, and interruption and inadvertent convergences with other such networks” (Butler, 1995, p. 135).

Ethical considerations: intersubjectivity and social inequality

A further area of significance for this thesis is the questions raised by feminist analyses of Foucault's later work, in which he re-considered his earlier ideas about discipline, power and freedom in the light of some revised notions of the self. In work such as *The use of pleasure* (Foucault, 1987) and *The ethics of a care for the self as a practice of freedom* (Foucault, 1988), Foucault argued that working on and transforming the self as a work of art was a possibility for individual resistance to the “subjectivising” forces of governmentality. It could be a practice of freedom that could bring one personal aesthetic pleasure, while also involving caring for oneself as an ethical practice.

This work has been criticised by feminists however, because it is, once again, gender blind. Foucault built his arguments on analysis of the interactions of a few Greek elite males, and in McNay's opinion, their possibilities for a separate, independent and autonomous exploration of the self have never been the case for women (McNay, 1992, p.169). Further, Foucault's assuming of a “disengaged, unencumbered” self, and “an isolated process of self-stylisation” as the basis for an ethical existence of individual freedom, obscured the place and significance of social interactions in the formation of subjectivity (ibid). Grimshaw (1993, pp.65-6, following Eggleton) agreed, stating that Foucault paid lip service only to the idea of the self as social, concerning himself only with the self in relation to the body and physical sensations and avoiding considerations of emotionality, intimacy and possibilities of mutual compassion. She wrote that his conceptualising gave “no sense whatever ... that there might be a morality ... which aims towards mutuality and collectivity as crucial organising principles for the conduct of individual lives” (p.68). The issues for feminists are not just ones of care for the self, she argued, but of how to develop “practices of freedom” that can achieve the goals of equality and justice for all groups, while still enabling “forms of autonomy and individuality and care for self without which ideals of commonality and mutuality can sometimes be as coercive and constraining as those forms of individuality they have wished to replace” (Grimshaw, 1993, p.69).

While feminist poststructuralists have brought into their analyses of subjectivity consideration of the interplay between bodies, emotions and minds through which one's sense of self is constructed in on-going interaction with others, as I have earlier shown, those of a more materialist persuasion have argued that these analyses must be placed within wider considerations of socio-cultural hegemonies that maintain systemic inequalities. McNay

concluded that Foucault's ethics of the self cannot translate into a politics of difference and associated work for deep seated social change (1992, p.162). Fraser (1989; 1997) further argued, from her criticism of the ambiguities in Foucault's work around how we might form normative judgements about ethical uses and abuses of power, that such considerations need to be included in explorations of how collective identities are formed and practised within wider social relations of inequality.

A pragmatic approach to discourse theory

In thinking about the strengths and limitations of a Foucauldian analysis, I have taken up Fraser's arguments that such a pragmatic (as opposed to structuralist) approach to discourse could aid feminist analyses of the junctures between discourse, power, agency and social relations of inequality (Fraser, 1997, pp.152-4).⁷⁶ Fraser pointed out that studying discourses as not only historically specific and changing social practices of communication through which individuals interact, but also as "set within social institutions and action contexts," enables links to be made between the study of language and the study of society (1997, p.160). She argued that an emphasis on the historicity of plural and shifting discourses and on an understanding of signification as action and agency enables the "thematising of change" in ways that are advantageous for feminism.

Firstly, through a poststructuralist understanding of social identities as formed in discourse in complex, shifting and fragmented ways, previously static, single-variable, essentialist views of identity could be avoided. We also could see people as "socially situated agents" who "do things with words" (p.152).

Secondly, group formation could be understood as occurring through struggles over discourse, when people's understandings of who they 'are' shift, in relation to current discourses, other people and in relation to previous strands of identity that may have been submerged in their current sense of who they are. These submerged understandings can reappear in such struggles Fraser argued, "as the nub of new self-definitions and affiliations with others."

Thirdly, the closely related issue of socio-cultural hegemony could be understood through the concept of discourse. She argued that "hegemony is Gramsci's term for the discursive face of power" to establish the 'common sense' of society, "includ(ing) the power to establish authoritative definitions of social situations and social needs ... to define the universe of legitimate disagreement ... to shape the political agenda"(p.153). Hegemony thus "expresses the advantaged position of dominant social groups with respect to discourse." These understandings, she argued, "allow us to recast the issues of social identity and social

⁷⁶ She links this approach to the work of Bakhtin, Foucault, Gramsci, Bourdieu, Kristeva, Irigaray.

groups in the light of social inequality” such as stratification along complex and intersecting ‘lines’ of gender, ethnicity, class, sexuality.

Fourthly, hegemony is not a monolithic, seamless, top-down control, but rather a contested set of discursive struggles over meaning and “processes wherein cultural power is negotiated and contested” (p.154). Thus, by combining the concepts of discourse and hegemony, we could analyse the processes by which the “sociocultural hegemony of dominant groups is achieved and contested” and enable analyses that move beyond a top down domination towards understandings of how women participate in social and cultural change (ibid).

While I take this four pronged approach in my analytical chapters (Chapters 11, 12, 13 and 14), I acknowledge that there are some tensions in my arguments. In making the decision to retain the concepts of hegemony (and hegemonic masculinity) within my feminist poststructuralist toolkit, it could be argued that I have written back in links to Marxist theorising that I problematised elsewhere in this chapter in relation to a truth/ideology dichotomy. Danaher, Schirato and Webb (2000) maintain, for example, that Gramsci’s formulation of hegemony implies that this is achieved through a form of brainwashing of the subordinate and that this means that domination can only be understood as functioning at the level of mental states. Thus, if the subordinate are enabled to see the ‘true’ situation, then they will be free to act in their own interests. They argue that Gramsci’s conceptualising is flawed by opposing it with the view of Foucault that there is no truth to be discovered but only constructions of truth. I do not accept, however, this reading of hegemony as being established merely through cognitive processes. In this thesis I use the concept of hegemony argued for by Fraser, to refer to the configuration of ideas and practices that, while made authoritative as a consequence of “the advantaged position of dominant social groups with respect to discourse,” is open always to contest and challenge within social relations of struggle (Fraser, 1997, p.153).

The tensions in my arguments and seeming inconsistencies in my theoretical toolkit might be considered to limit my theoretical approach by making it ‘impure.’ Tensions such as this are not that surprising within a poststructuralist approach that is premised on an understanding that multiple discursive constructions and experiences of the world constitute our shifting understandings of social ‘realities.’ Further, the value of any theory or concept must be judged on how useful it is for illuminating the particular forms of social reality that are being problematised. I consider that the tensions between some of the concepts I have retained and re-articulated, are fruitful ones, enabling the unpicking (among other things) of the paradox that is at the heart of this study: that is, the emergence of co-principalships as an innovative way of being educational teacher/leaders in Aotearoa/New Zealand, despite the subject position of a co-principal being outside of the ‘normal’ and legal constitution of the principal as the head of a school, and despite the new managerialist discourse that seemed to be gaining ascendancy as a regime of truth in the early 1990s. I use this combination of

theoretical tools to analyse what kinds of contesting interests are layered into and around the women's initiatives and to look at whether and in what ways specific local social arrangements have challenged and been 'fitted into' larger systemic conjunctions. The study explores how these processes might be simultaneously enabling and exploitative for these women and what might be the implications, for these women and their leadership model, for other women (and men), and for the wider theorising of educational leadership. Following Foucault, I have approached this study within "a *logic* of the specificity of power relations and the struggles around them", in a step by step investigation that includes "reflection (which will necessarily be historical in some of its aspects) on given situation(s)" (Foucault, 1980, p.145).

Because I was particularly interested in exploring how varying and shifting power relations might impact differently on different co-principalship initiatives over time, I designed a study that focused on the three primary schools where, within a year of each other, women teachers initiated and established shared leaderships. I explain my research methods in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH PROCESSES

Introduction

The ‘messiness’ and serendipitous events that can occur during longitudinal qualitative studies are not always discussed in reports of a study’s research methods. These factors impacted on my research, however, in ways that became quite important for this thesis. The original design for the research included discourse analysis of both policy and academic texts and of qualitative, longitudinal case studies of three schools. Although these methods were used throughout the six year evolution of my study, I became engaged in debates about theoretical and methodological approaches and issues, and events unfolded that caused me to modify some of my earlier ideas and intentions. Consequently, I changed ‘tack’ while designing the research approach, carrying out the field work, reviewing literature, analysing policy and writing up and analysing the case narratives. Such shifts occurring within research are not unusual. Indeed, because qualitative fieldwork involves the researcher in interactions with people as they go about their daily lives (Patton, 1990), researcher flexibility and ability to redesign when unexpected events occur, or new understandings emerge, are judged as both necessary and appropriate (Hammond, 1964). To capture a sense of the significance of these shifts within my lived research processes, in this chapter I weave my discussions of methodological issues in feminist research epistemology, the use of narrative in research and discourse analysis, into my descriptions of the methods and procedures I used throughout the study.

I have already explained part of my own research and intellectual journey towards the key questions that are this study’s focus. Before I take up this account again at the point of designing the proposal, I will explain how I see this study in relation to feminist research.

Feminist research

Feminist approaches to research have developed within wide ranging debates around such questions as: who is feminist research being carried out for? what does it hope to achieve? what assumptions are underpinning its development? A fundamental question, ‘what is feminist research?’ led to the development of a range of typologies during the 1980s (Mies, 1983; Oakley, 1981; Roberts, 1981; Stanley & Wise, 1983) and feminists in Aotearoa/New Zealand engaged with these discussions. Shipley, for example, maintained in her study of women’s employment and unemployment, that:

various sociological research methods are neither inherently feminist, nor on the other hand, sexist. The statistical survey is no more a masculine research method than the in-depth case study is a feminine one, although there may be good historical reasons why feminists find the latter more productive sociologically. Feminism informs the research process from start to finish, but it does not constitute the sociological approach (Shipley, 1982, p.11).

Early feminist critiques of sexism in research still saw research methods as objective, not being susceptible to bias or influence. Kelly (1978), for example, argued that feminism could only influence the first stages of choosing a topic and the last stage of interpreting the results. However, in a now classic paper, it was pointed out that there needed to be a “recognition that personal involvement is more than dangerous bias - it is the condition under which people come to know each other and to admit others into their lives” (Oakley, 1981, p.78). Ann Oakley called for “a reflexive sociology in which the sociologist takes her own experiences seriously and incorporates them into her work” (ibid). My own earlier studies of women educational leaders were shaped by this point and assumptions about feminist research such as those outlined by Smith and Nobel-Spruell (1986). I saw the open presence of the researcher as intrinsic to the research process, where the researcher/researched relationship should be non-exploitative and emphasise collaboration, co-operation and respect and I understood feminist research as being primarily for women, being based in the premise of male oppression of women that it was committed to changing. As Lather later put it,

Through the questions that it poses and the absences it locates, feminism argues the centrality of gender in the shaping of our consciousness, skills and institutions, as well as in the distribution of power and privilege. The overt ideological goal of feminist research in the human sciences is to correct both the *invisibility* and *distortion* of female experience in ways relevant to ending women's unequal social position (Lather, 1991, p.71).

The political aim of emancipation for women was pre-eminent in both of my previous studies which explored how gender inequalities were being experienced and transformed by women in educational leadership (Court, 1989; 1994c). I hoped that change would be assisted through raising awareness about the dynamics of male hegemony, and, through making the women's stories visible, I hoped to empower both them and other women. In both studies, I took an “openly ideological” stance (Lather, 1991) naming myself as a feminist researcher with those political aims.

Studies such as these emerged out of a feminist standpoint epistemology: that is, they argued for the development of knowledge derived from a committed feminist exploration of women's experience of exploitation. From the point of view of a ‘feminist standpoint’ theorist:

knowledge emerges for the oppressed only through the struggles they wage against their oppressors. It is through feminist struggles against male domination that women's experience can be made to yield up a truer (or less false) image of social reality than that available only from the perspective of the social experience of men of the ruling classes and races... To achieve a feminist standpoint one must engage in the intellectual and political struggle to see nature and social life from the point of view ... which produces women's social experiences instead of from the partial and perverse perspective available from the ‘ruling gender’ perspective of men (Harding, 1987, p.185).

Since the time that these approaches were developed however, there has been a growing awareness of difficulties around achieving such aims. Poststructuralist critiques of enlightenment versions of ‘the truth’ have fed into what Lather described as “unsettlement and contestation (that) permeate discussions of what it means to do educational inquiry” (1991, p.2). Such unsettlement has occurred across the social science disciplines. The effect within feminism has been that “many of the certainties of feminist research practice have been dislodged” (Gibson-Graham, 1994, p.206). As explained in Chapter 3, contestations around women’s diverse realities and experiences, and complex intersections of power dynamics constructed along the ‘lines’ of ethnicity, sexuality and class, have challenged attempts to describe ‘women’s experience.’ Such an aim is now recognised as assuming a commonality among women and a “female experience” that was “never as knowable, as universal and as stable as we presume it to be” (Fuss, 1989, p.114). Indeed, “feminist social analysts find themselves confronting an ironic impasse as what have been seen as the unifying objects of our research dissolve before our eyes” (Gibson-Graham, 1994, p.206).⁷⁷

An emphasis on developing understandings about women’s diverse and often contradictory experiences of power and powerlessness has evolved within feminist research alongside an emphasis on the importance of personal reflexivity on the part of the researcher. For example, in education, Ellsworth’s article about her experiences while developing an anti-racist programme in a feminist classroom, critiqued critical theory for its blindness to its own investments in forms of power. She applied this critique to her own practices, explaining how, as a white feminist teacher and researcher, she needed to “unlearn” her own privileges and to change her “own relation to and investments in currently oppressive power relations,” in this case race relations (Ellsworth, 1989).⁷⁸ Gosetti and Rusch (1995) developed a similar critique of white masculinist ethnocentric educational administration theory and practice; they described how this critique led them also into reflections on their own embedding in these culturally inflected power relations. Incorporating personal and theoretical reflexivity has remained an important part of feminist research since early admonitions of the value of making this explicit as part of a challenge to so-called ‘objective’ and distanced research (Jones, 1992; Oakley, 1981; Reinharz, 1992). This current study recognises that personal experience cannot be treated as a form of unproblematised knowledge (Weedon, 1987, p.125). Within feminist poststructuralism, the focus is instead on *contextualising* experience to analyse how it is constituted within particular networks of social and discursive power relations.

In 1992, Reinharz compiled a description of the then main themes of feminist research, which she identified as a perspective, rather than a research method, that “amoeba-like,” reached into all disciplines and used all methods. This description remains valid, as does

⁷⁷ As Frazer and Lacey have pointed out, however, while the category ‘woman’ has no simple or unitary content, neither does any other category in social theory (Frazer & Lacey, 1993, p.11).

⁷⁸ For a discussion of the debate that this paper provoked see Lather (1991, pp.43-49).

Reinharz's view that the aim of feminist research is to transform gender relations through strategies such as criticisms of non-feminist research and the use of feminist theory to guide analysis and recommendations. Alongside this political purpose, there remains also a concern to develop reciprocal relationships with research participants and a special relation with the reader. Sometimes the latter is evident in a "forging connections" dialogue approach, or an engaging of the reader in analysis of the research material (pp.240-269). In this current study of the co-principalships I have attempted to do the latter through my use of a *storying* approach to reporting the case studies. (I explain this later.)

Reinharz also identified a focus on women as an important part of feminist research. Although women are the central protagonists in my study of the co-principalships, this research goes beyond investigating only women's views and practices. In each of the schools I studied, men were the initial chairpersons of the boards that appointed the co-principals. I was interested to explore their attitudes (and those of other men) towards the women co-principals and vice-versa, and how their relationships were worked out in practice, to see whether any changes could be identified in terms of what has been found in earlier feminist studies of male dominated leadership in schools.

My original research proposal and rationale stated that:

The discursive field of teamwork and team management includes a range of competing discourses, including gendered discourses, which may be opening up opportunities for counter hegemonic work, as well as the possibility of co-option and capture by dominant groups ... One of the aims of the research is to explore further how gender is implicated in discursive constructions of educational leadership in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

While my interest in exploring gendered constructions and negotiations of leadership within a field of competing discourses has remained as a significant thread of analysis in this thesis, my thinking about the nature of power and the centrality of emancipation as an aim of feminist research changed during the course of the study. I will return later therefore, to the question of whether this research can be described as feminist in terms of a feminist politics of change. Meanwhile though, to explain how the research evolved, I need to go back to mid 1994, when I developed a proposal for this doctoral study.

Designing the study

My original research proposal was for a study of team leadership in three secondary schools. I planned to investigate and compare the characteristics of and relationships within a 'traditional' senior management team (of a principal, a deputy and an assistant principal), a 'flatter' co-principal model, and a feminist team leadership model, such as described by Sewell, at Green Bay High (Sewell, 1989). I wanted to look at how these team approaches were being enacted during the mid 1990s within the prevailing neo-liberal market managerial approach to education. The research was designed to begin with a discourse analysis of earlier

and current educational policy texts and academic literature to identify the nature of shifting discursive constructions of educational leadership in this country. This was to be followed with case studies of the three schools, using ethnographic methods to generate stories and reflections about the team leadership for analysis in relation to the discourses previously identified and discussed. Although the focus on team management in secondary schools shifted to a study of co-principalships in primary schools, and the order of the discourse analysis and case study phases of the research reversed (shifts that I will explain soon), both those research methods have been retained.

As in my previous studies, I consider case study is an appropriate method for exploring and describing the views and experiences of participants in specific initiatives, especially when the researcher does not need to control events and when ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions are a focus of the study (Yin, 1989). In case study, research material for analysis is commonly generated through qualitative methods, primarily interview, but also observation on the site and analysis of documentation (Anderson, 1990). Although some of the findings and analysis may be generalisable to other cases of the same type, the aim is not to generate ‘hard facts’ that are value-free and scientific as required under traditional positivist methods (Stenhouse, 1981). In seeking to find out “what is going on here?” (Bouma, 1996, p.89) the purpose is to illuminate particular features and characteristics of the phenomena under study to understand “its activity within important circumstances” (Stake, 1995, p.xi).

Stake (1995) has identified three kinds of case study: intrinsic (focussing on understanding the unique aspects of a particular case); instrumental (focussing on examining a case to build understandings of things external to it); and collective (including more than one case and comparing particular aspects to develop understandings about the phenomenon). My research included aspects of all of these three types of case study.

As I have indicated, my original focus on secondary schools changed to an investigation of primary school co-principalships. For this study, I wanted firstly, to capture the unique qualities of each of the three co-principalships and so I needed to describe what was happening in each of the three schools. I therefore interviewed in each school not only the co-principals, but also the board chairpersons and members, other teachers and support staff, teacher trainees (in 2 schools), and in Hillcrest Avenue School, parents and some students. I visited the schools at three monthly (or so) intervals for periods of between two and five years (and kept in touch with the women co-principals in each until the completion of the study). During the focused field work I observed classes and meetings, such as some board meetings, staff meetings, meetings with parents and special events such as a shift off campus during re-building, a parent/staff barbecue, a special assembly. I studied each school’s documents, including meeting minutes, school charters, strategic plans, curriculum and teaching plans, school reviews, newsletters and correspondence. All of this material was drawn on in my writing up of the case study narratives that are presented in Chapters 8, 9 and 10 in Part II.

Secondly, to enable a wider examination of how each school's approaches and work could be explained in relation to the 'external' system and political issues and requirements, I went outside of the schools. I interviewed people in the educational agencies, (the Ministry of Education, State Services Commission, School Trustees Association), the primary teachers' union (New Zealand Educational Institute) and the Principals' Federation, and I analysed educational policies, legislation, reports (such as ERO reports) and academic literature. This interview material was used to supplement that gathered from the schools and was included in appropriate places in the case narratives. My analysis of policy, legislation and academic literature formed the base for the discussions presented in Chapter 6 in Part II.

Thirdly, to be able to draw out differences and similarities in practices, values and beliefs, and to trace the varying "capillary" working of power (Foucault, 1980) in each site, I wanted to carry out a comparative study. This is not just in the sense of comparing school with school, but also comparing school/state, school/agencies and school/community interactions. This level of analysis informed my selection of material for the case narratives in Part II, and is explicitly presented in Part III.

I turn now to explaining how my original research focus on exploring examples of secondary school team leadership was changed, as a consequence of a series of serendipitous events, to studying three women's primary school co-principalships.

Serendipity one:

Finding the Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship and modifying the design

After gaining approval for the doctorate proposal, I began thinking about how I could find participants for the study I had planned. I knew about the Selwyn College co-principalship and was about to contact them when a colleague told me that a co-principalship had been initiated in a small three teacher primary school. I was attracted to the idea of focussing on just these two initiatives in shared leadership. It seemed to me that this kind of study could not only generate insights into an alternative to hierarchical school leadership, but also into the nature of different techniques of power that emerge when previous ways of doing things are challenged.

As I thought about what such a change in my research design could mean for my doctoral study, I worried that focussing on a primary and a secondary school could introduce complexities of sector differences that might pose problems for comparison of the shared leadership dynamics. Further differences were that the secondary school had a mixed gender team, while the primary team were all women and the secondary team was functioning within a senior management group of six people, in a very large school, while the primary team was a completely flat model, where all three teachers in a very small school were the co-principals. These differences could also, of course, enrich the study. While I was puzzling over this dilemma, I presented an address about women's leadership and job share experiences at a

principals' conference, during which I mentioned the co-principalships. Jane Gilmore and Liz Nicholson, the two women who had initiated the primary school co-principalship were in the audience. (All the names of schools and participants are pseudonyms). They introduced themselves to me at the end of the session and told me about their shared leadership at Hillcrest Avenue School. I was intrigued by their account and took the opportunity of asking whether they would be interested in participating in my research. They were both interested, but said they would have to consult with the third teacher involved, Karen Lane. When Karen phoned me the following week to tell me that all three of them wanted to become involved, I was delighted. I was invited to meet with them at their teacher-only development days in September 1994, to explain the study further and to observe, if I wished, their discussion of their school review survey and their planning for 1995.

I accepted this invitation gladly and began modifying my proposal and developing information sheets for the co-principals, their board of trustees and parents and participant consent forms (examples of the final material used are given in Appendix 1), which were submitted to the Massey University Ethics Committee for approval. I attended the two day workshop the women had organised for themselves and talked with them about what the research would entail. We agreed together, that if the ethics of the research was approved, I would visit the school over one year (this period was later extended to three years, and I kept in touch with the co-principals until 2000). The co-principals felt comfortable about me observing (after having been given permission) some classes and relevant meetings and were willing for me to interview and talk with them, both singly and in group discussions, at about three monthly intervals. We discussed the possibility of me carrying out single interviews with teacher trainees in the school, support staff, board members, parents and some children. We agreed that the board would be fully informed and asked for permission before this research began. Given this permission, and Massey University ethics clearance, they were happy about making school documents available to me for reading and photocopying if I wanted. We also talked at some length about ethical issues such as protecting confidentiality, the participants' right to withdraw and to read the transcripts and alter any material in them. I will discuss these issues and explain the ethical procedures of the study in more detail soon.

The women were very interested in all aspects of the research and Liz was particularly interested in the question of what makes collaborative leadership work, the people or the model. I promised I would give her feedback if I found out. I also explained to them that as well as wanting to understand their model, I wanted to look at the possibility of tensions within a team approach, of struggles over power, for example. Liz, Jane and Karen were intrigued and amused by this. When she was introducing me later to one of the parents, Jane said that I was going to dig for power struggles between them, and laughed.

I stayed on during the co-principals' two day 'vision workshop' (which they had organised for themselves around Senge's (1993) suggestions), observing their interactions and planning for the coming year. After Ethics Committee approval was given for the study in

November, 1994, I sent the women further information about the research and a formal request to the board of trustees for permission to carry out the research (Appendix 1). Soon after this approval for the study was given by the Hillcrest Avenue School board. Jane told me that one board member had commented during their discussion of the research proposal that their school was a go-ahead place, and this study would be good for its profile. She corrected his perception that the school would be named and the co-principalship publicised through the study.

Serendipity two:

Finding two more co-principalships and refining the design

Before I could contact Selwyn College to invite their participation in my doctoral study, I was told about women in two more primary schools who were developing co-principalship proposals. I was thrilled to hear this. A study of three primary schools would resolve my nagging worries about the difficulties posed by working across the primary and secondary school sectors. Studying three primary schools would be a more manageable project and allow for more focus. I wasted no time in contacting Brigid Kirkwood and Carrie Perkins at St Mary's School, and Kate Walker and Ann Howells at Telford School to request permission to study their initiatives.

Once again, I was invited to meet with the women in their schools and I spent an hour and a half with each pair, explaining my ideas for the focus, aims and procedures of the study and inviting their participation. Each partnership was a little uncertain at first. They were still in the planning stages of their proposals to their boards. They had not yet been interviewed, or appointed as co-principals. Carrie was particularly worried about their potential co-principalship being studied for only a year. If she and Brigid were appointed, she said, it would take possibly longer than a year for them to establish a good working model, given that there were no guidelines to follow. I explained that I was interested in researching whatever happened as they tried out different ways of doing things and that even if their initiative was not an ultimate 'success,' documenting their experiences would be very valuable. If things went 'wrong,' this would provide opportunities to evaluate what had happened and identify what kinds of strategies worked and what to avoid or alter. (In this way, the study was aiming to build understandings of what Foucault (1980) called, "strategic knowledges," although I had not conceptualised it this way back in 1994.) When I said that I could also research their schools for as long as they were happy for me to follow their progress, each partnership agreed to join the study, pending the success of their applications and the approval of their boards. At this first meeting, we informally agreed that I would focus on three monthly 'tracking' interviews with the women co-principals for the first year, and in the following year, carry out some interviews with teaching and support staff and board members.

And so the year ended. By the beginning of 1995, both the St Mary's and Telford women had been successful in their co-principalship applications, and after receiving my information about the proposed research and invitation to participate in the study, both boards gave me permission to include their schools in the project.

Three schools: similarities and differences

More detailed descriptions of each school are given at the beginning of the case study narratives in Part II, so what follows is only a brief introduction. The schools were similar in some ways but interestingly in different others, enriching this study of their co-principalship initiatives. Each was a small primary, with three, five and six teachers respectively. All the teachers in each school were women and each school drew their students from both the surrounding suburb and much wider afield.

Hillcrest Avenue School was predominantly Pākehā/European, and was situated in an affluent central city location, drawing students from here and from some far flung suburbs. Parents from those suburbs had sought out the school because of its central location, which made it easy for them to drop their children off on their way to work in the city and to be more accessible to them during the day if they were needed. St Mary's was an integrated primary in a mixed socio-economic area, drawing its students from both its immediate suburb and a wider area as parents sought the special character of the school. This school had an ethnic mix of mainly Pākehā/European and a significant group of Samoan families, who lived in a neighbouring suburb. Telford was also situated in a mixed socio-economic and ethnic area. As well as its two mainstream classes, this school had a full immersion Te Reo class, and its students lived mainly in the surrounding area. There were also two Montessori classes and parents from widespread suburbs brought their children to this strand, seeking its different philosophy and pedagogical approach.

In each school I investigated the research questions that I had planned to help me gather material that I could use to describe the evolution of each co-principalship. That is:

- Why did the co-principalships emerge as they did, going against the grain of 'commonsense' understandings of leadership and dominant theories and regulations for 'efficient' school management?
- How did they evolve?
- What issues emerged?
- To what extent, and for what reasons, were these forms of school leadership continued or discontinued?
- What, if any, part did gender play in influencing the initiation and trajectory of the co-principalship?

I was also interested in investigating questions about power and individual and group negotiations of dominant formulations (discourses) of educational leadership. My initial thinking identified questions such as, what kinds of contesting interests might be layered into and around the women's initiatives and whether the women's 'local' initiatives were challenging, co-opting or being co-opted by dominant discourses of leadership. These questions, as qualitative research theorists have pointed out, can be seen as already analytic, having a "focusing and bounding function, ruling out certain variables, relationships, and associated data, and selecting others for attention" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.431). The design of the study was not, however, an "off-the-shelf" model, as Miles and Huberman put it: it was "custom-built, 'revised' and 'choreographed'" (ibid). As I read more in the area of poststructuralism, my theoretical questions became more focused around explorations of the discursive constituting and re-constituting of individual subjectivity and intersubjectivity within the initiation and evolution of the co-principalships. I will explain how this happened later, after describing in the next sections, the unfolding process of the research and the interwoven ethical issues that were addressed at the proposal stage and later.

The phases of the research

I concentrated on visiting Hillcrest Avenue School for the first two years of the study. Because this co-principalship had been established in 1993, and had already been going for a year, I thought it was important to gather as many impressions and memories as possible, before these faded. I wanted to know how this co-principalship had started and how the women had worked together during that first year and I wanted accounts from each of the women so that I could get some insights into their varying perspectives and aspirations for themselves as well as for the co-principalship. I also wanted to know how parents, board members, children and the agency personnel with whom they had negotiated at the beginning were responding and taking various initiatives themselves.

This focus on an in-depth study of the Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship while carrying out three monthly interviews with the women co-principals at St Mary's and Telford schools, proved to be another 'bit of serendipity.' Firstly, it was a useful way to manage the accomplishing of the fieldwork. I soon realised that within the constraints of doctoral study and full-time university teaching commitments, I would not be able to carry out in-depth studies of all three schools. Secondly, working in a focused way in one school while simultaneously building understandings about how the other two had begun and were developing, enabled me to identify early on some important issues (such as the significance of different selection and appointments processes and the clash between differing views of accountability). Thirdly, as I watched and listened in each school, I found myself intuitively comparing and contrasting what was happening.

From the beginning I wrote myself reflective memos (Strauss, 1987) and over time these clarified some of the similarities and differences between the three schools, the women and their emerging co-principalship philosophies. Each of the latter was slightly different and I became interested in how they were in turn shaping the thinking and practices of the women. I will return to a discussion of the analytical processes later.

Ethical issues and procedures

Throughout each of these initial phases of making contact with the women in the three schools, I took care to abide by the Massey University Ethical Guidelines for Research on Human Participants. While I discussed the issues personally with each of the women, I also sought permission from the three school boards to carry out research in their schools. Several issues needed attention at the beginning stages and throughout the study. I discuss here issues around confidentiality and anonymity, participants' rights, including children in the study and developing reflexivity and reciprocity in my research design and methods. I look later in this chapter at issues around cross-cultural research and maintaining trust through gaining participant feedback.

Confidentiality/anonymity

As this country is so small and there were so few co-principalships when this research began, there were significant ethical concerns around confidentiality. The principals, chairpersons and some designated staff such as the school secretaries, could be easily identifiable, especially in the short term. Issues of confidentiality needed careful and on-going thought and vigilance on my part as I negotiated with each school access to material, staff, parents and children, and agreements about the procedures that I would observe to guard against and protect the schools and their communities from any potential harm.

I explained to the board chairpersons, principals and school secretaries and staff such as the designated principal release teachers, that although pseudonyms would be used and names of places would be changed, I could not guarantee these people complete anonymity, especially within the professional educational community. This was not such an issue however for participating parents and students, whose anonymity I could more easily guarantee through the use of pseudonyms and the removal or scrambling of any identifying details.

Participants' rights

All participants were informed of their right to decline to take part in the study, and their right to withdraw at any stage. (See *Participant Information Sheet* and *Participant Consent Form* in Appendix 1). Participants had the right to refuse the taping of their

conversations with me (no one refused) and to keep copies of the transcripts of interviews that were sent to all interviewees who requested them, so that they could check for accuracy of recorded information and the removal or altering of any material they were unhappy with. As a result of these “member checks” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) there were very few alterations and only one embargo on information that could have harmfully identified a person. I will discuss other research feedback procedures in later sections.

Including children

The original proposal included an aim of investigating the effects of shared leadership on children’s learning. This was dropped as being far too ambitious for a study having specific time and resource limitations. However, as I wanted to glean some ideas about what children thought of having more than one principal, I did interview and talk with some children at Hillcrest Avenue School. (Children were not interviewed at St Mary’s or Telford.) At the beginning of the research, a notice was included in a school newsletter that explained the study and requested that any parent who objected to my speaking with their child should contact the school. (See Appendix 1) No negative responses were received. I also sought the parents’ as well as the children’s consent (Appendix 1) before specific taped interviews were undertaken with children, and these were carried out with the parents present.

On my first visit to the school, I was introduced by Liz to the children during their whole school hui (an assembly held in an open-plan classroom space). She explained that I would be visiting regularly to study how she, Jane and Karen worked together as co-principals and I might want to talk to them sometimes about this. (The Hillcrest Avenue narrative in Chapter 8 gives examples of how these co-principals talked with the children about their shared leadership. For example, a group of the older children were asked for their views about having co-principals as part of the staff’s 1994 school survey. This openness with the children was part of these women’s philosophy.)

Over the time that I was visiting this school, I became a fairly familiar figure to some children. They would sometimes chat to me about what they were doing or ask me for help with their work and at such times it was a pleasure to forget the research and slip back into teacher mode. Such occasions were the exception, however, rather than the rule. Most of the time it was easy to remain fairly inconspicuous. These children were used to having many visitors in their school and my experience as a teacher and Education Review Officer helped me to fit in with normal school procedures and not to disrupt teaching and learning processes. When I did talk with children about what was happening, I did not scribble in my research notebook as we chatted, but slipped away unobtrusively (I hoped!) into the cloakroom, to write hasty notes that were as near- to- verbatim as I could manage, of what they had said to me and what I had observed.

Māori research principles

Research codes of ethical principles have typically required that researchers take care to minimise harm to their participants through ensuring informed consent and protecting confidentiality. Within a rapidly developing literature on indigenous research, however, Māori writers have called for acceptance of research practices that extend beyond these protocols (Durie, 1992; Irwin, 1992; Smith, 1999; Te Awekotuku, 1991; Waitere-Ang, 1999).

Smith located her arguments for “decolonising methodologies” within extensive critiques of Western research’s colonising effects on Māori and other indigenous peoples (Smith, 1999). Her criticisms include analyses of the limitations of some white feminist approaches. While noting the value of feminist deconstructions of previously taken-for-granted “rules of practice” in research, such as critiques of critical theory’s silences about the importance of reflexivity (“a process of critical self-awareness ... and openness to challenge”), Smith pointed out that within feminism itself there has been a silence about “organic and indigenous approaches to research ... (that are) generated from very different value systems and world views” (Smith, 1999, pp.166-7). In my attempts to avoid this form of cultural imperialism, I have followed the following ethical principles.

Te Awekotuku (1991) advised that research which includes Māori people should be guided by respect for the “rights, interests and sensitivities” of the people being studied. Kaupapa Māori⁷⁹ approaches go beyond this basic principle to include culturally specific ideas such as those of mana, mauri, mahitahi and maramatanga (Durie, 1992). The first of these principles (mana) involves being respectful in ensuring that the personal well-being and dignity of each individual is protected at each stage of the research. This principle guided my interactions with all participants in this study.

While one aspect of the principle of mauri is that when all participants are from the same tribal area, tribal authorities should be consulted (Waitere-Ang, 1999), did not apply in this study (the whānau members came from several different areas), I sought to follow this principle in the gaining of consent in the following way. Kate Walker (all names of research participants are pseudonyms), represented the whānau within the Telford School co-principalship, and I asked her how I should contact them to explain the research and to seek permission to include them, or their representatives, in the study. I was committed to the principle of *kanohi kitea* (face to face interaction) as I believe that potential research participants need to be able to judge for themselves a researcher’s credentials. This is not just in the sense of their academic qualifications to do the job, but also in the sense of their

⁷⁹ Citing Graham Smith’s (1997) writing about this, Linda Smith commented, “Kaupapa Māori is related to being Māori, connected to Māori philosophy and principles, takes for granted the validity and legitimacy of Māori, the importance of Māori language and culture, and is ‘concerned with the struggles for autonomy over our own cultural well-being.’ ... (It) does not mean the same as Māori knowledge or epistemology. The concept of *kaupapa* implies a way of framing and structuring how we think about those ideas and practices” (Smith, L., 1999, pp.185-9).

“political credentials (and) their personalities and spirit” (Smith, 1999, p.157). This is particularly the case when research participants come from marginalised groups, such as Māori. Smith stated that in this situation, researchers “are expected to position themselves clearly and state their purposes. Establishing trust is an important feature” (ibid). Similar arguments have been made by feminist researchers (Jones, 1992 Oakley, 1981; Reinhartz, 1992).

In my research at Telford School, however, Kate wanted to be the person to tell the whānau about the study and she did this for me at the next whānau meeting. Permission was given and it was agreed that Marg Tua and Rawinia Hunt would be interviewed as representatives for the whānau. Mere Katene, the kaiako (teacher of Māori) during the first year of the research at Telford, left the school before I could interview her. I later made contact with her, through a Māori colleague who explained the research (and me!) to her and invited her to participate. Mere also agreed to be interviewed.

Like the other participants I interviewed for this study, Marg, Rawinia and Mere each read their interview transcripts and discussed them with me. They also requested an opportunity to read the narrative when it was completed. I took it to them, and met with them later to discuss it and the theoretical interpretations that I was making in the final part of the thesis. The principle of mauri also implies that care needs to be taken to be accountable to the collectives linked to individuals, who have a vested interest on the outcome of the research. The feeding back of the case narrative material to these women, was part of my acknowledging that ownership of the whānau’s story rested with Marg and Rawinia as their representatives, and part of my processes to ensure that no harm would come to the women or to their wider whānau through any unintended misrepresentation of what they had told me. To help guard against the latter, I checked cross-cultural meanings, for example by asking during the interviews whether my understandings of the issues around education that Marg, Rawinia and Mere were describing, were correct from their points of view. (These discussions highlighted for me the different positions being held by these women and in the case narratives I have recorded these in some detail.)

Māori researchers have also maintained that research into issues affecting Māori should be of benefit to those being researched (Durie, 1992; Smith, 1999; Te Awekotuku, 1991). Waitere-Ang (1999, p.110) noted the link here to the research principle of reciprocity, pointing out that this includes the ideas of the researcher “giving back” information to the researched and both the researcher and the researched “giving out” knowledge that will nurture the development of others. In my interactions with all the participants in this study, I tried to follow this aspect of the principle of mahitahi: that is, a collaborative approach that involves “working together in a reciprocal manner where meaning is mediated by both the researcher and the participant in order to achieve maramatanga, a better understanding of the issues constituting the focus of enquiry” (Waitere-Ang, 1999, p.100, following Durie, 1992).

Developing reciprocal relationships

Reciprocity has been highlighted also as a significant protocol and value within feminist research (Reinharz, 1992). In this study, I have given it a priority in different ways. For example, I maintained regular contact with the co-principals throughout the process of the research in their schools and I consulted them and kept them informed of my progress during the writing up and analysis stages (see the section on writing narrative analysis). During the research in Hillcrest Avenue School, when I was perusing the board meeting minutes, I noted a sentence in a section of the co-principals' report of our first meeting in September, 1994. It stated, "The Board will be given the opportunity to preview any written materials which may be used for later publication" (BOT Minutes, 19 September 1994). I did not remember saying this, but I kept faith with this understanding and as part of the research verification processes, sent to each of the schools' board chairpersons as well as the co-principals, their case narratives and some conference papers that included emerging analysis concerning their school. This has been an important part of member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Comments I received back were both helpful and interesting. Sometimes these corrected small errors of fact (such as in two instances where there were errors about staffing) and sometimes a caution to be careful about what I made public. Some comments were lengthy reflections on the nature of management and shared leadership, and I have included these in the final versions of the case narratives and in my analysis.

This feeding back of research material to people in the schools proved to be a way of also returning something of value (I hope) to the school. In one case, my paper, *Women challenging managerialism: devolution dilemmas in the establishment of co-principalships in Aotearoa/New Zealand* (Court, 1998), was used by a school board in their negotiations with the Ministry of Education to clarify the legal position of the co-principalship contract and its accountability requirements. On another occasion, in 1998, I was invited back to Hillcrest Avenue School by the co-principals, when they were inducting the second new staff member into the shared leadership. Jane asked me to present to them my account of the original aims and my perceptions of the strengths and limitations of their model in comparison with a single principalship. The reflexivity built into the design of the research enabled this kind of two way sharing of ideas and insights.

The feeding back of the narratives had some other results that I had not quite anticipated. At Telford School, the Māori whānau representatives interviewed for the study, found that reading their school's narrative helped to put everything that had happened into perspective and they both felt heartened by the progress that had been made at Telford School since the early days of their struggles to achieve an immersion class for their children. They both requested a personal copy of their school's narrative. Other participants similarly found reading the narratives personally helpful, although Kate said she cried at times. She said she had not realised how much emotional investment she had in hers and Ann's co-principalship

and some of the memories were painful for her. She also said though, that reading the case narrative was a healing process. Phillipa and Brigid made similar comments. Phillipa said that reading the narrative helped her to understand better Ann's perspectives and Brigid said that in her case, it helped her to move on from painful events.

As in some other feminist research (Strachan, 1993), friendships between myself and some of the women developed during the quite long associations I had with them. I stayed overnight with Jane and with Karen, for example, and shared lunches and dinners with all the women, sometimes in a café, sometimes in one of their homes. Developing relationships like this could have caused problems. In their letter approving my study, the university human ethics committee had asked me "to be aware that (I) may be exposed to unanticipated consequences involved in a shared principalship arrangement." This rather cryptic comment came back to me on separate occasions in each school, when I had to remind myself that my role was primarily one of a researcher so that I retained an awareness of the need for discretion when difficulties within some of the co-principal relationships. Fortunately, I did not get involved in any situations where I felt impelled, for example by a sense of justice or fair play, to intervene beyond sympathetic listening and maintaining contact. This, however, could have happened, so there was an element of risk in the research approach.

Issues of morality and ethics are never far away in any school situation however, and I was especially watchful in situations where I perceived that there could be potential difficulties. One such situation occurred at Hillcrest Avenue School, when I was invited to contribute to the discussion I was observing in a board meeting that was deliberating questions around whether, or how to continue the co-principalship when two of the original co-principals had left. The dilemma here for a researcher could be an acute one, if the standard is one of keeping a so-called objective and neutral distance in order not to impact on the situation and people one is studying. Not only is such an assumption incorrect, (all research impacts on the individuals being studied), but I decided that not contributing was untenable when, as the only person in the meeting who had been present when the previous board had made related decisions about the co-principalship, I was holding some valuable 'institutional memory' in my documentation and insider knowledge of what had happened. As part of my commitment to not only document this initiative for the information of others, but also to be of assistance to the school itself, I decided therefore, to step outside of the researcher/observer role and to contribute. I gave information (as I saw it) and responded to questions that sought my opinion about various options open to the board. I did this with the provisos that the information was as factually correct as possible, given that I had not at that stage fully analysed my research material, and that my opinion was only one person's viewpoint. I stated that they as a board should make their decision in the light of their own judgements about what they saw as best for their children, their staff and their school. (This episode is described in the case narrative.) The board told me my contributions were helpful, and in my view, the outcome was a good

one, for the board, the school and the co-principals. I was not aware of any ways in which it could have distorted or adversely influenced the research process.

Interviewing

Although I also observed some class lessons, staff and board meetings, interviews were the primary method used throughout the research to generate material for the development of the case narratives. The one-off interviews, with people such as representatives of the educational agencies, parents, support staff and teacher trainees, were semi-structured conversations (Oakley, 1981) that explored the interviewee's perceptions about the co-principalships. The recurrent interviews with the co-principals picked up on issues that had emerged from my thinking about the content of the previous interview and on events that had occurred since we last met. Sometimes, we discussed a point that had arisen in one of the other schools. In the latter situation, as part of the confidentiality agreements that had been made, I introduced a point in general terms without referring explicitly to the other school. At the time of the research I was focussing on maintaining the confidentiality of each school's experiences and I was taking care not to talk about what was happening in the other schools, unless I had been given permission to pass on a piece of information. Although there were a few occasions at the beginning of the St Mary's and Telford initiatives when the women or board chairpersons met someone at Hillcrest Avenue School, the women and board chairs did not keep close contact with each other, maintaining a certain autonomy and uniqueness in their approaches to developing their own co-principalships.

When I met with the co-principals (nearly always in their schools, though on the odd occasion in a home or café) the conversations would mostly start with me asking, "Well, how are things going?" The talk usually flowed easily, increasingly so as we got to know each other, although when difficulties arose in both St Mary's and Telford, some tensions became apparent in the interviews. At those times, there would be some pauses and what I perceived as some anxiety about what could, or perhaps should, be said and shared. In all cases though, there was an increasing frankness as relations of trust were built. I was particularly aware that as a researcher this was a trust that I needed to constantly guard, especially when I was talking with other people about the co-principalship models and sometimes when I was talking between the partners in a co-principalship.

The interviews with the co-principals were a blend of group discussions and individual interviews. This, I decided would give me a good indication of both personal feelings and responses as well as of the character of each co-principalship's relationships and interactions. On some of these occasions the group interviews also included the board chairperson and this was very useful for my developing understandings about the nature of these governing/managing relationships. (There is little material in the literature about the emotional

dynamics of these partnerships, dynamics which my observations would indicate are worth exploring further.)

The group discussion interviews were like informal focus group interviews. Advocates of these argue that they “increase the chance that talk in response to interview questions is similar to talk between friends, colleagues and family members” (Dupuis & Neale, 1998, p.124), thus providing a naturalistic set of responses that can provide access between participants to what others have to say about a topic (Morgan, 1993). Creating research opportunities for this kind of openness seemed to me to be both appropriate and potentially useful to the participants as well as to me as the researcher. In this study of shared leadership teams it provided the participants with opportunities to judge the nature of my relationships with other members of their team and to check my trustworthiness, through watching and listening to the quality of my interactions with each of them. (I did not talk explicitly with the women co-principals about this, but in retrospect, I think it would be a useful thing to point out to participants in longitudinal studies such as this one.)

Shifting researcher perceptions

During the interviews and conversations, I tried to keep my own views out, except when I was explicitly asked for my opinion or reaction which did happen now and then. I did not go into the interviews and observations with a ‘blank slate’ or nil set of expectations however. For example, when I first heard about the Hillcrest Avenue School co-principalship in 1994, I knew well Codd’s (1990) critiques of the educational reforms and his analysis of the potential harm of a shift away from professional forms of educational leadership to a technocratic form of business managerialism (Smyth, 1993; Boston et al., 1996). During my brief year and a half of working in the Education Review Office, I had also experienced the impact on education of what I later came to understand as the New Public Management (NPM) market model of ‘public service’ (Boston et al., 1996). As early as 1991, Education Review Officers were facing the political possibility of school reviews becoming contestable and I was both annoyed and dismayed when I was told by a political secretary that, as an education review officer, I was accountable only to the Minister of Education, that my job was to supply information to him and that my viewing of myself as a collegial evaluator and advisor to teachers and principals was totally inappropriate. Within the promotion of a market approach to education, competition and audit were being promoted as the mechanisms of improving schooling through increasing the accountability of teachers, rather than collaboration and professional sharing of knowledge and initiatives. I strongly disagreed with the market approach, and I left ERO soon after this.

I entered this research then with my own set of understandings and critiques about what the new managerialism was meaning in the context of school leadership. I saw it then as taking a punitive and controlling approach in its accountability requirements. I saw its insistence on

documentation for proof that good teaching was occurring, as downplaying the significance of an individual teacher's sense of duty and commitment to professional ethics and the sharing of knowledge and pedagogies. I saw the introduction of competitiveness and the proposal to improve performance through managerial 'measurement' and reward in 'merit' pay increments, as forms of accountability that were likely to divide teacher from teacher and teachers from principals, having long term negative effects on the building of strong learning cultures in education.

However, I tried to put aside my worries as I worked with the schools and interviewed people in the education agencies, so that I could focus on listening to people talking about their aims and aspirations without imposing on them my own views about the wider educational and political environment. During the first two years of the fieldwork, I stopped my close reading of the academic literature on the restructuring and focused on interviewing, talking and observing, reading the transcripts of interviews and my observation notes, and thinking about the issues and dilemmas the participants were describing, so that I could probe them further each time I saw them. In consecutive interviews and conversations with the co-principals and in two schools, with the board chairpersons, I asked them to expand on their earlier comments, or to give me examples of what they had described as an important idea or practice in the development of their co-principalships. In this way a large amount of very interesting and useful material was generated.

Feminist researchers have criticised positivist assumptions that research can be value free (Jones, 1992; Oakley, 1981). A researcher's own values and beliefs shape the process of research even when we are trying to stand back from these to enable understandings of another's position. As the following episode illustrates though, exposure of our own biases can be beneficial to the research process. It can enable a participant to challenge our position and it can enable us to grow in understanding, both of ourselves and of the situation we are investigating.⁸⁰ During 1995 and 1996, I interviewed representatives of the state agencies that the schools had contacted, to hear their views about the viability of a co-principalship. From these interviews, I formed my own views about the agencies' ideas and the roles they were playing in the attempts to initiate shared leaderships. As a consequence of a discussion with a New Zealand Educational Institute (primary teachers' union) representative, however, I had to rethink the ways I was 'seeing' and representing the positions of the State Services Commission (SSC) and the Ministry of Education. I was challenged on my choice of language in my question, "So you're saying that SSC and the Ministry have not really blocked this initiative at all?" the NZEI spokesperson replied,

You're jumping - aah - in all of these things the language used becomes important and you've made several jumps there by using words like blocking or whatever, you know. You can't necessarily say that... there was an awareness there that a hell of a lot more work had to be

⁸⁰ Smith (1999, p.157) has made a similar point in relation to the principle of *kanohi kitea* in Māori research.

done. Was there more resistance from the SSC or the Ministry than from NZEI? Yes. But that doesn't necessarily constitute a blocking (Interview with NZEI spokesperson).

I realised that this union representative had clearer understandings about the legal complexities of the SSC position on co-principalships than I did, and that there was also some sympathy on this person's part for particular arguments that I was challenging in using the word 'blocking.' I recognised that I had to do some rethinking.

This interview was serendipitous for me in terms of developing my own understandings about power relations. I experienced a dramatic shift in my own perceptions. Whereas previously I had remained rather 'stuck' within a conceptualising of power as a top down one way oppressive relation (with the 'subordinated' only resisting, accommodating or colluding with the exertion of power over them by the dominant group), I now saw much more clearly that power was not a thing owned by one group - in this case, SSC. I began to understand how power is produced within complex and shifting relations between individuals and groups. I saw that NZEI had significant leverage in this discursive field and so, indeed, did I. In my capacity as a research 'expert' on co-principalship I could (and did) ask challenging questions of the state agency representatives and through my research I could perhaps produce some shifts in their thinking. Those individuals also had powerful impacts on my 'expertise,' my perceptions of, and theorising about, shared leadership. The interview with the NZEI representative helped to clarify also how, while particular interest groups may develop 'party lines' of argument, individuals within these groups act out of their own broader understandings, bringing a range of past experiences to bear on their actions.

Shifting approaches to analysis

Going earlier than planned 'into the field' (as researchers talk about naturalistic investigations) was also serendipitous in that it meant that I began observing the New Zealand primary school examples of co-principalships right at the beginning of my doctoral study. This was fortunate for several reasons.

Following a common research convention, I had planned to complete a thorough literature review of any existing co-principalships, and a discourse analysis of educational policy and literature on leadership and management in Aotearoa/New Zealand, before I began interviewing and observing in the schools. As it turned out, I heard the women's accounts of what they were trying to do without any preconceptions from the co-principalship literature about how this form of shared leadership had been practised and theorised in other places. If I had read the American literature that I discussed in Chapter 2, I may have been expecting the women in the three-way Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship to be splitting all their responsibilities with, for example, one taking over the technical, plant and systems areas, while another took responsibility for the educational/curriculum development areas, and another did

the 'public relations' work of negotiating with the Ministry, parents and newspapers. Questions I may have formulated from this literature could have led me down quite a different path of analysis and may even have led the women to think that this was what they should have been doing. As events unfolded though, my review of the academic literature on co-principalships was completed much later in the study and it was shaped by my immersion in three years of listening to and watching the participants in the three primary school co-principalships, and by my attempts to come to an understanding of the values, beliefs and particular sets of meanings that each woman brought to her practice as a co-principal.

Such an approach fits within "'loose' inductively oriented" qualitative research that uses "minimally predesigned instrumentation" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.441). It has been realised that this can help to minimize researcher impact and keep us open to interpretations that "connect with participants' lived experiences" (ibid). It also fits within a storying approach to research reporting and analysis.

Story and narrative

The use of story and narrative in research is now widely accepted. For example, within feminism stories have been used as accounts that reveal how gendered subjectivities are constructed in daily interactions (Bird, 1992; Davies, 1989; 1993); life history narratives have analysed teachers' professional lives (Middleton & May, 1997; Weiler & Middleton, 1999); different conceptual stories have been used as a tool for theorising (Court & Court, 1998); personal stories have been shared in consciousness raising action research about collective patterns in experience (Mies, 1991), and in collaborative inquiry 'listening circles' as a basis for reflection, understanding and action (Hawk, 1997). There is also a large methodological literature developing around the terms story and narrative, though there is no clear consensus about how they are to be understood and used in research activities. It is important therefore for me to explain how I developed my own approach to 'storying' the case narratives.

Distinguishing, and blurring distinctions, between story and narrative

In research accounts, story has been described as "one species huddled under the umbrella" of narrative (Barone, 1995, p.73). A narrative, according to the Oxford dictionary, is in popular current meaning, "an ordered account of connected events" (Thompson, 1993, p.591), while a story is "an account of imaginary or past events, a tale, an anecdote" (p.901). Some researchers maintain that careful distinctions need to be drawn between the use of the two terms in research accounts. Clandinin and Connelly (1994, p. 416), for example, argued for distinguishing *story*, as meaning the participants' accounts of experience told to researchers, from *narrative*, as meaning the researcher account that has been further refined through some form of inquiry. They used the term *narrative inquiry* for the latter. Reason and

Hawkin's approach used storytelling by both researchers and their research participants, as a form of inquiry that works "to either explain or express; to analyse or to understand" (Reason & Hawkins, 1988, p.79). Elbaz (1990) further argued that the terms narrative and autobiography tend to carry positivist assumptions, while story keeps the teller in focus and assumes a listener/reader who is making meaning out of the account that is told. In his view, while a story may be "elliptical and rambling ... (it) involves both the creation of a coherent meaning and the successful resolution of whatever conflict threatens meaning" (Elbaz, 1990, p.38).

Because I was particularly interested in exploring how individuals have created meanings around the terms 'leadership' and 'co-principal,' I was attracted to the approaches of Elbaz and Reason and Hawkins. However, it was also clear to me that I had conducted a bounded inquiry into co-principalships and that my research purposes had shaped the stories I had been told (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Any case study accounts that I wrote could be seen therefore as case narrative inquiries, in the sense used by Clandinin and Connelly (1994). I was concerned though, that the distinctions made by Clandinin and Connelly between story and narrative privilege the rationality of the researcher over the thinking/analytical processes being invoked by research participants themselves, when they tell research interviewers (and themselves) stories about their experiences.

In my study, therefore, the lines that some researchers seek to draw between story and narrative are blurred. For example, while I have engaged in a form of narrative inquiry and analysis, sections of the case narratives will demonstrate how the women co-principals were constructing their own narrative inquiries as they storied their developments of their shared leadership practices. Further, while I have chosen to call the three case study accounts narratives (because they are my "ordered accounts of connected events"), I not only present many stories within them, but have used *storying* techniques to construct them. That is, the case narratives evoke particular historical, geographical and social/institutional settings. They are each temporally 'plotted' with a beginning, a middle and an (albeit open) end. They recount events that have involved protagonists and some other central characters. They are shaped around some common and some different themes, and these themes emerge in descriptions of the motivations, aspirations and practices of the people who participated in the shared leadership initiatives. These themes also reflect the wider social forces within which the co-principals and people acted. As Denzin has noted, "the stories that members of a group pass on to one another are reflective of understandings and practices that are at work in the larger system of cultural understandings that are acted upon by group members" (Denzin, 1989, p.81).

Further blurring of distinctions around story (telling) and narrative (inquiry) occurred within my own role. As a researcher, I became to some degree a part of the storying that occurred in each of the groups, as we developed together some understandings about their co-principalships. As a narrator/author of the research accounts, however, I have re-presented the

women's oral stories and "textualised" them for analysis (Van Maanen, 1988, p.95). I have used excerpts and juxtapositions that attempt to show how the women were engaged in not only constructing co-principalships, but also parts of themselves as 'co-principals.' As I noted earlier, people "create themselves when they engage in storytelling practices" (Denzin, 1989, p.82; Polkinghorne, 1995) and I wanted to provide material in the case narratives that could illustrate how this process might be occurring. I will return to these points again later, when I explain my feminist poststructuralist approach to discourse analysis.

Overall, this thesis also blends some other different approaches to constructing research narratives. Van Maanen (1988) identified three main conventions in research that uses ethnographic and narrative techniques: realist, confessional and impressionistic. He argued that realist narratives use a traditional form of ethnographic distancing of the author from the account, which is recounted in the third person and typically leaves out mention of emotional responses. The confessional narrative is the reverse of the realist in that its stance is highly personal and centres the researcher's own experiences and responses to what they are investigating. Such accounts can also trace the personal journey that led up to the present study and, through a process of deconstructing her own and other's previous work, point to the flaws and gaps in that work and the ways the current study and understanding is a "better" approach or set of understandings, arguing, "It's not that. It's this" (Van Maanen, 1988, p.110). The third narrative convention, the impressionistic style, constructs a "thick description" of the context, the sights and feelings experienced by the researcher when she was in the field. It aims to open up this world to the reader through "cracking open the culture" (p.102). It attempts to bring the people "alive," giving pseudonyms and describing distinguishing features, so that readers can be introduced, albeit in part and through the researcher's own eyes, to the world that is being explored.

I have used the second convention, a confessional narrative approach for the shaping of this first part of this thesis. Chapters 1, 3 and 5 present discussions that have deliberately exposed my own theoretical and research journeys and some of my personal feelings about these, to open up spaces for readers to "dialogue" with my ideas and approaches (Jones, 1992). I have written the case narratives however, within a combination of the first and the third of the conventions that Van Maanen describes. In these narratives I stand back, using the third person and keeping my own responses out of the accounts, aiming to bring the co-principalship initiatives alive through relating, in their own words wherever possible, the participants' ideas and opinions, especially as these were related in stories.

At this point, I want to describe how I went about writing up my accounts from the many stories I was told and how, despite my seeming distance from the narratives, embedded into each of these is an analysis of the set of research questions that were the initial impetus for this study.

Developing the ‘storied’ case narratives

Polkinghorne (1995) has argued that two forms of temporal data can be distinguished in narrative analysis: diachronic and synchronic data. The former describe “the sequential relationship of events,” including information about consequences and effects on personal experiences. The latter are organised around the interviewer’s questions and concerns, resulting in a categorical analysis that does not highlight the historical or developmental concerns (p.12). As I considered the research ‘texts’ I had accumulated in my bulging casework files, I decided against producing an account that was organised just around the categories and themes I could see emerging (the themes of leadership and management, accountability and responsibility, democratic organisation and community involvement). While I wanted to capture a sense of these themes, I also wanted to write in a way that could reveal and foreground the character of the daily ‘meaning- making’ and shifting relationships that I had often observed. To capture some of this ‘unfolding,’ I chose to use a (mostly) chronological story structure that included vignettes of diverse viewpoints and experiences. I wanted readers to be able to ‘get inside’ the co-principalship initiatives, with enough material available for them to make their own interpretations of the narrated events, ideas and documents.

This is an increasingly common aspiration among qualitative researchers, who take varying paths to achieve the aim of enabling readers’ involvement with their material. For example, from a longitudinal study of students’ views of their schooling experiences, Nash and Major produced a series of monographs that presented large excerpts of interview transcripts for the reader to consider alongside Nash’s own interpretations (1995). In a later monograph (Nash, 1999), such transcript extracts and accompanying researcher commentaries were ‘framed’ within a beginning extract from a conversation between Bourdieu and some French youths about the youths’ lives. This “conversation from the other side of the world” was reproduced without Bourdieu’s own commentary, with the aim of challenging readers “to make their own interpretations and connections” (Nash, 1999, p.1). O’Neill has also argued that qualitative studies which give a brief quotation from an interview can give a distorted impression of the “situated complexities” and motivations of the work of a particular head of department, in a particular department, time, set of colleagues and external imperatives (O’Neill, 2000). Both of these researchers argued for presenting research in a “conversational” mode, with the participants’ views standing alone and then commented on by the researcher. O’Neill called this a “pointillist” approach that would allow the reader to “come to an informed position” on the researcher’s own commentary in the light of their own reading of the research material. I am attracted to these arguments, and to Barone’s point that in research narrative and storying, potential conversations wait between the lines, as it were, not only between the reader and the writer, but also between the reader and the characters (research participants) in the narrative.

While Barone suggested that a storytelling approach can persuade readers to contribute answers to the dilemmas that are posed, he also argued that “we do not always need, within the same textual breath, to deconstruct in another style and format, the epiphanies they foster” (1995, p.66). He maintained that “Sometimes the conversation between writer, reader and characters, should be allowed to wane before additional voices interject themselves into the dialogue” (p.72). This argument influenced my decision to construct the case narratives with no comment from myself interspersed within the text and to write separate analytical chapters that discuss the themes and theoretical issues I saw as significant.

As with all narratives, these cases cannot be read, however, as ‘true’ histories of ‘what happened.’ Not only are they constructions by the participants; they have been shaped also through the medium of this researcher’s eyes and ears, mind and heart, ‘washed’ through my subjectivity and coloured by my own interests and understandings. In this way then, while my study supports Polkinghorne’s view that narrative inquiry needs mainly research diachronic data (which I have used for the storied narratives which explain when, why and how the co-principalships were initiated), the narratives I developed include also synchronic data that was generated in the participants’ answers to my questions that were probing *my* research interests. (An example is the material about feminism which resulted in most cases from a question put to the women co-principals towards the end of my interactions with them.)

In my writing up process, I began with a close reading of all the research material I had generated over four years of fieldwork in the schools. My focus was on identifying material that could answer my first set of research questions about why, when, where and how the co-principalships were initiated and developed. Rather than using a categorising and coding approach as can be done either manually or by computer, I chose to use a process that involved on-going reading, selecting, writing, re-reading of the transcripts and other material filed for each co-principalship case, as I built up for each a story about their initiation and development. I did this because I did not want to lose sight of the participants’ contexts and subtly varying nuances as their ideas shifted and/or developed in interaction with the other women in their partnerships and people in their school communities. I ticked or drew a diagonal line through material as I included it and on completion of the writing of each narrative, I skimmed back through the mound of transcripts and research documents for that case, to see whether I had overlooked any significant sections. Selections had been necessary to avoid undue repetition and, in a few situations, to protect confidentiality or minimise harm to individuals. I was gratified however, to see that in each case the research material had been richly represented in the final accounts.

While the writing of the case narratives was thus a painstaking process, it was also a rewarding one that, for me at least, demonstrated how diverse and often conflicting viewpoints can be reflected in a research account. The interviewing of a wide range of people in each school and the analytical reading and rereading the transcripts as I wrote up different people’s viewpoints on a particular theme, helped me to keep intersubjectivity to the fore and to

develop a multi-faceted view of how individuals were thinking, feeling and acting in relation to each other in particular situations. The process also enabled me to develop a fuller appreciation of the complex interpersonal and political dynamics at play in these situations.

In the ways I have described then, the case narratives are not unanalysed or ‘raw’ data, but examples of what Polkinghorne (1995) has called narrative analysis. Because my shaping of these accounts could become obscured in the artifice of a naturally flowing story, I have left reminders of my presence and the crafting process, in a ‘paper trail’ of references to the interview transcripts and documents which provided the original material for the narratives (Armstrong, 1997). These references invite the reader to see the seams of my weaving and my stitching together of extracts from separate interviews and different documents, and to remember that these are my accounts of the ideas, events and stories that I saw as significant for the questions that I was exploring. As has been pointed out, “there is more than one way of telling a story, and more than one story to be told” (Pagano, 1991, p.197). Other accounts of the co-principalships would, no doubt, highlight different storylines. Despite this caveat and the point that the rather linear character of case narratives imposes a form and a structure that also belies the messiness and contradictions of day to day experiences, I have endeavoured to capture some of the special character of each initiative.

Maintaining trust and protecting participant confidentiality and integrity

I also sought at that stage of the study, to ensure the significant ‘players,’ especially the co-principals and the board chairpersons were comfortable with what I was writing. As indicated earlier, throughout the research process, I used a range of now well established ethical procedures to ensure that the participants maintained control over the material they were generating with me for my analysis. Interview transcripts were sent back to all participants who had requested them and I talked with them in follow up phone conversations to receive their feedback. There were no concerns at this stage. While I was writing the case narrative accounts of conflicting perceptions and accounts of participants who had been involved in some potentially contentious episodes, however, I worried about some research ethics issues. I felt the dual pulls of wanting to tease out understandings about issues and factors that had led to and impinged on the difficulties, and the simultaneous needs to protect confidentiality, not damage the professional work of the people involved, nor harm to their relationships or them personally.

I used a staged feedback strategy to help here. Firstly, I fed back to individuals the sections of the case narrative drafts that involved them, explaining how I had used the material and that they could withdraw or change any of their material as they wished. After each of these participants had given their approval for what I had written, I then sent the full case narratives to the co-principals and the board chairpersons. I also used the guidance of my supervisors and comments of colleagues whom I asked to read the narratives, as safety nets

to ensure that I did not overstep the mark. These strategies worked well. As I indicated earlier, apart from small changes to correct some factual mistakes and to protect an individual's confidentiality, I was not required to alter any material, and the co-principals and board chairpersons said that they learnt a lot from reading the narratives.⁸¹

Before I move on to explaining how I carried out the discourse analyses of these narratives, and of 'official' and academic texts, I want to reflect briefly on how my case narratives have used storying as expression, explanation and critique.

Using storying as expression, explanation and critique

Using stories in expressive and representational ways is a research approach within which I feel particularly comfortable.⁸² I agree with Witherell and Noddings' (1991) point that lives tell stories, though as Plummer (1995) has so clearly argued:

whatever else a story is, *it is not simply the lived life*. It speaks all around the life: it provides routes into a life, it lays down maps for lives to follow, suggests links between lives and culture ... but is not the life, which is in principle unknown and unknowable. (1995, p.168).

The point of using stories in my narratives has not been not centred around capturing 'a life,' however, nor on whether the stories are the complete and absolute 'truth' or not. As Barone (1995, p.64) wryly commented, "since the onset of deconstructionism," who can believe that any text does this? Neither can my case narratives present full accounts of the stories and experiences of each woman in the kind of detail that can be achieved in a life history. Although that approach may be the most illuminating way to express and explore women's varying aspirations, experiences and locations within complex and shifting social contexts, I could not employ this method in this study. It was designed to investigate the co-principalship initiatives as they were developed over time within three schools and to include a wide range of people's perceptions of and interactions with the women co-principals. Consequently, there was not the space to engage in individual, fine-grained life histories, such as has been done in some other studies of women teachers and administrators (Hall, 1996; Middleton, 1993; Strachan, 1997; Weiler, 1988). My decision to incorporate into the case narratives small vignettes for each of the women co-principals aimed to capture enough detail to give the reader a picture of each woman's background, aspirations, political affiliations and values and their sometimes changing perceptions about how these were shaping their aspirations for and experiences of co-principalship. As such these vignettes aim to provide

⁸¹ However, David (the board chairperson at St Mary's) thought that narrative "over-played" gender as contributing to the breakdown of their co-principalship and that accountability issues should have been highlighted more. When I asked some other participants, about this though, I was told that the narrative accurately reflected what had happened. Bridget and Carrie were adamant that the power relations they had experienced around both gender and governance/management issues, had been accurately portrayed.

⁸² In my secondary teacher 'former life' I taught literature and language.

(albeit limited) case histories for the women. Hakim has described case histories as exploring the perceptions, experiences and situations of people involved in a case, in such a way as to reveal the influences on “personal decisions that come into play in any series of events” (Hakim, 1987, pp.65-66).

My decision to construct the case narratives within the storying emphases that I have described is consistent with research approaches that use stories as both a source of expression and of explanation, “not as competing modes, but as poles of a dialectic”(Reason & Hawkins, 1988, p. 83).⁸³ As expression, stories told in everyday vernacular can capture some of the “dailiness” diversity and colour of different environments and perspectives (Barone, 1995, p.73). Explanation also emerges however, through the ways that both the research participants’ and the researcher’s stories have dynamic phases that sometimes “flow together within a single, coherent structure,” such as an early introduction of characters within a human dilemma, followed by a building and a resolving (sometimes tentative and ambiguous) of complications and meanings (ibid).

A story can also provide, of course, critique. Elbaz (1990, p.31) pointed out that story is a “basic and essential genre for the characterisation of human actions” that often involves a moral or a lesson to be learned, voicing criticism in a way that is socially acceptable. He saw storying therefore, as a particularly fitting form for research that aims to “give a hearing to the teacher’s voice” (ibid). In the light of the ways that the NPM restructuring of education in Aotearoa/New Zealand has marginalised and dis-empowered teachers, deliberately silencing their voices within arguments that providers of education had captured this field,⁸⁴ Elbaz’s point is particularly salient for my study. Capper made a similar argument for the use of story in educational administration research that is trying to open up spaces for those whose voices have been previously silenced by “traditional” research, theory and practice. She stated that those involved in preparing candidates for principalship and administration have “a moral obligation to ensure that a variety of stories are told in publications, in course materials and in the conduct of research” (Capper, 1992, p.122). In this field and others, she argued, storytelling should not “be confused with disrespect for scholarship,” but rather be recognised as:

a form of communication (that) is a rich and valued tradition, especially in non-European cultures. It is especially useful because stories convey multiple ways of giving meaning to the world, whether it is in the form of biographical narrative or in the form of ‘research’ (Capper, 1992, p.105).

Bishop has affirmed the use of story as a culturally appropriate research tool, because can enable the storyteller to retain control over the representation of different truths (Bishop,

⁸³ My approach is, of course, also consistent with many case study approaches (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

⁸⁴ I discuss this fully in the next chapter.

1996, p.24). And as Ballard has noted, research stories can “promote the sharing of knowledge and experiences” (Ballard, 1993, p. 19).

These arguments are all salient for my study and support my decision to write the case narratives as I have done. They are the heart of this thesis and placed centrally in its arguments. In my view, they contain interesting, insightful and sometimes painful stories that are so rich it would be impossible in one thesis to dredge them of all their meaning. For the purposes of this study however, they answer descriptively, and largely in the participants’ own words, the original research questions of: Why, how and with what effects were the co-principalships initiated? What difficulties were encountered? To what extent, and for what reasons, were these forms of school leadership continued or discontinued?

Developing micro/macro discourse analyses

While the case narratives make no explicit references to discourse, my discourse analyses of the co-principal initiatives began quite early on in this study. My purpose in this final part of the chapter, is to explain how my approach to this form of analysis was developed and carried out.

Foucault’s discourse analysis has been described by Luke as working mainly at the “macro” level of histories of ideas: “Discourses with a capital D,” as Gee put it (Gee, 1990, cited in Luke, 1995, p.10). And, according to Luke, “one of the key limitations of discourse analysis in education “has been the difficulty of bridging what we might broadly term “macro” approaches to discourse with more microanalytic text analyses” (Luke, 1995p.10). Foucault (1980) argued, however, that if we are to understand how power flows in networks of social relations wherein meaning is constructed and reconstructed, we need to go to the “extremities of power” and look at how people are enacting in particular sites the effects of truth producing discourses, while also themselves acting on discourse. During the early stages of my fieldwork I had become much clearer that, alongside producing descriptive case narratives of the co-principalship initiatives, what I wanted to attempt in this study was a ‘bridging’ analysis that could illuminate the shaping/reshaping of individuals by discourses and of discourses by individuals. I later realised (following Foucault) that this could be done most usefully through a bottom-up analysis of spoken and written language and practices produced in both local and institutional/state sites.

‘Stumbling’ into a bottom-up discourse analysis

As in all qualitative studies, my reflective analysis had begun in the first stages of planning my study and continued throughout my research fieldwork in the three schools, when I wrote myself reflective analytical memos (Strauss, 1987) about what I was noticing in the stories I was being told and the practices I was observing. As I listened to the stories of

teachers, parents, board members and state agency representatives, I began identifying discursive influences within them. I realised that I was hearing the language of the law (particularly the Education Act) and individual accountability in some accounts, of educative goals and individual responsibility in others, of working conditions or women's disadvantage and under-representation in others. These were discourses with which I was familiar and I was not surprised to hear them being expressed. I began noticing also though, how they were being expressed sometimes in combined and/or contradictory ways.

Although I was thinking primarily at this stage about how discourses as "social texts" (Elbaz, 1990) can shape people's viewpoints, language, expectations and practices, I was becoming aware of what seemed to be a 'new' or different discourse that was appearing in some people's stories and my observations of the co-principals' work. A set of meanings around mutual accountability and shared responsibility was insinuating itself unevenly and sometimes unexpectedly, into the other discourses and practices. My interest was sparked in how these meanings were being constructed within, against and outside of the wider discourses about educational leadership which were in circulation at that time.

During this stage of my research I was stumbling, somewhat unconsciously at first, into a Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis. Although my original research proposal was for what could be described as a 'top down' discourse analysis (that is, first identify educational leadership discourses in academic literature and policy documents, then look for these discourses in practices), my analysis was becoming increasingly 'bottom up.' This is in the sense of Foucault's (Foucault, 1980) arguments for an ascending analysis that examines how power is produced and resisted within local and shifting systems of relationships, meanings and institutional practices that form conditions for the emergence of particular sets of ideas and forms of knowledge as discourse (Gordon, 1980, pp.237-8).

By the time that I started writing up my first draft of the case narratives then,⁸⁵ I had formed already some ideas about the discursive contours of the field in which I working. Although my attention at that writing stage was focused on plotting, characterising and 'theming' the case narrative accounts, some further discursive "echos" (Loveridge, 1999) surfaced for me during that work. My decision to include in the narratives multiple quotes from the interview transcripts and school documents, aimed not only to give voice to the participants and to provide a thick, rich description of each initiative, but also to provide sufficient material for my later discourse analysis.

⁸⁵ The refining of the narratives continued sporadically as I kept in touch with the schools, until 2000, when I wrote the epilogues for each case.

Identifying discursive ‘themes’

When I began that analysis in a more focused way, I started with my ‘micro’ level research ‘texts’ (the case narratives into which I had incorporated extracts from the interview transcripts, field note observations and local school documents). I then moved to analysing more ‘macro’ level texts (‘official’ state policy and review documents and some academic texts), before returning to the case narratives to carry out a further analysis. My aim in this to-and-fro process was to try to maintain a ‘hold’ on both micro and macro discursive dynamics and forms of analysis.

Throughout this work, I found Elbaz’s (1990) suggestions helpful. She wrote that we can think of discourses as “social texts ... particular signifying practices of a given group (that) are both constituted by and constitutive of the discursive field in which members of the group live and function” (1990, p.150). While including practices in an analysis, she recommended that the researcher focus in the first instance on language, as it is through language that discursive categories and concepts that impose limits on possible ways of naming ‘reality’ are developed. She suggested that the following questions could be considered.

Around what concepts and distinctions is the field organised? What terms are used and what assumptions, commitments and values underlie this choice of terms? What places are available in the discourses for possible subjects and who can assume these various subject functions? What can we say about the way that this discourse is produced and about how it exists in the world? (Elbaz, 1990, p.15).

Working with the case narratives

I initially read each of the case narratives to identify and list its broad discursive patterns. I noted what kinds of words and phrases were being used, what kinds of subject positions were being constructed and who was speaking through this discourse. Early on in my research I had identified how the so-called ‘new’ managerialism was being instituted in ways that were making the initiation of the co-principalships difficult (Glenny et al., 1996). I looked therefore during this early stage of my discourse analysis at whether managerialist constructions of effective school administration could be identified in the co-principals’ and others’ language and practices. I looked too for how a discourse of professional collaborative leadership that I had been noticing during my fieldwork, was being constructed and I searched for feminist discourses and discourses of sexuality, class and ethnicity.

It was at this stage that I realised that a critique of elements of professional discourse was appearing in some of the co-principal’s accounts and practices more strongly than a critique of new managerialism. And although I saw evidence of some feminist discourses about equality and fairness, male domination and ‘women’s ways of leading,’ a feminist discourse about collectivity and democratic organisation was appearing more strongly in the women’s accounts than the feminist discourse of emancipatory leadership (Strachan, 1997)

that I had been expecting to find. I also found elements of other discourses, such as a class discourse and a Māori discourse of bi-culturalism.

Re-searching and re-viewing literatures

After doing this initial analysis, I turned to re-searching the ‘official’ and academic literatures about educational leadership, feminist literatures about leadership and collective organisation (including Māori analyses). I drafted some reviews of professional, managerial and feminist discourses and analyses of leadership, and also of collective organisation. I also carried out an intensive search of the international literature on co-principalships. (My review of the latter literature was presented in Chapter 2 and I incorporated my review of feminist liberal, radical/cultural and socialist feminisms and leadership research into Chapter 3's theorised discussion of my own intellectual journey towards this study.)

Soon after this however, I realised that the reviews of professional, managerial and feminist collective discourses were not ‘working’ in the ways that I had hoped. That is, they did not tease out sufficiently the discursive elements and categories that I thought were shaping the educational policy and practice contexts in which the co-principalships had emerged. What I wanted to achieve in these pieces was an analysis at the macro levels of the state and educational system that would convey the nature of on-going political struggles over what should ‘count’ as educational leadership in this country. I wanted to capture some of the shifting meaning-making processes involved in the production and maintenance of dominant, or hegemonic discourses, “truth regimes,” as Foucault (1980) called them. In particular, I wanted to analyse how these processes could be seen to be occurring in Aotearoa/New Zealand in the period between the 1970s, when most of the women co-principals were entering teaching, through to the mid 1990s, when they were initiating and working in their co-principalships. In the feminist chapter, I wanted to show how a resistant, or counter discourse of collective organisation had appeared also and was being expressed.

I decided that what might help was more of a Foucauldian genealogical approach (1980). That is, I could problematise taken-for-granted concepts and practices in the present by “moving back and forth from accounts of specific local situations and practices of the past” (Anderson & Grinberg, 1998, p.341). From each of the literatures I had studied, I chose some text examples that were illustrative of the discursive themes I had been identifying in my research material. I carried out a more finely-grained discourse analysis on these text samples to identify in them particular uses of language, concepts and arguments that I was seeing appearing (sometimes in contradictory ways) in the co-principalship narratives. I identified also the nature of both the authorship and the historical contexts and purposes of the text samples I had chosen. These analyses were more useful and I re-shaped my reviews of the discursive formations of professional collaborative leadership and the New Zealand NPM model of market managerialism, and of feminist views of democracy and collectivity, around

them. These discussions are presented in Part II, in Chapters 6 and 7 prior to the case narratives (presented in Chapters 8, 9 and 10).

Before I move on to describing how I extended this discourse analysis into my feminist poststructuralist analyses presented in Part III, I want to briefly discuss some of the difficulties I encountered as I carried out each stage of this work.

Discourse boundaries

Like other discourse analysts, as I worked I had to constantly make decisions about what is a discourse, and what is not, and what elements were more characteristic of one discourse than another. Frazer & Lacey (1993) describe this as deciding on “discourse boundaries.” In my study, the problem of distinguishing discourses related to questions such as, what are the distinct elements of liberal feminism as opposed to radical feminism? Should I analyse liberal and radical feminisms as “*part* of the discourse of feminism, or as ‘hybrid’ feminisms in their own right?” (Frazer & Lacey, 1993, p.17). What distinctions am I identifying between feminist emancipatory leadership and feminist collectivity? Between bureaucratic, democratic and transformative versions of professional collaborative discourse and between these and managerialism? What are the differences between market and New Public Management forms of accountability?

I struggled also with the problem of deciding what is, and is not, a discourse. I thought about the ways that academic theorists can constitute links between power and knowledge, while remaining blind to these effects and the unequal social relations they are maintaining. Did this mean, then, that theories are discourses, in the sense that they constitute social relations of power? (I have experienced, for example, the ways that white masculinist rationalist theorising of educational leadership has occluded the presence, experiences and knowledges of different women, including in Aotearoa/New Zealand, white, Māori, Pacific Island, Chinese and lesbian women.) As I read more of Foucault’s genealogical studies and arguments (which moved away from his archeological ‘pure descriptions’ of discourse that bracketed off questions of power and historical social relations),⁸⁶ I realised that while a particular theory may become part of a discursive formation and power relations, on its own a theory is not a discourse (Middleton, 1993). Foucault (1980) argued that discourse included practices. Thus, public choice theory, principal agency theory and transaction cost analysis are theories that during the late 1980s in Aotearoa/New Zealand, were taken up and used in rationales, practices and justifications for strategic actions that embedded a raft of legislation, rules and managerial practices for governing the public service within an entrepreneurial

⁸⁶ McNay has provided a useful analysis of the limitations of Foucault’s early archeological approach. “In failing to articulate successfully the relation between the archive’s discursive and non-discursive elements, Foucault produces, in fact, a rigid taxonomy of discursive potentialities that says little about how discourse actually functions in a socio-historical context” (McNay, 1994, p.79).

market state (Boston et al., 1996). This example illustrates how discourse can be understood as “theories in action” (Smith, 1992, cited in Middleton, 1992, p.xi).

Let me give a different example however, to illustrate how boundaries between theory and discourse can become blurred. In Chapter 3, for reasons of clarity in the overall development of this thesis’s argument, I mostly referred to liberal, radical/cultural and socialist feminisms as theories or approaches. These can be considered also however, as discourses and part of a feminist discursive field. Although some theoreticians may analyse liberal feminism in terms of it being just an analytical theory, liberal feminist concepts and arguments have been enacted in social and organisational practices over the last decade in Aotearoa/New Zealand. For example, a version of liberal feminist theory has become institutionalised in equal employment opportunity law and its resultant organisational policies, procedures and data collection, analysis and monitoring ‘rules’ (Court, 1994a; Sayers & Tremaine, 1994) - “theory in action” (Smith, 1992).⁸⁷ The opposite movement, of practices themselves constituting and changing discourse can also be illustrated in this example, in that liberal feminist practices have co-opted managerial theory in the development of categories such as EEO strategic plans, EEO reviews.

A Foucauldian understanding of the links between discourse, knowledge and power can help to explain these dynamics. As I discussed in the previous chapter, Foucault (1980) has shown how particular ways of naming and describing ‘reality’ can become embedded in practices that when institutionalised, can become normalised as powerful truth regimes that can act to limit other ways of acting, knowing and indeed, being.

Groups who have the possibility of ensuring that significant aspects of their own reality are reflected in prevailing conceptual categories thereby exercise power over other groups whose situation and experience does not have this legitimacy as expressed in names, concepts and definitions of their reality (Elbaz, 1990, p.15).

Foucault also argued though, that where power is exercised, there too will be resistance and the ever present possibility of the construction of a counter discourse and set of practices. Frazer and Lacey have reminded us that “Social reality is not static. What ‘counts’ as ‘medicine’ or ‘liberalism’ for example, varies over time ... and is the subject of negotiation,

⁸⁷ Socialist feminism has similarly developed both theories (such as the theory about sexual divisions of labour within analyses of unpaid domestic labour and the stratified paid labour market) and practices (such as agitation for the enacting of the *Employment Equity Act, 1993*, which (briefly) required job evaluations to be carried out to ascertain comparative tasks, skill and remuneration levels in areas of men’s and women’s work). Socialist feminism has not been always successful in winning a lasting legitimising of its theoretical concepts and arguments however. For example, the *Employment Equity Act* was rapidly rescinded by the National government, and there have been protracted difficulties in achieving legislation for increased paid parental leave. Socialist feminism could be seen therefore as a marginalised discourse. This is particularly so in the field of educational leadership, where the category of class is not usually problematised. In contrast, liberal and radical feminisms have achieved some recognition for the problematic of gender in this field.

dispute and conflict. We should not therefore expect the boundaries of discourses to be stable or determinate” (1993, p.17).⁸⁸

As I worked my way through these ideas and the difficulties they pose for discourse analysis, I decided that a fine-grained argument about the ‘categorising’ and ‘ordering’ of discursive types was not productive for the aims of my study. In fact, it could be counter-productive in ways similar to those noted in Chapter 1, in relation to the limitations of theoretical taxonomies. I saw that I needed to focus on how discourse *functions* in socio-cultural contexts (McNay, 1994). Thus my re-drafting of Chapters 6 and 7 set out to uncover some of the discursive tensions, contradictions, co-options that have formed the context in which the co-principalships emerged.

After completing this work, I went back to refine and extend my still largely embryonic discourse analyses of the case narratives.

Using discourse analysis tools for a feminist poststructuralist account

For that final stage of analysis, my aims were two fold. Firstly, I wanted to understand whether and how a particular configuration of discourses was opening up sites for the construction of the counter discourse (Hennessy, 1993; Kenway, 1995) of co-principalship. In particular, I wanted identify whether and how dominant discourses were being resisted and challenged, or reconstituted in the spoken and written language and practices of the co-principalships. Secondly, I wanted to explore a feminist poststructuralist analysis of the links between discourse and the constituting of individual subjectivities, collective identities and wider socio-cultural hegemonies.

I decided that neither a very fine-grained linguistic analysis of grammar, transitivity, field and so on, of the kind described by Threadgold (Kamler, 1997), nor an analysis of the part played in meaning construction by non-verbal language features (such as pause and tone) as suggested by Potter and Wetherell (1987), were appropriate for this part of my work. I considered that these techniques could lead me ‘down rabbit warrens’ where I could get lost in a maze of distracting detail. Instead, I kept in mind Elbaz’s focussing questions, and used some of the critical discourse analysis ideas explained by Luke (1995). Luke has maintained that a glossary for critical discourse analysis should include “text, discourse, intertextuality, genre, subjectivity, hegemony and ideology” (1995, p.12). In my approach, I eschewed the Marxist term “ideology” (for reasons I explained in Chapter 4), and instead of looking at genre, I used a focus on story and storying, because I see these as having a particularly useful

⁸⁸ There are thus alternative possible interpretations of whether particular forms of feminism are theory or discourse. For example, liberal feminism could be seen as simply a theory, while EEO is considered as a discursive formation that draws on other theories such critical theories of race and ethnicity. Another interpretation is that both liberal and radical feminisms are discursive formations, while EEO and sexual harassment are “hybrid discourses” (Frazer & Lacey, 1993) that have developed within the wider feminist discursive field.

place in a feminist poststructuralist discourse analysis of subjectivity and collective identity. Let me elucidate this point.

Stories told to researchers are an individual's own constructions and perceptions of events, and as such, they can be a "window" into how an individual is understanding what has occurred (Armstrong, 1997, p.79). Further, though, stories told about daily lives "flow from" cultures and back into them (Plummer, 1995). Seeing experience as inter-subjectively and culturally constructed within fluid and often contradictory discursive fields of power and knowledge can therefore also open up "a window in/on to the complicated workings of discourse" (Armstrong, 1997, p.80). That is, not only can a feminist poststructuralist approach to interpretation of interview texts offer a "more complex and dynamic analysis of subjectivity than previous feminist accounts allowed" (ibid): in stories, we can document experiences as "evidence" for analysis of discursively shaped power/knowledge intersections.

In taking up these points, alongside using the interview transcripts and school documents as texts for my analysis, I also used the descriptions of the co-principals' experiences and practices that I had written during my field work observations and incorporated into my storying of the case narratives. This provided me with material to move into the rather ambiguous area of discourse analysis of action. While my storied descriptions have filtered action through the lense of my own subjectivity, as I analysed these parts of the narratives I was thinking about how what people *do* is a significant component of a discursive field, making up what Foucault (1980) called technologies of power. I found these parts of my analysis the most difficult: it was a little like trying to catch a wisp of steam as it evaporates.

To briefly summarise how I actually did these analyses, I worked within an understanding of discourse as re-occurring wordings and statements that cluster around a theme (Foucault, 1972). I carried out a close reading of each sentence and paragraph in each of the case narratives and I marked words and phrases that were appearing and re-appearing within an individual's accounts, as well as across the accounts of several people and in the documents I had quoted. (Luke (1995, p.13) has termed the former "key words"⁸⁹ and the latter "intertextuality.") As I did this, I noted in the page margins the broader discursive 'categories' that I saw emerging, such as "professional discourse," "gender discourse."

During this work, I was looking for continuities and contradictions between the discourses being expressed at the 'micro' level of the co-principalships and those I had identified within policy documents and academic texts at the more 'macro level of the state and educational academe. I was asking myself, how, meaning in what forms, were academic and political versions of the dominant discourses appearing in the ideas, conversations and strategies of those who were involved in the establishing of the co-principalships? What evidence was there of any subjugated forms of knowledge? If the co-principalships were

⁸⁹ He noted that these construct specialised meanings in a particular field of practice and belief, dynamically shifting according to institutional and community contexts and in interaction with other discourses (Luke, 1995, p.15).

contributing to the building of a counter discourse of shared leadership, how was this being constructed? Was there any evidence of such a counter discourse impacting on the dominant discourse of school leadership as embodied in a single principal/ chief executive who is accountable for all matters of school management? By this time, I understood Foucault's comment that "usually a discursive practice assembles a number of diverse disciplines or sciences or crosses a certain number among them and regroups many of their individual characteristics into a new and occasionally unexpected unity" (Foucault, 1977b, p.200). I was looking therefore for language and practices that might be re-weaving familiar ideas, that is, disconnecting accepted logics and re-codifying them within 'new' resistant forms of meaning.

Hennessy's (1993) discussion of the ways that particular elements of discourse can be de-articulated and re-articulated was helpful to me throughout my analysis.⁹⁰ Her approach to ideology critique and analysis of language practices (in *preconstructed discourse*, *transverse discourse*, and *intradiscourse*) that contribute to the perpetuating of particular dominant versions of and social arrangements in the world were discussed at some length in Chapter 4, and I do not want to repeat that discussion here. Suffice to say that it assisted my thinking about how particular gendered constructions of leadership were appearing and how new formulations might be liberating for some women, yet constraining for others.

I used each of these discourse analysis tools alongside feminist poststructuralist understandings about the ways in which discourses shape both individual forms of subjectivity and our desires about appropriate ways of 'being' (Davies, 1993; MacNaughton, 2000; Weedon, 1987). The latter researchers have shown, for example, how discursive power can be exercised through the invoking of personal pleasure when we 'get right' particular gendered ways of 'being.' Although I was 'freed up' by arguments that there are productive processes of power within interactions and negotiations over meaning, that is, power is not merely a negative force, I was also mindful that within discourse, power can "attach to strategies of domination as well as to those of resistance" (Sawicki, 1991, p.43). Thus I also looked for ways that language interactions might be re-stitching pre-constructed gender discourses back into 'new' ways of leading.

My analyses of the case narratives confirmed for me that three main discourses (professional collaborative, managerial and feminist discourses of leadership and organisation) were indeed woven through the co-principalship initiatives. I felt that I was beginning to

⁹⁰ It also alerted me to areas where critique could be usefully employed throughout this thesis. In Chapter 3 for example, I have looked at how elements of preconstructed essentialist ideas about 'women's nature' as opposed to men's, are threaded into feminist discourses such as cultural feminism's 'women's ways of leading' and a discourse about feminist leadership as different from feminine leadership. Other feminists have demonstrated (without using this term) that the preconstructed is "a powerful site for critical intervention" (Hennessy, 1993, p.78). I look in Chapter 7 at some of their analyses of how a persistent thread of gender opposition has run within and beneath masculinist leadership discourses that have either silenced considerations of women's participation in leadership or have constructed women as 'outside of' these practices. Such feminist critiques of a dominant knowledge system have contributed to the building of "counter-hegemonic knowledges" (Kenway, 1995).

understand, and hopefully, was going to be able to show “how large-scale social discourses are systematically (or for that matter, unsystematically) manifest in everyday talk and writing in local sites” (Luke, 1995, 11). I saw much evidence of what Foucault (1980) identified as the links between discourse, power and knowledge and evidence that supported feminist poststructuralist understandings of the formation of individual subjectivity (Davies, 1997; MacNaughton, 2000; Weedon, 1987), collective identities and socio-cultural hegemonies (Fraser, 1997). I recorded these dynamics in the page margins alongside my identifications of particular discourses (see Appendix 2 for some examples from pp.5 and 9 of the Telford narrative) and wrote copious reflective notes in my research journal (often in the middle of the night, in case I lost a ‘eureka’ insight!)

As I was beginning this work I read Fraser’s (1997) article on a feminist poststructuralist pragmatic approach to discourse. I realised that this could provide me with a useful way to order my analytical chapters. I could organise them into explorations of the discursive shaping of individual co-principal subjectivities, followed by analyses of the significance of inter-subjectivity in the formation of collective co-principal identities, followed by an examination of how wider socio-cultural hegemonies were being expressed, agreed with and/or contested within these collective social practices. Finally, I could focus on issues of governmentality in an examination of the intersections between state level discourse and practices and local school/individual micro level enactments.

This is the structure I have used in Part III, where I present in Chapters 11, 12, 13 and 14 my feminist poststructuralist discourse analyses that draw out also the links between particular discursive formations and social and institutional practices that I argue were significantly shaping how the co-principalship partnerships emerged and developed.

Conclusion: To return to feminist research and a question of politics

My description and justification of the research methodology and methods that I have used show that I have forsworn “the comfort of a single feminist method or feminist epistemology” (Fraser & Nicholson, 1990, p.35) and ventured into some rather ‘choppy’ waters. This study does not focus on a radical/cultural feminist examination of gender relations as the oppression of women by men; nor on an examination of diverse intersections of power between women of different colour, race, class and sexuality and how these are experienced within wider structuring forces. Although women are central in the strategies that are explored, the study does not then “appear to conform to the definition of politicised feminist research which was current in the 80s ... equated with collective feminist action as the only viable form” (Armstrong, 1997, p.70).

Although I wanted to find out whether feminism had had any impact on the women’s initiatives, I did not set out to identify a collective approach to leadership as being feminist,

nor to promote this as an emancipatory practice for women. It was not my aim to focus on whether the co-principals were feminist or not, nor on what could be seen as defining their practices as feminist leadership, as was done in Strachan's (1997) study, and explored by Grace (1995) and Hall (1996). Indeed, I left asking the women about their attitudes towards feminism until the final stages of my fieldwork in each school, so that it would not feature centrally in our interactions and overtly 'colour' the women's responses to me. This may seem to be duplicitous in terms of a feminist 'ethic' of 'ideologically open' research (Lather, 1991). However, as I designed the study to generate material that would enable an analysis of diverse power relations in play around the initiation of a strategy for changing hierarchical forms of leadership, that could in turn contribute to feminist understandings about such power relations and the development of further strategic knowledges that could benefit women, I consider that my stance is justifiable.

In that the research focusses on women's initiatives in three specific and different socio-economic and ethnically mixed sites, it can be seen, however, to be conforming to what has been suggested as a postmodern feminism that is "comparativist rather than universalising ... attuned to changes and contrasts instead of to covering laws ... replace(ing) unitary notions of woman and feminine gender identity with plural and complexly constructed conceptions of social identity" (Fraser & Nicholson, 1990, pp.34-35). Drawing on a Foucauldian approach, it attempts an, albeit brief and limited, genealogy of "local struggles" within and against "the effects of centralising powers" (Foucault, 1980, p.84).

In his commentary on Foucault's writings, Gordon maintained that Foucault's work raises the following kinds of questions.

(1) A genealogical question. What kind of political relevance can enquiries into our past have in making intelligible the 'objective conditions' of our social present, not only in its visible crises and fissures but also the solidity of its unquestioned rationales?

(2) An archeological question. How can the production in our societies of sanctioned forms of rational discourse be analysed, in ways that include an adequate consideration of the material, historical conditions that made them possible as well as drawing out their governing systems of order, appropriation and exclusion?

(3) An ethical question. What kind of relations can the role and activity of the intellectual establish between theoretical research, specialised knowledge and political struggles?

(4) And a related question about power. What 'proper' use can be made of the concept of power, and the mutual enwrapping, interaction and interdependence of power and knowledge? (slightly adapted from Gordon, 1980, p.233).

I have found each of these questions instructive and they have influenced both my research and the shaping of the final form of this thesis. In the process of this study I have also come to have considerable sympathy with Gibson-Graham's view of her role in feminist research. She wrote:

As a feminist researcher, I am coming to understand my political project as one of discursive destabilisation ... Conversations can produce alternative discourses that entail new subject positions, supplementing and supplanting those that currently exist. These new subject positions crystallise power in new sites, enabling novel performances - individual or group interventions in a variety of social locations... In this way the creation of alternative discourses subverts the power of existing discourses and contributes to their destabilisation (1994, p. 220).

In some ways the mid 1990s discursive field of competing characterisations of educational leadership in Aotearoa/New Zealand could be seen as a central 'character' in my doctoral study, though perhaps that image is too strongly reifying of a set of often impalpable forces. It is a significant focus of my analysis however, as the field of power relations in which the action that the study documents occurred. As I explained in the previous chapter, power is conceptualised in this study not as a top down, one-way force of oppression, but, following Foucault, as weaving through both the people and the discourses which constitute their ways of 'being' and acting, as school leaders, policy makers and enforcers, governors, parents, students.

I do not see my study, however, as constructing new subject positions or 'enabling novel performances' as did Gibson-Graham (1994, p.220). Rather I see it as documenting and analysing women's resistances and agency, in partnership sometimes with men, and mostly with each other, in their practices of a new form of primary principalship. In this way, I see the study endorsing the importance of understandings of inter-subjectivity and inter-dependence in human interactions. My hope is that it will contribute to our understandings of how women and men can engage together in building strategic knowledges that will assist us to bring about change towards a more just and inclusive society. As such, this study can be seen as feminist research that is political.

Lather called for research designs that would allow both the researcher and the researched to be in the words of the feminist singer-poet, Cris Williamson, "the changer and the changed" (1991, p.56). This research has certainly changed this researcher. It remains to be seen whether 'the researched' have also been changed and whether the above goals can be achieved.

PART II

CONTINUITIES AND CONTRADICTIONS:

THE DISCURSIVE CONTEXT

AND THE CO-PRINCIPALSHIP NARRATIVES

Apparatuses of power are always liable to forms of re-appropriation, reversability and re-utilisation, not only in tactical realignments from 'above,' but also in counter-offensives from 'below' (Gordon, 1980, p.256).

It is usually the case that a discursive practice assembles a number of diverse disciplines or sciences or crosses a certain number among them and regroups many of their individual characteristics into a new and occasionally unexpected unity (Foucault, 1977b, p.200).

The years between 1970 and the mid 1990s, when the women who are the centre of this research entered teaching, developed their philosophies of education and leadership and initiated their co-principalships, were a time of increasing discursive struggle over the nature and purposes of education and educational leadership in this country. Within wider political discourses of social democratic liberalism (the 'liberal-left') and market liberalism (the 'new right'), two 'mainstream' discourses of professional collaborative leadership and neo-liberal managerialism came into 'collision,' with the latter winning ascendancy in the reform of educational administration in the late 1980s. The 'new' managerialism was embedded into a string of education policies and legislation that shaped the conditions for teachers' work during the 1990s - and the context for the emergence of the three primary school co-principalships.

For several reasons, the word shaping is important here. Policy making at the level of the state is not a simple linear and neutral process of formulating guidelines for the organisation and work of a particular field. Policy statements are the outcome of debates over political purposes and social meanings in specific economic, political and institutional settings (Codd, 1994). As such, they are part of social struggles over "the ensemble of rules according to which the true and the false are separated" and over which discourse will prevail (Foucault, 1980, p.132). Further, policy making is a discursive practice that *produces* officially sanctioned forms of truth and knowledge (Ball, 1993, p.14). In making possible some ways of seeing and speaking reality while obscuring others, policy making and policy statements are therefore not only linked to the exercise of power (Codd, 1994): they also shape subject positions and possible ways of being (for example, ways of being a principal, a teacher, a school trustee). Thus, struggles over what meaning will 'count' in policy and legislation

involve also struggles over how identities, needs and relationships should be named and thus constituted, or “brought into being” (Yeatman, 1990, p.154).

In the first two chapters in this central part of the thesis, I use these Foucauldian tools of analysis to discuss educational administration in Aotearoa/New Zealand as a discursive field of struggle over how educational leadership should be defined, practised and controlled. I do not attempt to provide a full genealogy of the historical conditions that led to the emergence of the discourse of market managerialism in education. For my later analyses of the co-principalships, however, it is important to convey a sense of the contested nature of the conditions that both enabled and constrained their initiation and establishment. In Chapter 6, therefore, I focus firstly on the ways that social democratic discourses of professional collaborative leadership were being constituted during the 1970s, 80s and 90s. I then discuss debates within and between these constructions and those of the neo-liberal market managerialism introduced in the re-structuring of the educational system. Following this, in Chapter 7 I examine what could be called an area of subjugated knowledges (Foucault, 1980), those of feminist critiques of hierarchical authority and leadership and a feminist discourse of collective organisation. This chapter’s analyses link with those presented earlier in Chapter 3 and provide my interpretations of the ways in which feminism has become variously significant in this country, in both public and educational leadership, including co-principalships.

In these two chapters I am aiming to provide discourse analyses that work at the macro level of state and educational system policy, as well as at the level of academic analyses of institutional practices. I have selected some text samples that are illustrative of the ways that particular discursive themes were being constituted and debated, focussing on uncovering the discursive tensions, contradictions and co-options that have significantly impacted on the initiation and trajectories of the three primary school co-principalships.

Then, in Chapters 8, 9 and 10, I present the three co-principalship case narratives. Each of these begin with a description of the school and its staff, in particular, the women who initiated the co-principalships. Accounts of how the proposals for sharing the leadership were developed, discussions and events that led to their appointments, negotiations around their contracts and how the women developed their own models of co-principalship follow. Issues that became significant in each school are detailed and an epilogue that explains the current situation completes each narrative.

These three chapters provide in narrative form, descriptive answers for the first set of research questions that I developed for this study. That is: Why did the three primary school co-principalships emerge as they did, going against the grain of ‘commonsense’ understandings of leadership and dominant theories and regulations for ‘efficient’ school management? How did they evolve? What issues emerged? To what extent, and for what reasons, were the shared leaderships continued or discontinued? What, if any, part was gender playing in influencing the initiation and trajectories of these primary school co-principalships?

The narratives describe the ideas and events that were seen as significant by the co-principals, other staff, board members and, in the case of Hillcrest Avenue School, by teacher trainees, parents and some of the children. I have also woven into each account comments from my interviews with people in the education agencies. Extracts from documents held in the schools (such as board and staff meeting minutes, the principals' 'To Do' Book, school review surveys, Education Review Office reports, curriculum planning documents and so on) are used to illustrate or expand points. Hillcrest Avenue School was the first to establish its co-principalship and this successful co-principalship is significant for this research. I begin with its narrative and then present the Telford School and St Mary's School narratives, which highlight different issues that contributed to both those school boards deciding to revert to a sole principalship.

My purpose in each of these three chapters is to present rich and detailed material that wherever possible lets the participants speak for themselves. Thus, within the constraints of available space and the focus of this research, I have used many quotes from the interview transcripts and school documents. Quotations that are taken from interviews with individuals (all of whom have been given pseudonyms) are referenced by the interviewee's name or role, the page number of the transcript of a single interview, preceded by the number of an interview if there were more than one with that person. After the first mention of a single interview, only the transcript page number is given subsequently.

In Part III, I will interpret the co-principalship case narratives in the light of the Chapter 6 and 7 discussions and my feminist poststructuralist toolkit. I will show how the co-principals were variously drawing on often conflicting discursive elements and the gaps that those contradictions exposed, to formulate their own counter, or resistant discourse (Hennessy, 1993; Kenway, 1995) of shared school leadership, and their own versions of a 'new' subject position in this country - that of a co-principal.

CHAPTER 6

DISCOURSES OF PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP AND NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT (NPM)

Introduction

Theoretical concepts of leadership and management do not “float freely in the textbooks of educational administration or in the prescriptions of technical primers of school management” (Grace, 1995, p.26). They are embedded in and emerge out of shifting historical and cultural contexts, in which competing discursive versions of ‘what counts’ as knowledge circulate. As such, the conceptualising of leadership and management is part of a wider “general politics or régime of truth” in which normalising discourses are both produced and contested (Foucault, 1980, p.131). In this chapter, I identify and discuss shifting constructions of and contestations over educational administration and leadership in Aotearoa/ New Zealand. My aim is to draw out particular socio-political contexts and discursive elements that I identified during my research fieldwork as significant in the emergence and trajectories of the three primary school co-principalships.

In his analysis of the discursive formations of school leadership in the UK, Grace (1995) identified an educational professional collaborative leadership discourse as constructed within the language and practices of post second world war social democracy. The latter aimed for social reconstruction that would provide better public services and increased democracy and social justice for all citizens. Grace described the “ideal leader type” that was seen as needed in Britain’s public service of the time, as “professionally expert (an example of meritocratic success), committed to innovation (a modernizer) and consultative in operation (a team leader)” (Grace, 1995 p. 30).

In New Zealand’s post-war development of a Keynesian welfare state, some similar public service aims and constructions of educational professionalism developed within egalitarian, public good conceptions of education (Fraser, 1939; Department of Education, 1978; Renwick, 1979; Gordon, 1992). Educational administration was seen in this context as “embodying values of consensus and social justice” (Codd, 1993, p.154) and educational leadership was understood as practised by the teaching profession as a whole (Department of Education, 1976). In a rather unique (by world standards) close partnership with the national Department of Education, teachers contributed to the development, as well as to the implementation, of national educational curriculum and teaching service policy (Capper & Munro, 1990; Gordon, 1992). Gordon has pointed out that while there were democratic advantages in this professionalism, in that it enabled teachers to expand their role beyond teaching and enabled civil society to make some demands of state education, there were also

some limitations. Up until the 1970s the teaching profession was little motivated to “investigate and solve the structural bases of social inequalities of class, gender and ethnicity” (Gordon, 1992, p.26). It was not until the 1970s and 80s, that the education system began responding to calls from women and Māori in particular, for changes in curriculum, and to a lesser degree, in educational leadership representation.

In these contexts, the ‘good school principal’ in Aotearoa/New Zealand could be described as very similar to the ‘good headteacher’ in Britain: a gifted teacher and leader amateur, who was a competent organiser and administrator, consultative and focused on pedagogy and people (Grace, 1995, pp.34-5). Professional educational leadership during the 1970s and early 80s in Aotearoa/New Zealand, was also influenced, however, by various management theories and approaches ‘imported’ from overseas, especially from the US and the UK. Blase and Anderson (1995, p.141) have noted that in the US, although the principalship began as the notion of “principal teacher,” through the influence of scientific management, principals became increasingly distanced from teachers and more involved in administrative concerns. In the UK, Grace has described how management discourse and practices were introduced in Britain within the comprehensive school reforms of the 1960s and 70s, which resulted in larger schools and an argued need for enhanced management strategies. A new literature of education management was created by educational researchers and local headteachers (“gifted amateurs”) who created training manuals that, among other things, “legitimated concepts such as ‘the senior management team,’ ‘management by objectives,’ the ‘management of human resources’” (Grace, 1995, p.35). The consultative version of bureaucratic school management which emerged in Britain was theoretically informed by human relations concerns. This “attempted to realise notions of professional collegiality, consultative management and shared decision making” and to more fully involve community members in partnership with school professionals (ibid, p.38). Grace concluded, however, that limitations in achieving the broad ranging socially democratic goals for school leadership (for example, individual headteacher styles could endorse autocracy and there was reluctance on the part of some professionals to enable greater community involvement in their work) provided the conditions for New Right ideological attacks on state education in the UK and the introduction there of market forms of managerialism (p.39).

Grace’s analysis helps to illuminate the ways that professional school leadership was being constituted and challenged during the 1970s, 80s and 90s in Aotearoa/New Zealand. In the first part of this chapter I focus on professional constructions of leadership discourse. I analyse some Department of Education documents and academic texts, to show how different educational professional leadership discourses have constructed teamwork within the language of collaborative planning, shared decision-making and collegiality. I will demonstrate however, that a (sometimes masculinist) hierarchy and elitism, and a professional/‘lay’ divide have remained threaded through the prevailing collegial, collaborative democratic professional discourses.

In the second part of the chapter, I draw on the writing of academics Boston, Martin, Pallot and Walsh (1996) and other scholars to trace how, during the 1980s, politicians, in alliance with powerful economic interest groups in the Treasury and the Business Roundtable, were working to create an education market ‘regulated’ by both competition and legal managerial forms of accountability. I describe how particular discursive elements can be identified in the New Zealand model of public management (NPM) that was imposed across the whole of the state sector in the late 80s. Then, in the third part of the chapter, I outline the main arguments of review reports, policy documents and legislation for educational administration, which were produced as part of the consequent restructuring of educational administration. These discussions will demonstrate how in the NPM discourse in education, the school principal is required to be a chief executive, who will rationalise staffing, finances, plant and curriculum offerings to make the school more efficient, effective and competitive within an education market environment. I will show also, how the skills and aptitudes endorsed for school leadership are those associated with economic, technical and rational forms of management (Codd, 1990). These analyses are followed in the fourth part of the chapter, by my discussion of professional educators’ wide ranging criticisms and resistances to the rationales and practices of what Peters and Marshall (1996) have called the “busnocratic” discourse of corporate school leadership.

In the final section, I present a discourse analysis of a report entitled *Professional Leadership in Primary Schools*, which was published by the Education Review Office in 1996. My aim here is to show how elements of both professional collaborative leadership discourses and market managerial discourse have been incorporated into the 1990s state discourse on educational administration.

As these discussions are read, it must be remembered that until 1989, within the centralised bureaucratic education system in Aotearoa/New Zealand,⁹¹ primary teachers and schools were positioned differently to secondary teachers and schools. There was, for example, a different promotion system: Department of Education officers inspected and graded primary school teachers, while secondary teacher advancement was supervised by their heads of department and principals. Primary schools have also traditionally encouraged and enjoyed much closer relationships between teachers and parents than secondary schools. In the reviews and restructuring of educational administration in the late 1980s, however, primary and secondary school teachers were treated largely as a homogeneous group. I have chosen therefore, to discuss in this chapter text samples that illuminate views of schooling structures and practices that have been commonly applied to both sectors.

⁹¹ The education system was centrally funded and governed by national Education Acts and regulations which gave inspection powers and advice/support roles to the national Department of Education. As I have noted, the Department was responsible also, in partnership with teacher professionals, for initiating and supporting developments in curriculum and pedagogy. While primary schools were administered by regional Educational Boards, each secondary school had their own elected parent Board of Governors. The latter formed the ‘prototype’ for parent boards of trustees in the *Tomorrow’s Schools* local school management model.

Three versions of professional leadership discourse

Over the last three decades in Aotearoa/New Zealand, professional school leadership has been variously constituted within educational versions of bureaucratic,⁹² cultural⁹³ and democratic ideas and practices. In the 1970s the principal was constructed as primarily an instructional leader who had administrative responsibilities (professional discourse). During the 1980s, a bureaucratic version of this discourse became more prominent. This positioned the principal at the head of senior and middle management structures, working collaboratively with staff. More latterly in the 1990s, in a 'hybrid' version of that discourse (Frazer & Lacey, 1993), the principal has been conceived as a builder of a school's shared vision and culture, whose role is to transform teaching and learning through encouraging teachers' collaborative reflection on their practice (transformative, cultural management discourse). In both the bureaucratic and transformative/cultural management discourses, the principal has been positioned as the school's communicator, negotiator and figurehead in relations with the school community, with community partnership configured as professional consultation with parents, or reporting to them. Although these leadership discourses have largely normalised a split between professionals in the school and parents in the community, a more democratic discourse of school/community partnership has been in circulation also throughout these years, as the following discussion will show.

A professional democratic discourse: *Towards Partnership* (1976)

In the Department of Education review report, *Towards Partnership* (1976), a democratic discourse was promoted in arguments for an increased involvement of parents and students in school decision making. Such arguments have surfaced periodically during the last three decades, running against the grain of the more hierarchical bureaucratic and managerial discourses. I want to show, however, how elements of a professional discourse that constructs a professional/lay divide, have weakened these arguments. My discussion will also draw out

⁹² Ball (1987) has succinctly defined bureaucratic educational leadership. Organisational control is position-oriented rather than person-oriented and information and influence are constructed as flowing through "formal channels and structures ... with duties and responsibilities fixed and limited at each level" (p.101). The principal is constituted as "a chief executive... surrounded and supported by a senior management team ... each with delegated areas of responsibility specified in written terms of reference and job descriptions," working within a formal structure of meetings and committees, which have written terms of reference, an agenda and recorded minutes (ibid). The principal relates to the rest of the staff through this team, often through memoranda or formal announcements. Teaching and learning goals for the school are set out in terms of aims and objectives, against which achievements can be measured.

⁹³ Cultural as used here, refers to organisational culture (Schein, 1985). This perspective examines cultures that form within group interactions and the sets of values, beliefs and practices that develop and influence 'the way we do things around here.'

how leadership in education was being understood at this time, as the domain of all teachers, not just the principal.

Towards Partnership was the report of a review of secondary education produced for the Department of Education by a team of predominantly education professionals - eight school principals, four tertiary educators, three school board members and three Departmental officers, along with three 'community' members.⁹⁴ This team investigated participation in school decision making and the conditions for enhancing community involvement in schools. Their report supported devolution of central authority, power and responsibility to local schools (Department of Education, 1976, p.78).

The reviewers strongly supported teachers' professionalism, to the extent that I could find only one specific mention of the subject position of principal: "In large secondary schools, the principal and senior staff spend much of their time on administration" (p.79). The current divide between principals as managers of teacher workers was not evident at all in their report: indeed, they wanted all teachers to have "increased training in management skills" (ibid). The main concern though, was to promote democratic learning partnerships between teachers, students and the school community. The reviewers noted that "Although the teacher has a leadership role, he (sic) is also a partner in learning ... To be both leader and colleague is difficult but this is the role expected of the teacher" (p.62).

Thus, unlike the Treasury report of 1987, which characterised education as weakened from "provider capture," the *Towards Partnership* report did not 'knock' teachers or teacher collegiality and participation in decisions such as those "affecting their supply, service and conduct" (p.75).⁹⁵ Teachers were implicitly criticised, however, for the ways that parent participation had been "confined" to matters of little consequence. The centralising of most decision making in the Department of Education was identified also as a factor militating against the growth of good relationships between schools, parents and communities. The reviewers argued that school professionals needed to find ways to build closer partnerships with "the community" ("lay" people). Towards that end, they advocated that "school boards need to report to the local community, if they are to look after and transmit the interests of that community" (p.36).

It was further argued that democratic processes of collaboration and consultation needed to be extended beyond involving parents, to include students in the running of the school and in the development of school curriculums, within the national guidelines (p.37). The reviewers stated that, "If the school is to become a learning community, students must be given responsibility and trust" (p.63), through involving them in such things as choosing options, planning programmes, deciding on rules and discipline. Echoing (though not

⁹⁴ From UEB Industries, the Catholic Women's League, Trade Union. Of the 21 members of this review team, only 5 were women.

⁹⁵ It is somewhat ironical then, that parts of their argument that individual school autonomy should be encouraged, foreshadowed the restructuring of education in 1989 that eroded teacher professionalism.

knowingly) ideas being promoted about this time in Norway, during the initiation there of shared school leaderships, the reviewers argued that:

schools should do more to foster democratic values... Students need to know that group policy is not just the sum of its various separate members, but something worked out co-operatively... with a corporate responsibility to democratic decisions (p.64).

For this thesis's later analysis of how the primary school co-principals negotiated (and in some cases, tried to reconstruct), varying notions of shared decision making and democratic involvement of different communities, it is worth looking at how 'community' was being represented by the authors of *Towards Partnership*. They defined it as meaning "those people living in a geographic area together with those who, for various purposes, spend a considerable amount of time in that area, and those people who share social relationships and cultural values" (p.29). It was also pointed out however, that New Zealand society was "pluralistic," with "communities that are not homogeneous (but) composed of people with differing ideas, values and hopes" (p.31). These conflicting consensus and pluralist meanings were threaded through the report's central arguments, giving rise to some contradictions and rather tangled arguments in places. For example, while advocating increased community participation in schools, the reviewers were concerned that this "lay" involvement should not threaten teachers' professionalism, nor under-mine their confidence (Department of Education, 1976, p.31). They wrote, "We do not accept that parents and the community should make professional decisions about education that affect what is taught and how it is taught" (ibid).

Asking who is speaking in this part of the text can alert us to how a professional form of power was being exercised here. The majority of the reviewers had professional affiliations and it would seem fair to assume that their view prevailed as a consequence of an exercising of their institutionally based power to define the terms of any debate over the nature of a professional/lay divide. It needs to be noted here that during the 1970s educators were engaging in political struggles over their claims to be a profession. Although it was acknowledged in the Marshall Report on the registration and discipline of teachers, that teachers were employees of the public service who had a "captive clientele" because of the compulsory nature of education (Department of Education, 1978, section 3.2), teaching was being claimed as an area of specialised service by those who possess a body of expert knowledge. The latter, it was argued (by both Department of Education officers and teachers) gave educators the right and the responsibility to regulate and discipline their members within professional codes of ethical practice (Department of Education, 1978; Renwick, 1979). Struggles between teachers and the state over these matters and more latterly, teacher accountability, continued throughout the 1980s and 1990s, culminating in the attempts by a coalition of the state and business interests, within the restructuring of educational administration, to re-regulate control over educational provision and workforces (Capper & Munro, 1990; Gordon, 1992; Robertson, 1999). These struggles over the meanings and practices of teachers' professionalism, which include struggles over what should count as

professional leadership, are a significant part of the context in which the co-principalships emerged.

It was the struggles between teachers and parents that were the main focus of the *Towards Partnership* report, however. In a section sub-titled, *Who speaks for the community?* the reviewers noted that teachers often faced “conflicting pressures from active minorities ... and the most vocal group does not necessarily represent community opinion” (p.31).⁹⁶ The writers were of the opinion that it was partly as a consequence of these pressures, that parent participation in school decision making had been confined to “matters that are often inconsequential or of low level assistance” (p.34).

It is interesting to think about who is being silenced in this part of the reviewers’ discussions of “the community.” Silence has been identified by feminist and indigenous researchers as a significant factor in the dis-empowerment of minority groups (Court, 1989; Smith, 1999; Waitere-Ang, 1999; Weis & Fine, 1993). In *Towards Partnership*, a rather complex silencing dynamic can be detected in the way that some parents were marked as “vocal minorities” in contrast to those described as the “inarticulate majority.” It is implied here, that by claiming attention for their own issues the minorities were somehow disenfranchising the majority. This construction obscures, however, how the assumptions and opinions of a dominant group do not actually need to be articulated: they are largely normalised, taken for granted as ‘the way things are’ (Gramsci, 1971; Johnston, 1998).

Yet, on a closer reading of the report’s constructions of the community as made up of either “vocal minorities” or an “inarticulate majority,” all the parents seem to be ‘damned if they did and damned if they did not’ speak up. As members of vocal minorities they were construed to be applying pressure to ‘get their own way’ and as members of the ‘silent’ majority, they were judged as standing back and not taking part. The reviewers advocated that parents needed to be awakened to their responsibility to become involved. However, in discussing teachers as professionals and parents and community members as “lay” people, the report positions teachers as superior in status and knowledge to parents. Thus, a “lay/professional” divide that discursively legitimates a view that parents should keep out of areas of teachers’ ‘expert’ work, was being re-inscribed, despite the stated views that a partnership should be developed.

What I have been trying to show in this part of my analysis, is how links between knowledge and power can be forged through discursive “dividing practices” that disenfranchise particular groups (Foucault, 1980; Waitere-Ang, 1999). The case narratives will illustrate how the professional/lay divide posed difficulties for some parents in the co-principal schools and my later analyses will open up how this discourse of difference can be problematic for the development of more democratic and fruitful teacher/parent partnerships in education. My discussion here has also drawn attention to the ways that groups designated as minorities

⁹⁶ This statement incorporates moves from a pluralistic to a consensus view of community, without problematising the inherent contradictions.

can be presented as potentially disrupting a so-called community consensus and harmony. Social differences of gender, class, race and ethnicity, and the ways that such factors may have been impacting on struggles between parents and teachers over decision making in schools, were not considered at all in this report however, and so those differences were ‘counted out’ of consideration: that is, subjugated, as Foucault (1980) termed it. This supports Gordon’s (1992) claim that teacher professionalism was not adequately giving attention to social inequalities in their communities. Issues of social inequality constructed around the divides of class and ethnicity emerged as particularly significant in my research at Telford School, though the threads of gendered inequalities emerge also in the narratives of the other two co-principalships.

The influence in education of a liberal feminist discourse can be detected, however, in the comments in *Towards Partnership* that the under-representation of women in leadership positions was “reinforcing sex stereotypes for students who do not see women making important administrative decisions in the school community or in education generally” (Department of Education, 1976, p.7). Two pages of descriptions of the constraints on women’s promotion anticipated the findings of the later research into teacher career and promotions (Whitcombe, 1982). It is worth noting here that Ros Heinz, an active feminist educator, was a member of the review team. A normalised masculinist view of school leadership persisted in the report, however, in that the principal and teachers were still referred to as “he” throughout the report.

Professional bureaucratic discourse: *Management and Administration* (1984)

It is interesting to compare the tone and arguments of the previous report with a document about management and decision making produced by the Department of Education nearly a decade later. This document presents a ‘snapshot’ of how the work of principals and middle managers in schools was being constituted by the Department of Education within a more explicitly bureaucratic discourse. *Management and Administration* (1984) illustrates how this discourse was incorporating the collegial team management and management by objectives approaches, which were noted by Grace (1995) in his analysis of the UK discursive constructions of social democratic professional leadership. Significantly, there is no mention of teacher leadership at all in *Management and Administration*: the principal was constituted as the school leader. The document is also interesting for the ways it reveals that little movement had been made in Aotearoa/New Zealand (as in the UK) towards breaking down the lay/professional divide in school decision making.

Produced by two (male) inspectors in the Department of Education, in collaboration with a seconded secondary school principal, *Management and Administration* was intended as a management training resource document that inspectors could use during their work with teachers in schools. Its purpose was to help them “to effect change towards improving school

management and developing the professional expertise of those involved,” by “creating awareness of ‘key areas’” in the work of management and administration (Department of Education, 1984,p.2). The resource document included an overview and sets of questions for each of the “key areas considered important in school management and administration” (p.2). These were listed as “communication, environment and climate, professional development, resources, school development and goals” (p.3).

A bureaucratic view of management is clear in the way the principal was positioned as heading up senior and middle management personnel. A top-down pyramidal chain of communication and control from principal → senior management → heads of department → teachers, was unproblematically noted as the structure of an “effective” school. Lines of communication were formalised, detailed as passing “upwards, downwards and across the school” through “meetings, newsletters, manuals, assemblies.” Within this bureaucratic hierarchy, job descriptions were advocated as necessary “to clarify roles and assist the delegation of tasks.”

A ‘softer’ human resource management ‘ hybrid’ of bureaucratic discourse appeared in statements that middle and senior managers were expected to be exercising with “their” staff, skills such as being able to listen, observe, build relationships and morale, develop self esteem, promote equality and job satisfaction. School working relationships were constituted in this way as collaborative, with both heads of department (middle) and senior managers (assistant and deputy principals) described as “working with” others within the staffing structures. In the further specifying of “instructional leadership” as “the development of others” through “in-class supervision ... in-service training ... and observation opportunities” (pp.4, 9-10), elements of a specifically educational version of bureaucratic management discourse also appeared.

A liberal equal opportunities discourse (Middleton, 1992; Sayers & Tremaine, 1994) was articulated alongside the previous discursive strands, in statements that managers should work for the inclusion of “marginalised groups,” and in questions about whether managers’ communication methods “show cultural sensitivity” and whether their management practices “acknowledge equality of opportunity.” While these phrases indicate a recognition of the existence of unequal power relations, the challenge to these does not go beyond toleration of difference and an acceptance that equal access to opportunities is beneficial. As I noted in Chapter 3, an EEO discourse does not enable an argument for increased democratic decision making through a dismantling of structural hierarchies, (an argument that was proposed in the Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship - see Chapter 8) as it is framed within assumptions that equality can be achieved by a re-ordering within the given hierarchies and structures.

While *Management and Administration* positioned the principal at the top of a hierarchy of control within the school, it also constituted the principal as a co-ordinator of “collaboration between professionals and communication with their school community.” On first reading, the last statement sounds rather like the version of democratic discourse

articulated in *Towards Partnership*. In *Management and Administration* however, the professional/lay divide was not problematised at all. On a closer reading it is clear that collaboration was perceived as occurring “within” the school between school professionals, with only communication “from” them “to” the community. In this relationship, the principal was positioned as a negotiator and public relations expert, who needed to “listen, be courteous and balance the rights and needs of minorities and majority” and to “explain decisions” to parents and the community (p.40). In these ways, the community was placed outside of the school. Underpinning a silence about any involvement of parents in the making of decisions, are assumptions that a professional/lay divide was natural and neutral and that the principal was in a legitimately hierarchical position of authority to mediate this divide.

In this document, the Department of Education can be seen to be positioning itself in a collegial relationship alongside teachers and principals. The writers envisaged that *Management and Administration* would be given, during “school report visits ... to staff, who will, if time is short, respond in writing to areas in it that strike responsive chords” (p.3). The final phrase indicates a level of choice for school personnel that was certainly not part of the 1990s’ Education Review Office auditing brief. (I explain this later.) The collegial character of the relationship that existed in the early 80s between some Department of Education inspectors and teachers in their liaison schools, can be illustrated by the following personal anecdote. In 1984, when I was working as an assistant principal in a rural co-educational secondary school, during a school inspection I asked an inspector what the Department was developing in relation to management training and review. We talked about the management by objectives approach and a week later, I received *Management and Administration* in the mail, with a note that it was at that stage confidential, but that I might find it useful. This kind of collegiality was to be characterised by Treasury officials in 1987 as “provider capture” and approaches to improving the quality of teaching and management within a new right managerial discourse of linear and legal forms of accountability were argued by them to be necessary to break down these kinds of “interest group” collaborations. It was these arguments that made the initiation of the co-principalships difficult, as the case narratives will show.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the rising currency in education in the UK and the US of business forms of managerialism during these years, that discourse also made an appearance in *Management and Administration* (Grace, 1995; Korba, 1982). It was stated that “specific training in management skills is as much needed for educational managers as it is for managers in industry” (p.37). Ball (1987) has pointed out similarities between the hierarchically ordered divisions of roles and control lines in bureaucratic and business or industrial models of school managerialism that work within “the structures, relationships and processes of the factory” (Ball, 1987, p.96). There are some differences though, between the management by objectives approach being promoted by the Department of Education in Aotearoa/New Zealand in 1984 and the business matrix, or split roles approach, that was suggested for some co-principalships in the US in the early 1980s.

As I explained in Chapter 2, it was argued in the US that the instructional leadership and administrative management tasks of principalship should be *split* between dual co-principals (Thurman, 1969; Shockley & Smith, 1981; Korba, 1982). In the 1984 Department of Education's suggestions for a professional management by objectives approach, however, the *links* between teaching and management were emphasised, not the divisions and distinctions between the two kinds of work. Thus an educative management was proposed, in statements such as: "There is overlap between the skills you use in managing a classroom and those required to manage aspects of a school's operation"; "the prime task of school management is to improve the quality of teaching and learning" (p.37); "the student is always the first concern" (p.1). Although within the new managerialism in Aotearoa/New Zealand, these links were later severed,⁹⁷ in two of the co-principalships, the linking of teaching and management was a specific goal, and this was developed in practice in all three.

The co-principalships also prioritised the place of values in educational leadership. This element of professional work was not really highlighted in *Management and Administration*, although it did note that there were limitations in focussing on only the structural aspects of management. It was stated that "To be complete, any approach must also focus on the ends to which school administrative structures are directed, the values of the school - those beliefs and practices that make one school more effective than another" (Department of Education, 1984, p.2).

Thus, this document illustrates the kinds of intersecting and sometimes contradictory discourses that were in circulation in the field of educational leadership and management during the 1980s: professional, bureaucratic, managerial and the beginnings of what I call a cultural discourse of education management. (All these discourses are evident in the case narratives of this study.) This document was both reflecting some existing school administration practices and contributing to the development of new ones. Here too, we can see similarities to what was happening overseas, where academics were collaborating with school professionals to constitute 'new' discourses of educational leadership (Grace, 1995). Ideas advanced in *Management and Administration* were incorporated by the Department of Education into introductory pamphlets on school management that were made widely available during the mid 1980s and which drew on the academic writing and in-service training work of Tom Prebble and David Stewart. I look at this area next.

⁹⁷ In the New Zealand model of NPM roles were split across the whole education system. Divisions were instigated between those who make policy (the Ministry of Education), those who govern implementation (boards of trustees), those who manage implementation (principals), those who carry out the actual work of implementation (teachers) and those who audit implementation (ERO).

Transformative leadership/culture management: *The Reflective Principal* (1993)

A collaborative version of leadership that can transform leadership/followership relations is the heart of an organisational culture management approach which has become increasingly influential during the last decade, both here and overseas (Angus, 1989; Carlson, 1996; Gronn, 1996; Stewart & Prebble, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1991). In this section, I want to show how both bureaucratic and managerial discursive elements persist within constructions of this educational leadership approach in Aotearoa/New Zealand. I have chosen for my discussion, some texts that were familiar to the women who developed the co-principalships. Indeed, most of them attended courses on developing reflective practices in school leadership run by David Stewart and had his books in their school staff libraries.

Stewart was a practising school principal who became a university academic/consultant. He collaborated with academic Tom Prebble, in the writing of three influential books which were included in both university courses and practical training courses for educational professionals aspiring to, or working in, school leadership positions. The stated aims in the first book, *School Development: Strategies for Effective Management* (Prebble & Stewart, 1981) and its sequels, *Making it Happen* (Stewart & Prebble, 1985) and *The Reflective Principal: School Development Within a Learning Community* (Stewart & Prebble, 1993), were to provide a “training resource for ... practising school administrators ... a set of good working theories, conceptual tools which can be applied in everyday work” (Prebble & Stewart, 1981). The first two books described how a principal could manage a whole school developmental approach to on-going improvement through involving staff in an action research cycle of investigation, intervention, reflection and action. In the third book, *The Reflective Principal*, Stewart and Prebble acknowledged that many schools could not muster the level of commitment and energy required and they narrowed the focus on to what they saw as the central roles of the school principal in school improvement.

In *The Reflective Principal*, the principal was constituted as a transformative leader (Burns, 1978),⁹⁸ whose work was pivotal to the success of the self managing school. Stewart and Prebble described the transformative leader’s role as follows: to generate a shared vision for the school learning community and to build staff’s critical reflection on practice (Schon, 1987; Sergiovanni, 1991; Smyth, 1989b) and mutual accountability (Kraus, 1980) through involving them in participatory decision making (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1984). In this role, the principal should identify a set of core values, beliefs and practices and socialise teachers into these, so that organisational members will develop a “passionate commitment”

⁹⁸ Burns (1978) defined transformational leadership as occurring when “one or more persons engages with another in such a way that the leaders and the followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality... working for common purposes ... (having) a transforming effect on both” (p.20). Stewart and Prebble cite Sergiovanni’s pithy distinction between transactional leadership, as “what gets rewarded gets done” and transformational leadership as “what is rewarding gets done” (Sergiovanni, 1992, pp.41-45) to support their argument for the latter approach.

to the core culture, transforming it into a learning community (1993, pp. 188-9). Careful management of the school's culture by the principal was argued to be an effective and necessary way to achieve this work (Schein, 1985). Some "explicit, structured and shared" activities were suggested, including aspects of the writers' own earlier school development model alongside techniques of total quality management such as quality learning circles (Stewart & Prebble, 1993, p.121).

While the development of a learning community is a laudable aim and the accounts of transformational leadership endorsed shared planning and decision making, symbolic hierarchy was normalised in Prebble and Stewart's portrayal of the principal. For example, they stated that:

(In a very real sense, the principal personifies the school, its culture and its mission. In this respect, the principal is like the decorated prow of a ceremonial canoe: at the head of the institution, showing the way, leading by example and extremely visible. The figurehead role may ... convey an aura of wider authority on school leadership ... as a trusted community leader (p.191).

Further, despite Stewart and Prebble's disclaimer that "The study of control takes us not into the technology of domination and manipulation, but towards the values and practices ... of participative management" (p.43), their presentation of "strong leadership" as culture management advocated what are, in effect, manipulative strategies. They stated that "careful management of communication networks within the school will be a key tactic" in achieving the goals of transformative leadership (p.190). Principals were advised to use his/her "unique position, to *channel* communication and debate" (p.190, my emphasis), to act as an "interpreter," and to encourage all members of the school "to relate all their plans, expectations and perceptions to their understanding of the core culture" (ibid). Neither the implicit hierarchy, nor potential for manipulation within transformative leadership discourse was problematised by Stewart and Prebble, however. Indeed, they argued that culture management was a "useful mechanism" for the principal to develop cohesion, continuity and agreement in their school, where "norms of behaviour are established, rituals and taboos are adhered to, rites are recognised and celebrated, and events and relationships form a web of consistent and confirming interactions" (1993, p.188). A Foucauldian view of power as exercised through disciplinary practices and the discursive construction of cultural norms illuminates the 'underbelly' of these so-called collegial, collaborative cultural management strategies. Foucault argued that modern forms of governmentality are not just about regulating individuals through rules and surveillance, but also about "employing tactics ... to arrange things in such a way that such and such ends may be achieved" (Foucault, 1991, p.95). The question must be asked then, within such approaches what exactly is being transformed?

The ethical problems that can arise within a principal's use of their status and authority to 'transform' a school culture, through shaping and controlling information channels and what people are expected to do and think, are not commented on by Stewart and Prebble. Contradictions arise within this 'transformative culture management' amalgam of the elements

of collaboration, participation and mutuality with an implicit promotion of one person's view (the principal's) of what counts as vision, direction and worthwhile values. For example, a view of the principal as a transformational leader who is responsible to "shape and share a vision which gives point to the work of others" (Handy, 1992), hooks us into old ideas of leadership as based in personal charisma, as reflected in Carlson's (1996) view of transformational leadership as "facilitating change ... through having and articulating a vision, creating enthusiasm and support through charisma" (p.142). Such a view of leadership has been criticised as exclusionary and impositional by both critical (Angus, 1989; Grace, 1997; Smyth, 1989a) and poststructuralist analysts (English, 1994; Maxcy, 1995). These writers have called for radical re-evaluations of hierarchical and 'salvationist' or 'hero' mindsets that lead people to accept that some people are born with leadership qualities and that institutions and organisations need such people.

Critics have pointed out also, the disjunctions between claims of democratic collegiality and school micro-political realities of hierarchical power relations where the principal holds veto power and final accountability for all management decisions (Ball, 1987; Blase & Anderson, 1995; Hargreaves, 1991; Wallace & Hall, 1994; Weldon, 1993). While arguments for an empowering and collaborative leadership that builds "mutual accountability" pervade *The Reflective Principal*, significant dilemmas and contradictions emerge in practice when principals are identified in law as individually accountable for the management of their schools. Stewart and Prebble themselves alluded to this difficulty in their criticisms of the system of teacher and principal appraisal and performance management, which is now mandatory as part of the new public management in education. They pointed out that "if a team is at work, it does not make much sense to look closely at the activities of one member in isolation from the team" (1993, p.199). They attempted to solve this problem by arguing that in collaborative school cultures, principal appraisal should become more like school self-review (ibid). It seems from their account, however, that principals can take the lead role in changing the ways teachers think, act, work and take the figurehead status and higher management salary for leading a learning community, but when it comes to judgments about the worth or success of what they have put in place, then responsibility and accountability is to be shared. There is clearly an ethical problem here, if the principal can claim praise for vision and direction, but the teachers may get the criticisms when things go wrong.

Angus (1989, p. 87) argued that in a more democratic approach, "power and authority would be regarded as reciprocal, relational concepts... and reform can be asserted from below by participants," supporting Foster's (1989) view that leaders have to engage in dialectics, exchanges with followers that involve negotiations around visions and ideas. Foster argued that in such situations, the followers "may in turn, become leaders themselves, renegotiating the particular agenda" (pp. 42-43). Foster was pointing here towards a democratic reformulating of leadership, but the problem remains that embedded hierarchical structures persist in schools, weakening any efforts made towards an equalising of power. Hierarchical

splits between managers and teachers place principals at the apex of salary and status pyramids of control, caught in both ethical and practical dilemmas if they wish to share power fully with others in their school communities. Within a school management model that places the principal as in charge, or “sovereign” as Southworth (1993) put it, a collaborative principal can be perceived as “only developing teacher interaction as a vehicle for the implementation of his or her wishes.”

Hargreaves (1991) termed the latter “contrived collegiality.” He argued that this can result from “the exercise of organisational power by control-conscious administrators,” where collegiality could be “either a managerial imposition ... or a co-opting of teachers to fulfilling administrative purposes and external mandates - ie. a management of consent” (Hargreaves, 1991, p.51).⁹⁹ He described the features of contrived collegiality as administratively regulated and compulsory (as when teachers’ collaboration is required, such as in mandatory peer coaching, team teaching);¹⁰⁰ implementation oriented; controlled in terms of purposes, time, placement; and predictable in outcomes (1991, pp.53 - 4).

To sum up thus far

Collaboration/collegiality and community/partnership have been significant, but contested, themes in the literature about school leadership throughout the last two to three decades. While Southworth (1994) identified the elements of collaborative leadership in education as “co-operation, communication, continuity, co-ordination, collaboration, consistency, coherence and collegiality” (p.29), it has ^{been} pointed out that professional collegiality can be contrived as a result of managerial manipulation of teachers’ involvement in an imposed ‘shared’ school culture (Hargreaves, 1991). In the examples of the discursive formation of *professional collaborative leadership* that I have discussed, there has been a shift from this being constructed as exercised by all teachers, to being basically the role of the principal. The principal has been positioned somewhat contradictorily, as a team person who, while believing that leadership is something you do with other people (Wylie, 1997, p.3), is also ‘in charge’ of the work of teachers and representing them in dealings with the school community (parents). The collaborative principal has been constructed as consulting others, but implanting and building a vision in the school, and as an educative leader who is focused on improving teaching and learning by ‘working with’ teachers through relationship building and participatory decision-making. In actual school working relationships however, such

⁹⁹ Blase and Anderson (1995) showed how the latter can occur through a form of cognitive politics - what they call the control of ideology.

¹⁰⁰ For example, the use of *quality learning circles* could become required, such as happened in Norway, when teachers were required to meet in school time for organised collaborative work on planning and decision making, resulting in them feeling powerless and apathetic (Klette, 1997).

partnerships have been enacted within bureaucratic hierarchical structures and micro-political dynamics that divide administrators and teachers and parents from educators.

In the next part of this chapter I explain the background to the rise of new public management in Aotearoa/New Zealand and outline its main features. The section after this will trace how existing contradictions within constructions of professional collaborative leadership and conflicts between these and market managerialism have been exacerbated within the “contrary currents” (Wylie, 1995) of the recent restructuring of educational administration.

New Public Management (NPM)

In the discourses that have become known in this country as market managerialism, the theme of ‘management for efficiency and accountability’ can be seen as the lynchpin of an emerging ‘regime of truth’ that has been “linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it” (Foucault, 1980 , p.20). In the following discussions, I draw on this idea and a Foucauldian understanding of power (as produced and dispersed within social interactions and practices) to examine the constituting of market managerialism within the public sector in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Background to the rise of a discursive formation

Policies for the restructuring of the state and of education emerged in this country “within the nexus of government, the Treasury, State Services Commission, the Reserve Bank and the Business Roundtable,” being constructed at “the intersection of power and influence exerted by a relatively small, close knit group of politicians, businessmen, bankers and bureaucrats” (Peters et al., 1994, p.266). During the mid to late 1980s, this convergence of political and economic interests was successful in ‘rolling back’ the welfare state (Codd et al., 1990, pp.7-21) . In what has been termed the “revolution” in the state and public sector management (Boston et al., 1996), a competitive market economy was introduced (Kelsey, 1995).

The genesis for the promotion of this “enterprise culture” (Peters, 1996) has been attributed to a range of factors. There is general agreement though, that it emerged out of a decade of prolonged economic crisis in the aftermath of the oil shocks of the 1970s, and declines in profit that were due partly to a breakdown within the country, of the capital/labour compromise under Keynesian welfarism (Roper, 1991, p.46). The ensuing crisis of political legitimation prepared the ground for a withdrawal of the state. In the reformers’ discourse it was argued that the proliferation of governmental bureaucracies had accelerated overspending and contributed to the economic crisis, so there was a need to reduce costs and improve “allocative and productive efficiency”(Boston et al, 1996, p.4). As well as this however, the

focus was turned onto improving “the effectiveness of government programmes and the accountability and the quality of goods and services produced by the public sector” and onto reducing “the opportunities for non-transparent use of public power” (ibid). The latter was linked by the Treasury with the notion of ‘provider capture.’

In their *Brief to the Incoming Government: Economic Management*, the Treasury (1984) argued that the main role of government was management of the economy and that a restructuring of the public sector along competitive market lines was necessary to improve accountability and remove exploitative provider capture. Treasury stated that “without the constraints of the market there are opportunities for public service providers to maximise their own interests rather than to maximise the interests of their clients” (1984, p.257). It was further maintained that giving all individuals in society opportunities to exercise choice in their social as well as their business transactions, would force providers of public services to improve the quality and efficiency of their service or goods. That is, competition would act as a ‘natural’ control over provider capture and ensure the increased accountability of public servants, including educational professionals.

The promotion of market liberalism by the Labour Lange-Douglas government has been linked with what occurred in British Thatcherism and Reaganomics in the US and the introductions there of competitive market economies (Codd, 1993b; Whitty, 1997). In Aotearoa/New Zealand, however, it has been argued that neoclassical economics “has been spectacularly successful in giving ideological coherence” to the reformers’ agendas for state economic management (Roper, 1991, p.47). This coherence, along with the speed and extent of the state restructuring, is perhaps unique to this country (Boston et al., 1996). The Treasury has been identified as a ‘key player’ here. In a time of economic crisis, the Treasury was particularly strategically placed to promote its own economic rationalism and theories about a wide range of social and political issues. Commentators have pointed out that the combination of the highly centralised nature of the New Zealand state and Treasury’s “traditional function of financial controller” enabled Treasury officials to become involved in the “whole gamut of governmental activities” (Whitwell, 1986, p.20) and to have a huge influence on policy making. Indeed, Codd maintained that the Treasury briefing papers to the incoming (Labour) government, *Economic Management* (1984), provided “the blueprint” for the Labour government’s monetarist reforms (Codd, 1994, p.45).

After they were elected to government in 1984, Labour moved rapidly towards monetarism,¹⁰¹ with the introduction of ‘Rogernomics’ driving the programme of economic deregulation and the shift from public service to commercial activities by the state. After their re-election in 1987, the changes from a social welfare state to a minimalist state and market economy were rapidly effected through a carefully planned and organised restructuring of all state agencies within the new public management model. Roger Douglas, the then Minister of

¹⁰¹This move occurred despite their campaigning on traditional Labour platforms that included equity policies for disadvantaged groups such as women and Maori (Middleton, 1992).

Finance, commented later that reform should be implemented “by quantum leaps. Moving step by step lets vested interests mobilise. Big packages neutralise them. Speed is essential” (Peters et al., 1994, p.259). While Olssen and Morris Matthews (1995) have warned against over-simplified understandings of the restructuring as a conspiracy hatched between business and ‘new right’ political/economic interests,¹⁰² Douglas showed in his speech just how carefully planned were the moves to shift New Zealand into an enterprise culture.

NPM: knitting a ‘new’ model of state administration

Foucault argued that within ‘newly’ emergent discursive formations there is likely to be a re-combination of several pre-existing threads “into a new and occasionally unexpected unity” (Foucault, 1977b, p.200). Many commentators¹⁰³ have illustrated the cogency of this insight in their analyses of the theoretical threads in the ‘new’ public management model that was developed and imposed across the public service during the restructuring of the state. These analyses have shown how a view of individuals as acquisitive and motivated primarily by self-interest is common to all four of the theories of public choice, principal/agency relations, transaction cost economics and the ‘new’ managerialism. The amalgamation of these theories not only informed the arguments and model for the restructuring of the public sector; as I will show in the last part of this chapter, they were later embedded in policy for restructuring educational administration, in some contradictory combinations with elements of the professional educational leadership constructions I have already discussed.

What then, are the arguments and viewpoints of the discursive strands of the new public management?

Public choice theory

This theory emerged out of studies of the motivations and behaviours of individuals as politicians, voters and bureaucrats, which were analysed within economic rationalism, a discursive construction of all human interactions as economic exchanges. Tullock (1965) argued that individuals’ political and economic behaviour is conflated; that is, individuals will seek to maximise their own economic and political advantage, whether it be through their efforts to make a profit in business or to win votes as a politician. In public choice theory people are constituted as “rational utility maximisers” (Buchanan, 1978, p.17); that is, as primarily seeking opportunities and making choices that will better their social, economic and

¹⁰² These writers also noted that while the ‘new right’ is a term that has been used to refer to an alliance of business, economic, political and conservative social groups, “the cohesiveness of those groups should not be exaggerated” (Olssen & Morris Matthews, 1995).

¹⁰³ See, for example, (Boston et al., 1996; Codd, 1993a; Wylie, 1995; Robertson, 1998). See also the authors in a special two volume edition of the *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies* (1999).

political situations. Thus there is no such thing in public choice theory as ‘the public good’ because as Middleton put it, society is only a set of “atomised, competitive and acquisitive” individuals (Middleton, 1998, p.10). Indeed, according to Boston et al (1996, p.17), the concept of public service, or ethical concerns about the public interest, have been treated with some cynicism by public choice theorists because these are seen as areas that can be easily manipulated.

Influenced by this view of people’s behaviour as governed primarily by self interest, public choice theorists have maintained that powerful interest groups can rise, particularly in the political and bureaucratic arenas, and capture resources (through building up their own constituencies or department budgets for example). It is argued that “institutional rigidities” (such as top heavy bureaucracies whose processes are weighed down with ‘red tape’) can develop in ways that “threaten individual liberty” (Boston et al., 1996, p.18). Although the pursuit of self-interest in the marketplace can result in some socially desirable outcomes where the whole group may benefit from the entrepreneurialism of particular members, this is not seen as occurring necessarily by design.¹⁰⁴ For these reasons, it is argued that society needs to develop institutions that will align an individual’s opportunistic behaviour with others, “so that individual behaviour will further the interests of the group, small or large, local or national” (Buchanan, 1978, p.17). Minimising the role of the state is seen by public choice theorists as one way of protecting society against the worst excesses of political self-interest. So too is the separating of policy making from policy implementation, so that ‘bias’ can not occur.

The Treasury took up these views to argue, in *Economic Management*, that competition between providers of a service or goods would give individuals opportunities to exercise choice in their transactions, and so through the mechanism of the market, individual freedoms and accountability could be enhanced (The Treasury, 1984). In Codd’s view, this Treasury document was particularly influential in the discursive construction of a form of economic rationalism that:

advocated the replacement of the state’s distributive role with the allocative role of the market and promoted the view that market exchanges extend the domain of choice, thereby reducing the amount of government intervention in the lives of citizens and promoting the sum total of individual liberty (Codd, 1994, p.45).

Principal/agency theory

Woven into the New Zealand model of public management alongside public choice theory is principal/agency theory. This views all of “social and political life as a series of ‘contracts,’ or agreed relationships, between one party (a principal) and another (an agent),

¹⁰⁴ It is ironical that self-interest within the marketplace can achieve social good, but self-interest within professional groups is seen (by the Treasury in its 1987 analysis of education, for example) as a provider capture that militates against social benefits.

where the agent agrees to carry out various tasks or responsibilities for a principal in return for a mutually agreed reward” (Boston et al, 1996, p.19). This version of exchange theory sees contracts as the most rational way of ensuring that conflicts of self (and group) interest are avoided and/or controlled. Contracts can be both formal, legally explicit documents (such as a lease agreement, or terms of employment), and relational - that is, relatively loose understandings that are based on mutual trust and co-operation, such as marriage (p.20). In both kinds of contracts though, it is thought that it is important to work out “optimal contractual arrangements” (p.21).

Within this approach, attention is focused on devising smoothly functioning contractual arrangements that can exploit the opportunistic self interest of the agent, as a motivating factor. The aim is to exploit this opportunism to the maximum level possible within the hazards of various uncertainties, such as incomplete information and the difficulty of not being able to observe all of an agent's behaviour. Principal/agency theorists see this part of contractualism as hazardous, because all individuals (agents) are understood to be “self-seeking with guile” (Williamson, 1985, p.45). There is a concern, therefore, to tightly specify all parts of an agreement so that agents will not be able to get away with “shirking, deception, cheating and collusion” (Boston et al, 1996, p.20).

Avoiding multiple accountabilities is also considered important. To reduce opportunities for agents to ‘slip through the net’ and to ensure that accountabilities can be tied to particular individuals, agents should not be placed in the position of having to balance dual or conflicting demands of more than one principal. It is this kind of reasoning that resulted in the delineating of single and straight-line accountability structures, (recently tied to performance standards and pay) as the preferred management approach within the competitive and contractual state settlement that emerged at the beginning of the 1990s (Robertson, 1998).¹⁰⁵ Contractual forms of labour control were institutionalised across all of the public and private sector, beginning with the contracting out of particular services to consultants within tightly framed agreements on all aspects of the tasks, and moving into the widespread ‘unpicking’ of collective labour agreements and the passing of the Employment Contracts Act in 1991, which legislated these forms of industrial relations.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ This approach coheres with other aspects of the NPM institutional model for the public sector, such as a preference for divided over inclusive responsibility, short hierarchies, like with like (on the basis of purpose or the kind of service) and single purpose over multi purpose organisations (Boston et al, 1996, p.81).

¹⁰⁶ During the time of this research, individual employment contracts were agreed between the Ministry of Education and principals of primary schools. The aim of dismantling collective ‘provider capture’ by professional school leaders in this sector of education, was to all intents and purposes then achieved, it seemed.

Transaction cost economics

Within the New Zealand public management model there are two other theoretical approaches, transaction-cost analysis and the 'new' managerialism, both of which contribute alongside the previous two theories to the enhancing of hierarchical control. Transaction-cost economics is an approach to economic management that also sees individuals as self interested and opportunistic. In its aims to cut costs however, its focus is more on devising cost efficient structures for organising exchanges of physical goods, than on the individuals involved (as in the focus of the previous two theories). This approach examines "comparative costs of planning, adapting and monitoring task completion" (Boston et al, 1996, p.22). Such systems are seen as important because people are argued to have only a 'bounded' form of rationality. This means, according to Treasury exponents (1987, Vol.1.11), that humans lack the ability "to comprehend fully the nature of their environment, to anticipate or devise strategies to cope with change or to communicate effectively with each other" (presumably such bounded rationality does not apply to the Treasury officials who wrote this document - a strange contradiction!)

'New' managerialism

This narrow view of rationality is paralleled in the 'new' managerialism, which assumes that a generic form of management can deal with a range of variables in every area of private and public enterprise. As a consequence of an assumption in the NPM model that business and private sector systems are more efficient than public sector practices, there is a lifting of business practices (and the language of business) into the public sector, including education. To support the drive for efficiency, a raft of managerial strategies is promoted, such as tightly specified job descriptions tied to performance monitoring and strategic planning. Ironically, this is not new, but merely a reinvented technicist approach that draws on Taylor's (1911) system of so-called scientific management (Codd,1990). Taylor specified time and labour components of tasks and organised their completion in assembly line processes. The aim then, as now, was to cut costs.

Summary

The main elements of the New Public Management model have been summarised by Boston and his colleagues (1996, p.26) as embodying:

- the belief that private and public organisations can and should be managed on more or less the same basis;
- a shift to accountability for results (output, outcomes, performance targets);
- an emphasis on generic management skills;

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- the devolution of management control coupled with the development of improved reporting, monitoring and accountability mechanisms;
 - the disaggregation of large bureaucratic structures into quasi-autonomous agencies, and separation of policy advice from delivery and regulatory functions;
 - a preference for private ownership, contestable provision and the contracting out of most publicly funded services;
 - a shift from relational to classical modes of short-term and tightly specified contracting;
 - the imitation of private sector practices such as strategic planning, performance agreements, new management information systems and a greater concern for corporate image;
 - a preference for monetary incentives rather than non-monetary incentives, such as ethics, ethos and status;
 - a stress on cost-cutting, efficiency and cut-back management.

The managerial discourse that has emerged through the amalgamation of the above approaches and theories constitutes social and work relations as existing in a market in which people are positioned as providers, clients, sellers, buyers. Social interactions are constituted as being about making choices and taking initiatives that are predominantly to do with consumerism. Although the notion of choice is promoted, because this discourse constructs a *managed* market (Scott, 1989), choices and subject positions are not as equal, or equitable as they may seem at first glance. Powerful positions are those of the chief executive, the manager, the employer and arguably, the client; a less powerful position is that of a worker and the unemployed person is positioned 'at the bottom of the heap.' Whatever the subject position that is taken up, within the New Public Management version of market managerialism, people are seen as primarily opportunistic - rational utility maximisers who are basically selfish and untrustworthy because they are motivated primarily by self interest. In this discourse, provider capture emerges as almost an inevitable threat to be guarded against. Thus, contractual forms of agreement and management systems that define and tightly specify tasks, performance criteria and accountability lines, are constructed as necessary, as well as the most efficient and effective forms of control.

For the purposes of the present study, it is significant that this has become a dominant discourse for public management in Aotearoa/New Zealand, including the field of educational leadership. There is little mention of the word leadership in this discursive formation, however. In a separation between governance and management, leadership is subsumed in a technicist approach to policy making and separated from management, which is constructed as merely implementation (through strategic planning, co-ordinating, monitoring and reporting on task and goal achievement) of policies that are made 'elsewhere.'

Restructuring education 1987-1990: state discourses of educational management

In the following discussions, I set out to show how the theoretical underpinnings of the New Zealand market NPM discourse, were taken up and articulated in the Labour government's policies for educational reform alongside some of the elements of a professional discourse of educational leadership. Unsurprisingly, there are some contradictory consequences. My discussion outlines the main arguments of significant policy documents produced between 1987 - 90, and these will then be further analysed and critiqued in the final part of the chapter.

Government Management (1987): Treasury and the marketising of education

The reform of educational administration largely followed the blueprint for state sector reform. The discourses and rationales outlined in the previous section emerged in the central arguments of the Treasury¹⁰⁷ in their brief to the incoming (Labour) government, *Government Management Vol II: Education Issues* (The Treasury, 1987). It was argued there that education needed to be more closely linked into the needs of business and the economy and should be subject to the same kinds of analysis as other areas of the market (Treasury, 1987, pp. 27, 33). This reflected Treasury's view of education as a commodity, a service that could be chosen as a private individual "choice" for developing skills needed in the market, rather than a public good to be provided for all.

Treasury maintained that the model of state funded and controlled education had not performed well, despite increased funding (pp. 37-38;140). This "mediocrity" was linked to a situation where teachers and other educational providers were argued to be more motivated by self-interested agendas than by concerns about their "consumers" - students and their parents (pp.37-38). The Treasury can be seen to be co-opting here the earlier calls for the greater involvement of parents in an education 'partnership.'¹⁰⁸ Rather than calling for collaborative partnerships, however, competition was argued to be the best way to improve

¹⁰⁷ Although the particular form of state restructuring in this country was in many ways the 'brainchild' of Treasury and their political partners (particularly Roger Douglas, as finance minister of the Labour government), the State Services Commission also had significant input into the planning and implementation of the changes. In Dale and Jesson's (Dale & Jesson, 1993) view, the SSC recommendations to Government about a bureaucratic re-organisation of state agencies have been more influential in education than the Treasury recommendations about competitive privatisation. For most of the period involved in this research (ie. 1994-99), the SSC remained influential in education as the government's employing agent.

¹⁰⁸ Within the restructuring of education, these arguments were rearticulated however, into a new public management discourse that split local school governance as the role of parent boards of trustees from management as the role of principals.

accountability to various constituent groups. It would also eliminate the professional “provider capture” that had contributed to inefficiencies and inequities in schools.

Alongside this form of market accountability, the Treasury also advocated national monitoring of schools to ensure that they could be held accountable for the use of public funds and resources (p.108). Thus, within the Treasury’s promotion of a decentralised market model of education, centralised control over and monitoring of funding was maintained. Accountability was tied into state level economic agendas and shifted away from professional claims that accountability involves ethical forms of service within mutual relations of responsibility and trust (NZEL, 1986).

If this document is viewed in the light of the documents I discussed in the first part of this chapter, *Towards Partnership* (Department of Education, 1976) and *Management and Education* (Department of Education, 1984), it can be seen that there were some grounds for the criticism that schools were distancing themselves from parents and their communities. The call in *Towards Partnership* (1976) for more parent involvement in schools, was supplemented by reports revealing weaknesses in the bureaucratic system (Barrington, 1991). The *Curriculum Review* (1987) carried out between 1985-6, confirmed that many parents, especially Māori parents, felt dis-empowered. Within the long-standing effects of earlier assimilatory policies and institutionally racist practices in education, Māori claims for more equitable provision of education for their children were clearly justified. Struggles over equitable provision of schooling for girls also indicated that professional accountabilities did need some revision. Despite the Treasury claims that the education system was an inert, top-heavy bureaucracy ripe for radical overhaul, the *Curriculum Review* (1987) provides evidence that the educational state agents were already moving to improve educational provision, and that they were working through extensive consultation with schools *and* their parent groups. Throughout the 1980s, however, as had been the case earlier, parent school committees had little say in matters of curriculum, pedagogy or school internal management - these remained in the professional sphere.

***Administering For Excellence* (1988): contradictions and compromises**

In July 1987 a team appointed by David Lange (the then Minister of Education) and headed by Brian Picot (a successful business man), was given the task of reviewing the education system. The Picot Report, *Administering for Excellence: Effective Administration in Education - Report of the Taskforce for the Review of Educational Administration* (Department of Education, 1988a), reflected much of the language and themes of the new public management approach to restructuring. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the mix of people in the review team (it included educational professionals, business people and a Treasury

representative)¹⁰⁹, it also contained many contradictions in the views it presented about the educational workforce and the ways efficiency and effectiveness should be achieved.

In terms of the education system as a whole, this was described as being on the one hand, a “culture of dependence,” with individuals and institutions relying on excessive central decision making (p.25), and as slow to respond to schools’ requests and the needs of particular groups. The latter criticisms were often made by teachers and principals with whom I have worked. On the other hand, the system was also described as being “vulnerable to pressure group politics” where consumer, professional or geographical interests were intent on capturing resources to further their own self-interests (p.23). The influence of a public choice and principal/agency view of individuals is evident here.

However, schools were described also as needing to be “partnerships between the teaching staff (the professionals) and the community” (p.xi), where teachers and parents would together “determine what is to be taught and learned” (p.46). Throughout the report, an emphasis was placed on collaboration and partnership. The principal was positioned as a “helper” of teachers (in collaborative appraisals) and as “a professional and instructional leader” whose collaborative relationship with staff “must be protected and enhanced,” so that all staff members “are able to contribute towards a continuing examination of what the institution is for” (pp.51 -2, 68). The many endorsements of collegiality and partnership read as if they have been taken out of *Towards Partnership* and *The Reflective Principal*, where collaborative relationships were presented within a context of professional ethics and trust.

The constructions of collaboration and partnership in the report were placed, however, alongside the advocating of a model of executive management, where, for example, “only the principal can make final decisions on professional matters” (p.52) and where the principal was required to control and judge teachers’ performance (p.51). This hierarchical form of executive management was endorsed in statements maintaining that effectiveness could be achieved only through defining “a hierarchy of objectives and priorities at all levels of the administrative structure” (p.42) and through clarifying the nature of individual accountabilities. To achieve the latter, it was stated that:

care should be taken to separate particular activities: individuals or organisations must not have responsibilities that are in conflict ... those who are accountable must know who they are accountable to: the *lines* of accountability must be clear (pp.42-3).

The school’s charter was to “define the purposes of the institution and the intended outcomes for students.” As “the ‘lynchpin’ of the structure,” it was to “act as a contract between the community and institution, and the institution and the state,” and to be used for

¹⁰⁹ The team included some prominent educators with varying views and understandings about equity and educational management - a school principal, an academic and a College of Education teacher educator, two representatives from the State Services Commission and the Treasury (seconded, part-time), a Department of Affairs researcher, and two businessmen, both company directors.

independent review and audit to ensure that each institution could be held accountable for meeting its objectives (ibid).¹¹⁰

Overall then, the Picot recommendations for changes to administration can be seen to be pushing in two directions - towards a democratic form of collaboration between educational professionals in partnership with their local school communities, and towards a hierarchical system of line management. Within the arguments about the need for linear, single line forms of individual accountability, a principal/agency theory view of accountability as an issue that needed addressing was evident. The perceived need to control opportunistic individuals underpinned recommendations that there should be a “separating of particular activities” to avoid “overlapping” and conflicts in responsibility. The latter were constructed as a problem as they could muddy the capability of management to sort out who could be called to account for mistakes. The assumption that the holding of multiple responsibilities opened up opportunities for individuals to collude with others to promote their own interests, can be seen to inform the recommendation that “Those who have responsibility for a particular task cannot also be the sole judge of the effectiveness of performing that task” (p.42). At the level of policy it was stated also that “To keep policy free of self-interest the Ministry will have no part in the provision of education services.” Rather, the separating of policy making, from implementation and from audit/review of that implementation should be ensured. Thus the establishment of an independent Review and Audit agency was recommended to provide a mechanism for holding each institution accountable “for meeting the objectives set out in its charter” (p.xi) and that agency should itself be accountable to the Minister.

A basic mistrust of individuals that emerges out of the theorising of individual motivation as only ever tied to self interest has shaped the arguments in the report that accountability needed to be carefully ‘tied down.’ For example, it warned that:

On occasion accountability can be split, with a particular individual or agency being responsible to more than one other individual/agency for different aspects of the same task. When this happens, the different accountabilities should be clearly delineated and there should be no conflict between them (p.43).

Codd (1999) later called the policies that arose out of these recommendations, “policies of distrust,” because they paid little or no respect to professional autonomy and responsibility. While I have been indicating that a rosy idealism should not cloud judgements about the nature of professional accountability, to undermine its conceptualising as endorsing altruism and ethical service (as in the NZEI *Code of Ethics*, 1986, for example), was running the risk of ‘throwing the baby out with the bath water.’

Accountability in terms of achieving an efficient use of public funds was also emphasised in the *Picot Report* (p.43). This is not a goal that needs contesting. However, a

¹¹⁰ It was recommended that the charter be approved nationally by the Minister through the Ministry, and that the principal should be responsible for the development of the charter “within national guidelines ... in consultation with staff and the community.”

public choice reduction of social interactions to economic exchanges redefined the relationship between parents and teachers into one of “consumers and providers.” Here, open communication was reported to be needed, not just to provide each of the people centrally involved in a child’s learning with information that would assist that learning, but also to provide “consumers with a way of checking on the exercise of power and responsibility within the system” (that is, a way to control professional provider capture). It was needed too, according to the report, to provide consumers with “a basis for choice.” Unspoken in this statement is the Treasury’s assumption that consumer choice will lead to competition between schools, ensuring improvements in teacher standards and accountability. In this market form of accountability (where parents, as consumers of education for their children, have the right to shift their children if their needs are not being met in a particular school), choice is limited to the exercise of exit, as Gordon (1994a) has pointed out. Further, this market playing field is not equal: for example, the cost of bussing a child across town is out of the reach of some parents.

At the time of the release of the *Picot Report*, two themes were given prominence in the media: an over-large, inefficient education bureaucracy had been captured by educational providers and parents should have more ‘say’ in the running of their children’s schools. As is clear from the focus of the document *Towards Partnership* and the findings of the *Curriculum Review*, these themes were likely to evoke support for reform.

***Tomorrow's Schools* (1988); *Education Act* (1989): contracted autonomy and governance/management ambiguities**

The state policy document *Tomorrow's Schools* (Department of Education, 1988b) released soon after the *Picot* report, began with a personal message from David Lange headed: “The Education of Our Children - Your Chance to be Involved” (p.iii). In this document, increased partnership between “the professionals and the particular community in which (the school) is located” was heralded, but simultaneously hedged in the statement that this would occur “within the overall national guidelines set by the state” (p.1).

Tomorrow's Schools encapsulated most of the recommendations and arguments of the *Picot Report*, but the emphasis on collaboration did not appear. This policy constituted the principal more as a middle manager, responsible in the first instance to her/his school’s parent board of trustees, and in effect, running the school for the board. The emphasis throughout the first 19 pages of the 43 page document was placed on the responsibilities of the board. Although it was noted that the board should work in collaboration with the principal and/or the staff, the principal’s role as a “professional leader” (p.10) was diminished to management responsibilities. These were detailed in half a page as: preparatory work on the charter, allocation of duties among staff, development of performance objectives for staff and measures

to assess that performance, supplying information about registration of beginning teachers and keeping parents informed about their children's progress (p.11).

Partnership with parents was a dominant theme throughout *Tomorrow's Schools*, but a tension between local autonomy and central control is clearly evident in this document, particularly in the sections on the place of the charter. In a shift of responsibility from the principal to the board, it was stated that "While the board is responsible for the overall preparation of the charter, the details will be determined by the community and the teaching staff working together" to decide the school's aims, objectives and standards "within the national guidelines"(p.4). Charters here sound somewhat like a provisional educational plan for development - a familiar and useful concept for most educators - and the community participation theme sounds exactly like the recommendations made in the review report *Towards Partnership*. In carrying over the Picot recommendations that the charter be "a contract between the state and the institution," as well as "between the institution and its community" (p.4), contractually agreed requirements between the school boards and the state were embedded to auditing schools' meeting of national requirements and objectives.

When the new system came into being with the passing of the *Education Act 1989*, a separation of education policy and audit functions and accountabilities from each other, as well as from those involved with the implementation of policy was achieved through abolishing the central Department of Education and regional offices. Together, these had previously dealt with matters of property, finance and personnel supervision, as well as professional guidance in staff and curriculum development. These institutions were replaced with a central policy making body (the Ministry of Education), audit agency (the Education Review Office), and as a consequence of the Education Amendment Act, a standards setting agency, the Qualifications Authority (as well as several other single purpose agencies, such as the Careers Service, the Special Education Service).

Governance of each school, within the terms of its charter signed with the Minister of Education, became the responsibility of local school boards of trustees that were made up in the main of parent representatives elected every three years. As governors of their local schools, boards of trustees were given some discretion in decision making across a wider range of administrative areas than was previously the case, including resource allocation, staff appointments (including the principal), support services and staff development. However, as noted above, limits were set on local autonomy through the mechanism of the charter and its contractual form of accountability to the state agencies at the centre.

The principal was constituted now as both a member of the board and its "chief executive," charged with the management of the school and its implementing of charter policies. Clear distinctions between governance and management were not made in the *Education Act, 1989*. Section 75 stated that: "a school's Board has complete discretion to control the management of the school as it thinks fit," and Section 76 stated that "the school's principal is the Board's chief executive in relation to the school's control and management ...

and shall comply with the Board's policy direction." Section 76 also stated however, that the principal "has complete discretion to manage as the principal thinks fit the day to day administration." The word "management" was applied rather loosely here to the roles of both the board and the principal (O'Sullivan, 1998). It appears that while the board has overall management "control" (does this mean authority to make all final decisions?) the principal has "day to day" management control. The boundaries between these two spheres of influence and control are blurred. In a later attempt by the Ministry of Education (1997a) to clarify board and principal responsibilities and roles, it was stated that the board "should not be involved in the day to day running of the school." As O'Sullivan has pointed out, however, the use of the word "should" rather than "must", indicates that the Ministry was only expressing an opinion rather than a legislated requirement (O'Sullivan, 1998, p.180). The applying of the word "management" to the work of the boards of trustees indicates also, that they are not policy makers in their own right, but more like agents of the state, required to work within tightly constrained and stringently audited requirements for school administration (Ballantyne, 1997, p.18).

Foucault's (1991) questions about the nature of government within dispersed, yet simultaneously centralising exercises of power, resonate with this analysis. These are questions such as: "How to govern oneself, how to be governed, how to govern others, by whom the people will accept being governed, how to become the best possible governor" (Foucault, 1991, p.87). Such questions have become increasingly significant within widely dispersed post-modern challenges to traditional forms of authority and sovereign forms of power. While in recent years power relations in many western societies have become progressively elaborated, rationalised and centralised within state institutions, Foucault pointed out that where power is exercised, there too is resistance (Foucault, 1982, p.224). This thesis explores these dynamics within the co-principalship initiatives, which illustrate how distinctions between board governance and principal management roles as constituted in the educational restructuring in this country, have remained unclear for many boards of trustees and parents. The ambiguity of the distinctions has contributed to opening up opportunities for some multi-levelled struggles over power, between school boards and the state, between boards and parents, between boards and principals.

Today's Schools (1990): review, and the rising star of managerialism

A review of the implementation of the reforms, instigated a short time after their commencement, stated that these had not gone far enough. In *Today's Schools*, the Lough report, the review team (headed by Noel Lough, a retired Treasury official) more sharply defined the principal's role as primarily a chief executive/manager. Eschewing any references to professional leadership, the report stated that the principal's function was to implement an administrative system that would include "objective setting, planning, effective management,

internal monitoring and reporting and external reporting” (Lough, 1990p.19). A greater clarification of role definitions and responsibilities, along with key performance indicators developed for all areas, would lead, it was argued, “to greater accountability, which in turn, improves administrative effectiveness” (p.20).

In the next section I discuss reactions to these reports and the reforms, exploring criticisms of the economic rationalism and contractually linear form of management that was being imposed on education.

Criticisms, challenges and (re)capture(s)

The arguments and reforms of new right proponents of an education market that is bolstered by managerialist strategies to assist the control of self-interested “provider capture” (for example, Treasury, 1987; Lough, 1990) have been challenged from the outset of the restructuring of education in this country. Foucault argued that resistances “are all the more real and effective because they are formed right at the point where relations of power are being exercised” (1980, p.142). In his thinking about governmentality, which he saw as relating to structuring the “possible field of actions of others”(Foucault, 1991, p.221), he also argued that resistance can be understood as “freedom’s refusal to submit”(ibid). He was not suggesting here an “essential freedom,” but rather a freedom to act, within a field of power relations and struggles that involve “reciprocal incitation - less of a face-to-face confrontation which paralyses both sides, than a permanent provocation” (p.222). These ideas illuminate how critical responses were provoked by the reformers’ construction of education as a private, individual choice. Educational academics advanced professional and social justice arguments that education is a service and a primary public good, which must be freely available for all (Codd, 1993a; Peters, 1995). In response to the managerialist constructions of the principal’s work and responsibilities, it was pointed out that educational leadership is more than an executive management that relies on task specification and contractual obligations (Grace, 1990; Stewart & Prebble, 1993).

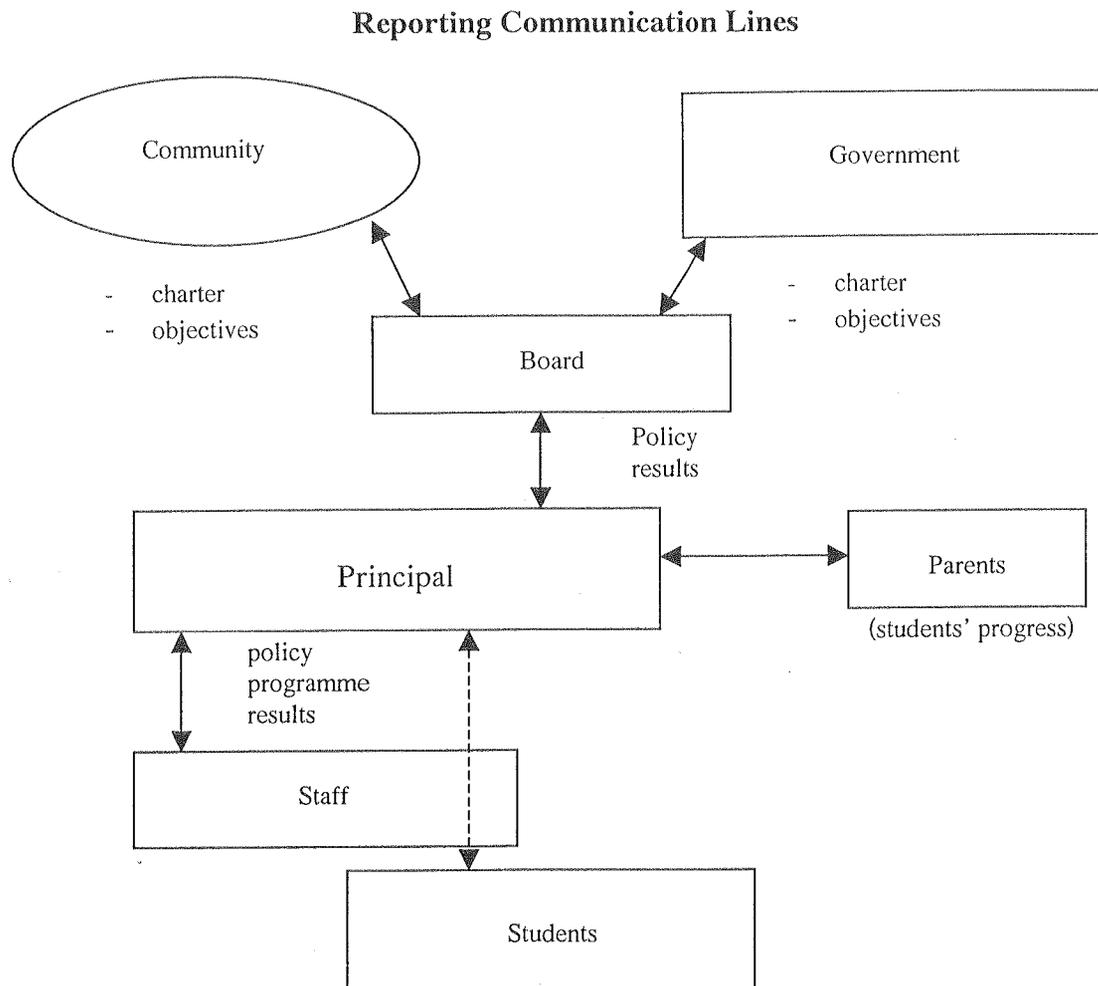
It is clear from even a cursory reading of the Treasury and Picot reports, that Codd’s (1993, p.157) claim that “the political forces behind the restructuring have been strongly imbued with an ideology of hierarchical managerialism” and driven by economic rationalism and a market view of education, can be supported. Lange’s statement in *Tomorrow’s Schools* that “Our children will not receive the education to which they are entitled unless our administration of education is effective” (Department of Education, 1988b, p.iii) holds an assumption that “changes in the way we administer education will improve learning and teaching in schools”(Ballard & Duncan, 1989, p.15). The restructuring of administration was not to enhance teacher professional collaboration and collegiality, however, despite international research findings that this is a significant factor in improving schools. Indeed, in his early critique of the Lough Report, Codd (1990) identified the ‘new’ managerialism as

merely a 're-invented' form of Taylorism, a 'scientific' model that saw all work as able to be broken down into particular tasks and responsibilities that can be delegated to individuals who can then be held accountable for completing or achieving them satisfactorily. Codd warned that this management model could set up an organisational culture that was "hierarchical, competitive, individualist and highly task oriented...an instrumental culture where people are valued only for what they produce" (p.22).

In the lead up to the restructuring, it was argued that parents needed more say in how schools were run. It is thus doubly ironical then, that despite the emphasis placed within public choice theory on devolution and decentralisation, policies enacted to achieve the objectives of the state restructuring kept control of key governmental powers and responsibilities (such as the setting of resource ceilings) with central agencies. As Wylie (1995) pointed out, in the Treasury's applications of principal/agency theory, any opportunism of the principal (agents of the state like themselves) slipped from view. Within "centralised decentralisation" (Blackmore, 1995, p.45), the potential for elites, such as politicians and those whom they appoint, to accrue power and control is obscured, while accountability becomes focused on those who implement at particular sites the centrally generated policies and legislation. The constraints on local management and leadership in schools that result from these "contrary currents" (Wylie, 1995) have been particularly significant for the initiating of co-principalships in Aotearoa/New Zealand, as the case narratives in Chapters 8, 9 and 10 will show.

The reforms set out to eliminate wherever possible multiple accountabilities, so that the principal could be held "accountable by the board for the performance of the school" and the board accountable for reporting to the community (the electorate) and the Minister, through the Education Review Office (Ballard & Duncan, 1989, p.12). Yet Ballard (who was brought into education from forestry to manage the implementation of the administration reforms)¹¹¹ himself drew attention to the multiple reporting responsibilities of the principal. In the discussion of the school's accountability mechanisms, the principal was placed at the centre of an accountability 'web' in a diagram (see Figure 1) that had reporting lines connecting up to the board, then 'the community' (are these the taxpayers?) and then the Government; lines connect out to parents; and more lines connect down to staff and students (p.14). Although it was argued that "communication flows both ways," the diagram represented a hierarchy where the principal was shifted from being at the head of the school to being very clearly in a middle management position in relation to the board and the state.

¹¹¹ This fact illustrates the assumption within the new managerialism that 'generic' management skills are all that is needed to increase efficiency and effectiveness. "Dr. Ballard was not a professional educationalist, but his experience in corporate planning and his understanding of management procedures made him ideally suited to the job" State Services Commission Chairman Dr. Hunn said" (*Waikato Times*, 3 August 1988, cited in Middleton 1990, p.76).

Figure 1: The Principal as a focal point

(Ballard & Duncan, 1989, p.14)

Although the principal has been 'netted' in these ways in multiple accountability lines, the local school boards have been constituted as also accountable to their communities and to the state for everything that happens in their schools. Barrington (1991), however, argued early on that increased community participation in schools was being enabled by the restructuring of administration. And a set of events did work (ironically), to empower some school boards' challenging of central control. In 1990 the wording of the charter was altered as a consequence of the realisation by Ministry of Education personnel that the original contractual nature of the school charters bound the government (as principal) to provide the necessary resources for the school (as agent) to meet its (own) goals. The charter "agreement" became an "undertaking" by the school boards to the Minister of Education and reference to the Ministerial commitment to fund schools was removed. The changes that were made to the charter "extended only to those aspects of the charter framework which could have implications for the state" (Codd and Gordon, 1991, p.27). That is, what had previously been

a public service responsibility was being transferred to voluntary agents drawn from the community and the risks which might emanate from their potential opportunism and bounded rationality were being minimised within the regulatory framework of the charter. This effectively left the boards carrying responsibility for poor achievement that might actually be the consequence of inadequate funding from the state.

There was huge protest about the alterations to the original clauses, from both parents and professional members of school communities. Consequently, government passed legislation that made boards a body corporate, limiting the individual responsibility of each school trustee. This change, as the case narratives will show, has empowered some board members to take action in ways that tread fine lines between ‘thumbing their noses at’ (disobeying) their political ‘masters,’ and abiding by the rules for governance and management accountabilities.

Some other commentators have argued that the rise of market liberalism has not, “despite the efforts of business associations, Treasury and other partisans of the New Right, engendered a fundamental transformation of the popular consciousness” (Roper, 1991, p.47). For example, O’Neill commented that “There are few who now believe that the state explanations for policy changes have any locus other than the economic” (O’Neill, 1996b, p.77). The limitations of public choice and agency theory had become clear to many in education. To return to school boards of trustees as an example, as agents, the boards have an independence from the government (as their principal, that is, their funder), because unlike government employees they are “not bound to reflect in public only government views” (Wylie, 1995, p.157). The boards also have levers, such as the fact that they work for a pittance, (they are essentially volunteers) and there is not a queue of people lining up to take their jobs. Wylie’s research has further demonstrated that “people in schools do not behave as government agents, and the relationship between a school principal and a board is more likely to reflect the ethos of ‘partnership’ which was emphasised in the initiation of the reforms, than the hierarchical control which is the hallmark of NPM” (1995, p.157). Wylie has drawn on her NZCER surveys (1990 and 1993) to show that boards of trustees do their voluntary work because they are motivated to do things for children and because they enjoy being involved, as part of a team, in their school’s decision making. This picture does not square with the opportunistic, economically driven, self-interested individuals that agency theory posits, nor with the top down control embedded in the new managerialism.

Other researchers have expressed concerns about the consequences of the marginalising of teacher involvement in the direction of the reforms, and the likely development of a low-trust hierarchical system rather than a high-trust collegial one (Sullivan, 1994; Codd, 1999). Studies have shown increased workloads for professional staff (Bloor & Harker, 1995; Sullivan, 1994), with a heightening of teacher stress, a steady decline of teacher morale and “quite a high turnover rate for principals” (Wylie, 1995, p.163).

Perhaps most importantly, critics have alerted us to how the economic rationalism underpinning market views of education silences important dimensions of human life and dignity. For example, transaction cost economics cannot account for ethical or moral considerations as matters of social cost. Although principal/agency theorists did include in their analyses “relational” contracts (Williamson, 1985, p.72) that rely on large degrees of mutual trust, co-operation and commitment to long term relationships (Boston et al, 1996, p.20), these kinds of contractual arrangements have not been taken up by the architects of the reforms. There are several problems here that I will take up in more detail later in Part III’s analyses of how ethical issues that are largely ignored within the NPM discourse, have been confronted and negotiated in different ways, with different effects, in the co-principal initiatives.

Reconstructing ‘the principal’

In the debates about which discourse of educational provision and management should prevail, the role of the principal has remained a significant site of contest and struggle in this country (Robertson, 1997; Strachan, 1997; Wylie, 1997a). In this last part of the chapter, I want to illustrate the discursive shifts that were occurring in the constituting of ‘the principal’ during the mid 1990s under the National government’s pursuing of an increasingly “busnocratic” (Peters, 1996) form of managerialism for education. The Education Review Office Report Number 7, *Professional Leadership in Primary Schools* (1996) illustrates the official representations of the work of the principal and educational leadership at that time, while also documenting professional views that are at odds with ‘business management constructions. The report provides an interesting example of the effecting of discourse shifts through the de-articulating and re-articulating of language categories (Hennessy, 1993), with the reconstituting of leadership as management being particularly evident.

Professional Leadership in Primary Schools (1996)

This report began with a description of the roles and functions of the principal that lifted out some of the traditional elements of a *professional leadership* discourse and then rearticulated these alongside an account that privileged a *market managerial* discourse. The discussion began by treading familiar ground, with professionals defined as having “a high degree of skill and knowledge” and “bound by codes of ethics that outline how they are to operate in their professional life” (Education Review Office, 1996, p.4). These characteristics were reported to “create a collegial environment amongst members” (ibid) and the degree of respect accorded to a profession was linked to its maintaining of standards through self regulation of their practices and members.

Into this professional discourse however, there was inserted the language of the NPM. It was stated that the purpose for professionals' ethical codes of practice was that these were necessary for safeguarding "the best interests of their clients rather than their own interests" (p.4). Both a market view of education (as between providers and clients) and a principal/agency theory mistrust of self-interested individuals were thus insinuated into the way the professional leader in education was being constituted. S/he was not positioned as working with 'parents' or the 'community' as in the reports discussed in the first part of this chapter, but (as in the *Picot Report*) with 'clients,' in a business relationship. Simultaneously, there was a silencing of a professional morality that emphasises altruism in a construction of educational work as "personal service to others through concern for, and responsible promotion of, the education and welfare of children, students and teachers" (NZEI, 1986). Instead, in the ERO document's use of a market discourse, an ethical code is required to protect clients from the exercise of selfish opportunism on the part of teachers. The argument that discourse constitutes what can be said and what can't be said is particularly salient here (Cherryholmes, 1988).

A hierarchical split between principals and teachers was also reinforced in this document. Distinctions were made between teacher professionals and "professional leaders." Teachers, it was stated, "do exercise professional judgments" in their work, but their job was to "deliver" curriculum and "provide educational services" to their students (p.5). Thus, teachers were not positioned as leaders (as they had been 20 years earlier in the Department of Education review, *Towards Partnership*), nor as partners with the state in terms of policy development and/or creative developers of curriculum, as they had been in this country up until the late 1980s (Capper & Munro, 1990; Gordon, 1992). Teachers were constituted as merely workers, implementers of curriculum planned and developed by others. This is an example of the proletarianisation and deskilling processes identified by Apple (1986) and discussed by Capper and Munro (1990) and Gordon (1992) in relation to the eroding of teacher professionalism in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Although teacher leadership has been promoted as necessary for effective educational reform in countries such as the US, in this ERO document professional leaders were constituted as 'principal managers.'

Although a dual role of management and leadership was acknowledged for the work of the school principal (p.5), the emphasis was firmly placed on their technical, task oriented management responsibilities. These were listed as: "managing the day to day operation of their school and putting into practice the board's policies for: managing curriculum, managing teacher and student activities, maintaining school property and managing finances" (p.6). Primary school principals were also represented as needing to "protect the reputation of their profession" (with the unstated implication that they seek to ensure that their own status and rewards will not deteriorate?) "by ensuring their staff deliver high quality education" (p.6). The latter was to be achieved not through leadership from within the group as in collegial teamwork, nor through example, as in instructional leadership, but rather through being "the

leaders ... of assessment of student achievement” (whatever that might mean) and the “monitoring of teachers' performance” (ibid). Outmoded Taylorist approaches to leadership that rely on tests and measurement are evident here, in an implied need for surveillance and control of teachers' work.

In this document the “regulatory framework” for the principal's roles and responsibilities was also emphasised, with a summary of the relevant sections of the *Education Act 1989* and the *National Administration Guidelines* (Ministry of Education, 1993).¹¹² (The Education Review Office early on gave priority to carrying out compliance audits, to check that schools were meeting their legal requirements, thus tightening constraints around areas of professional autonomy and judgement.)

The document also noted that boards of trustees were to employ and “control the management of its chief executive, the principal,” but in emphasising that the principal was also “a full member of the board” (p.9), it reinforced the blurring of lines between governance and management that I have already discussed. Principals were constituted in the report as “chief executives,” but within a middle management paradigm that emphasised their positioning at the centre of a multi-layered accountability sandwich, and their role in implementing government policy. The language of the market emerged here in statements that principals were “responsible for managing state funds and assets” (p.8) and accountable to the taxpayer for ensuring a good return on investment (although principals of primary schools were described as “accountable for the management of less Crown revenue”(p.6) than larger secondary schools).

The wider political agenda for the marketising of education was made even more explicit in a section entitled, “The principal as the manager of a business”(p.9). It was stated that “There are similarities between the management responsibilities of a school principal and those of a manager of a private business”(ibid). The product being sold was termed “delivering high quality education” and the implication was that in carrying out their daily business, a successful principal would ensure that their school stayed ahead of the competition (other schools). The report stated:

The bottom line for a manager of a business is profit and staying in business. The bottom line for a principal is roll numbers and keeping the school viable... Just as the shareholders of a private company may withdraw their capital if the firm performs badly, so may parents withdraw their child if the school performs badly (ERO, 1996, p.9).

¹¹² The NAGs were produced by the Ministry of Education and published in the *Education Gazette* on 29 April, 1990 and revised and re-gazetted in April 1993. The latter version stated that “Boards of Trustees and Principals respectively, are required to follow sound governance and management practices involving curriculum, employment, financial and property matters” (Ministry of Education, 1993). The specific guidelines in each of those areas, plus those of health and safety, documentation, self review and administration were promulgated to provide direction beyond that underpinning the school Charter. Both the NAGs and the Charter were to be used as a basis for reviews of the schools by the Education Review Office.

ERO also advised that a strategic management by objectives approach was the way to keep in business, as it were. A successful principal would focus on “developing strategies, determining goals, providing means to achieve them, using resources efficiently, managing people and ensuring the quality of outputs” (p.9). Embedded in this section then, is a view of market forces holding schools accountable for providing top quality education through the person and position of the principal. In these ways, market managerialism can be seen to be becoming ascendant in this state agency’s view of the principal’s role.

As critical commentators have pointed out, and as the co-principalship case narratives will illustrate, professional accountability needs to be thought about in more complex ways than this (Edwards, 1991; Pascal, 1989; Scott, 1989; Timperley & Robinson, 1996). I will focus on exploring issues around struggles over different forms of accountability within the three co-principalships in the final chapter of this thesis.

To conclude

In this chapter I have argued that several different discourses of school leadership and management have been in circulation over the time that the women in this study came into teaching and formed their ideas about and aspirations for school leadership. I have analysed these discourses as falling into either a professional collaborative discursive formation or a market managerial configuration of NPM discourse.

My discussions have traced how, over a 20 year period between 1976 and 1996, there have been some quite dramatic discursive shifts in the construction of professional educational leadership. From being a function of all teachers in the 1970s, leadership in schools became increasingly constituted as the right and responsibility of the principal, who in the early 1980s was positioned as a professional instructional leader working with teachers to improve classroom practice. A bureaucratic management by objectives approach introduced at that time was modified in the early 1990s, into a constituting of professional educational leadership as transforming the work of teaching and learning through the principal’s adept management of a school’s organisational culture.

Discursive shifts in the constituting of management can be traced also within changes to what ‘counted’ as professional educational leadership. From management being the administrative ‘desk work’ carried out by principals, school boards of governors and Education Boards in the 1970s, there was a shift in the early 1980s, to it being the management of people by the principal (and a team of senior and middle managers), and the management of classroom teaching by teachers. By the late 1980s, management was becoming constituted as the primary work of the principal, who was positioned within the restructuring as a school (Crown enterprise) “chief executive.”

As I have shown, in 1988 the latter subject position for principalship was embedded into educational administration policy, legislation and regulations. Within the NPM discourse,

the principal's work was then officially constituted as focused on the management of staffing, finances, plant and curriculum to make the school enterprise more efficient and effective, and, therefore, competitive, in an educational market, where parents, as clients, could exercise choice over which school their child attended. Within this discourse, management controls over staff and plant were introduced with the rationale that this would enable a principal to oversee the driving up of standards that would help a school to win and keep clients (parents and students). School managers (principals) were still constituted as team leaders, but like their business counterparts, this was in the sense of being strategic planners and team builders who skilfully select, motivate, monitor and reward their workers to ensure that they pull together to improve the school's image and product.

While professional discourses of collaborative leadership and shared decision making were not been eliminated during the years of educational restructuring, they have been subjected to what Foucault has described as discursive filtering processes, such as arguments that disqualified them as "insufficient to the task" (Foucault, 1980, p.83) of developing an education system capable of producing an "enterprise nation" for participation in a competitive global market (Peters & Marshall, 1996).

The case narratives presented after the next chapter will show how the normalising of the NPM discourse in education has created difficulties for the development of shared leadership within co-principalships. This thesis is arguing however, that it has also been within the struggles over what should 'count' as school leadership, that the opportunities for shared leadership opened up. This was partly because during the last decade in particular, the gaps and contradictions between and within the two 'high profile,' different, and often contradictory, discursive formations of leadership and management that I have been discussing, have been made quite visible to some people. In this situation, as active players in struggles over meaning, individual women and men have been able to weave new meanings and practices into their ways of leading and organising the work of teaching and learning.

Before I move on to present the case narratives that describe these events, ideas and practices, though, I need to build on my discussions in Chapters 1 and 3 of feminist discourses, to show in the next chapter, how a discourse of collective democratic organisation emerged within feminist critiques of masculinist hierarchical authority. This discourse has also been a significant influence in the constitution of the women's primary school co-principalships.

CHAPTER 7

FEMINIST CRITIQUES AND COUNTER DISCOURSES OF COLLECTIVE DEMOCRATIC ORGANISATION

Introduction

Conflict and contestation has been a theme of the previous chapters and it continues in this one. My purpose in this chapter is to build on my earlier discussions of feminist theories in Part I, extending them into analyses of issues that are central to feminist notions of the democratic, ideas and practices that have been influential in shaping aspects of the co-principal initiatives.

I begin by looking at feminist critiques of a masculinist discourse of citizenship that has been built on narrow rationalist notions of authority and leadership. I will draw out how, while this discourse has underpinned and legitimated women's subordinated status in public institutions such as education, it has been also resisted. Women have found ways to create their own "public spaces" and political activity (Fraser, 1997). In the second part of the chapter, I describe how the development of feminist collectives and feminist democratic discourse have been part of this resistance. To enable an explication of links between these discursive ideas and practices and those of some of the women co-principals, I examine some articles about New Zealand women's collectives, examining the language, ideas, values and practices that have typified them. I argue that these collective approaches have reflected elements of a radical feminist discourse of differences between women's and men's organisational approaches, mediated by understandings and acknowledgements of differences within the category of women. I then draw on international literature about feminist collective approaches to discuss the kinds of difficulties that have emerged in feminist collectivist practice. In the third part of the chapter, I look at Mary O'Regan's approach to 'marrying' feminist leadership and collectivity within the New Zealand Ministry of Women's Affairs. While she was the CEO of this Ministry, a parallel Māori/Pākehā structure was established as part of the Ministry's commitment towards partnership with tangata whenua. Such an approach can be seen as part of New Zealand feminist engagements with 'difference' debates and attempts to build more democratic organisations. Finally, I discuss recent developments in feminist theorising of democracy that have re-examined issues of difference within a context of intersecting social inequalities. Fraser has called here for more carefully articulated analyses of the effects of "different differences" in analyses of the need for both cultural recognition and redistributive justice (Fraser, 1997). I will draw on these analyses in my discussions of the different co-principalship attempts to build more fully democratic communities in their schools.

Feminist critiques of masculinist individualism, rationality and authority

Although not necessarily influenced by a Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis, feminists researchers who have investigated links between language, social practices and power, have examined how gendered oppositions of what it ‘means’ to be a man or a woman were linked in classical Greek philosophical splits between what was understood as the public and private spheres. In the Greek view of the world, all dimensions of life were understood as falling into two spheres of activity, that of freedom or necessity (Cox & James, 1987; Warner, 1976; Hekman, 1990). Oppositional categories such as culture/nature, mind/body, rationality/emotionality, spirit/matter, public/private, were conceived as ‘fitting’ into one or other sphere. The first category in each pair was associated with freedom, while the second was seen as necessary for life, but of lesser value. Significantly, the place of free men was seen as in the public/civic sphere of politics, culture, mind, rationality and spirituality, while women and slaves were linked with nature, the body and sexuality, emotionality, matter and work in the private world of home and family. These associations were argued to be a ‘natural’ consequence of men’s and women’s different biology, as well as of ‘natural’ laws of domination, wherein the conqueror had rights over slaves and “the male is by nature superior, the female inferior, the male ruler, the female subject” (Aristotle, *Politics* 1,11,9, 11-12, cited in Cox & James, 1987, p.211). Thus, in the Greek formulation, the only role for women and slaves was to provide for the necessities of bodily material existence,¹¹³ to allow free men to carry out ‘their’ work as citizens, policy makers and leaders.

Such discursive associations of freedom, rationality and authority in the civic sphere with white, elite men, were particularly endorsed within enlightenment epistemology, becoming embedded in the bourgeois civic sphere (Fraser, 1997) and persisting in varying ways across the centuries in Anglo/European societies, resurfacing in recent times in masculinist and rationalist forms of managerialist organisation (Blackmore, 1999). Hekman investigated how a construction of rationality as a “specifically masculine mode of thought” was developed within historical developments of learning, logic and knowledge (Hekman, 1990, p.5). In earlier times in western societies, it was argued that as a consequence of their ‘superior’ intellectual, spiritual qualities and destined work in the civic and religious spheres, only boys should be educated. This not only gave them access to established bodies of knowledge, but also legitimated the ways that traditional fields of knowledge in European and Anglo societies have been created over many centuries by “a circle of men,” philosophers,

¹¹³ An example of how Greek thinkers devalued women’s role in reproduction is Tertullian’s argument that “In birth the whole fruit is present in the semen” while women’s menstrual blood provided only the matter for the development of the embryo (Warner, 1976, in Cox & James, 1987). Cox and James commented, “In a society in which matter drew contempt and form belonged to the realm of the rational and the spiritual, such an argument reinforced the misogyny of Aristotelian philosophy” (1987, p.4).

politicians, poets and policy makers, who have been writing and talking to each other about the issues that are important to them (Smith, 1978). What has developed is a discourse available to particular groups of men that “allows them to represent themselves as people, humanity, mankind,” while in contrast, however differently they may be constituted in different practices and discourses, women have been “constantly and inescapably constructed as women,” ‘other’ to and less than men (Black & Coward, 1981, p.85).

Hekman also noted that within male educational practices and understandings of logic as adversarial disputation, boys learned to debate in Latin as opposed to the vernacular, the ‘mother’ tongue (Hekman, 1990, p.32). Much feminist work has been done on how language practices powerfully shape social relationships. Spender’s (1980) radical feminist examinations of historical practices wherein elite men “captured” language for their own advantage, described how, for example, English male grammarians in the 16th and 17th centuries developed semantic rules that enabled the generic use of ‘he’ and ‘man’ to encompass ‘she’ and ‘woman.’ This practice effectively subsumed women within men’s viewpoints and expressions of experience. Spender also showed how women and femininity have been denigrated and devalued through specific pejorative and abusive language practices. The links between discourse, power and knowledge have been made clear in such analyses and those of language that has been used to denigrate ‘others.’ Working class people and ‘race’ and ethnic minorities have been categorised also as deviant, deficient and devalued in largely unspoken comparisons with the norm of the dominant group - elite, white men.

More subtle forms of logic and argument effect power inequalities in ways that are not as readily open to critique, however. In classical liberal discourse, for example, in order to make generalisations or universal statements, there was a “decontextualisation, or abstraction of real events and people from their situation” (Blackmore, 1989, p.108). In effect, ‘the individual’ was disembodied and each person, regardless of their gender, class, ‘race’ or ethnicity, was treated as having similar status and experience. This probably seemed a reasonable tool for treating everyone as equal, but the public individual was termed ‘universal man.’ Thus individuality and masculinity became literally linked, while the individuality of women was rendered simultaneously invisible (ibid).

The liberal individualist conception of citizenship (and its associated privileging of practices that led to positions of power and authority for men) has been criticised as a “patriarchal category” (Pateman, 1988). Feminists have shown that it has been based on what men did (in relation to national security and state politics, for example), de-legitimising and devaluing women’s qualities and activities as civically and politically insignificant. The currency of these ideas made it possible for Rousseau to argue that, while all individuals should be considered as equals, with their opportunities restricted only by innate potential and abilities, the only point of education for women was to equip them to “please ... and make themselves useful to men” (Ritchie, 1988, p.49). Such statements could only be made within

a social environment that was built on the discursive constructions and legitimations that I have been describing.

Liberalism's basic tenet that everyone is equal is a normative neutrality that obscures the facts of individual embodiment in material relations of gender, race and class power inequalities (Frazer & Lacey, 1993, p.74). Thus liberal feminism's argument that everyone should have equal opportunities *regardless* of ethnicity, class and gender, works, of course to obscure the very real differences those embodied social relations entail. This is a consequence of the abstract disembodied individualism of liberalism, which provides inadequate theoretical tools for analysis of how power is embedded in social institutions and relations (*ibid*). Although liberalism argues for equal rights and individual freedom within the law, this argument is about rights to participation, rather than the substance of participation (Pateman, 1986).

These factors, among others, have contributed to the accumulation of power by white bourgeois liberal men in most western societies, and the resulting exclusions, until very recently, of 'others' from civic and institutional positions of power and authority (Hekman, 1990, p. 21). Further, white, masculinist discursive constructions of different groups' 'natural' characteristics and abilities have legitimated the exploitation of the labour of women, working class and minority 'race' and ethnic groups, and the marginalising of these groups from meaningful and well paid employment in socially valued areas of work (Fraser, 1997).

While such practices are changing, and while arguments such as Rousseau's may not be expressed so openly today, the legacies of masculinist white liberal individualism remain as embedded strands of preconstructed discourse in what often continues to be taken for granted as 'natural' rules that shape our lives (Hennessy, 1993). Foucault's (1980) theory of discourse is relevant to understanding how such discursive dividing practices authorise particular viewpoints and speaking positions while excluding others. For example, the persistence of a masculinist discourse that divides men as a group from women as a group, and allocates authority to men while excluding them from so-called 'private' caregiving responsibilities, is clear in the following quote from an influential psychology text published in 1970. In his analysis of human motivation, Maslow wrote:

It is possible for a female to have all the specifically female fulfilments (being loved, having the home, having the baby) and then, without giving up any of the satisfactions already achieved, go on, beyond femaleness to the full humanness she shares with males; for example the full development of her intelligence, of any talents she may have, and of her own idiosyncratic genius (Maslow, 1970, p.xiv).

Middleton (1990) has shown how similar ideas were embedded in the Treasury's arguments to the incoming New Zealand government in the late 1980s. The Treasury described women's desire to have children within employment market relations as "irrational," but by implication, 'natural' as a consequence of their femininity. Thus, to follow these masculinist discursive arguments, if women want to become part of the 'normal' (that is, male) world, they

need to be more 'rational' by not involving themselves in family responsibilities. (The ironies here do not need to be spelled out!)

Feminist critiques of rationalist educational leadership discourse

While Maslow's and the New Zealand Treasury's gendered views of human motivation have been strongly criticised (Shakeshaft, 1987; Middleton, 1990), these arguments have been very influential in educational administration theorising. They have contributed to legitimising the gendered hierarchies within schools organisational structures and the under-representation of women in leadership. As I indicated in Chapter 3, a residue of the gendered dichotomy that linked rationality as a so-called 'higher sphere of the mind' to masculinity, in opposition to a feminine so-called irrationality and affective nature, has been a significant discursive thread of assumption that has worked against the acceptance of women's leadership capabilities in education. There is now a large body of feminist literature analysing the effects for women of the constitution of educational administration as "a masculinist enterprise" (Blackmore, 1999). Blackmore has reminded us, however, that the persistence of these factors is not necessarily a conscious conspiracy, but more the effect of:

an on-going set of discursive practices favouring particular interests centred around fundamental theoretical binaries (rationality/emotionality) and the gendered division of labour between administration/teaching (Blackmore, 1999, p.50).

Blackmore's (1989) earlier analysis outlined how liberal individualism's construction of 'the citizen' in abstract, neutral and universal terms stressed the necessity for individual autonomy and rationality. She identified the links between these arguments and those underpinning Weber's 'ideal' type of bureaucratic organisation, where "leadership is justified on the grounds of rational necessity, individual behaviours and opportunities" within hierarchical structures of control and command that have been constructed as a "technical necessity" for the co-ordination of subdivided tasks (Blackmore, 1989, p.118). This bureaucratic discourse's emphasis on linear procedures of rational decision making reflects a positivist privileging of facts over values. As a result, bureaucratic organisational rationality has required all situations to be treated according to a set of rules that has left out the particular and ignored feelings: the latter have been seen as subjective and likely to bias judgement. As women and femininity have long been equated with emotional empathetic qualities seen as the opposite of objective rationality, Blackmore argued that it is not surprising that women have been seen as unsuitable in the realm of public decision making (ibid). Conversely, men's authority as rational leaders has been taken for granted as a normal part of their 'masculinity.'

In Aotearoa/New Zealand these gendered distinctions have been grounded historically in the cult of domesticity, a discourse that has constructed women's nature as fitting them for domesticity and caring roles, legitimising both their 'place' in teaching (caring for and nurturing children) and in supporting men (in the home and in their paid positions), rather than

in positions of leadership themselves. Despite changes in women's workforce participation, there has been little change in gendered divisions of labour in the home, with many women now carrying dual responsibilities at home and at work (Court, 1997), as well as carrying out much of the emotional labour in their paid workplaces (Blackmore, 1996). This is not to argue that all women are caring and nurturing of course. The practices of some managerial women can seem more macho and authoritarian than those of their male colleagues (Reay & Ball, 2000). It is to argue though, that preconstructed discourses of hierarchy and gender difference can persist in ways that are difficult to change. Interview and ethnographic studies in educational and other bureaucratic and corporate organisations around the world have revealed how the legacies of these combined discourses have made it difficult, until very recently, for many women to either consider or gain promotion into any positions of management and leadership in public organisations (Al Khalifa, 1989; Cockburn, 1991; Kanter, 1977; Neville, 1988; Pringle, 1989; Sampson, 1987). And while subject positions of 'feminine' and 'feminist' leadership have recently been made available for women, elements of these positionings still clash with the position of entrepreneurial competitive market manager where it re-endorses so-called 'masculine' toughness and competitiveness as required for educational leadership (Blackmore, 1999; Leonard, 1998; Strachan, 1999).

At this point, it must be noted that in Aotearoa/New Zealand, women are now breaking through the glass ceiling in national and local politics and in some large corporations (indeed, cartoonists are now targeting 'the matriarchy'!) This supports Foucault's argument that wherever there is power, and a dominant regime of truth, there is also resistance and the possibility for individual agency (Foucault, 1982). In education however, there has been much slower change in the advance of women into leadership positions. Perhaps this is partly because there are such obvious links between traditional gendered oppositions of a so-called 'feminine' nurturance and the development of children in positive supportive learning environments, and the recent ascendancy of a masculinist market managerial approach. Despite the recent research interest in re-examining the schism between rationality and emotionality, and findings about the significance of emotionality in the constitution and exercise of intelligence and leadership (Blackmore, 1996; Beatty, 2000; Court, 1995; Hargreaves, 1997; Sachs & Blackmore, 1998), the resurgence of masculinist individualist versions of autonomy and rationality is strongly evident within market liberalism (O'Neill, 1996a; Peters, 1994). This means that the gendered problems associated with liberalism have not been dissipated by (some) women's arrival in the 'corridors of power.'

To sum up the arguments I have been making, in their critique of liberal individualism's reliance on "abstracted, transcendent features of personhood" as the basis for political theory, Frazer and Lacey (1993) pointed out that questions of form rather than substance have been the centre of analysis. That is, liberal individualism has focused on questions about the status of citizenship and the holding of rights, rather than on questions around differentiated access to power or the worth of political rights to particular people or

groups (*ibid.*, p. 99). Feminist critiques of this approach (and its associated arguments in relation to authority and leadership) have highlighted how the values and processes of liberal individualism disadvantage women and other groups, and have emphasised instead the importance of social interconnectedness (*ibid.*, p.100).

Counter discourses: new regimes of truth?

Feminist leadership counter discourses are not without their own problems, however. As I have been indicating in this thesis, cultural feminism is particularly problematic. While it has co-opted discursive constructions of ‘feminine power sharing, caring and nurturance’ as an argument for appointing more women as educational leaders (Albino, 1992; McCrea & Ehrich, 1999), a cultural feminist ‘women’s ways of leading’ discourse ignores the variability of women’s natures, values and attitudes (Blackmore, 1999, pp.57-8). As such, it works to constrain different women’s approaches within its own universalising meta-narrative (*ibid.*). That is, cultural feminism can become a regime of truth that sets up ‘fences’ around possible ways for women to ‘be’ and to act.

In Blackmore’s view, the development of a feminist emancipatory leadership that highlights the need for improved equity and social justice for all social groups, is a more effective approach (see also, Strachan, 1997; 1999). As I explained in Chapter 3, this discourse incorporates a caring orientation as a significant component of educational leadership, but extends this idea into advocating for the recognition and valuing of differences (of gender, ethnicity and culture, sexual orientation, class, for example) and to addressing issues of deprivation and exclusion. Feminist emancipatory leadership thus endorses shared leadership, decision making and teamwork as part of its agenda for sharing power across all levels of the organisation.

As I also indicated in Chapter 3 however, there is a significant tension within arguments for a feminist emancipatory leadership. Feminist educational leaders, along with all collaborative leaders who work within the existing market/bureaucratic organisational and institutional structures, face the dilemma that, while they may espouse and promote an emancipatory, power sharing approach to leadership, they are themselves still placed in positions of influence, privilege and status at the top of a hierarchical division of management/teaching labour. This is the same tension that exists in representations of the principal as a collaborative leader who facilitates shared decision making as ‘morally’ uplifting (Foster, 1989; Sergiovanni, 1991) within a largely unproblematised acceptance of the hierarchical structuring of school workforces. Such structures rely on technicist distinctions between those who manage (and as a consequence of their position power, assume the right to control through the authorising of decisions), and those who teach (and implement decisions authorised by managers). While a poststructuralist analysis of the discourse/power/knowledge nexus can alert us to this inherent contradiction (between sharing power while keeping final

decision making authority), most theorists of feminist educational leadership (to my knowledge) have not yet really confronted this tension and its accompanying dilemmas. (Karen Sewell (1989) who while she was principal of Green Bay High school in Auckland did not exercise her principal veto over collective decisions made by the staff, is a rare exception).¹¹⁴

This tension lays feminist emancipatory leadership open to criticisms such as those of Lynn Davies (1996). While Davies agreed with the importance of critical reflection for emancipatory forms of leadership, she challenged Grundy's (1993) view of an emancipatory leader as one who has time and space for critical reading and reflection. Such time and space was "not available to other members of the educational community" and principals should not have "a monopoly on critical thinking time" or on the development of visions for the work of a school (Davies, 1996, p.307).¹¹⁵ Those promoting a discourse of professional collaborative leadership may argue that this difficulty can be addressed through strategies such as project teams or quality learning circles, but another dilemma persists. Collaborative, collegial leaders can find themselves walking a fine line between empowering and manipulating others. "Contrived collegiality" can become the order of the day when leaders and directors require that subordinates become involved in planning and strategising exercises within wider organisational conditions over which they have no control (Hargreaves, 1991). There are also, of course, elements of elitism in the whole notion of empowering 'others' (Angus, 1989). Embedded within the emergent discourse of feminist leadership then, is a preconstructed strand of hierarchical leadership.

Feminist organisational theorists and critics of bureaucracy have identified the kinds of dilemmas I have been discussing as inherent in organisations that are structured around stratification and hierarchy (see, for example, Fergusson, 1984). Rather than trying to modify hierarchy through caring or emancipatory forms of leadership, as has been done in the feminist leadership approach advocated by Blackmore (1989) and researched by Strachan (1997; 1999), feminists who advocate a collectivist form of organisation have argued for egalitarian practices that *dismantle* hierarchy. I turn now to examining their arguments and approaches. Elements of this discourse resonate strongly with some of the arguments and practices that were being taken up in the primary school co-principalships that are the focus of this study.

¹¹⁴ The arguments of some of the women co-principals who are the focus of this current study, drew on a different feminist discourse, that of collective democratic practice, which enabled some of them to avoid some of the dilemmas that inhere in existing conceptions (including feminist) of the collaborative, power sharing principal.

¹¹⁵ From studies of the workloads of principals in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Sullivan, 1994; Bloor & Harker, 1998), it could be argued that even principals do not have time for critical reflection. Despite this caveat, the model of the reflective principal is still promoted as a professional ideal here (Stewart & Prebble, 1993).

Feminist discourses of collective democratic organisation

In her analysis of masculinist bourgeois versions of the public sphere, Fraser showed that while this has been exclusive of women and minority groups, both of the latter have constructed paths to public debate and political life, through building their own, albeit “subaltern,” public spaces (1997, pp. 74-5).¹¹⁶ “In such spaces members of subordinated groups invent and circulate counter discourses, which in turn permit them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests and needs” (Fraser, 1997, p.81). Fraser suggested that such subaltern groups had dual functions of withdrawal and re-groupment as “training grounds” and bases for agitating in the wider society (ibid). Feminist collectives illustrate these kinds of dynamics.

The US feminist collectives emerged there during the 1960s and 70s, as part of the women’s liberation movement and wider anti-authority movements that gave rise to a range of alternative organisations, including student and union organisations, food cooperatives, communes, medical clinics and research collectives (Rothschild, 1994). Grounded initially in radical feminism, they sprang up all over the US as consciousness raising groups of six to twelve women. These small egalitarian groups formed to support women who were seeking to understand themselves and their most intimate relations with men in ways that would help them build their confidence and strength to combat patriarchal domination (Mansbridge, 1994, p.546). A positive outcome for many women was membership in groups that developed a sense of community and sisterhood based on “bonds of friendship, equality and respect” (p.551). Mansbridge reported that this enabled individuals to develop strength, new ideas and new energy (p.547). Similar consciousness raising groups also arose in Aotearoa/New Zealand during the early 1970s, alongside more politically focused action groups (Dann, 1985).¹¹⁷

While the different groups that developed during these two decades had some different purposes, depending on how women perceived the needs of their members and their wider communities, some common characteristics became evident (Leidner, 1991; Sirianni, 1994; Vanderpyl, 1998). All of the collectives had the dual aims of educating their members and bringing about change in specific issues affecting women. In many of the early feminist collectives the size of groups was kept small, to enable direct, face-to-face meetings that could use participatory and consensus decision making. This was seen as a challenge to the impersonal and hierarchical structures of bureaucratic, masculinist organisations (Rothschild, 1994). Egalitarianism was stressed as a fundamental value: every member was to have equal status and rights of participation. It was argued for example, that the creation of ‘stars’ through

¹¹⁶ Examples are the suffragette movement, women’s publishing houses, the Kohanga Reo (Māori pre-school immersion language centres) movement and academic courses in both feminism and radical race analyses.

¹¹⁷ For example, groups formed to protest sexist advertising, agitate for equal pay, challenge health and education provision, protest male violence, especially in rape and domestic abuse.

practices such as some women becoming spokesperson to the media, should be avoided. Indeed, leaders and leadership itself was eschewed because it was viewed as an offshoot of 'male' competitive ways of operating.

The following text examples, from articles in an early edition of the New Zealand feminist magazine *Broadsheet* (1975),¹¹⁸ illustrate the tone and categories of a discourse of feminist collectivist organisation that was being constituted in Aotearoa/New Zealand during the 1970s. The case narratives presented in the next part of this thesis illustrate how some of these ideas and practices of 'women working together' fed into the initiation and development of the co-principalships.

Discursive themes of feminist collectivity

Providing refuge, support and political education

In 1974 a group of women in Christchurch decided that there was a need in the city for a "a place of refuge providing temporary accommodation for women and children leaving violent and oppressive domestic situations, and a sanctuary for women to be together, share ideas and problems and support one another" (Diane, 1975, p.20). Diane's herstory outlined the establishing of the Christchurch Women's Centre, the first of its kind in the country. She described how, with "plenty of womanpower," the collective found, set up and maintained a building suitable for their dual purposes of providing a shelter/refuge and meeting/support space. It was agreed that the house would be a woman only space, and simple rosters and procedures were agreed on. "Women on the roster generally write in the day book what has been happening. This serves as a record for women dealing with a particular case and also keeps Centre women in communication" (p.20).¹¹⁹

The interweaving of educative, supportive and political purposes of the collective can be seen in the following comments.

We realise that the Women's Centre is just treating the symptoms of male dominated society by providing refuge for women ... We realise the great need for change in attitudes and expectations placed on women in our society. Thus there are groups of women using the women's centre to raise their awareness of feminism. To me the centre is a place where women can come together to discuss and act on feminist ideas. It would be good if some of the women who stay at the centre, could, on leaving, combine with other women to set up co-operative living arrangements so that they could support each other and face their common

¹¹⁸The collective began when four women who had been involved in the women's liberation movement and who were "in consciousness raising groups, had been to seminars, discussion groups, had read books, magazines and women's liberation literature, felt ready to initiate some project that would further the ideals of the women's movement", to make "a solid contribution to changes in people's lives and in Society overall" (Coney & Cederman, 1975, pp.30, 35).

¹¹⁹ Some of the co-principalships used as similar strategy in their Principals' To Do book.

problems together, rather than each family going off to their own house again to struggle on with problems that are still there (pp.20-21, 24).

Diane's article presented a picture of women as strategic agents working together in resistance to male domination, educating themselves through collective consciousness raising and problem solving. A radical feminist discourse (of women as subordinated by male power and as finding shared strength within a sisterhood) can be seen to be underpinning these arguments. Diane's use of her first name only also made a statement of resistance to patriarchal/patrilineal naming practices.

A 'sisterhood' that acknowledges differences

Although there was an ascendancy at the time of radical and lesbian feminist discourses (Jones & Guy, 1992), in the collectives established in Aotearoa/New Zealand during the 1970s, there was also, almost from the beginning, an awareness of the importance of acknowledging differences between women. This was articulated by Diane in terms of differences of sexual orientations, political persuasions and feminist theoretical positioning. She wrote: "There are the usual divisions that are apparent in the feminist movement as a whole - between lesbians and 'straight' women, between socialists and non-socialists, between lesbian and lesbian/feminists, between feminists and radical feminists" (Diane, 1975, p.24).

The different political opinions within feminist collectives were presented by Diane as a positive factor that could contribute towards building 'sisterhood.' Sharing and debating ideas was an educative strategy that was not only necessary to build a cohesive movement, but also, in her view, energising. She wrote:

In New Zealand we are lucky that we are small in numbers. We all have to stick together really or at least keep up contact with each other... but as long as we have a central place like this, we'll keep coming together and sharing ideas and energy and the whole feminist thing will grow and develop (p.24).

The Broadsheet magazine's editorial collective was particularly committed to the goal of education through debate, and its articles about collectives represented different feminist ideas. For example, two viewpoint pieces written by two members of the Auckland Women's Centre discussed the issue of whether women's centres should be women only spaces. One member wrote that "the large majority supported it because the oppression that women feel when men are present inhibits them from speaking as freely as they should" (Saari & Coates, 1975, p.5). The other woman said that while she agreed with the original decision, she felt embarrassed when she had to tell her male friend that he was not allowed in. She reported that:

Naturally he was hurt and bitter ... I feel now that it is too great an ideological sacrifice to be making. Poor community relations ... The only people whose presence seems illegitimate to me are those who come to hassle. And I'll throw them out, whether they are male or female ... There is the justification of creating a women's centre for those unbalanced individuals who need a place to hide. This is fair enough ... but maybe the centre should be more

concerned with political change. Women will not be enlightened as to the meaning of sexism if they see that we interpret it as a battle of the sexes” (ibid).

The tensions between different feminist understandings of gender relations and the rationales for the work of collectives are illustrated in these two pieces. In the first writer’s comment there is a radical feminist understanding of both systemic patriarchal oppression of women and the assumption that within interpersonal interactions, (all) women are disempowered by (individual) men, whose mere presence can silence women’s free and full expression of their ideas and feelings. In the second writer’s statements, a liberal feminist discourse is evident in the understanding of equality and fairness as meaning treating men and women in the same ways (having equal access to the Centre; being equally ‘thrown out’ if they cause trouble). Alongside this is an acknowledgement that fairness may also require different treatment for individual women who may need support and assistance to build their assertiveness and ability to ‘make it’ on their own. Individual women are stigmatised, however, as deficient (“unbalanced”) in this account; they are presented as the problem that needs fixing. The hurt feelings of the rejected male friend are also presented as a problem, but here there is a sense of obligation to not upset “community relations” (meaning the ‘normal’ patterns of expectations and relationships between men and women). The links between discourse and power are evident in the ways that normality is linked with a heterosexual view of gender relations, where men have right of access to women and women’s facilities, and women who can’t cope with these ‘normal’ relations are “unbalanced.” Some of these dynamics emerge in the St Mary’s narrative (see Chapter 10).

While the normalising effects of a masculinist liberalism can be seen to be shaping this *Broadsheet* writer’s understandings, it is also clear that she was aware of a radical feminist view of sexism as power struggles between men and women, described as a “battle of the sexes.” The extract reveals this woman’s thinking about different discursive possibilities for action and we could read her liberal feminist response as a “more comfortable” position for her to take up than a radical feminist focus on difference as conflictual (as Blackmore (1999, p.196) suggested in relation to the liberal feminist positionings of some of the Australian women principals she researched). The *Broadsheet* writer’s argument in favour of a liberal feminist approach of bringing about change at the level of rationality (enlightening women) and perhaps legislation (political change) is indeed constructed within normalising liberal discourse. It could also be read, however, as a strategic political response of working within the system to avoid what she sees as the ‘poor community relations’ that may result from a more separatist policy for the collective. The extract thus opens up considerations of how individuals can think about and take action within discourse, as a “feeling subject and social agent, capable of resistance and innovations produced out of the clash between contradictory subject positions and practices” (Weedon, 1987, p.125). This is the kind of analysis developed later in Part III of this thesis.

The simultaneous circulation within this collective of different discursive constructions of 'woman' is also illustrated in this article. Women who helped at the centre were constructed by one writer as basically strong, enlightened and politically active, while those being helped were seen as oppressed, unenlightened and/or passive. There is an assumption in both accounts however, that all women deserve the care and nurturance of their 'sisters.' Interestingly, in each of the *Broadsheet* articles^I have discussed, a discourse of caring sisterhood was built around a liberal tolerance of differences, rather than an explicit analysis of power inequalities between women. Some of these kinds of discursive negotiations, debates and dilemmas surfaced also in the co-principal initiatives, as the narratives which follow this chapter will show.

Eschewing hierarchical organisational structures

While there were these kinds of differences within and between the early collectives overseas and in Aotearoa/New Zealand, studies of them and documents written by collective members, indicate that they were all highly critical of any form of elitism or hierarchy (Diane, 1974; Freeman, 1973; Leidner, 1991; Mansbridge, 1994; Vanderpyl, 1998). The early feminist collectives wanted to evolve alternatives to what they had experienced in male dominated organisations that excluded and/or oppressed women. Radical feminist ideas about male domination/female subordination that drew links between hierarchical forms of leadership, impersonal systems of control and men's practices in public organisations, were drawn on as women developed different forms of organisation that they thought would more appropriately suit their aims and ways of working together. The *Broadsheet* collective's statement was typical of the approach. "We believed in the idea of a loose collective where everyone who was around was involved in decision making" (Coney & Cederman, 1975, p.31).

For many of the collectives, having any form of structure was viewed as building hierarchy. For example, a member of the Dunedin Collective for Women (a women's liberation group which saw itself as more radical than women's rights groups), commented that:

We are very different to NOW (the National Organisation for Women) as we do not have elected officers ... From the very beginning the Dunedin Collective for Women has striven to get away from such hierarchical structure ... Women's liberation groups emphasise personal involvement, high attendance at frequent meetings, and a deep commitment from women ... They prefer to use de-centralization (ie. small groups) and rotate tasks to avoid becoming a 'top down,' elitist, hierarchical organisation (Levesque, 1973, cited in Dann, 1985, p.10).

A desire to change the structure of the principal/teacher divide was a significant motivation for the initiation of the Hillcrest Avenue School co-principalship (see Chapter 8). As I suggested earlier, the antipathy in some feminist collectives towards hierarchical organisational structure equated this not only with male domination, but also with bureaucracy, which was criticised as instrumentally rationalist and controlling (Fergusson, 1984). Indeed,

some American scholars have seen the rise of all kinds of collectives as driven by an anti-bureaucratic ‘movement.’ Rothschild (1994), for example, has analysed distinctions between the ideal types of bureaucratic and collective organisation, identifying differences along eight dimensions of their definitions and use of authority, rules, social control, social relations, recruitment and advancement, incentive structure, social stratification and differentiation (pp. 451-62). Distinctions in the basis of authority were seen by Rothschild as “the heart” of the differences (p.451). She wrote that while bureaucratic authority is held by an individual as a consequence of rank or expertise, in the ideal collectivist-democratic organisation, authority resides in a consensus of the collectivity as a whole and is based in shared substantive values (such as equality). This consensus is treated as fluid and open to negotiation, with decisions being made in relation to particular cases.

Rothschild observed that control within the ideal democratic collectivist organisation is based in personal and moral factors, rather than enforced through direct supervision, rules and sanctions (p.453). She acknowledged however, that control is enhanced in both collectivist and bureaucratic organisations, (particularly at the top levels of the latter), through the selection of an homogeneous membership, those who share similar life styles and world views (p.454). However, while bureaucratic social relationships have been generally characterised as impersonal, role based, segmented and instrumental, in the collective-democratic organisation, social relations are ideally holistic, personal and of value in themselves. Rothschild noted that friendship and similar socio-political values are sources for membership of a democratic collective, whereas formal qualifications and specific expertise have been used in recruitment into bureaucratic organisations. Friendship in an ‘in-group’ can also be a source of power and control, however. I will return to this point later

As part of their dismissal of hierarchy, collectivist organisations also typically eschewed careerism. Rothschild observed that they rely more on “value fulfilment and solidarity incentives such as friendship” for motivation than on material incentives (1994, p. 455). She also pointed out however, that even for volunteers there is likely to be a “coalescence of material and ideal interests”, such as skills acquired ‘looking good’ on a CV. A strong incentive for those who choose to work in a collectivist organisation is the potential for increased control over their own work and working together with others in ways that are “congruent with their ideals” (p.457). The egalitarianism that is such a prized value of collectivist-democratic organisations, is practised typically through the minimising of differentiations in salary and privileges, and the sharing or rotation of tasks. Teamwork is advocated as part of educating all in specialised knowledge areas and as part of breaking down distinctions between intellectual and manual labour. “In the fully democratic organisation, everyone manages and everyone works” (Rothschild, 1994, p.459).

The co-principal narratives presented in the next part of this thesis reflect many of these characteristic sets of beliefs, values and practices. As with all social practices, however,

collectivist forms of organisations have inherent dilemmas and problems, and some of the dilemmas and difficulties I turn to now.

Difficulties in “structurelessness”

While all the above ideals of egalitarian, supportive, educative, consensus and personal values and structures have sought within feminist collectives, early in their development there came a realisation of difficulties that can emerge in highly informal organisations. In Aotearoa/New Zealand, for example, the *Broadsheet* magazine collective’s attempts to work as a loose collective that welcomed anyone who wanted to help struck problems.

We found conflicts arose when people had goals or methods which were different from the majority and when people made decisions which were not based on either knowledge or commitment. We found that it is unrealistic to expect women who put in a few hours a month into *Broadsheet* to bear the same responsibility and to have the same share in decision-making as women who put in over one hundred hours a month and have done so for a long period” (Coney and Cederman, 1975, p.32).

Negotiating tensions between leadership, power, consensus

Although they wanted to achieve minimal structure, some feminists quickly recognised what Freeman (1973) called “the tyranny of structurelessness.” Martin later clarified organisation structure as “an intentional or emergent plan of organisation, strategy and goals that may or may not be reproduced in official tables of organisation, constitutions and job descriptions” (Martin, 1990, p.185). In a very influential paper that was circulated widely in the US before its publication,¹²⁰ Freeman pointed out when formal structures are not established in an organisation, informal structures that coalesce around the most powerful in the group, emerge. Freeman noted that the effect of the lack of formal structure in a group or organisation, could be a masking of unspecified rules that were shaping how decisions are made and leading to the formation of an elite (often friends) within the larger group. A small friendship group that socialised outside of the organisation could become a powerful, perhaps the only, communication network. Freeman pointed out that if a group did not select who among their ranks will exercise power, it did not get rid of power, only the right to demand responsibility from those who exercise it.

Hartsock (1981) thus later argued that it was not leadership that was the problem, but rather the desire of some individuals to assume undue control. What was needed, Hartsock maintained, was not the throwing out of leadership per se, but strategies for keeping leadership accountable. This feminist call for accountability strategies in their organisations may seem ironical, given my previous criticisms in this thesis of narrow managerialist forms of

¹²⁰ Sirianni (1994, p.558) considers that Freeman’s essay was important in “triggering a process of critical reflection” that has continued ever since within feminist collectivities.

accountability. Freeman and Hartsock proposed, however, more democratic strategies to ensure responsibility was adequately taken up, such as negotiated delegations and distribution of authority as widely as possible through rotation of tasks and a supported apprenticeship approach, along with systems for ensuring frequent diffusion of information and equal access to resources. As the next chapter will show, each of these strategies were used in the Hillcrest Avenue School co-principalship.

The *Broadsheet* collective realised that they needed these kinds of “minimal structure” to resolve the problems they had encountered in their initial attempts to operate in a ‘structureless’ way. Consequently, they decided to have weekly planning/ problem solving meetings and a monthly policy making meeting, and they agreed that all decision making should be by consensus, “no matter how long it takes” (Coney & Cederman, 1975, p.32). They were adamant that as a group they should “try to adhere to this principle of the women’s movement: that women should eschew a patriarchal hierarchical structure” (ibid).

In their banning of leadership, some collectives had also found that they had opened themselves up to an insipid consensus that enforced a ‘grey sameness’ of opinion. It was reported that some individuals suffered a loss of their sense of ‘self’ and/or felt guilty about their own desire for recognition and personal initiative when these conflicted with the aims of the group (Riger, 1994). Within a discourse analysis of the formation of subjectivity, what could be identified in the latter situation is an individual confronting a clash between her emotional investment in a liberal individualist discourse of personal autonomy and success as opposed to her desire to be a feminist collective member. In the collectivist approach, the former subject position was explicitly denigrated and excluded in favour of a submersion of individualism within a group identity. (Once again, this kind of dilemma emerged for some of the women co-principals, as I will explore later in Chapter 12.)

Sirianni summed up the problems of the ‘structureless’ collective as:

Informal dominance, expressive manipulation, leadership trashing, false consensus, enforced sisterly virtue - all these were problems that, to a considerable degree, were generated by the very attempts to prefigure an ideal of participatory openness and egalitarian process (1994, p.562).

A Foucauldian analysis could suggest that these difficulties were themselves ‘pre-figured’ in the genesis of feminist collective organisation as the antithesis to masculinist organisational structures and practices. That is, collectives were set up within arguments shaped by the preconstructed discourse of gender difference discussed in the first part of this chapter. This knitted into feminist collectivist democratic discourse the cultural feminist notion that all women are naturally predisposed to the egalitarian approaches being espoused and that any form of leadership or rational kinds of organisational structures were linked to patriarchal practices of men and therefore needed ‘trashing’ and avoiding. Not surprisingly, women working in the collectives found that these ideas are flawed.

... and between unity and difference

Difficulties in achieving an ideal of equal exercise of influence persisted within the experiences of feminist collectivities. While drawing on an ethic of care (Gilligan, 1982) married to a belief in a radical form of participatory democracy, feminists of different political persuasion and material circumstances came into conflict over what was 'counting' as the ground values and aims of their collectives and wider (loose) federations (Riger, 1994; Sirianni, 1994; Vanderpyl, 1996). A New Zealand example described in Chapter 3, was the criticisms levelled by Māori and lesbian women at white heterosexual feminists in the women's movement in this country. This conflict split apart the hegemony of any assumed 'sisterhood.' Vanderpyl's (1996) study analysed (among other things) how such splits were experienced within the development of a New Zealand Rape Crisis centre. This study is a useful one for opening up the kinds of issues that emerged in the Telford School co-principalship initiative. In this school, although the issues were not exactly the same and the dilemmas were played out differently, misunderstandings around differences of ethnicity and culture became significant.

The feminist organisation studied by Vanderpyl exhibited in its early 'creation stage' and second 'collectivity stage' (Riger, 1994), most of the characteristics of the ideal type of collective identified by Rothschild (1994). Its structure was largely informal, there was a sharing of jobs and the aim was to provide support for women. While the collective acknowledged differences of race and class between women, it was itself a largely homogeneous group of mostly Pākehā educated women (p.13). When a Māori women's group joined the collective, they wanted to admit men. While dissension over this issue was resolved, inter-relationships were damaged. In her discussion of the resulting decline and dispersal of the founding membership, Vanderpyl showed how a feminist collective is not immune to charges of institutionalised forms of racism. While claiming to respect and acknowledge diversity as part of a commitment to anti-racist practices, "appeals to sisterhood and common feminist values ... fail to recognise that 'woman' and 'white woman' are not the same," she wrote (ibid). Vanderpyl reported that in the collective she studied, the cultural values of the Māori and the Pākehā women were directly opposed and the only solution was separation. For one of the Māori teachers in my study of the Telford School co-principalship, separation began as a political strategy and ended as a coping strategy (see Chapter 9).

Increased formalisation

While the small size of collectivist democratic groups was seen as important for developing and maintaining egalitarian practices, studies have shown a collective can be propelled towards increased formalisation (Riger 1994). As its membership grows, the excessive time taken to reach consensus and to reflect on process was found to be hindering

productivity and thus some collectives initiated a formalising of procedures. Riger has identified this as a 'third stage' of growth in a collective (the previous two being the creation and collectivity stages). This stage can include the institutionalising of policies and procedures, initiation of specialised positions and a hierarchy of titles, as well as increased reliance on more impersonal forms of communication (Riger, 1994, p.283). By 1990, for example, the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges in Aotearoa/New Zealand (NCIWR), had developed a marrying of some bureaucratic approaches with earlier strategies that aimed for democratic egalitarianism within feminist collectives. While each refuge remained autonomous, the national office developed a manual of guidelines to assist "the formalising of your working structure" (NCIWR (National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges in Aotearoa/New Zealand), 1990, p.2.1). This manual defined a collective, its purposes, responsibilities and accountabilities, principles of collective decision making, positions, tasks and responsibilities, and gave some detailed guidelines for practice. The NCIWR recommended that both of the positions of convenor and treasurer should be shared by a Māori and a non-Māori woman working together, as a practical way of facilitating parallel development (1990, p.2.8). Guidelines for responsibilities of these positions, and others, such as the meetings facilitator, meeting recorder, were also detailed.

While this kind of development may have been judged as necessarily 'bad' by early radical feminist collectivists, recent analyses have pointed out that there are advantages and disadvantages in both collective and bureaucratic forms of organisation (Riger, 1994; Sirianni, 1994) and elements of both can be amalgamated. The focus on elements of collectivity as the only characteristics that qualify an organisation as feminist, has been judged also as being too narrow. Martin (1990, p.184), for example, defined a feminist organisation as "pro-women, political and socially transformational ... allow(ing) feminist programmes in mainstream organisations to be counted as feminist."

Many feminists in Aotearoa/New Zealand have remained committed to a collective approach and some women working in state organisations have tried to initiate this approach there. The following is an example that became widely known among women in this country. As such it has formed a significant part of the discursive realm of possibilities for democratic forms of shared leadership in public sector organisations, including schools.

'Marrying' feminist leadership and feminist collectivity?

Mary O'Regan's practice as the first chief executive of the New Zealand Ministry of Women's Affairs, was an attempt to build not only a governmental department that would "work for women to influence policies and legislation so that they were better for women" but also to use feminist organisational principles to "provide a model of a way of working to which women could relate" (O'Regan, 1992, p.98). Her approach is a particularly interesting one for this study of the women's primary school co-principalships, as the women co-

principals faced some similar constraints as they initiated collectivist approaches in their schools.

O'Regan's style as a femocrat combined elements of both feminist leadership and collective discourses. She described this as trying to minimize hierarchy through collective decision-making and consultation with women nation wide. The latter was driven by the Ministry's viewing of women's life experiences as part of the "expertise" they needed to tap into (O'Regan, 1992 pp. 201-3). There are many similarities between O'Regan's view of a feminist leader as holding a "strong vision ... forging team spirit and shared commitment ... and developing relationships on a personal level" (p.199, 204,5) and that of the professional transformational leader described in the preceding chapter. Distinctions emerge in several areas however. For example, O'Regan commented later that her position should have been shared - if not as two heads of department, then "the positions of head and deputy should have been thought of together, with salaries split equally, even if we had had to do it informally. One of the positions should have been designated Māori as this would have presented a model of partnership" (p.204). This illustrates the commitment of many feminist leaders and feminist organisations in this country to bi-cultural partnership and parallel development, a commitment that can be traced back to the working through of issues around racism in the women's movement in late 70s and 80s. Although she was not able to share the leadership in the way she wanted, the Ministry did set up a parallel Māori/Pākehā structure.

O'Regan also demonstrated a commitment to establishing working relationships that were as egalitarian as possible (p.205). Frazer and Lacey have commented that as part of this ideal in feminist organisational approaches, there is a "constant scrutiny" of habits and established ways of doing things in groups (1993, p.122). In the case of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, O'Regan reported that "this soul searching about what feminism meant in relation to organisational practices, involved the whole staff" (p.205). Coterminous with these concerns was the aim to minimise status and salary distinctions, though these attempts were curtailed by the wider public service career and employment structures and rules, (a constraint the co-principalship initiatives also ran up against). Acknowledging women's personal lives and the dimension of emotionality within organisational processes were further elements distinguishing O'Regan's approach and that of the educational collaborative leadership model.

In the mid 1980s as O'Regan was establishing these processes and approaches within the state Ministry, women around Aotearoa/New Zealand were made aware, through the well attended women's forums and media reports of them, of how a discourse of feminist collectivity could be 'married' with a feminist approach to management. This possibility became part of the social imaginary for many women, providing for them model of how things could be done differently within a public service organisation. The widely consultative, open and 'flat' management organisational approach O'Regan was employing was much talked about, even in the tiny rural town where I was then living. As such, it formed part of the

discursive possibilities for enhanced democratic practice that the women primary teachers who later initiated the co-principalships could draw on.

Unfortunately, a salutary warning followed upon O'Regan's retirement. When Judith Aitken was appointed as her successor, she immediately dismantled most of the collective processes in the Ministry and re-shaped it within the New Public Management model. (She literally remodelled the open plan working spaces, as well as re-instating hierarchical working relationships). The lesson for feminists was that not all women, not even feminists,¹²¹ have the same goals and aspirations for democratic practice in workplaces.

Feminist interest in finding ways to effectively theorise and practise democracy in the workplace has continued however, as the co-principalship initiatives show. Before I move on to presenting those case narratives, I want to introduce some recent developments in feminist theorising of radical democracy, as I have found these arguments particularly useful for my theoretical analyses of the ways in which individual subjectivities as co-principals and collective co-principalship identities have been formed and negotiated within the primary school initiatives I have studied.

From a feminist politics of 'difference' to radical democracy

Earlier in this chapter, I referred to Pateman's (1988) defining of liberal notions of citizenship as patriarchal. To correct this narrow view of a universal, abstracted, disembodied individual and the gender inequalities it legitimated, she called for a "sexually differentiated" definition of citizenship that would include women's role and work in motherhood. Mouffe later pointed out though, that Pateman's solution, of valorising women as women and their role in motherhood, remained "trapped" in the "very opposition of men/women" that she wanted to challenge (Mouffe, 1995pp. 322-3). Mouffe argued that a new conception of citizenship was needed, wherein gender differences are no longer pertinent. She argued for the formation of a "radical democratic citizenship ... articulated through new egalitarian social relations, practices and institutions ... and achieved through the transformation of existing subject positions" (p. 327). Her definition of the social agent as "an ensemble of subject positions, corresponding to the multiplicity of social relations in which it is inscribed" (1995, p. 323), resonates with a poststructuralist understanding of subjectivity and analysis of possibilities for agency within complex and intersecting social power relations.

Young also argued for a radical democratic re-visioning of citizenship. Her re-formulation was based on a "politics of difference" within a heterogeneous public that was open to "unassimilated otherness" (Young, 1990a.p.320). For Young, what was important was

¹²¹ Aitken was involved in the women's movement and in 1980 published a book, *A woman's place? A study of the changing role of women in New Zealand*. In 1991, she was appointed as CEO of the Education Review Office, and she drove that Office's NPM model of educational audit in schools until the end of the decade.

the representation and recognition of different groups, who could retain their own collective identities, while negotiating with other groups to find common interests in issues that concerned them all. Young conceptualised democratic action and political agency as groups of people building shifting alliances across difference to combat varying forms of oppression.

While Young argued that her approach could enable change for groups affected by material exploitation and deprivation (most notably class groups) and those suffering cultural discriminations (including women and racially marked groups), both Mouffe and Fraser (1997) were of the opinion that Young's analysis privileged an ethnic model of collective identity centred on a shared cultural affiliation. Fraser pointed out that while this works well for ethnic groups, it does not work so well for groups such as working class people, whose interests and identity are rooted in political economy factors (1997, pp.201). Mouffe further criticised Young's vision of a group differentiated citizenship and democracy because in her opinion, Young's version of a politics of difference was conceived as "a process of dealing with already-constituted sets of interests and identities:" while this "rainbow coalition" approach might enable dialogue across multiple interest groups, in Mouffe's view this could be only a first step towards democratic equivalence (Mouffe, 1995, p.327).

For Mouffe, the aim of radical politics should be the creation of egalitarian social relations, practices and institutions, and this could only be achieved through the transformation of existing subject positions (ibid). Thus, she argued that feminist politics needed to give up pursuing the interests of 'women as women.' She pointed out that a poststructuralist critique of the essentialism of this notion has demolished any unitary form of politics. Rather, a feminist radical democracy should work with an understanding of the ways that the subject is constructed through different discourses and subject positions, to identify how particular categories imply subordination. The aim should be to "reveal the forms of exclusion in all pretensions to universalism and claims to have found the true essence of rationality" (p.329). Thus the critique and deconstruction of all forms of essentialism were the necessary base of a feminist democratic project (ibid).

Fraser agreed with the point that a politics of difference as presented by Young was limited because its argument for social justice revolved primarily around affirming cultural differences and fostering cultural diversity (1997, p.196). Fraser interpreted Young's version of coalition politics as an additive pluralist approach that did not take sufficient account of how disadvantaged groups differ from one another in root causes of their powerlessness (p.202). Fraser made a further argument here, however. In her view, *both* a pluralist multiculturalism (such as Young's) *and* a radical democracy (such as Mouffe's) remain largely tied to a cultural politics analysis, and both of these approaches fail to fully appreciate that "cultural differences can be freely elaborated and democratically mediated only on the basis of social equality" (p.182). Fraser argued that a radical democracy which focused on a deconstructive anti-essentialism as its primary tool, was only part of what is needed. She

advocated instead a two-pronged feminist strategy for analysis, research and action in the areas of both cultural and economic social justice (p. 185).

Fraser's distinguishing of two understandings of injustice in sociological and philosophical analyses is useful and worth repeating here. She argued that:

Socio-economic injustice is rooted in the political-economic structure of society. Examples include exploitation (having the fruits of one's labour appropriated for the benefits of others); economic marginalization (being confined to undesirable or poorly paid work, or being denied access to income generating labour altogether) and deprivation (being denied an adequate material standard of living)... The second understanding of injustice is cultural or symbolic. Here injustice is rooted in social patterns of representation, interpretation and communication. Examples include cultural domination (being subjected to patterns of interpretation and communication that are associated with another culture and are alien and/or hostile to one's own); non-recognition (being rendered invisible by means of the authoritative representational, communicative and in interpretative practices of one's culture) and disrespect (being routinely maligned or disparaged in stereotypic public cultural representation and/or everyday life interactions) (Fraser, 1997, pp.11-12).

Thus Fraser argued that it is important for a feminist reformulation of democracy to connect a cultural politics of recognition to a social politics of justice and equality in analyses that integrate the two dimensions (ibid). This is particularly important in her view, for analyses of group issues related to gender and race, areas that are particularly difficult to deal with within the kind of cultural definition of group that Young favoured throughout her book *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Fraser pointed out that both women and racially differentiated minorities need the dual strategies of cultural recognition (to re-value their group characteristics) and political economy restructuring (to overcome the material realities of exploitation that have been suffered by many as a consequence of their 'difference' from the dominant group and their marginalising from areas of socially valued and well-paid work) (1997, p.202). As Fraser put it, "both redistribution and recognition are required here to overcome a complex of oppression that is multiple and multiply rooted" (ibid).

As part of her suggestions for this kind of "credible vision of radical democracy" (p.186), Fraser maintained that feminists need to make normative judgements about the value of "different differences," by interrogating their relation to social inequality (p.203). In her view, a liberal humanist version of differences oppresses the latter as outside the norm, thereby "stunting skills and capacities." Such differences should be abolished. Some forms of difference that have been devalued, such as feminine nurturance, or indigenous people's connection to the land, should be re-valued and universalised, being made available to all. Variations of cultural differences that are neither "superiorities or inferiorities" should be valued and enjoyed for their own sake. Fraser concluded that such a more carefully differentiated politics of difference would enable a critical theory of cultural recognition that could more sharply focus on "versions of the politics of difference that coherently synergise with the politics of redistribution" (p.204).

Despite the seeming fragility of attempts to bring about democratic change in organisational work practices, there has been a recent resurgence of interest in this area in education. Abstract disembodied individualism, of the kind embedded in the NPM discourse of organisational accountabilities has been found to be “ill equipped to focus constructively and critically on social institutions and relations” especially on the inequalities that are effected through social stratifications of gender, race, ethnicity and class (Frazer & Lacey, 1993, pp.53-4). In my analyses of the co-principalships in Part III, I will argue that feminist theorists of radical democracy such as Mouffe and Fraser in particular, could assist the re-conceptualisation of community in current efforts to build the educative potential of a more fully democratic participation in the work of schools (Apple & Beane, 1999; Beck, 1999; Furman, 1998; Shields & Seltzer, 1997).

Conclusion

In this chapter I have built on my discussions in Chapter 3 of feminist discourses that have formed part of the discursive context for the emergence of women’s initiatives in primary school shared leaderships. While those discourses and the feminist critiques of masculinist hierarchy and exclusionary forms of organisational practices that I have discussed in this chapter have not been significant for all the women co-principals in this study, developments in the constituting of feminist collective organisation discourse and practices in Aotearoa/New Zealand are particularly relevant for this study. I have shown how these developments have influenced not just women who have set up small voluntary community collectives, which have aimed to bring help, education and support to other women, but also women who work in politics and public service organisations. As such, a feminist collective discourse has formed part of the social imaginary for the women who initiated shared leaderships in primary schools. I turn now to presenting their stories.

CHAPTER 8

HILLCREST AVENUE SCHOOL NARRATIVE

Introduction

Hillcrest Avenue School initiated its co-principalship in 1993. At the time this research began in 1994, it had a roll of 64 students, most of whom were Pākehā: there were two Māori, 2 Samoan, 1 Chinese and 2 Iranian children in the school. As a 'normal' school (that is, a school which took a large number of College of Education student teachers throughout the year), it was funded for 3.2, then 3.3 full time teachers. Two of these were senior teacher positions (funded by the 'normal' school allowance) and one a principal position. (Usually schools of this size would have a principal, a senior teacher and an assistant teacher). The school was located in a wealthy middle class area and had a top socio-economic decile rating of 10. Although there were a few single parent families, most of the children lived in families which had both parents working in highly paid and often prestigious professional or managerial careers. Many of the latter parents employed nannies to assist with child care.

When Jane Gilmore and Liz Nicholson took up their co-principalship at the beginning of 1993, joining Karen Lane, the other teacher in the school, there was a great deal of upgrading work to be done on both the school grounds and buildings. The classroom block was too small, resulting in cramped spaces for children and staff, and outside there was a need for better storage for play and sports equipment. The fencing needed to be extended, paving redone and the trees needed pruning to make them safer. The women worked hard with parents to achieve all these things, though it took until the end of 1994 for the reconstruction of the building to get underway. When that happened, the whole school boarded two busses and shifted out to temporary accommodation in a large hall in a nearby area, returning six weeks later.

When the work was completed, all three classes were accommodated in a most attractive two storeyed building that opened on to a covered verandah and a small, but attractive paved playground area which included a timbered adventure fort and a well equipped sports' shed. Although the children had no grassed area for ball sports and athletics, the teachers walked them to a nearby sports-field for these activities.

On the ground floor of the building were the staffroom, two open plan classrooms that had interesting work spaces for the children, the cloakrooms and a good sized storeroom, that doubled as another working space when the children were working in small groups, practising a play for example. The classrooms were partially separated by storage units and wall hangings and opening off one was a kiva, a round discussion space with tiered seating and a glass domed roof. To the right of the kiva was a staircase leading up to the third classroom and the new school office that had been added above the cloakrooms.

Before the building extensions, the staffroom on the ground floor had doubled as the tea room (equipped with the usual sink, zip for hot water and small fridge), meeting space and workspace for the staff, as well as housing the school photocopier! After the extensions and the shifting out of photocopier and some files into the new school office upstairs, the staffroom had become a reasonably comfortable space for staff (and for children who needed a quiet place during lesson time). On the walls at the far end of this rather narrow room were display shelves for the staff books, bulletins and magazines such as the latest NZEI pamphlets and the

Education Gazette. A whiteboard term planner and a weekly noticeboard were on the wall just to the right of the door.

Upstairs, the new school office was a joy for the staff. It had been carefully planned, in consultation between the builders, the three co-principals and the school secretary, to meet the need for a staff workroom as well as a school office. It was well equipped with work benches, shelving, filing cabinets and later, a prized new possession, a fax machine. The school photocopier was placed inside the door, which meant that there were often students in and out of the room, but the school secretary and co-principals did not mind this: although the noise and the interruptions were inconvenient, the co-principals in particular liked to keep in touch with what the children were doing when they were working on administrative tasks during their release time. (In fact they often left their administration work for a brief tour around the classrooms, to see what 'the kids were up to'). The office was sometimes used for small meetings, such as the weekly meeting with the board chairperson, or discussions with student teachers or parents. A new separate stairway entry enabled visitors and parents to reach the office without having to walk through the classrooms.

The parents held very high expectations of the school. They were described by one parent who helped in the school as having *the confidence and the know-how to get what they want. They would not hesitate to come into the school and say, My child is not achieving, so what are you going to do about it?* (Parent 10/3/95). In a written description of the nature of the community involvement in the school, Phil Cody, the board chairperson in 1993 -1994, stated that, *Among parents... there is a perception of a high rate of parent participation in the school affairs. This has been a factor of the importance that parents place on their children's education and facilitated by the cultural power to feel that a meaningful contribution can be made. It has been further intensified by community struggles in the mid 1970s and 1990s over suggestions that the school could be closed. In this sense there are a series of active political involvements that the community has had in the school. This involvement, however, seems to be at a cognitive level rather than a practical participatory level - it is participation by word, biro and chequebook rather than by spade and whiteboard marker* (Phil 28/11/94:10).

The members of the board of trustees of Hillcrest Avenue School throughout the time of this research, 1994 -1998, were highly skilled, professional or business people, well endowed with middle class cultural capital. However, although they knew quite a lot about how to get 'the system' to work for their school, the negotiations for establishing the co-principalship were protracted and sometimes difficult, as the following narrative will show.

There are seven main sections in this narrative:

- initiating the co-principalship;
- establishing shared leadership;
- negotiating the contract;
- building shared accountability and responsibility;
- the school community's views of the co-principalship;
- what happens when one leaves?
- an epilogue: 1997-2000.

Initiating the co-principalship: challenge and contestation

When the positions of principal and senior teacher in Hillcrest Avenue School were advertised in 1992, Liz Nicholson and Jane Gilmore put in a joint application and proposal to share the two positions as co-principals. As a consequence of their past experience and reflection about a variety of approaches to school leadership and management, they believed that collaborative planning and decision making contributed to the development of better teaching and learning programmes. They had also come to believe that traditional management hierarchies were not the best model for school leadership, and each of them had separately considered ways of making a more fully shared leadership viable. Karen Lane, who later became the third member of the co-principalship, was working as a senior teacher in the school in 1992, and she also applied for the principal's position. This situation could have caused problems, but it ultimately turned out well. This first part of the narrative introduces Karen and outlines how she came to the school in 1990 as one of a team of three teachers. It then introduces Liz Nicholson and Jane Gilmore, describing the factors in their backgrounds that they saw as significant influences on their decision to jointly apply as co-principals at the school in 1992. The board's response to their proposal is followed by descriptions of the interviewing processes and discussions that led up to their appointment as co-principals at the end of 1992.

Karen and the previous team at Hillcrest Avenue School

Karen Lane came into teaching late. Having gained her Social Welfare qualifications and working for four years in this field, she had married, had a family, and taken seven years out of the paid workforce while she cared for her children. During this time she had studied part-time and attained her BA degree, with *subjects chosen*, she laughed, *because they were at the right times for creche and school and other things* (Karen 1:1). In 1978 she found herself on her own and needed to be able to earn enough to support her family. She decided to enter teaching and went to teachers' training college, again because this fitted in with the children being at school, meaning that she could look after them herself and not have to put them into after school care programmes. *I felt my prime responsibility was as a parent and to them* (1:1).

When she considered what factors had led her to seek promotion, she said, *It was only after my children became less dependent that I decided that I would look at going up the ladder a bit educationally. That was after my first appraisal, in 1989, when someone told me that I should be applying for deputy principal positions, that I'd be good at it, that I thought, ooh, I didn't realise I was a good teacher. It had been a very lonely existence, on my own with the family and guiding them through their education. I guess I hadn't had much time to reflect on how I was going* (1:1).

When all three positions of teaching principal and two senior teachers at Hillcrest Avenue School were advertised in 1990, Karen suggested to her then colleagues, Jim Webb and Felicity Vault, that they all three apply, because in her opinion *we had complementary skills and were used to cooperative ways of working together.... you really needed people to be united in their approach in a school the size of Hillcrest Avenue* (1:2). The three had contacted the then board chairperson, and explained that they wanted to work as a team. If the school was interested in them, they said, Jim would apply for the position of principal, and Felicity and Karen for the senior teacher positions. The board chairperson had thought this was a very good idea and after the due interviewing processes, Jim had been appointed as principal and then Karen and Felicity as senior teachers.

Karen, Jim and Felicity worked as a team, planning together the teaching and learning programmes. Karen said that Jim was the leader though, in the sense that, *He wore the principal 'badge.'* *I'm sure other people saw it as a very male hierarchical arrangement where we were the ladies in waiting, though he wasn't that kind of male at all. He was a very-feminine sort of male leader... but he was the official welcomer, fareweller, the presenter of awards, the dealer of punishment. He did all the principal-type tasks, like the March returns and writing the annual reports, the mail, dealing with the Ministry, parents, going to board meetings.... he was the final point on the line of communication (1:4-7).* During the two years they worked together, these three did not change the traditional principal/teacher structure, despite the fact that *Jim used to say, this is ridiculous. We should be taking the principalship a turn about, one term each. We were thinking in terms of one principal at a time - we didn't think leadership could be shared (Karen1:6).*

Karen's perceptions were corroborated by parents and board members. Mary Stevens, who was on the board at that time, said, *Jim, Felicity and Karen came as a team. They knew each other very well, and they socialised together and there was an element of trust already there. They came as a group. I didn't necessarily see it as an equal team though, because Jim was the principal... he was always the nominal leader and when it came to the crunch, Jim led the discussion, Jim represented the school (Mary:1).*

However, despite this group's collaborative ways of working, the pressures on the teaching principal were huge. Karen thought that it was the demands of parents and stress of having to be a good teaching practitioner, as well as an efficient administrator, that took their toll on Jim. *There were always interruptions - he was forever being called away from his teaching. He had one release day a week and that meant that he had to devise a programme to cover the whole day for the release teacher... and there came a point when he couldn't sustain the energy it required any more (Karen1:4).*

When Jim decided to move into a different kind of educational work and Felicity also resigned to move to a different part of the country, Karen was sorry to see them leave. She decided, however, to stay in the school - and to apply for the principal's position herself. She wanted to move up another step in her career and decided that she was ready to try for the principal's position. She had a strategy planned out, modelled on the one she, Jim and Felicity had used. She contacted two people she knew she could work well with, and told them that if she won the position, the two senior teacher positions would be advertised, and would they apply? They agreed, and Karen prepared her application, unaware that Liz Nicholson and Jane Gilmore were also preparing their applications - and their proposal for sharing the two jobs of principal and senior teacher as a co-principalship.

Liz, Jane and the idea of a co-principalship

Although they were not close friends, Liz and Jane had met several years earlier when they joined the same women's group. They had subsequently worked together on several occasions. They had been (separately) invited to participate in a Lopdell House course, to prepare resource material for the development of non-sexist curriculum material and teaching approaches. Later, they had both participated in a reflective principal training course, and following this they collaborated in organising and tutoring a similar middle management course for teachers. The two women held many similar beliefs, particularly about the value of shared decision making and collaborative management practice in education. They had read the research about the links between these practices and effective schools and a commitment to this approach was a significant factor in the idea of their joint principalship application.

Liz: strategic 'women-centred' feminism and power sharing

For Liz though, it was feminism in particular that was *driving* the idea of a co-principalship. She explained that feminism was *why it happened - we were testing out an idea to see if you can make it happen* (4:10). When describing some of her personal background in relation to the initiation of the co-principalship, she talked at some length about her feminist beliefs and the ways she thought these had contributed to the initiation of the co-principalship. She said, *I think there was a stage in my life when I would have very strongly said 'I am a feminist.' I feel less strongly about the label now, but as strong about the ideas ... especially the acceptance of difference within women's styles of working and valuing the difference within woman-ness. I suppose for me, women are the most important thing in the world, women and relationships with women ... Given that there are lovely men too, but women as a group, I like the way they work, I feel more in tune with them philosophically* (4:2). She mused that she had *a very strong sense of feminism. I would probably be a reasonably radical feminist in my personal beliefs* (4:3). Over the years she had learned that to say such things publically would not be wise, however: *that would just get me a label straight away, and you'd probably get a backlash.*

Liz was strongly committed to working for change and had thought carefully about the ways that she could be most effective and the approaches that were comfortable for her. She had observed some of the more destructive sides of early women's groups, when some became caught up in struggles around identity politics. She said that there were some *incredible fights between radical, that is, lesbian feminists and other women, when they were challenged with questions like, Why on earth aren't you a lesbian if you like women? It was so ugly and unpleasant. Those battles just seem so incredibly destructive* (Liz 4:3). She had also worked however, during the early 1980s, with NZEI women activists who were challenging the government's broken service policy¹²² and proposing a re-training scheme for teachers who had had time out of full-time teaching. (These women argued that the policy was discriminating against women who had taken time out for childcare.) Liz was inspired by this NZEI group of *strong women. They gave me a strong political sense of myself and an analysis of myself as a woman and as an activist* (4:4). She described herself as *not a first line person - a radical who challenges absolutes just to make people feel really uncomfortable ... I think it's more useful to do something with the discomfort. I like to see something positive coming out of it ... and I've learnt to temper myself as I've got older* (4:4). She said that as a young person at secondary school she was *a really quiet, mouse-ish person - I just used to sit there and be terribly good* (4:5). She never felt she fitted in to the quiet rural town where she grew up, but her mother was an early strong influence on her thinking, giving to her and her siblings a sense of *there's more to the world than here ... She told us to get out and do things with your life.* This was significant for Liz. Straight after her secondary schooling she left to train as a teacher, and then worked over a period of 11 years in several different schools. During this time she had two one year breaks from teaching and travelled overseas, and had become involved with union politics.

Reflecting on her recent experience, she said that her desire to bring about change in schools was not in the sense of trying to *end the oppression of women*. She said that she might have used that kind of language ten years earlier; but now she focused on a need to *be strategic* and to work in focused ways on particular issues. At this stage in her life she was *working*

¹²²This was introduced in 1975 as a response to the surplus of bonded teachers. It meant that Education Boards were "required to put to one side the applications of teachers who had not had continuous service (Phillips, New Plymouth Education Board, personal communication June 1989).

within the structures of education to bring about a specific change in the hierarchical ways that schools are run, so that there could be a more power sharing way of working (4:5). She said she learned from her earlier experiences of working with the NZEI women she had realised how powerful women can be if they group together - they can be really good at thinking through a strategy, and can be really cunning and wise ... and in this group, you were accepted as being whatever you wanted to be. You didn't have to be stroppy, you could be quiet, and that was just fine. Everyone has a valuable way of actually contributing something to a group and that the parts together make more than a whole (4:5-6). While she believed strongly that women had feminine qualities of being inter-connective, sensitively listening, caring and nurturing, for her being a feminist was stronger than that. It's more than just those characteristics. It's about a change in a power structure in society and a belief in the importance and power of women in the world. So feminism takes all the good in women and makes them do things with it for change (4: 6-7).

Liz tried out her feminist beliefs about collectivity and power sharing during the time she was seconded into a school liaison team as an advisor and while she worked in a very collaborative deputy principal/principal partnership. She also tested out her ideas in relation to academic literature that theorised the effectiveness of collaborative and diffused leadership styles when she participated in a reflective principal course. Rose Fleming, who was a lecturer on this course, (one that Jane Gilmore also attended), said that *Some of the key ideas in the leadership courses were about transformational leadership and having a kind of diffused leadership so that all the teachers in the school were sharing that role. We were talking about it in theory, but I knew that Jane and Liz were doing it in practice - already - in their work as deputy principals in their own schools (Rose:1). Rose had worked in a professional development role with both Liz and Jane in their schools, and she said that it was a combination of their broad understandings and practical experience that made the middle management course that they later organised and taught together such a terrific course that other teachers got a lot out of (Rose:2).*

For Liz, the idea of a co-principalship seemed to arise out of what she saw as 'natural' development of her personal and professional beliefs and approaches to management and teaching. She hoped that the co-principalship would not only benefit the women who would be working together, but also that it could be of benefit for the children *and the ways they see each other. They might not necessarily take notice or believe in it, but they will have experienced it. Otherwise they think that things always work the same way (4:8).* She thought that, from working with Jane on the middle management course and from knowing her during her earlier involvement in the women's group, that Jane seemed to be a natural choice for a partner in the challenge of creating a new kind of school structure.

What, then, was Jane's background, and what experiences and beliefs did she see as significant in her thinking about shared leadership?

Jane: teamwork, fairness and feminism

Jane had originally trained as an occupational therapist, *choosing this because, she laughed, if I'm really honest I thought everyone gets married, so I'll choose the thing I'll do for the longest length of time - the training I mean, not the work!* (Jane1:1) During this time she observed different ways of leading, but when she was offered a supervisory position, she *took fright*, thinking that she did not have sufficient experience for this responsibility, and left. She then worked in a Steiner home for children with special needs before she travelled overseas.

On her return to New Zealand, she decided to enter teaching, but at the time when she completed her training in the early 1970s, there was an over-supply of teachers and she had difficulty getting a permanent position. In her first 10 years of teaching, she worked in relieving positions in seven different schools, with 14 different principals. She said she had many opportunities to observe principals in action and one she worked with in the early 1980s particularly impressed her. *He gave quite a different view of leadership. He involved all the staff in a review of the school. This was quite innovative then, about twelve years ago. Scale A teachers' ideas were considered equally to those who held positions of responsibility. Anyone could bring a point to the whole staff and it could be debated and changes did occur because of this... He also believed that a Scale A teacher could be in charge of syndicates - there was a lot of power sharing. And so there I was, a relieving Scale A teacher, and I was the leader of a three teacher syndicate. That was quite influential for me (1:2).*

While she was teaching full-time, Jane was also studying, *to prove I could do it!* she laughed (1:2). She completed her BEd then did honours in education. She remembered that working with two other students on a collaborative research project was *a really worthwhile experience and set of learnings - we were a good team. The other two were young things, were fairly academic, but I added the wisdom. It was just a different skill we had (1:2).*

Thinking about feminism while she was at university had also been influential for her. *I think intuitively I was a feminist - not consciously, but doing a Gender and Education paper made me think about things that haven't felt right ... things like fairness. ... and some awful things have been done to women, myself included (1:3).* She described an earlier experience where she had not been able to get back into teaching after taking more than three months out to look after her brother's children when he and his wife split up. When her appeal on compassionate grounds was turned down, after thinking hard about what she could do, she *got about eight people to write to different MPs, and it was just political - it was appalling, because I then got a letter to say that I was being classified as having continuous service (which meant I could get back in). I was quite shocked... It was the classic, you know, who do you know (1:3).* She realised then that there were things about *the system that were wrong (1:3).* This realisation fed later into her thinking about possible new ways of restructuring the work of leadership and teaching in schools, she said.

Jane talked too about her attendance at *many valuable sessions on beliefs about learning and teaching*, and the way she was mentored by an inspector who graded her and then *fed* her educational articles that he thought might interest her. She was invited to the Lopdell House course that worked on developing resources for improving gender equity in schools and was encouraged to think about applying for positions of more responsibility. She described how she then applied for a position at Awanui School (a six teacher school) as deputy principal. She won this position, but before she could take it up, the principal left. When she was then asked to go in as acting principal, Jane's response was to go to the school and say to its staff and board, *Well everything needs to be open and honest. There are two options. Either I come in and do it with all of you helping, and it would need to be a co-operative-type approach, or they can second someone else (1:5).* When she was made acting principal, she said that she kept to her belief that everything should be open and honest. *I was quite up front with people - like with a strong, rather strident feminist, who was quite difficult really, I'd say to her, I disagree actually, and that worked with her. That was a good learning experience (1:5).*

After the new principal was appointed to Awanui School, (Jane did not have the appropriate grading to apply), Jane worked closely with her for four and a half years. Rose Fleming, who was involved in a school development project with them, said they worked together *in a very sharing and equal way*; for example, they were the only principal and deputy

principal who had sent all their staff to a residential professional development course. *They put a lot of resources and energy into sharing around the leadership and not just holding on to the knowledge* (Rose:7). Jane remembered this experience as being quite influential in her thinking about collaborative approaches to leadership.

She also remembered having talked often during these years with a teaching colleague, Anne Fletcher, about how nice it would be to work collaboratively with a friend. While in the same school, they had worked in a team teaching situation. *I used to say to her, now once your children grow up, you and I will apply and get into a little two teacher school and we'll do something nifty - one of us will get in as the principal and the other as a teacher, and then we'll change it all so it becomes cooperative. Funnily enough, at that stage I didn't think of attacking the structures until we got in there. Our base would have been more that of being friends rather than of having a similar idea, like when Liz rang me up about the Hillcrest Avenue School ad when it was in the Gazette* (Jane1:7). She said later that the conversation with Liz about sharing the leadership had quite a different focus: *It was not so much a relationship thing, it was because of the belief in cooperative methods of working.* (2:1).

However, when Liz asked her what she thought about joining her in proposing a co-principalship to the board of Hillcrest Avenue School, Jane wanted a couple of days to think it through, to clarify her ideas about how she saw herself as a leader in relation to Liz. *I saw Liz as strong and charismatic and vibrant, and therefore would I be up to it? With her? I thought I would just be the backup person ... But that was my problem really. I thought, it's not her fault if I don't say anything - it was no use expecting her to sensitively watch my little self being pathetic. I decided that I would have to be a bit bolder really. If I was going to go into it, I had to be honest and say something about me, or if I wasn't happy with something, that was the appropriate way. So I faced this. I thought I'm not making a commitment to work in a particular way if I haven't thought about how I am going to cope in that situation* (Jane1:7,8).

Jane also knew though, that she had particular skills that were different to Liz's. *I had learned a lot of parental skills... and I knew I was able to see lots of people's points of view* (1:9). So she said to Liz, *Yeah, great idea. Let's go for it - feeling at that point that I was going to be the key learner.*

Developing the joint application and proposal for a structural change

The two women met to talk through how they could work together as co-principals. They focussed on identifying and clarifying their shared values and goals about leadership and management, teaching and learning. Liz said later, *I used to think good principals were charismatic visionaries. I don't think that any more. Vision is important, but no one individual is more important than anyone else* (1:6-7). It seemed logical to her therefore, to change the position of principal from being synonymous with a single person, to being a *position that helps to carry the ideas*. Liz and Jane agreed that such a reconstruction of the principalship would not only enhance the quality of leadership in the school, but also the quality of the teaching and learning, as a consequence of the greater involvement of teaching staff in the planning and decision making about all aspects of school life.

They also agreed, however, that such a shift could only be accomplished through a structural change. In Jane's words, *It's no good just saying we'll make it shared. You had to validate it through structural change. That's the crunch really* (1:11). As she explained later, *If the principal is just one person, they hold the philosophy really, whereas once it's all the people, the philosophy is held in the institution. It's held in the people, the fabric of the school, the children and the community, because it can't be held in an individual* (1:11). Thus, what

they were proposing was a conscious *challenge to the structure and the system of management in schools* (Liz 2:1).

In the proposal they developed, Liz and Jane rejected a bureaucratic managerialist approach to the co-principalship. They did not want to develop job descriptions with separate tasks and responsibilities detailed for each of them, but wanted to be allowed to develop ways of working that would enhance a collective responsibility and a shared approach in as many aspects of the principal's work as possible. And they did not want to spell out in detail exactly how the collaboration would involve the third teacher in the school and include support staff and the board of trustees; they wanted this to evolve as they worked together with these people. Jane was particularly committed to creating partnerships between herself as a teacher and the parents of her pupils: *It is critical that we work together... I genuinely believe that we're all equal. I just happen to be trained in a specific area.*

They agreed that priority should be given to establishing systems of communication at all levels (between staff within the school, between the principals and the board, between staff and parents, between staff and the wider agencies) and that there should be a mechanism for regular review (by both the staff and the board) of the structures and practices they developed.

Liz and Jane's application made it clear that their job-sharing of the principal and senior teacher positions would involve both philosophical and protocol issues. Their proposal that accompanied their joint application also highlighted the place of shared vision and laid out goals for the children as learners and for the school.

THE PROPOSAL (1992)

- That Liz Nicholson and Jane Gilmore job-share the positions of principal and senior teacher.
- That the collaboration involve the third teaching member, support staff and BOT.

Philosophical Issues

- Transforms power from a single to a collective base.
- Structural change validates a collaborative school culture.
- Greater degree of consultation and collaboration with the school community.
- Increases responsibility and accountability of all involved.
- Dependent on collective vision.
- Acknowledges differences and sameness.
- More likely to be focused on learning and teaching, and less on trends and personality of the leader.
- Based on and reflects the best qualities of learners.

Protocol Issues

- Priority given to establishing systems of communication and decision making at both high and low levels.
- Share administrative tasks - Liz and Jane - time is a major factor - decision on some factors in January.
- Alternative management model for pre-service trainees and the wider educational community.
- Regular review of management structures - staff and board.
- Three way teaching collaboration.

WHAT ARE THE LINKS?

- Shared vision enhances commitment (ownership), motivation (meaning to the job!), high-level needs through work, teaching skills, school problem-solving
- Shared vision results in high quality learning and teaching

WHY?

- Separately considered the idea of collective leadership previously.
- Opportunity arose with two jobs being advertised.
- Job descriptions, mission statement, goals, school description support our proposal.
- school could accommodate and gain from an alternative approach to leadership.
- Proven professional relationship.

IN TWO YEARS:**Learners who:**

- adhere to the N.Z National Curriculum and Hillcrest Avenue School charter;
- have a balanced programme - intellectual, creative, social, physical;
- take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour;
- are challenged and expected to achieve;
- work at their own pace and level;
- have opportunities to work in different ways- individual and group;
- can understand and manage change;
- take risks;
- understand and use a problem solving process;
- communicate ideas effectively in a variety of ways;
- work with a variety of adults - teachers, parents;
- recognise their strengths and weaknesses;
- want to learn and want to come to school;
- have skills to think laterally

A school where:

- learning is managed;
- quality learning is paramount;
- teaching models the qualities of good learning;
- there is collaborative planning, shared decision-making and collegial work in a framework of experimentation and evaluation;
- there is school self-review, school and teacher development and appraisal systems;
- there is parent and community consultation;
- there are clear systems of communication and decision-making;
- children's progress is monitored and evaluated;
- learning needs of particular groups are met: girls, special needs, ESOL, Māori, Pacific Island;
- people feel welcomed and involved.

By the time that they had written up their proposal, the two women were utterly convinced that this was what they both wanted to do. Jane said that *doing the application clarified it - you think of all the reasons, and then it becomes terribly obvious (2:2)*.

Board of trustees' response to the 'flat management idea'

The board appointment committee were, in the words of one of them, initially *blown away* by the whole idea of a shared principalship. Mary Stevens (who was then the board chairperson), Naomi Grant and Phil Cody had had experience in the areas of education research, teaching and management and industrial relations, and they quickly saw advantages in what Liz and Jane were proposing.

Naomi was particularly thrilled to have such strong women applying. She had been in many schools in the process of her work, and she had found it *quite disheartening to find again and again one male, and he was the principal* (Naomi:13). She identified herself as a *feminist, who had constantly questioned the male management model. I had personally experienced that as a department head and hadn't liked it ... and totally supported the idea of women sharing the leadership* (17). She saw the co-principal proposal as a *strong gender strategy. I brought out all the statistics about the number of women in the principalship in primary schools, and we didn't want that in our day and age. That was the model our school had had previously - always a male principal, and recently two women senior teachers supporting him. We wanted to change that whole approach... And we felt it was crazy in such a small school to have one chief and two Indians, so we were keen on the flat management idea* (5).

Mary did not think that gender was an issue, though she said, *I did think it was very good if we had female principals* (18). The central thing was that the board shared Liz and Jane's strong commitment *to the best interests of the children* (Mary:8). The appointment committee was also very clear that their job *was to assess all aspects of the proposal and make the appointment process fair* (Mary:8). The committee thought they had been very careful to set up good systems for the selection and appointment process. They had identified a very full list of criteria for each of the positions to help them shortlist from the good pool of applicants. When they read Liz and Jane's application and CVs, they were thrilled with the calibre of both women as individual professionals, and were excited about the idea of a co-principalship. However, they recognised that there could be practical and industrial problems around sharing the principal's position and so they sought advice from the State Services Commission, the Ministry of Education, the School Trustees Association (the school boards' organisation) and the primary teachers union (NZEI).

Consulting the agencies: accountability, accountability, accountability

State Services Commission (SSC)

The legality of Hillcrest Avenue School's proposal was a major issue for the Commission. The SSC was concerned to ensure that there was someone to be accountable for the school's management and practices. An SSC representative recalled later that the board had been told that the Education Act (1989) defines a principal as one person. This definition is because *there has to be someone who eventually carries the can and takes the ultimate decisions if there's a disagreement... that's accountability, the one who is clearly responsible* (SSC: 5). It was stated that *'job sharing' a Principal's position is not within the law*, because the Education Act *talks about "the Chief Executive of a state school, of an institution established under this Act."* So that indicates to us an individual. And there are responsibilities, like *"Subject to sub-section 2, the principal of a state school may suspend any student."* So there are sort of tasks that are given to the Principal and we don't see that the law really allows there to be more than one principal, to actually legally affect the duties and

responsibilities that the Act lays down Section 94 talks about "The Board of a state school shall comprise no more than seven and no fewer than three parent representatives, and one principal" being one. *The principal of the school* (SSC: 1-2).

Accountability for this SSC spokesperson meant *that somebody is responsible for something in particular*, and if this splitting of responsibilities and tasks did not occur, and these were shared, then there would be *no particular responsibility for anything* (2). In the view of the SSC this meant that *job sharing a principal's position is not within the law* (1).

When he reflected later on what SSC had told them, Phil Cody commented that, *within the education bureaucracy at a state level*, and he included here the School Trustees' Association (STA), and the primary teachers' union (NZEI), *there is a very fixed idea of the way in which labour relations and industrial matters work and are resolved. It's very hierarchical, and it's very much an old governmental model. And so what you'll find for instance, is a number of concerns being raised about authority, about responsibility, about, accountability within the schools and the ways in which a collectivised model of leadership subverts those lines, particularly of accountability. A collective leadership is seen as dangerous therefore* (Phil 2:2).

The SSC officer had also pointed out to the appointment committee that if there were problems, it would be the children who would suffer. Mary, Phil and Naomi were very aware of this, but they also thought that this model could be good for their children's education. In Mary's words, *We have so many hierarchical models - and I think hierarchies can work well, but at the same time, I think it is important for children to be exposed to other models. It gives them more options* (10). They found SSC difficult to persuade about this however. Mary said that, *The main things for them were to do with accountability and appraisals. STA were difficult here too.*

School Trustees' Association (STA)

When Mary and Phil consulted STA officials, (this organisation represents the interests of the school boards as employers and governing bodies), STA said that they were particularly concerned about the issue of accountability. This STA representative recalled later that there was concern *because there is the statutory employer role that a board has under section 75 of the Act (Education Act 1989) for governing. At the end of the day the board will hold the principal of the Hillcrest Avenue School accountable for certain outcomes because under Section 76, the principal is the day to day manager and the professional leader. So if someone wanted to job share a principal's position, how does that impact on that accountability line?* (STA:1) However, *STA didn't want to come from a position of saying don't do it though. We are there to represent and assist boards* (1).

The board were also asked to think about what they would do if one of the principals turned out to be incompetent: who would actually be accountable? STA was worried about how a board, *in that sort of scenario attempts to run a competency on one third of the principalship? It's pretty hard to argue that all three have an equal responsibility when in fact the deficiency is clearly one third of the equation* (STA:6). Other *practical difficulties*, and the possibility that *things are likely to slip through the cracks*, also worried STA. They asked the appointment committee questions about the resolving of potential anomalies between differing qualification levels, requirements for sick leave, superannuation contributions and so on. Although Phil Cody thought that going through the proposal with them, *problem by problem was incredibly useful* (Phil1:5), Mary found this process less helpful: *STA was swinging, not quite sure which way to go* (Mary:12).

Ministry of Education

When the appointment committee consulted the Ministry of Education, staff there were also very cautious about the viability of a co-principalship. Once again this caution centred on the need for there to be a clear and single line of accountability, as provided for in law. I was told later, *The Ministry is strict on what the law says - the Ministry has to be there when things go wrong* (Ministry:1).

The board found that the Ministry generally followed the SSC 'line,' although Mary remembered that in regard to the problem of how to pay the women, they were told as long as the board did not expect to get more money to pay each of the co-principals at the principal's rate, how the women's salaries were to be paid was not a problem. The payroll section in the Ministry Management Centre *was very good about that*, she said (Mary:12).

A Ministry spokesperson said that *fiscal neutrality was a constraining factor ... We are obliged to support self-management, and we are committed to flexibility, but the regime we work in is very difficult - within the Orders in Council and the Public Finance Act we have to be fiscally prudent in what we can do, and we have central resourcing- other resourcing models are broader* (Ministry:1). A second person added that *the Ministry is bound by Government policy to give schools more flexibility, and as long as they don't exceed the money given to them, we don't have a view on how schools should manage their resources. When a school over spends then the Ministry has a problem - we're to look after the taxpayers' money* (Ministry: 2).

New Zealand Educational Institute: advantages, disadvantages?

The appointment committee also consulted with the union, discussing issues around teachers' contracts and terms of employment. Mary thought that the NZEI were *very supportive* when she and Phil talked with them. Phil said though, that in his discussions with NZEI national executive members, he was told that there were mixed reactions to their proposal. The union had concerns about the way that the possible co-principalship would straddle two contracts (there was a principal and a senior teacher position involved in the collective leadership). They told the appointment committee that negotiating contracts for the co-principals could prove to be quite complex.

Later, a union representative said that some benefits of co-principalships had been recognised, such as widening career paths for women, increasing opportunities for people to experience the principalship, supporting collegiality, pooling of people's different strengths and the bringing in of different perspectives. However, this NZEI spokesperson remembered that concerns had been expressed to the board about *what could happen if sharing unravels... It's much more complex than some people realise... and there is a lot of homework to be done, because until all these practical things are sorted out, we cop the mess. Like the Ministry just sort of says, "Here's the problem, you sort it out"* (NZEI:3).

Practical worries around salary arrangements were still then one of the primary concerns for the union. These were not so much the issues about one person who is not working as hard as another, but earning the same pay (a point made by the SSC). The NZEI official was more focussed on salary difficulties related to industrial conditions of employment, such as how to sort out what happens when one person is on sick leave - does the other person also lose some of their sick leave entitlement? This concern around salary and employment conditions was linked to the other main worry of NZEI, that the shared principalships could damage career structures. NZEI remained opposed to a merging of two career positions, such as the disestablishing of the deputy principal position for it to merge into

a co-principal position. *The two positions must remain separate. This is all tied in to the whole question of bulk funding. It's very easy to break down staffing schedules. It's a hell of a task to get them back up again. The ability to make improvements could be lost forever. If the deputy principal position was disestablished, those tasks would not go away. Someone would have to pick them up - with or without a salary allowance (NZEI: 4,5).*

In his comments about what the NZEI had told the appointment committee, Phil said that, *It's my reading that there is a lobby inside the NZEI that says it's in their collective interests to protect the existence of the senior management contract... for a number of principals in particular. They gain a lot from being contractually distinct from their teachers. That's sort of an internal union politics that would be quite interesting to watch to see how they sort it out (1:3).* He remembered that at the time he and Mary were consulting with them, *there were a number of people in the national executive who recognised the worth of collectivising the position, but there were some other people there who had some problems with it. There was a long debate. But they ended up saying, yes, this is probably a good thing, and let's try it, let's support it.* He also remembered one man being particularly cautious and throwing up difficulties that the board should consider. He found this a useful thing to have to respond to though. The consequence, he thought, was that later, *what we finished up with is a regime that takes account of as many of the potential problems as we can put in place (1:4).*

Shortlisting and interviewing

Despite their own excitement about the potential of the co-principal proposal, Mary, Phil and Naomi were concerned about the issues that had been raised during their conversation with the agencies. They were also worried about what the parents would think of such a radical change to the school's management structures. They considered interviewing Liz and Jane separately. After reading Liz and Jane's CVs and referees' reports, each of the appointment committee had thought either woman would make an excellent principal.

They decided to meet with the two women and suggest that one of them could apply for the principal's position and the other the senior teacher position, and then, if appointed work together in the way they were proposing. But Liz and Jane said, *No. It is either the two of us, or nothing.* Jane remembered later (with some awe!) hearing herself saying in a firm voice, *This is very disappointing.* She was surprised at her own audacity and firmness! The committee were *impressed that they were not prepared to compromise the ideal of the shared principalship (Naomi:6).* Liz explained to me, *It was about an ideal. We wanted to try out this model which was important to us. We were like a package (2:1).*

Because the agencies were continuing to giving them many negative messages however, Mary, Phil and Naomi then decided to discuss the issues and what process they should follow from there on, with the whole board. *Quite frankly, we didn't know what to do,* Mary said. *So we asked the whole board whether to go ahead with considering this proposal alongside the other single applications. After much discussion, the whole board voted 5 to 2 that we should have a look at it (12).*

The appointment committee therefore short-listed Liz and Jane, along with Karen and two other applicants, and they invited a school advisor to assist them with the interviewing.

Interviews: round one

After interviewing the five applicants (Liz and Jane in a joint interview), Mary, Naomi, Phil and the advisor spent many hours discussing the candidates' strengths, weaknesses and

potential contributions to their school. They went back over the pros and cons of accepting the co-principalship model and the nagging questions: Who answers the telephone? Who is the Principal? What are the parents going to think? Naomi said that they realised *that a lot of the parents are in management positions and they may not support this style of operation* (Naomi:4). The committee were also particularly worried about bringing in two people in a shared position, while there was a third teacher in the school. *What if you are excluding someone - you'll have two people against one... We felt that we would insult Karen, and we wanted her to have equal status and feel comfortable with the whole process* (Naomi:3).

At the end of their deliberations the four of them came to a unanimous position. *We wanted to have our cake and to eat it as well*, Naomi said. *We definitely wanted Liz and Jane. We thought their proposal was fabulous and that it would work really well in our school. It would also model innovative styles and structures to other schools and to the teacher trainees...But we also wanted Karen. We wanted all of them for the range of skills they brought ... Jane's expertise with new entrants and parents, Liz's skills with music and the middle school and Karen because of the stability it would give the school and her skill in art and with senior students* (2). So the appointment committee decided to present to each of the three women their own proposal for a three-way principalship.

A three-way share?

The next day, Mary, Naomi and Phil met at the school and called Karen in to discuss this suggestion with them. Karen remembered later her shock. *I had never heard of such a thing in all my life. I'm quite a 'nuts and bolts' person - I wanted to know how it was going to work. I said to Mary, how are you going to pay us, I mean, I said, you are going to get two for the price of one - that's wonderful for you but where does it leave us? I was trying to think quickly on my feet* (Karen1:10). She asked for time to think about it and for permission to meet the other two applicants: *Because, she said, I can't say yes or no without knowing who it is you're proposing to put me with. So I rang Jane, who had also been rung by the appointments committee and asked to consider a three-way share... then Liz, Jane and I had a quick meeting. I had some questions, like, well we have this proposal, but what about the implementation plan? And Jane just smiled and said, 'I don't know how it will work, but I believe it could work if the three of us agreed to work together.'* They said, *'Karen, we realise that you are in a very difficult position, but you must say exactly what it is you feel and you must do what is important for you.'* They were absolutely marvellous. *I could see that they were people I could work with. Liz's sense of humour came through and Jane's philosophical outlook. I was trying to be really collected about it all, so I said to them, 'Look, I'm finding this very difficult to make a decision, um, and I don't think we've had enough time... If I say no, it's not because I've hated you on sight.'* I probably didn't say this very diplomatically, but I wanted to let them know that. *And they said yes, they understood. And I went home and toiled and thought late into the night... My first reaction was I could learn from this, but I was worried that it could be a disaster. I wanted to work with these people first. So I spoke to the board chairperson and said, 'Look I'd rather not commit myself to this structure - so what happens next?'* And she said, *'Well it's back to the drawing board. Everybody will have to go through the procedure again.'* But I thought stuff it. *I didn't have enough information. It was a risk that could work, but then the school could also end up in a shambles. So I said no, I can't go along with it at the moment* (Karen1:12).

Mary's response was because there had been pressure mounting in the community over the fairness of the interviewing procedure. Several people felt Karen had not been given an equal opportunity to present her vision of a team management for the school (she had not

talked to the interviewing committee about the women who were keen to work with her in a similar style to her previous colleagues).

And so a second round of interviews took place.

Interviews: round two, and the decision

This time the whole board was involved in the interviews with Karen and Liz and Jane. The women were asked to come with a presentation of their vision for the principal's work in the school, and Karen was invited to bring support people with her if she wished.

In their second interview, Liz and Jane stressed their commitment to the idea of achieving shared leadership through structural change. Jane remembered that Liz said, *It's no good just saying we'll make it shared. You had to validate it through structural change. That's the crunch really* (Jane1:11). Naomi remembered that Karen presented her vision for the school as having one person to lead as principal. Although the board valued her contribution, they were more interested in the proposal to change the management structure and they decided to appoint Liz and Jane.

When they informed each of the candidates of the decision, the committee found it very difficult to tell Karen that she had not been made principal. They were hoping, though, that she would be able to accept the decision and be able to see that the new approach could benefit her too, particularly if the three women were able to develop a three-way co-principalship.

Parents: partners or protestors?

When the news became public, however, there was an uproar from the community. The committee's failure to consult the parents resulted in some fiery challenges. There were *big public meetings and people yelling at each other and the board. The community was saying we weren't consulted on this. This idea was so new and many had faith in Karen and wanted her as the new principal* (Parent 9/3/95:3). Some parents thought that there was an injustice in the single candidate being put against two. And also a single person might have difficulty working with two coming in. (Parent 10/4/95:1).

The board, and the appointment committee in particular, were deluged with angry phone calls. There were objections to both the board's lack of consultation with the whole parent community and to the job-share model itself. Several thought that the proposal was crazy and would not work. Some rather nasty micro-politics occurred. Someone implied that the appointments committee had been "got to" by Liz and Jane (the implication being that they had somehow 'pulled strings' with their contacts in the Ministry). Some parents charged that what the board had done was industrially illegal. *There were a lot of threats made to us*, said Naomi (4), and there was lobbying against the board chairperson in particular. Mary said she was told that some of the parents 'wanted her head.' She was *personally attacked by some of the board members - there was a big split on the board*. She broke down briefly as she described what it had been like. *I'm sorry*, she said. *It really was quite a time - - even now I feel quite sorry - I found it hard. I hadn't had that kind of experience before. I'm not a political animal... There were some board members who were quite supportive. One member in particular was very difficult though, lobbying behind the scenes, you know, demanding that the board vote me off as chairperson, that kind of thing* (Mary:23, 11). She reflected later on the difficulties for a board. *People have given responsibility to the board - we are the people who make the decision - we were elected to do that. We want to keep people informed and you don't want to leave the community out. But it's a very difficult thing to actually keep*

confidences and to have a negotiated process with the community. You're treading a very fine line (13).

The appointment committee decided to call an open meeting for all the parents - an opportunity for them to *audit the board*, as Mary put it. *It was a bit like lancing a boil* (13). They also invited NZEI representatives to attend to answer any industrial questions from parents (and to ensure that each of the teacher's rights were protected). The meeting began with the appointments committee describing what they had done and explaining the reasons behind the processes. They aimed to show that *it had been a fair process, with each applicant having equal opportunity to put their case and explain what they had to offer the school... And we argued why the co-principalship was the most attractive model for our school* (Mary:4). At this meeting some were persuaded, but not all.

The unrest simmered and another meeting was held for Liz and Jane to explain their proposal to the parents. Jane said, *We knew what was happening (though we were not supposed to know). And the community 'meet Liz and Jane' meeting was incredibly uncomfortable. We came knowing that most would have preferred to throw darts really. We each gave a little talk, and people, I have to say, were very well-mannered ... though I think some might have been thinking that we were going to be raging left-wingers, wearing saffron clothes sort of thing!* (1:11). Most parents had their doubts assuaged at this meeting however. In the words of one parent, *I softened when I met them and heard them talk about what they were proposing* (Parent 20/4/95:1). Veronica Cowley, the principal release teacher, and a parent in the school community, said later that this meeting *was a turning point - it changed attitudes* (Veronica 1:2).

Veronica was then asked to talk to Karen, to *woo her into staying*, to tell her how good it would be for the school, but also for her. (Veronica 1:3). Karen felt later that this was a bit unfair, but she decided nevertheless, to stay on.

A co-principal partnership

Liz and Jane's co-principalship thus became a reality at Hillcrest Avenue School. Karen decided to work alongside the two of them to get to know them and to explore the possibilities of a three-way shared leadership. She was by no means convinced that this was viable, but she was prepared to give this possibility 'a go.' At the end of an eventful and stimulating, though at times painful and stressful third term in 1992, the three agreed to meet before the beginning of the 1993 school year, to discuss how they could work together.

Establishing shared leadership and reconstructing 'the principal'

'Clearing the air' and focussing on teaching and learning

During the selection and appointment processes, each of the women had felt that these were fraught with lobbyings and mixed messages. Later, Jane and Liz said they had felt particularly sorry for Karen, because *she was in a difficult situation - she knew the community, and probably knew what they were saying... Liz and I could pretend we were outside of a lot of those things. So the early difficulties therefore were probably trying to be honest with each other and also trying to consider each other* (Jane 2:18).

To help this process, at their first meeting in mid-January, Liz suggested that they should have a *frank and open discussion about the appointments process* (Karen 1:14). Karen remembered, *It turned out that we had all felt that the way the appointment had been done had been unfair ... but it wasn't until we came together that we could put the pieces together. So that was a really constructive thing for Liz to do, 'cos we then, you know, declared openly that we were there to work, and we talked about how we were going to operate together* (1:14).

This discussion cleared the air and enabled the three women to *move on quite quickly from the awful things that had happened during the appointment process... That messy process made us work out very clearly how we were going to go about the shared leadership - and that we needed to do it quite formally... We stepped very quickly on to a very professional basis... to think, we are here for the learning of the children, and so that's the common purpose* (Jane 2:18). Liz said later that they agreed to *take it all back to what you are there for - teaching and learning, for the children. That is what you focus on. You don't focus on personal agendas* (4:6). She also said, *Although the situation with Karen at the beginning was a real mess, we had faith that it would be all right* (4:4).

Part of Liz and Jane's faith was grounded in the fact that they saw Karen as *an articulate, capable woman*, and as Liz put it, *If you can't articulate what you believe you don't really know what you believe* (4:4). Liz and Jane had learned through their past experiences to not only reflect on their own values and beliefs in relation to those of the groups they were working with, but also to talk openly about these in group situations. They valued this approach, and were delighted to find right at the beginning that Karen shared their belief that, *You've got to be able to say to the rest of the people what you feel - you've got to equally share that. If Karen hadn't been assertive and willing to do that, I don't know that it would have worked* (Liz 4:4).

Karen reflected later that Jim, Felicity and herself *had never sat down and said, how are we going to work together?* She pointed out that, *Jane, Liz and I were in a situation where we were forced to say, what is our best course of action and what do we want to achieve?* (Karen 1:15) She thought that this turned out to be a very useful way to begin and said, *Although people thought that it must have been terribly difficult for me, in fact Jane and Liz made it very easy for me and treated me with utmost professional respect, and we were all equals right from the start. And we were all very very focused on the fact that we had to get busy and do the job that we were there for* (Karen 1:14). Liz commented later, *Building the collaboration was not a difficult process, because Karen in her nature is not a barrier 'putter upper'* (3:3).

Before they finished this first meeting, the women planned an agenda for their first teacher only day to be held on January 29, 1993. They agreed that Veronica Cowley, the principal release relieving teacher, should be invited to help them do two things: plan a school wide focus for the children's learning programmes for the next few months and assign various curriculum and liaison responsibilities.

Identifying a teaching and learning focus for collaborative action

Veronica Cowley had worked at Hillcrest Avenue for some time, under both the two preceding principals, and she remembered thinking that having a joint leadership was pretty much what was happening in the school with Jim, Karen and Felicity. *So I said well there's not going to be that much change* (1:5). (She changed her mind about this later). After the difficulties of the appointment processes however, she was a little worried about how the three women would sort out working together. So, at the meeting on January 29, she watched with

great interest as the three women discussed their teaching and learning focus and decided *who would do what*.

The women had already agreed that they were focussing their thinking, planning and action on the development of shared and agreed educational purposes, goals and approaches. Following up on what she and Liz had proposed to the board during their interviews, Jane suggested that their class programmes could focus on the children 'taking responsibility in learning.' She thought that this could begin with something quite small and practical. As they considered various possibilities for learning activities, Karen told them that a lot of the children in the school were cared for by nannies during the day and the children were not used to taking responsibility for themselves. *One of the manifestations of this was always the overflowing left property box. We called it 'left' because it was never lost, it was just discarded. So I said to Jane and Liz, can we look at taking responsibility ... in relation to operating on this box as the first stage of learning?* (Karen 1:5) This was agreed to as an appropriate *needs-based* beginning point.

Leading and managing together: who does what?

Veronica remembered that when it came to deciding responsibility areas, Liz, Jane and Karen *already had a list of all the responsibilities, all the curriculum and other areas, and I remember writing their names up on the whiteboard and the three of them sat there and I went through the list and they called out if they were going to take the responsibility - or often someone else's name if they thought they should be the one to do it... I was thinking - ooh, how many Ls and how many Js and how many Ks (laughs) - like, is it going to be a fair and equitable split? But they didn't actually count at the end as to who had what. They talked among themselves about who was better to have that responsibility, you know, who had the talent that made it sensible that they should have it. Like when it came to science, Jane said, Liz I think it would be sensible if you took that one. I don't feel confident about that one* (1:6). What made a real impression on Veronica was the speed with which the women were able to come to an agreement and to take responsibility, and *the way they were really open to each other. Yeah, that was neat*, she said.

At the beginning, when Liz and Jane were working as paired co-principals, they did not take time out to set up elaborate management systems. As Liz said later, *We sorted out our management strategies as we went along. We were really hairy to start with, but we got better and better at it* (1:1). To begin with, she and Jane were sharing tasks such as dealing with the mail, writing reports for board meetings and newsletters for parents, and liaising with various people and organisations such as the College of Education and the people who ran the after school care programme. They split their principal's release time of one day a week so that one would work on administrative tasks during the morning and one during the afternoon. (Their 'office' was then a table in the shared staff/photocopier room.) They alternated, week about, the responsibility for dealing with the mail, noting down any tasks that needed completion. They changed their first system of filing everything by subject (for example, newsletters to parents) to one where a copy of all inward and outward mail was put in one large folder: this speeded up finding material. A separate file was set up for any correspondence the board chairperson needed to read and deal with.

Because Joan Fletcher, the school secretary, finished work at 11.30am, while the women were involved in teaching, a notebook was used to record questions and messages (that flowed each way), as well as any tasks the co-principals wanted done. Joan was also encouraged to write down everything she did, *so*, said Liz, *if we wanted her for extra hours*,

we had information that we could use to show that she was actually doing more than her job description. We were able to increase her two hours a day to three this way (1:2).

To keep track of all the tasks that arose from their staff meetings and during day to day events, Liz and Jane decided to write them all down in an exercise book. They called this their Principals To Do Book, and it remained a central part of the systems they evolved for their shared management. It helped them to ensure that the paper work was dealt with in an orderly fashion, with both of them having quick and easy access to a written record of what the other person had done, as well as to what still needed doing. During their 'office' times, they turned to the book, picked up the next task on the list and worked on down it, ticking completed tasks *I love ticking things off!* Jane said one day as she whipped down a list of completed tasks (Fieldnotes 2/6/95). Sometimes the women wrote short explanatory notes or questions beside an entry. Simple strategies like these were used by Liz and Jane to keep each other, and other staff, informed about details that needed action.

Later in the year, after the women had agreed that they wanted a three-way co-principalship, and the negotiations with SSC about their contract were being focused on issues around accountability, the three women revisited the question of how the various leadership and management responsibilities should be shared. Their system of rotating liaison roles is described later.

Building shared decision-making and planning

Although Liz and Jane were taking responsibility at first for the administrative tasks there was much face to face three-way talking together with Karen about what was happening. During 1993 Karen remained as a senior teacher, but she said that, *Really there was no division between us, except that they wore the responsibility and perhaps had a bit more work in terms of opening the mail and doing the returns and things like that (1:14).* The women talked together about their teaching and how the children were responding, as they dropped in and out of each other's classrooms, grabbed lunch and coffee breaks (often on the run) and met more formally in their scheduled staff meetings.

These staff meetings, with specific agendas that included long and short term planning for teaching programmes and separate meetings for management issues, were timetabled into each term. The women commonly used a brainstorming approach to problem solving and decision making in these sessions and they often also concurrently explored their values and beliefs about the processes of communication and decision making.

They recognised that some planning and decision making needed to occur 'on the hoof,' and often engaged in 'off-the cuff' responding to and reflecting on particular situations ... During the day to day flux and flow of events they needed to be both proactive and reactive, identifying for themselves issues that needed addressing, and responding to issues raised by other people. Their approach to planning and decision making stressed the importance of flexibility, of *being fluid*, as they later described it. They reflected often on what they had done, and when a particular approach was judged by all three as having been successful, this was built in to their systems and ways of operating together as co-principals.

Developing open communication

Jane and Liz had been adamant when they developed their proposal for the co-principalship that there must be clear systems of communication and decision making. The *messiness* of what they described as *the lobbying and the telephone tree* politicking among the parents during the selection and appointment processes further convinced both of them that

they would need to emphasise right from the start, a school culture that practised open and honest communication. Liz said, *We thought that what happened during the appointments, the lobbying and so on, may be the way these people worked in their own sectors, but we didn't want that to be the way we worked here, it felt dishonest... We did not want that to be the culture of this place. So we tried to insist on having clear systems and processes and to lead by example* (Liz 2:4).

... between themselves

The sharing of their feelings and opinions about the appointment process was an example of how the women began opening up communication between themselves, *trying to have an honest relationship with each other*. (Liz 2:4). They built on this in a more formal way during their first teacher-only day, when they agreed on some 'ground rules' for their own internal communication.

GROUND RULES

Confidentiality - issues may leave, but not individual personal experiences
 Use equal amounts of meeting time - fair share of talk time
 Take responsibility for talking and listening - don't interrupt
 Build on to what others are saying
 Respect each other's right to disagree
 Deal with conflict

These ground rules were written up on the white board as a reminder to each of them, and to all who came into the staffroom, of the basic principles they wanted to follow in their meetings and their work with each other. They remained on the whiteboard throughout the time I visited the school 1994 - 1998, noticed by other people such as the relieving teachers, and the student teachers, who said they were part of the culture of the school.

... with the children

In their work with the children, the teachers wanted to build on the Hillcrest Avenue tradition that the children's opinions were important and would be considered in the decisions that were made. In the existing School Charter there was a specific policy on student participation that stated: *Children need to learn about decision making processes and problem solving strategies that will allow them to work in an informed and mature way and to contribute to the school community. Ensuring that children have a grasp of these skills is perhaps the most important thing that they can acquire from their school years*. The guidelines included this statement: *Where appropriate, the school will seek student input to policy making and will encourage them to submit their ideas about the form and content of particular policies*. In 1992 the board had met with senior students to explain to them what the board of trustees did in the school and to discuss issues of concern to the students. Among other things, the children had told them they would like more PE equipment, safer trees, more storage space inside (Board minutes, 27/5/1992).

Jane, Liz and Karen did not want their openness towards the children's input to imply that 'anything goes' however. An incident in the first week illustrates the approach they took. The children were in the habit of riding their bikes in the playground, but Jane and Liz thought

this was dangerous. After discussion with Karen, they decided to tell the children this, and to ask them to come up with some good reasons as to why they should be allowed to continue. Otherwise, they were going to ban bikes in the playground. Jane said, *None of them did come up with anything though, so we said, Right! That's it! No more bikes!*

When I was talking to some of the children later in 1995, I asked them, *Do you get a chance to say what you think about things?* The responses of Deirdre, a Form 1 student, and Jill, who had just started as a third form student at her new secondary school, were typical. Deirdre said, *Yes. That happens at hui. At hui time we can talk about any subject we worry about (laughs) or want to have a comment on. It's kind of like a sharing thing (2).* Jill said, *Yeah, there's much more sort of communication between the principals and the students (than before). They sort of tell us everything that goes on. With the other principal before, we would sort of find out quite a while later, but with these ones, we are sort of the first ones to know. And they are always telling us about things ... Like when the building was begun, we got told as soon as - before they had even decided, we knew they were thinking about it.*

... with parents

The three women also wanted to establish that they would consult parents widely whenever possible, discussing with them where improvements needed to be made, sharing reasons for particular decisions and reporting regularly on what had been achieved. In the first week of school, however, before they had time to do very much, a potential conflict situation arose with some parents who were unhappy about their Std 1 children being placed with Jane, in the junior class. (Std 1 children previously went into a Std 1/2 composite class.) The way the women dealt with this situation was to prove to be significant not only for their interactions and communicating with parents, but also for their developing 'model' of a co-principalship.

Veronica Cowley was present when the women first heard about the parents' displeasure. She said, *The first response was Liz and she said well 'Well just blow that! It's just going to have to stop. I'm not going to have that. I'm not going to be told what to do.'* And Jane said, *'Well I think we should maybe go back and ask them to explain just what the problem is and, and let us sort it out.'* And Karen sort of said, *'What's the policy? What's our policy? You know, how do we go about dealing with this?'* And I thought my goodness, three completely different responses to the problem. I thought how are you three going to get on? But in fact they're probably three very good combinations. You know, they sort of covered the gambit of approaches that should be brought to a problem in this school. And they talked then amongst themselves and - I'm pretty sure it was Jane that time who led them into what the first step should be (Veronica 1:7). She said that after expressing their own different reactions to the situation, the women moved on to collectively explore how it could be handled. When Jane suggested that she talk directly with each parent, Liz and Karen agreed that as the situation concerned the parents of the children in her class, it was a good idea that she be the 'frontperson' in the first instance. They discussed how this was also an opportunity for Jane to model the direct, open and negotiating style that they wanted to become the norm in their communication between themselves and parents. It was agreed that clear messages about the reasons for the decision that had been made needed to be given and they talked about these together before Jane rang the parents.

Jane said, *Most were happy, but one said, 'Everybody else is furious and I've been talking to so-and-so and so-and-so.'* And I said, *'Well you are right to talk to everyone, but unless you talk to us there will be no change. Unless we know there's a difficulty, we won't do a thing. I'm not saying we'll do anything now, but at least we'll know. And I think it's important that we talk face to face about this.'* So that Sunday, they all came down, one after

another, and told me that they were worried about things like their child wouldn't be extended and so on. So I said, 'Are you prepared to give me a term and have a discussion then to see whether your child's met the standard?' This was agreed to. I added that even then I was not promising I'd shift them! And they said things like, 'Well I'm still not happy, but I can see why you're doing this. And, at least I know that I mightn't always agree with you, but if I say something, you'll listen, even if you disagree with me.' That was a sort of a compliment in a way (laughs) (Jane 2:11). Thus the issue was resolved to everyone's satisfaction.

In the event, Jane had to tread a fine line between negotiating agreements with the parents on her own behalf and working to what the three women had agreed would be the best way to handle the situation. While keeping open options about the placement of the children after term one, she had been careful not to promise anything the co-principals might not be able, or want, to deliver. She reported back the conversations to Liz and Karen, so that they could review the situation together. They agreed that this approach of shared strategising, individual action and shared review had worked well.

They also identified another useful outcome from the incident. Jane commented that some parents thought that the involvement in decision making that was promised in 'Tomorrow's Schools' meant getting their own way (2:11). The women were concerned that a small minority of parents would continue to lobby. Jane's face to face directness had shown parents that the co-principals were professionals who were willing to be challenged about their decisions, but they would not succumb to 'behind the back' kinds of politicking.

... with the board

The women used a similar approach in their communications and work with the board. During first week of school in 1993, while Liz, Jane and Karen were 'settling in' to their teaching and working together, they were aware that, *The community was waiting with bated breath to see how this threesome was going to work out. There were all sorts of people popping in and out at the end of the day, you know, sort of almost observing us, seeing how we inter-related. And when they found out that in fact, you know, they could hear us laughing and we were actually smiling at each other, they said, hey all right, it's working! So the pressure came again from the board and they said, now what about a three-way principalship?* (Karen 1:15)

The women decided that it was too soon to make this kind of decision however. Liz said, *We talked about it and decided to take control of it. We said no, we would spend a year getting to know each other and working on our personal philosophy and seeing how the management system worked in a two-way thing and then we would let them know what we believed should happen* (2:2). They wrote the following letter to the board.

February 8 1993

Dear Trustees

Thank you for all the support you have given us at the start of this school year, which has enabled us to work together in a united way. We have had lots of discussion to clarify the position of co-principalship and feel strongly that we are now ready to work towards this goal.

We believe, however, that such an important step can not be taken without adequate and careful preparation. We welcome the opportunity to discuss our progress with you at the end of Term 1 but reserve the right not to make any final decision until the completion of the full internal review at the beginning of Term 3, for the following reasons:

- 1.) *It is important for the children to have a united staff. In order for this to happen, it is crucial that there is a solid foundation of professional trust and respect. We believe this is something that is developed through a process of consultation over a period of time.*
- 2.) *Change has to be managed, not happen in a haphazard manner.*
- 3.) *There needs to be time to develop a common educational philosophy and a clear understanding of shared leadership that prepares us for the complexities of the co-principalship.*

At the meeting with parents on February 23, we would like to make this joint statement to the community so that everyone is fully informed and clear of the direction in which the school is moving.

*Yours faithfully
Karen Lane*

Liz Nicholson

Jane Gilmore

After discussing their letter, the board accepted their proposal and the date for a full school review. *I think they were quite relieved really*, Karen said later (1:15). The announcement was made to the parents in the school newsletter and in this way, the women established for themselves time and space to work out a fully shared approach to both the management and teaching and learning in the school.

... and the board chairperson

To ensure that regular communication was maintained with the board chairperson, weekly meetings were set up with Mary Stevens. At these meetings, Jane and Liz kept Mary informed about the direction the co-principalship was taking and planned the agendas for the board and wider parent meetings. The discussions ranged wider than this though, and explored each other's views about the role of the board, the way particular meetings could be run and the effects of particular kinds of decision making processes. Mary was impressed by what she saw as a shift in management and decision making styles. *When Liz and Jane came, systems became very explicit. Before, we (the board) just kind of did things, like the treasurer held the purse strings. She did not share information. But Jane and Liz said, 'No, we need to have group decisions here... We need to decide what the process will be, negotiate this and so come to agreement.' That was quite a lesson for me, that sometimes I just imposed things on people... like in some ways I just ran the appointment thing... I learnt from them the usefulness of making it open, making it fair by making things explicit and transparent (Mary:19).*

Liz and Jane stressed to Mary their aim of being very open and honest with the board. Reflecting later about this, Liz said, *If we thought something was not good enough, Jane and I would say so ... Like, it's not the chairperson's job to sort out the correspondence and keep it all and read it all. It is the responsibility of the whole board. When one of the board people said, 'No, I'm not interested in anything else, I'm just interested in my bit,' I said, 'Well I don't think that's actually good enough. If you don't want to look at the global issues of the board, maybe you need to be co-opted to do the finances, not be an elected board member' (2:4).*

Mary thought that Liz and Jane's skills in communication contributed to their ability to open up discussions and make these more explicit and transparent. She said that both women were *very good at reading body language for example. Even when things were not being said explicitly, they recognised that there might be a problem, and they would say, 'Look, I think there's still room for talking here, we haven't quite covered the issues' (6).* She found that this approach surfaced for discussion by the board and the parents many aspects that had been previously rather taken for granted. She said, for example, that under the previous principal, *there had seemed to be a shared vision, but it wasn't openly discussed. It wasn't explicit (1).* She also found that she needed to change her own enacting of the board chair's

role, as Liz and Jane expected her to become *more accountable*. She needed to move from being a board chair who had rather *coasted along* under the previous principal, to one who had to become much more involved in the development of the school's shared leadership and philosophy.

Building a shared philosophy for children's learning

To help facilitate the development of their own *common educational philosophy and clear understandings of shared leadership*, as they had put it in their letter to the board, early in term one Liz and Jane suggested to Karen that she do the reflective principal course that they had both participated in before they came to Hillcrest Avenue School. Karen was pleased about this opportunity, and she attended the 1-4 March course. (This was funded from the staff development budget.) She said she gained from the course *an improved understanding of the role of a leader/practitioner and about alternatives to traditional leadership styles* (Karen's diary:2), and that *going to the same course the other two had attended also gave the three of us a shared language, and through that we were able to exchange ideas and question our meanings* (Karen, Vision workshop:43). During the course, Karen had time to *stand back from the situation and think about it. I drew up what I called 'our double agenda.'* *We were establishing a set of core beliefs about how children learn and things we should be seeing and doing if they were learning the things that we believed in... And we were trying to actually link those ideas across from the classroom to the community* (1:15).

Liz, Jane and Karen wanted both the board and the parents to be fully involved in building a shared vision for their school, so as the three of them were *meeting together and getting to know each other, Liz and Jane were also meeting the community and getting to know them* (Karen 1:15). The women agreed with the stated aim in *Tomorrow's Schools* of the need to build partnerships between teaching staff and the parents in the school community. They suggested to the board that as part of clarifying and coming to wider agreement on the school's purposes and goals, it would be useful to involve parents in reviewing the school's charter mission statement. The board agreed, and at a subsequent meeting nearly half the school community attended and talked at length about what they wanted as the important foci for their school. The community consultation committee then worked for several weeks on drafting, consulting and redrafting the mission statement, until agreement was reached. *They decided individual and group learning should be put in, and we felt that reflected the fact that there was a group modelling leadership at the top* (Karen 1:17).

Then during March, as part of their data gathering for their school wide planning, the staff (Liz, Jane, Karen and Veronica) held some workshops for parents to discuss with the teachers, goals for their children's learning. What emerged from these meetings was that the parents basically wanted their children to learn and to be happy and they wanted to be reported to regularly about how their children were getting on.

To improve their own knowledge about what the children were actually doing during the various learning activities, and as part of their follow up on the parents' aspirations for their children, the co-principals decided to give four of their Friday's principal release time to Veronica Cowley for her to monitor the children's on task/off task behaviours. The women then set aside a teacher only day to put together all the information they had collected to clarify their school wide philosophy and approach. This meeting was facilitated by Rose Fleming, who said, however, *At the end of the day I went home and thought, well they didn't need me at all! They'd already gathered information about what people thought and wanted and they were pulling it together* (Rose 4). From this information, the teachers felt confirmed that the

original focus for the teaching and learning programmes was the right one for the children in this community.

'Taking responsibility for our own learning, in partnerships with others'

The women wanted to find ways to alter the balance of teacher/child input to the children's learning (Karen's diary:3). After investigating a variety of different learning styles, they decided to emphasise a problem solving approach in their next units of work. They agreed strongly with the statement in the school charter that "children need to learn about problem solving strategies", but wanted to develop this further into encouraging the children to become more responsible for themselves and their own learning objectives and achievements. Karen's description gives a good picture of how they worked with their students. *We realised that a lot of these children were waiting for somebody to come and, you know, tend to their needs. At the beginning of the year, children would arrive at school and say, oh I haven't got my togs, my nanny can't have put them in my school bag. And we would say, well who was going swimming, you or your nanny? Well how do you think your togs could get into your school bag, you know. Is there another way that you could be sure? Ooh, I could do it myself. And that was the first sort of basic step. And then we decided that children had to realise that we had roles in order to fulfil our responsibilities. So we created a social studies unit around interdependence and from five through to thirteen the children were learning how groups worked. Some of the learning was done in peer groups, some of it was done in vertical groups, and they had all sorts of practical, ah, sort of formal learning type situations where they actually had to solve problems in groups, each group having a facilitator, a motivator, and a supporter and a recorder. So that was our needs-directed focus* (Karen 1:15).

The educational philosophy on which the women were building agreement, both between themselves and with others in the school community, was described by Liz. *We want these kids to think, to be able to think things through and to have some of the skills, the attitudes and the knowledge for them to be able to make choices... But it is also the idea of a partnership of parents and kids and teachers in a commitment to learning... we all have to work at it together* (Liz 2:11).

Jane developed a very practical strategy to assist this partnership between the teachers, the children and their parents. Each child was given an exercise book which was called their *Communication Book*. The teachers wrote weekly newsletters to the parents/caregivers, describing what was happening in their class programmes and what work at home could focus on. This was pasted into the book and sent home with each child. Parents often wrote back, with a comment or a question and sometimes on-going dialogues occurred between parent and teacher. One of Jane's letters illustrates the tone of the communications.

1st May 1994

Dear Parents/Caregivers

The last week of term one. The last three weeks seem to have been full of small holidays and to have disappeared quite quickly. In fact, it almost feels inappropriate having holidays now. However, I'm sure we'll all enjoy having a break and doing things that can't be fitted in during the school term.

Last week and this week the social studies focus has related to how people work in groups with an emphasis on the benefits that can be gained from working in this way. The children have carried out some tasks where the results couldn't be achieved if they'd carried out the activity alone. At home, you might like to talk about the way your family works as a group/team. You could consider how you work as a group so that practical tasks get done and also so that it is pleasant living together!

We have library this week. Last time only two children didn't have their cards, which was great. I do try to see the books the children are bringing home and to help them make appropriate choices. Sometimes, however, they get to the issues desk before I catch up with them (one took out 11 books last week!). My apologies for these occasions!

A new topic begins in mathematics this week. It relates to algebra. For my group this involves looking for patterns and seeing the rules that relate to the pattern. Looking at patterns around the house, in the garden and also in numbers (2,4,6,8 - what will be next? What is the rule? +2) would support this learning).

Hope to see some of you on Wednesday night when mending plastic bags and checking equipment for the team building outdoor education day will be the highlight!

Jane Gilmore

Although the women were aiming for the children to have a developing independence in their learning, this was within an expectation that others would become involved with them in this process. They said they wanted to help the children to build their ability to be autonomous, but within a concern for and connection with others. This aim was grounded in a wider vision of the 'good society' that Karen put this way: *I believe the essence of a democratic state is that every citizen takes responsibility for themselves... in ways that means you're always keeping in mind the well being of the group as well* (Karen 1:18). This philosophy simultaneously underpinned and was supported by the women's belief in and practice of shared leadership. Karen said, *If you are taking responsibility then you don't need a strong leader over you, telling you what to do* (1:19).

Evaluating progress. Term 2, 1993

Mary resigned as board chairperson in the middle of term two. She was sad to do this as she had found working with *Liz and Jane's two sets of ideas and energy coming at me stimulating. But I couldn't manage the workload with the long hours I did in my paid work* (22). Phil Cody was elected by the board to be board chairperson.

By the end of the second term, Liz, Jane and Karen agreed that they were getting to know each other and that they felt mutually supported. However, they felt that they had *run out of steam. For two terms we had worked full pelt and we needed a bit of consolidation time* (Karen 1:18). They thought they had achieved a lot and they wanted to slow down, and if possible, be more relaxed about work.

By this time they all agreed that their collaborative approach to the planning and implementing of the teaching and learning programmes had worked well and although Karen was not yet fully involved in sharing the management, she had decided that she did want to officially join the co-principalship. However, because the women wanted to refine their co-principal structures and systems, and because Phil Cody had been having difficulties getting the co-principal contract sorted out with SSC, they decided to wait until 1994 to announce the three-way share. They agreed that during the final term of 1993 they would clarify the ways they thought about and shared the various responsibility areas involved in their teaching and management.

Clarifying leadership liaison roles. Term 3, 1993

As in most primary schools now, Liz, Jane and Karen had each been taking responsibility for various areas of the curriculum, carrying out within these specific tasks, such as answering mail, drafting reports, setting up meetings and being the contact person for

communication. This did not mean that the only person others could refer matters to was the person with a particular responsibility however.

In the original proposal for the co-principalship, as part of their belief in the value and sense of sharing tasks and responsibilities, Liz and Jane did not want to divide all the various leadership and management tasks into delineated responsibility areas and then split these between them. During the contract negotiations with the SSC, however, SSC insisted that accountability lines needed to be clearly defined. As a way of accommodating this requirement and *to make it easier for the board or someone else to have someone to contact*, (Jane1:14) the women decided to identify some responsibility areas, such as property, finance and liaising with the educational agencies (including the Ministry of Education, the Education Review Office, the Payroll Division, NZEI and so on), and with the school secretary, the Spanish teacher, the principal release teacher, the cleaners, the after school care supervisor. They called the responsibilities they each undertook, their liaison roles and shared these among the three of them.

They stressed that these were *liaison* roles, *not knowledge or control roles*. This was because they wanted to emphasise an approach where each co-principal would involve the others in decisions that had to be made. As Jane said, *We wanted to make sure that other people would have to notice things in each area... not like the husbands of some of my friends, who say, if you just tell me to do the vacuuming, I'll do it! And the wife says, but I want you to notice! Like I'm the property liaison person, but I don't want to have to be the one who always has to notice that the tap is dripping, for example*(1:14). Calling the responsibility areas liaison roles was thus careful choice of terminology, indicating that each role was not one of sole responsibility or expertise, but rather that: 1) the person in the role was a first point of contact for parents or other people; 2) this person would pass on information, requests or questions to the other co-principals or other people as appropriate (the latter if they could not deal with a matter themselves); and 3) the role involved responsibility for keeping up to date with information and keeping the other co-principals and staff fully informed. This often required, for example, reading in-coming circulars from the Ministry and other material, such as publishing blurbs, related to their area, and summarising important information for the other staff or alerting them to material they needed to read for themselves.

It was also decided that they would rotate the various roles so that each of them would have the opportunity to develop the full range of knowledge and skills required in each area. Later, in 1995, they wrote up some guidelines, rather like an informal job description, for the roles they were currently working in, so that the procedures they had developed in the role were recorded and lodged in their 'Management Systems' folder for the next person who took over. For example, Karen developed guidelines for liaising with the teacher of Spanish after asking her how she liked to be informed, (whether this was by being phoned ahead of time, for example, or by a memo in her mail tray), and how often she wanted to meet with her advisory committee (Fieldnotes 16/3/95).

The co-principals took a very flexible approach to the ways they carried out their work in the various liaison roles. They were always willing to help each other and to move across the various responsibilities at times when one person was overloaded, or not well. Liz said, *Even though we have our responsibility roles, there's a lot of swapping around - especially if you notice the energy is foundering, you sort of get in and put a bit of a zap into that person ... there's a lot of 'reading' each other and the situation. Like saying - scrap that meeting this week, cos everyone seems really tired. To me, that's teamwork. Teamwork is not task oriented, it's actually noticing people, the other people around you* (3:15). They realised too that three heads were often better than one to complete a difficult task. For example, during one of my visits to the school, Jane was drafting a letter to a parent and she showed me where she had

written a note to Karen and Liz. It asked, *Is this over the top/ harsh?* She said that one of the real advantages of the co-principalship was that *When you are dealing with a matter, you can sort of be braver, cos there's three of you. You know that if the other two don't agree with what you've done, like in this letter, they'll delete or change bits* (Fieldnotes 2/6/95).

A three-way co-principalship has evolved

By September 1993, the three staff had agreed that a three-way co-principalship, with an equal sharing of all the leadership and management responsibilities and accountabilities, was viable. Indeed, by then a close collaboration was already happening. They were pleased about the ways they had 'reconstructed' traditional notions of 'the principal,' by removing the single figurehead component of the traditional principalship and the structural gap between 'the principal' and 'the other teaching staff.' Liz said, *We removed the gap physically. What is good about this school is that there's only three full-time staff and we're all equal* (2:8). Karen said, *While we were setting up some structures, we were pulling others down, so we were going through a restructuring weren't we?* (1:8)

Throughout the whole of 1993, while the women had been establishing their ways of working together, Phil and Naomi had been meeting with the Ministry and the SSC to sort out how the co-principals' contracts should be drawn up. It was not until the end of this year, however, that a resolution that was acceptable for all parties was achieved. These negotiations and the details of the contract are described next.

Negotiating and formalising the contract

When the board appointed Liz and Jane as co-principals at the end of 1992, none of them realised the *procedural difficulties we would have to go through later to get the co-principalship formalised* (Phil:1). In hindsight, Phil Cody thought that this was because the shared leadership *is such a significant change for the way we understand management structures to work*. He was referring here to the perception that if an organisation is to function efficiently and with accountability, it needs a chain of control and command, with one person who has an overview of all systems and functions and final responsibility for decisions. The Hillcrest Avenue School board had to develop a contract for their co-principalship that would satisfy SSC's requirements for this kind of leadership accountability, yet also 'open up' these constraints to enable the sharing of responsibility.

The discussions with SSC about formalising the shared principalship were difficult and protracted. Naomi Grant remembered later the personnel committee's disappointment about the constraints they encountered. She said that they had thought that within the requirements of *Tomorrow's Schools*, boards had *been given devolved responsibility for appointing staff, and after months of work we came up with a system that we thought would work well. But we were told, no, you haven't got all that much responsibility and power. And that was pretty hard* (9).

The co-principals thought that Phil's past experience in the union movement and his understandings of industrial law, along with Mary and Naomi's knowledge of and experience in the educational, proved to be invaluable as the various contractual and legal issues were hammered out. Phil, on behalf of the board, argued with the SSC that, *the principal is a position - it's structural, and if we take the rhetoric of Tomorrow's Schools at its face value, then schools have the power to fill that position any way they like* (Phil:1:1). The board proposed that the school could have *three people in the position, and that they would be a*

third of the principal and two thirds of a teacher. Phil said that SSC was adamant, however, that this couldn't be done, because the Act required that there be a principal. The rules said. And SSC said no - and quite properly argued case law and precedent which showed the principal was being interpreted as a person (Phil1:7). The board considered going to the Employment Court to get a change in the case law. But as Phil pointed out, it would have been long, it would have been expensive and the chances of us winning the case were too slim. So we backed right off that.. We were also trying to straddle two contracts - the Senior Management contract and the teachers' contract as well, and that caused problems with both SSC and the union (1:1-2).

The constraint on initiating a shared principalship because there is no one person in a position of accountability had been challenged in 1991, however, by the board of Selwyn College (a big co-educational secondary school in Auckland), when that school was investigating the possibility of a co-principalship. A civil rights lawyer, Rodney Harrison (QC), (at that time a Selwyn College board member) saw a loophole in the legislation and proposed that two people could rotate the role. After some lengthy correspondence, the Commission had agreed. Phil found out about this precedent and used it to win the SSC's consent for a similar model to be set up in the Hillcrest Avenue School co-principals' contracts. He said, *We asked the SSC, 'Can we do a rotating scheme like Selwyn does?' And they said 'Yeah. We've got a precedent.'.. So it was simpler for us to bend the rules rather than trying to have them changed (Phil1:7).*¹²³

The Hillcrest Avenue School board of trustees thus took a pragmatic approach, and decided that each of the women's contracts would specify that one of the co-principals would be designated 'the principal' each year. Along with Liz, Jane and Karen however, the board were concerned that the principle (that is, the vision and values) of an equally shared leadership should not be jeopardised. They won an agreement with SSC and the Ministry that the rotating of the principal's role would not be made public knowledge. As Jane said later in one of our group discussions, *We're not transparent in that area (Jane, Liz, Karen1:10)*

The shared concern here was that if people knew who was being designated as 'the principal,' then they would treat this person as the one in authority in the school. *It would have changed the dynamics, just like that, if they knew it was rotating!* Liz said (JLK 1:10). The women were adamant that there were a substantial number of people in the school community who, as Liz put it, *had no commitment to shared leadership. Whatsoever. Their commitment to the school is to do with it going really well... and for some people at least, they would like to have one person in charge because they'd be more likely to be able to nail them (JKL 1:11).* (The women's doubts about the depth of parental support for their shared leadership philosophy persisted, despite the positive comments from many parents in the 1995 teacher

¹²³ When I interviewed the SSC spokesperson, I was told that this was *a rotation situation where you may manage the school in a way where you share responsibilities, but in each year there is one definite person who is exercising the role and responsibility of principal and is accountable for everything that is done in the name of the principal. And there's another suggestion that one person is accountable for certain functions and another accountable for other functions. So that is split tasks - there's some kind of certainty then for the staff and the pupils (SSC spokesperson 11/12/95:3).* The practice of rotating principals was understood as *likely to be unsettling and undesirable from a long-term educational point of view in a school.* It was because of these kinds of concerns, that SSC decided that when boards asked for information *you do need to provide the board with the worse case scenarios to enable them to be able to sort out the situation ... And there'll be a lot of boards then who won't choose to do this (SSC:8).*

initiated school review survey. The co-principals wondered then whether people were just giving them the answers they thought they wanted to hear.)¹²⁴

SSC concerns about accountability 'lines' shaped the final agreement between SSC and Hillcrest Avenue School that the contract would name one person as 'the principal' each year. What the board and co-principals finally had to agree to was, in Phil Cody's words, *a regime where each of the three people is designated principal in terms of the staffing schedule for one year and one day. And then it rolls over to the next person. Under the terms of the Collective Employment Contract, you have to have been at the position for a year before you're eligible for a performance pay. (Laugh) It's as simple as that. I mean there's no other reason for the year and a day bit. On the 366th day of their term as principal, the pay increase takes effect. The only way we've got to adjust salaries is through performance pay on a range of rates. And that's working fine* (Phil1: 2).

At the end of 1993, each of the three women received from Phil Cody (by then the board chairperson), a comprehensive document that spelled out their contract and the understandings that had been reached during the long process of negotiation. The document included a letter of appointment as a co-principal of Hillcrest Avenue School, effective from January 29, 1994, with an accompanying preamble letter and the statements and agreements listed on the preceding page.

Letter of appointment

This letter formally confirmed the agreement about the rotating nature of each woman's appointment, as principal-designate once every three years and as senior teacher in the intervening two years. It noted the right of the board to renegotiate this agreement if any of the three women left the school. In a section headed up *Terms and Conditions*, the board referred the co-principals to four documents that they saw as defining their employment agreement. These were the Teachers' Collective Employment Contract; the Principals,' Deputy and Assistant Principals' Collective Employment Contract; the Co-principal Job Description, and the Co-principals Appraisal and Performance Agreement, with the latter to *be determined from time to time by negotiation between the Board and the Co-principals*. It was further stated that if one of the co-principals left, the remaining two *will continue to hold the substantive position of co-principal of Hillcrest Avenue School and the position of senior teacher will be deemed to be vacant*.

A preamble was attached that explained some of the pressures the board had felt in relation to the financial constraints around their decision to appoint co-principals and around their financial accountability for the use of taxpayers' money. These two issues will be described later in the section on the co-principal salary arrangements.

Job description

A concise job description had been drawn up and agreed to. It detailed the key responsibilities for the co-principals under the headings leadership, charter and policy, management and functional relationships. Responsibility for providing leadership for each other and *maintaining and developing the personal professional skills of all staff* was placed first in the list of responsibilities. Co-operative work between all staff members in planning, organising and implementing units of works in different curriculum areas across all levels of

¹²⁴ Later in the research process, I gave them some feedback about the positive evaluations parents I interviewed gave of both them and their model of shared leadership. (I talked with 36 parents in the school).

the school was noted as part of the management responsibilities (alongside the usual management tasks of producing a school development plan and budget, managing staffing, promoting the school and complying with the *relevant statutes and regulations and ensuring liaison with relevant agencies*).

Accountability was sharply defined in the job description as jointly held by the co-principals. The co-principals were required, *subject to the provisions of this contract, to satisfactorily perform, between them, the customary duties and responsibilities of principal and senior teachers within the school and to be held jointly accountable for this performance*. This section was linked to a statement on disciplinary procedures.

Disciplinary principles and procedures

This statement noted that, in any alleged misconduct of any one of the co-principals, *the Board shall not suspend a Co-principal without first allowing the Co-principal concerned a reasonable opportunity to make submissions to the Board about the alleged misconduct and the appropriateness of a suspension. The Board will take into account any such submissions by the Co-principal concerned before determining the matter of suspension*. It was also stated that an oral warning should usually precede a written warning and that the co-principal must be advised in writing of the specific matters causing concern as well as of the corrective action required.

There was therefore in the Hillcrest Avenue School co-principal contract, provision for the disciplining of an individual co-principal. There was no requirement that all the members of the co-principalship would be investigated on an accusation of the mis-conduct of one of them, though the board allowed for that possibility. In this section of the contract however, the board stated clearly once again that the co-principals would be held *jointly accountable* for the responsibilities detailed in the job description. In the understandings of the various board chair people who worked with Liz, Jane and Karen during 1994-96, and in the understandings of the three women themselves, there were moral and ethical dimensions to this agreement about shared accountability and responsibility that are not easily captured in the contractual statements. Their views about these dimensions are given later.

The statements about the procedures that would be followed to facilitate clarifying accountability reflected the board's and the co-principals' agreement with SSC as follows.

Accountability procedures

As in any other employment agreement, the Co-principals shall be subject to a performance agreement and review process. After an initial period where the performance will be reviewed after six months, there shall be a performance review conducted in March or April of every year. That review shall focus on specific issues identified in the previous review as requiring development. The appraisal shall be carried out as per the attached outline.

On a day-to-day basis, each Co-principal shall be allocated particular liaison roles within the school. For the most part, these roles coincide with the tasks and functions of Board of Trustees committees (eg. personnel, property, community consultation) but there shall be a number of other liaison roles as may from time to time be felt necessary or that are the result of particular functions of the principal or the school. For instance, one Co-principal may have a particular role to play with regard to enrolment. As outlined in the job description and the performance agreement, the Hillcrest Avenue School board of trustees will hold the Co-principals jointly responsible for all decisions. The allocation of liaison roles is designed to enhance functional efficiency within the school and in its relations with the community.

The Hillcrest Avenue School board recognizes that should an issue of accountability arise wherein one Co-principal feels that they have been unjustifiably held responsible for an action or outcome that they had no control over, the disciplinary procedures outlined in the contract may equally be applied to one or both those

principals. However, the board also recognizes the potential complexity of the issues and processes involved in such a situation and notes the provisions of Part 10 of the Primary Principals' Collective Employment Contract allowing for the State Services Commissioner to become involved should that be felt to be required. The Board also notes the provisions of the previously outlined disciplinary procedures requiring that it act in a fair and expeditious manner.

Co-principal's appraisal process

This agreement was collaboratively drafted by the three members of the personnel committee (who became the review panel for appraisals) and the co-principals. It stated that the co-principals were to be *assessed jointly, in a shared interview with the review panel* (twice yearly, in May/April and September/October) against specified and agreed objectives in the performance agreement. Further, *With the agreement of the review panel, the co-principals will nominate a person who will assess educational and professional leadership within the school and provide information on this for the appraisal.* This person would not be required to attend the appraisal interview, although this possibility was not excluded. The review panel was to produce a written reports (for the co-principals and the board) and recommendations for action in the light of the appraisal. (Recommendations could include, a review of objectives, specification of the process and date for the next performance appraisal, areas of development on which the following appraisal would focus and a statement relating to the satisfactory or otherwise nature of the performance.)

A partnership approach was taken to the appraisal of the co-principals and it was seen as appropriate for all stages of the appraisal process to be negotiated between the board and the co-principals. It was stated that the format (purpose, manner of the interview), role of principal's nominee, any canvassing of the school community to be undertaken by the review panel and the process for completion of the written report would be agreed to by the co-principals and the review panel.

The co-principals and the board also agreed that the appraisal was to be carried out as an evaluation of how well the responsibilities of the shared leadership had been performed. That is, it was an appraisal of the position of principal (held jointly by all three women) not of the one person who was in a given year designated as 'the principal.'

Principals' performance agreement

The purpose of this agreement was *To establish performance objectives in accord with Charter requirements and the job description so that the principals' performance can be assessed.* The document detailed specific *performance objectives in accord with charter requirements and the job description*, and covered the usual areas of a principal's teaching and administrative work.

The goals for the principals' work included an aim to: *foster a strong parent and community commitment to the school, through continuing consultation and involvement in the school's educational programmes and activities and by ensuring that the school continues to respond positively to its pupils, parents and community needs.* Within the three main sections of (1) educational and professional leadership; (2) instructional leadership; and (3) personal professional involvement, collaborative work was further emphasised to:

- *Promote professional interaction between staff where possible.*
- *Promote communication with parents and community where possible.*
- *Participate in teaching programmes in all areas.*

- *Be easily accessible to talk with parents/caregivers about programmes of learning.*
- *Collaborate on meeting agendas and notification of meetings.*

It was also stated that: *Assessment of performance will be linked to changes in the principals' salary, within the award guidelines.*

Salary arrangements

The board's position on the financial constraints on the co-principalship agreement was explained in the preamble letter that accompanied the contract, which stated that because of the salary limits imposed by the Collective Employment Contract, each woman could not be paid more than one third the global amount allocated to the school for the three positions of a principal and two senior teachers. This amount was *determined by the qualification levels of the holders of these positions... in a G2 school. The advice we have received is that this is "fiscally neutral" and therefore falls within the Ministry's guidelines for salaries.* The board was careful to point out that: *The effect of this is that your maximum salary will not be as great as it would be if you were a sole principal covered only by the Principal's Collective Employment Contract.*

The board stated that, *We feel under some pressure in regard to the overall financial implications of the scheme. We are required by virtue of the trusteeship to ensure that public money is used in the most effective manner within the school. This becomes important when we recognise that this arrangement results in three staff in a school with a teaching load of 3.2 being paid on the principals' scale once the system enters its third year. As a result of this requirement embodied in trusteeship, we feel obliged to note that we expect more effective school management by three Co-Principals than we would expect if there were only one principal. At the time of writing, we feel that this is most likely to be confronted as an issue in labour relations during the performance review process, although it may not be restricted to that, and we may from time to time place demands on the three Co-Principals that we would not place on a single Principal.* The letter assured the co-principals that the board is *fully supportive of the Co-principal positions* and it concluded: *The Board of Trustees is very happy with the way the teaching staff have worked as a team this year, and more generally with the way the school has been effectively managed by all staff. We look forward to this continuing* (Preamble to Letter of Appointment 1994).

Phil said later that the board had *wanted to pay each woman on the same rate. The problem was that two of the women were graded at G3 qualification level and one was at G2, so there was an equity issue there* (1:21). (Liz had not finished her bachelor's degree.) The board also felt themselves to be caught between the demands of fiscal and moral responsibility, on the one hand to the community and the state, and on the other to the co-principals. On the one hand the board was worried that school trusteeship required a financial accountability to taxpayers for efficient use of their money. On the other, they were concerned that they might not be paying each woman as much as she was worth. This was particularly worrying given that their salary increments would be constrained by the requirement from SSC that the initiative be "fiscally neutral". At the time of the agreement, the board had some leeway here, as they negotiated a salary 'pool' for the school that was a figure made up of the maximum for a principal with a G3 qualification (a bachelor's degree or the equivalent) and two teachers on the senior teacher salary. The board also won a concession that *each of the principals can be paid at the rate that is equivalent to them being principal once they've been designated as principal. We can't increase them until that time though. But after that, that extra component above the teachers' rate is protected pay... as long as it does not exceed the total pool. That*

means we've got six years potential movement... but the downside is that the highest any of them can be paid is one third of the way up the principal's scale(Phil 1:23).

Throughout their negotiations, each of the Hillcrest Avenue School co-principals was well aware of the salary limitations of the co-principalship arrangement, and of the downside to the arrangements for achieving salary increments. The arrangement meant that each of the women became eligible for the principal level salary only after she had been 'designated' on paper as principal, and eligible for a salary increase only once every three years, rather than every year, as she would if she was in a single principal position. The women agreed that this was an equity issue. However, they said they were not in this job primarily for the money, and as Liz pointed out, the salary increments were *such a piffly amount* that it was not worth worrying about. (The difference between the principal's and senior teacher salaries in a school of that size at that time was only about \$1200.00.)

Industrial issues

During the negotiations, the three women were also very aware of the industrial issues around the co-principalship that had been raised by NZEI, that is, the potential for harm to their colleagues' career conditions if the wider education workforce contractual conditions were altered. Liz, Jane and Karen were all adamant that they must remain within the NZEI collective contract arrangements. None of them would contemplate an individual contract, even though this may have expedited the negotiations around establishing the shared principalship, and perhaps have advantaged them individually. Their board could have increased their salaries, for example, without having to stay within the regulations for moving through a set range of rates.

Phil Cody agreed with the women's arguments here. In a later analysis, he wrote that, *The negotiations with the SSC would have been much easier, had we decided to opt in to the bulk funding 'trial' or had been prepared to sign an Independent Employment Contract with the principals. It was our assessment as a board however, that not only was bulk funding¹²⁵ politically objectionable, it carried risks of a huge exposure to the vagaries of school rolls. Opting out of the Collective Employment Contract was simply not an option we were prepared to entertain.* Phil also pointed out that, *The crucial factor in finally reaching agreement with the SSC that gave us an effective job-sharing of the three positions, was that we have been able to negotiate a performance agreement that considers the work of all three co-principals as a single evaluation. This is a fundamental reassessment of the basic industrial relations regime under which we work* (Phil 28/11/94:10).

The contract is signed: the three-way co-principalship is official

On December 13, 1993 Phil was able to finally present the contract documents to Liz, Jane and Karen to sign. All were thrilled that an announcement could be made to their school community that their three-way co-principalship was official.

¹²⁵ Bulk funding is a form of direct resourcing of individual schools, enabling/requiring those school board to take full responsibility for all aspects of resource allocation in their schools, including teacher salaries. Bulk funding has been vigorously opposed by teacher unions and some oards of trustees.

Building shared accountability and responsibility

Throughout the long period of the contract negotiations, the three women had got to know one another and were well down the track in evolving ways of working together however. They had built a base of shared understandings and goals and had set up systems for sharing the leadership between the three of them. This next part of the narrative focuses on how understandings about, and practices of shared accountability and responsibility were clarified and refined during 1994 and 1995, by the co-principals themselves and by others in the school community.

Appraisal processes

Because the board was tired from the processes of getting the contract formalised, at the beginning of 1994 the women themselves *drove* the setting up of the appraisal process. *We needed to do that, legally*, Liz said, (Jane & Liz:20). Jane added, *We needed to do it for accountability. But it's also for the information gathering, and it really does make us pause and think. It's like a good spring clean, isn't it?* (JL:24).

After amending the performance agreement originally made with Jane and Liz, to include Karen, the first appraisal was carried out by the board in April, 1994. Phil said that his board had identified performance indicators for all aspects of the principals' tasks and the purpose of the appraisal was to assess how well these responsibilities were being achieved. The co-principals were judged along a range of *'process in place and working well' through to 'nothing's happened'* (Phil 2:10). After this appraisal, the review panel deemed the achievement of Karen, Liz and Jane, under terms of their Performance Agreement, to be *most satisfactory* (Report to BOT on the Performance Appraisal, April 1994).

The panel and the co-principals realised, however, that not all the objectives in the performance agreement could, or should be assessed in one review period. Rather, specific areas that they together identified and agreed on as priorities (in relation to the overall strategic planning and the stage of development of the co-principalship), should be focused on. For the second appraisal period, they decided that there should be three focii: *(1) overseeing the setting of job descriptions, objectives and appraisal arrangements for all staff; (2) objective setting and evaluation and assessment throughout the curriculum; and (3) working with the treasurer and board of trustees to produce an annual budget in accordance with existing finance policy* (Report to the BOT on the Performance Appraisal of Jane Gilmore, Karen Lane and Liz Nicholson, Co-principals, Hillcrest Avenue School, September 1994). After this appraisal was completed, the report noted in regard to the first and the third objectives, that the process was in place and the co-principals' were achieving well. For the second objective, it was reported that good progress had been made, but that *the entire process has been complicated by the development of the curriculum framework ... New systems need to reflect this framework and it is simply too big to allow significant progress to be made rapidly*. Overall the report stated that, *It is clear to the Review group that Jane Gilmore, Karen Lane and Liz Nicholson are setting a high standard of performance in all areas measured* (Report on Performance Appraisal, 13/7/95, p.2).

Later, the co-principals said they knew that the board would not 'rubber stamp' their assessments. They pointed out that one of the board members was a teacher who *asks good educationally based questions about things. And with Beth it will be credit where credit is due, but definitely questioning. They feel responsible to be informed so that they can answer parents' questions* (Jane, JL:19). However, Jane had some concerns about the effectiveness of the appraisal system. She said, *There is no opportunity for a challenging of your*

philosophy. Although the old grading system was fraught with difficulties, that possibility could happen then, and it was quite exciting really. That wouldn't happen now... the board can't necessarily dig deep. We're hoping to have another principal come in to do a peer appraisal - though that won't necessarily be straight forward either. The cynic in me says you almost have to get someone who looks at things the same ways as you do to get the understanding, and then they'd possibly just agree with what you're doing.

It was because of these kinds of concerns that the three women invited Veronica to join them in their own six monthly peer appraisal to provide some more in-depth analysis for each other. They paired up to carry out individual evaluations of particular areas under the headings, teaching and learning, communication, pastoral and specific responsibility. One peer appraisal focused, for example, on what was wanted/expected in the children's behaviour around the school. It itemised such things as: *walking inside, no put downs, sensible use of the trees, acknowledgement of other people in the school - eg: the school secretary and visitors - and so on.* Each person worked with her peer appraisal buddy to devise appropriate routines for her children to develop the behaviours that were wanted. In the follow-up interview, judgements were made together about how well the objectives had been met, and strategies planned for improvement. The co-principals drew on these peer appraisals as well as their formal appraisals to help identify their staff development needs.

By March, 1995 however, Liz said that they had had to give up the peer appraisal cycle. She said, *We ran out of steam - this process was pretty high-powered* (Field notes, 16/3/95). However, the willingness of the co-principals to try a peer appraisal system as well as the more formalised board appraisal is an example of what Nicola (a student teacher who was in the school for one of her teaching practice periods) summed up as the teachers' heightened sense of responsibility. She said, *Here, all the teachers seem rather accountable to each other, you know* (Nicola: 4).

Personal integrity and accountability

Karen summed up the complex net of accountabilities the co-principals felt when she said, *I was accountable to myself, accountable to Liz and Jane, accountable to the board, to the whole school community - including the students, and accountable to the government... but in my hierarchy of accountabilities, integrity is the most highly regarded value. I have got to feel that I actually live up to my belief that I have integrity* (2:16). The women shared a strongly ethical view of personal accountability, which they saw as an important part of their commitment to what Karen described as *my, Jane's and Liz's agreed code of conduct when we came together. We made an agreement with the board... and we promised the community that we would abide by what they wanted* (2:16).

While holding themselves both individually and collectively accountable to, and for, each other, Jane pointed out that *there are times when you carry each other. Like if someone's having a low - or is stressed, or something* (2:16). She commented on how her menstrual cycle meant that for her *there's a cyclical thing - there'll be a couple of days when I'll admit it's not good for me to get into an argument* (JL: 17). Liz agreed. *Yes I'm very aware now that there are some days in my cycle when I won't even try to do some things with students because I know I'll become very intolerant very quickly. But if I think I'm becoming a malingerer, I'm off to the doctor to get it sorted* (Liz, JL:17).

While trying to keep aware of monitoring their own and each other's health and welfare, they also 'called each other to heel,' as it were, if they thought this was necessary. Jane said, *You do have to be reasonably tough. Like if I had to be carried for ages, I would like to think the others would say 'We've had enough. I think it's inappropriate professionally for*

that to go on too long (Jane 2:16). Being accountable for each other meant doing things like reminding another person that she had forgotten she was meant to be out on duty or keeping an eye on each other's teaching. Jane said, *If someone said I was running a useless social studies programme, Liz and Karen are accountable for that as much as me* (JL:16). Liz added, *This puts pressure on me, because I don't want Jane and Karen to be accountable for my slackness!*

Jane, Liz and Karen did a great deal of thinking about personal and collective accountability and responsibility during the second half of 1994. They had realised that all the work to get their systems up and running, along with the number of initiatives they had been involved in, *had crowded out a fair degree of professional thinking as a deliberate management process. A commitment was made to schedule reflection times* (Karen's diary 1994:14). They felt that they had talked a lot during the previous year and a half about their beliefs, ideas and approaches, but they wanted to spend some time on *distilling* all that. Relievers were organised so that all three women could meet together out of school for professional development on the refining of a collective vision.

Three 'vision workshops' were held, in July, September and October, 1994. As Karen told me, the women wanted to spend time *thinking again about our purposes, and this will improve our teaching and learning* (Fieldnotes, 8/10/94). These three staff development sessions were facilitated by Karen, who structured them around Senge's (1992) series of questions for individuals to answer and then discuss with the others in the group, with the aim of clarifying a shared vision as a way of building shared meaning in an organisation.¹²⁶ At their October 1994 staff development workshop,¹²⁷ the women distilled a set of key words to describe the ways they valued working. On a large piece of white paper they wrote the following list: *shared responsibility; partnership; connectiveness; fluidity; commitment; shared management; clear definitions and messages; group discussion and support; calmness; open to suggestions; part of the 'big picture'; high expectations; a commitment to learning* (Fieldnotes, co-principals 'vision workshop,' October 1994).

Clarifying 'open honest communication'

Liz was particularly adamant that *honesty is integral to effective communication... about professional things... I mean for real professional collegiality*. She equated honesty with not giving mixed messages. *Like when Karen wasn't on duty I just told her, rather than playing silly games. I said you need to go out, because we've got that commitment (2:17)*. She added that, *As I've got older I just believe so much in honest communication. Like, if I'm*

¹²⁶ In July 1994, the questions the women talked about were: *What does vision mean to you? Why is it an important concept? What if our visions are at odds? How can we bring our personal visions together to make a collective vision?* (Karen's diary, 1994:15). On the afternoons of September 12 and October 8 of 1994, the women continued these discussions. They explored the questions: *How do we work with the 'stakeholders'? How do we produce value? What is our image? What is our unique contribution? What is our impact? What does our school look like? In what ways is it a good place to work? What are our values? How do people treat each other? How are people recognised? How do we handle the good times/ the hard times?* (The mornings of these two days were devoted to reviewing their strategic plan in the light of the results of a school survey that parents had completed as part of the school's internal school review; and in planning the budget for 1995.) (Fieldnotes, 12/9/94; 8/10/94.)

¹²⁷ I observed both the September and October meetings and noted the ease and sense of trust between the three women as they explored their ideas, sometimes challenging each other, sometimes probing, as they clarified both the characteristics of their shared leadership and issues they needed to address..

feeling annoyed or irritated with us as a group, as staff members, because I feel it hasn't been discussed, I'll say can we have a meeting about this because I'm feeling I don't know what's happening. Now can we work out a way to make sure that I know and everyone knows? Because at the moment I don't like to be in a situation and all of a sudden there's a surprise for me. And so that's the way we talk. When I could not resist responding to this comment, But not everybody's brave enough actually to be honest though, Liz replied, No. No they're not. And of course, I'm not always brave and honest all the time either, but I just realise how important it is.

For Jane having open and honest communication meant being *straightforward*. Things don't get complex. For example, with the children, things are declared. There's usually no great hidden agendas. If we want them to do something we'll tell them what we want to do and if it hasn't been done adequately ... we ask, why hasn't it been done? She added that being explicit and open was also quite important in our dealings with each other. That's something we've really stressed that we need to communicate clearly. Sometimes we get it wrong, but ... Liz completed her sentence for her, *We're getting better at being very straight about what we want or what we're going to do*. Karen agreed that they were *straightforward ... giving clear messages* (Vision workshop 2, 26-27). This meant the women avoided what Liz called *playing silly games* with each other. Jane explained, that in relation to herself, *I realised that it's actually cruel of me to expect other people to notice if they had irritated me. That's quite exhausting, to have to check out if you've pleased or annoyed someone else. And you have to trust that they will tell that you've overstepped the mark, or whatever...* Liz agreed. *So we'll say to each other now, 'Hang on a minute, you didn't talk about that.' I think we've improved on saying what we want from each other.* (Liz 4:6)

Shared accountability/responsibility: where do you draw the boundaries?

During the nearly two years that they had been working together, the women had built up good understandings about what shared responsibility meant for the three of them. They were clear that they each had responsibilities to both watch out for and check each other. As they talked during their October 1994 vision workshop however, they were not as clear about what shared leadership and responsibility meant in relation to how they worked with other 'stakeholders' in the school. (They defined a stakeholder as *anybody who has a link to the school*). The difficulty was where to draw the line in regard to responsibility and partnership. In the next few pages, quotes are taken from the transcripts of their discussion in October, 1994, to illustrate how they were confronting and thinking about some particularly knotty problems in this area.

Liz and Jane agreed with Karen that it was important to *have clear definitions of roles, though with fluidity ... within the roles ... and to have partnership*. Jane nodded and raised the example of student teachers taking initiatives in the school. She referred to a situation when a person came in off the street and immediately went to Alec (a student teacher) to ask if they could use the phone. She said: *It would have been a polite thing for Alec to say like, is that okay, if this person goes and uses the phone?* Liz agreed. *Really, what they (the student teachers) need to do is check it out, to make sure that fits in with the way things work*. Karen wondered, though, *whether people sense when they come here that everyone is equal. So that is their role - to be equal too? Are we working with a double standard here?* Liz replied, *Yeah - we want them to use their initiative, but we want them to check it out!*

Karen voiced the dilemma the women were facing: *There are some decisions that aren't appropriate for student teachers to make, like taking children out of the school grounds... So by a clear definition of roles, what we mean is that we have to firmly establish*

to anybody coming into the school that there is a leadership system in place and that their role is to share in carrying out the decisions that have been made by the leadership. Jane observed in passing that the women student teachers would check, but not the men. Karen agreed, saying the men student teachers *ooze with confidence*. They were a bit annoyed about this situation but as they kept talking, they realised that there were some fairly blurred expectations around the sharing of decision making and responsibility, and maybe the student teachers weren't all to blame here. They decided to develop an induction checklist of how they saw the teacher student teachers' responsibilities and roles in this area.

From this discussion, the women began thinking about how far, or indeed whether accountability could be shared out to others in the school. Liz said, *Like I mean it's our role to be looking after the children and we're accountable for their learning - but they (meaning the children) are as well*. Karen thought that, *Ultimately we're the accountable people. But we do try to make people responsible for things... It is shared responsibility*. As they thought about this distinction between accountability and responsibility, Liz mused, *Mmm. We encourage children to be accountable for their actions, but ultimately they can fall apart. And we're not going to let this destroy them - and as for student teachers, ultimately we won't let them fall apart, will we?* Jane said adamantly, *No!* And Liz went on, *We'd save them in the end - though some of the third years, we'd let sink 'cos in fact they're not really good as teachers*. Jane interjected, *Though we'd try and make them reflect*. Liz agreed, *Mmm - and with parents, we're accountable to make sure the parents know what the school vision is and how things work... But we can't be accountable for what they feel about it - can we? Though we have to make sure that we do as much as possible to involve parents*.

Karen was sure that, *There is so much that we can be accountable for within the school programme, but that accountability is also shared by the parents, in that they have to support the programme, and by the students, in that they have to take responsibility. So there is that shared accountability too, isn't there, that's particularly focussing on learning... so are we thinking here about our legal accountability?* Jane thought that this was the case. *Yeah. I mean we're not accountable for a lot of the things the children do really - we can't do anything about them*. Karen nodded, and Jane went on, *And that's the thing that is often most frustrating*. Karen agreed, *Yes. We're accountable in a legal sense, but if you're thinking about sort of a moral responsibility and accountability, it is shared*. In mock 'doomsday' tones, Liz intoned, *Moral responsibility!* And Karen laughed, *We'll be getting onto outrage next!*

What about moral responsibilities?

The three women began here to think about to what extent they, as teachers, could be held accountable for children's learning about issues they saw as having moral consequences. They told me about an incident that they all had felt shocked by. Jane said, *My kids were doing a 'work at home' activity - we're doing this health thing. And they were taking responsibility for their clothes by looking to see whether they're clean and putting them away and putting them in the wash themselves, and all that sort of stuff. And they had to monitor it with their parents. And Stephanie, one of my children, said, 'Well I don't think I can do that because that's my cleaner's job and Mum is very annoyed if the cleaner doesn't do what she's asked to do.'* And I said, *'Well you need to check that out with your parents whether you could practice all this week doing it without getting the cleaner in trouble.'* So she did and that was all right. *I mean you can't, it's not her problem*. Liz nodded and said emphatically, *No! And she did check it out and it was fine*.

Jane continued, *But it's just a bit horrifying when you hear it - and you think, what attitudes the adult has. And also you think what the perception is of how you live in life. It can*

only be defined by what she knows. I mean no wonder she never picks up things round the place. She's waiting for Nat to do it. That's what she's learned is appropriate action. Not that she's being horrible.

Karen interrupted, *But this is what gave rise to the left property box. That was the nanny culture. It was the nanny's job to make sure that all of the things were picked up and that in fact children went home with the stuff they came with. And things like, 'My nanny didn't put my things in my bag today.' 'Why haven't you got your togs?' 'Well my nanny never did it.'* She threw her hands up with a shrug of her shoulders.

Liz said, *We've really challenged that. I mean we have actually taken some moral responsibility or authority on that, and said in this place you will organise yourself. But we've also taken it further: you will be organised for school. So it requires you getting your togs in your bag, you making your lunch and that, you do it. It's actually not good enough to say that my nanny didn't.*

The women said they were concerned that 'the nanny culture' seemed to be developing in some children a self-centeredness that expected others to wait on them. They described this attitude as emerging out of some parents' attitudes and practices around employing people to work for them in their homes. Karen summed up, *That's how things get done - you employ somebody to do it. You write a cheque - and the people, by the mere fact that they are employed and get paid, they lose their whole persona. You know, they're not people any more - they become faceless, and you don't have to consider whether they've got feelings... Their value is in a cheque* (13). The co-principals said they were trying to challenge this attitude. Jane said that they were concerned that the children learnt to *think more about other people* and about forms of interdependence between people that involved more than money exchanges. As part of this goal, Liz said that they had set the children activities where they *asked them to practice the skill of interacting, giving them problems to solve in groups.*

By this time, the co-principals' had realised that defining boundaries for various accountabilities and shared responsibilities was a complex task. Karen said, *Talking about shared responsibility in this context is quite a tricky question, isn't it? Where do you draw the line?* They came to the conclusion that, *It depends on the issue as to how clearly and how tightly you draw the lines.* Karen mused, *This is what we mean when we talk about the importance of having fluidity in our approach, isn't it?*

Fluidity was not only seen by the three women as an important aspect of deciding who had responsibility and what could be expected of different people in different situations. It also emerged as an element that the women thought distinguished the ways they were working from more rigid, rules based approaches. Jane said, *I think it is much easier to deal with school if there are very definite rules that say that's what we do - so it's black and white. I'm not saying it's good, but it's easier. Our way takes a lot of thinking, partly because we see it as a partnership - between us, the children and the parents.* Liz added, *Yeah, our way is more complex... It moves things to a deeper level of accountability from everyone... a rules based approach doesn't work.* Jane agreed, *No. It's too simple. And people aren't simple.* Karen nodded and said, *And I think with a more fluid type of practice there is more recognition of the value of others.*

Widening the responsibility 'net': 'a deeper level of accountability from everyone'

The issues that the women explored in this conversation during their teacher only day had been thought about by others in the school community. Veronica said she felt much more included within the co-principalship than when she had worked as the principal release teacher for Jim, and that as a consequence *I want to take on more responsibility. I want to be in there*

and be a part of that team (1:15). Anne Fletcher said that as a consequence of being included by the co-principals and having her opinions *not only welcomed, but also sought*, this was *not only very flattering and you sort of feel very important (laughs), but also, then you feel a sense of responsibility towards the school and the children and the staff - that you wouldn't otherwise feel* (Anne: 3). She described an example of how the parents had been told by the staff through the children's communication notebooks, that she was relieving, *and on the first day, I received several notes from parents addressed to me! I took responsibility for maintaining that home/school communication*. In another situation that blew up after Anne had been in the school for only a week, she said the co-principals *sought my opinion as both an outsider and as someone who was part of the team. It was a wonderful feeling to be so accepted and valued* (Anne:6).

Dean, a board member between 1995-7, saw a widening of the responsibility 'net' as one of the particular strengths of the co-principalship. *I think socially we tend to sort of try and pass the buck up or down, rather than collectively saying yes we're all responsible. One of the features about this school that I like, and that I know other parents like, is the whole area of social responsibility - doing things co-operatively and taking responsibility, not only for your own stuff but also for the welfare of others and things like that. And to me the co-principal model and the way it works here is reinforcing that shared responsibility and shared accountability and I just think that it's a really valid model* (Dean:1).

Most people approved of the widening of the responsibility 'net,' but some parents talked about the pressures they felt as a consequence. One woman said, *There is an expectation in this school that you will put your children first. I feel terrible that I didn't go to the AGM... My job means I have less contact than I'd hoped to be able to give, and I feel I'm letting the side down... I'm all for parent involvement, and I have served on a board of trustees, but I'm a single parent. I have a full time job. I can take a day off, but it will come off my annual leave* (Parent 21/4/95). On the other hand, a 'double income' couple said, *We both feel involved in decision making - but as an artifact of Tomorrows' Schools, which was predicated on the single income family, it is assumed that there is a person free to be involved in the school. For double income families there are difficulties - we can't get to meetings always or be involved as much as we would like* (Parents, 10/4/95). Focussing on a different aspect, another woman said, *I feel I should be more involved, but I can't stand being in the classroom - I found it a nightmare. I feel some pressure from myself that I'm not there* (Parent 20/4/95).

Although some of these parents felt what they called a *gentle pressure* from the co-principals expectations about involvement, when it came to the 'crunch' of staff sharing accountability, Veronica Cowley said that the co-principals were *very kind*. She described a difficult situation where she had been involved in a conflict with a child and parent and *When I got a personal letter from the parent, I took it to Liz, as everyone else was busy - and it was a parent of a child in her class actually. I felt terrible, and I was happy to respond to it, as I was the teacher who was responsible, but I wasn't sure how unemotional I could be talking to the parents about it. The principals decided to deal with it themselves in this case, but they kept me fully informed and the situation was resolved. I was very grateful* (1:15).

Challenging individualist hierarchy

The co-principalship was seen as challenging common understandings and practices of hierarchical and singular forms of accountability. Serena, who was a student teacher, was interested in thinking about school management structures and while she was working at Hillcrest Avenue School she observed the co-principalship closely. She described it as shifting from *an authority structure to an accountability and responsibility structure ... where the*

different principals or teachers have responsibility for slightly different things. Jane has responsibility for those parents who are new to the school in terms of new entrants and she has contact with them because that's her classroom, and she's accountable to do her job. She is accountable to the other two for that, because they share, and if one person fails, then they all fail. So it's accountability, not authority (Serena:2).

After he had been involved in the negotiations with SSC over setting up the co-principalship, Phil Cody was very critical of the ways that the central agencies had taken up highly individualised managerial and market models of accountability. He saw Hillcrest Avenue school challenging these ideas. *Without being too aware of it to start with we've challenged 'market speak' - we've taken the market discourse and said, okay, we'll talk about autonomy and choice, but we'll talk in terms of groups rather than in terms of individuals - and that's scary! They don't want us to be a group (Phil 2:8,9).* Dean, who became a board member in 1996, commented on the difficulties that could emerge *when the two systems of collective and hierarchical accountability collided, as he put it. Collective responsibility and accountability isn't an easier structure to operate. It's a more complex structure. And that means that it makes it difficult for organisations that like to keep things simple to interface with that. They may understand how it works but they're probably horrified at the thought of having to deal with it on even a small scale, because there are no mechanisms. I can visualise the situation where perhaps the school got into difficulty in some way and if one of the authorities, one of these organisations like the State Services Commission, had to get involved, for them it would become difficult, because they can not see a clearly defined responsibility structure that draws a very clear line around various people and says you are responsible for this particular aspect of things and you are responsible for that. Blame is the word that pops up very easily. In other words they say our responsibility stops with you because everything below you is your responsibility. Whereas with a sort of a much flatter structure their ability to actually allocate blame, or define accountability, becomes much more difficult. Their job becomes much harder because they're now looking at a greyer area that sort of more or less blurs out into the community, where the State Services Commission has to say to the community at large - you are all partially responsible for this situation occurring. And well, I can imagine that they would find that rather, ah, daunting ... I mean it's like the government saying to the electorate at large, you're all to blame for this mess. They don't say that - they like to focus on individuals or specific bodies (Dean:2).*

Beth Lawson, who was the board chairperson between 1995-7, argued though, that *there's no reason why a collective unit can't be equally responsible (2:9).* She was adamant that for the shared leadership, accountability must be judged by *measuring the principal as an entity, and in terms of the objectives that have been outlined in the charter and the performance agreement (2:9).* She had thought carefully about the arguments that had been put up by the SSC on the need to have one person in the position of the principal who can be held responsible for decisions. She said, *One person can justify their decisions in their own mind any way they like... It's much harder for three people to hide their true values, to have hidden agendas. In the collective leadership, each person has to bring their own justifications, reasons and values and then if something doesn't stack up the three have to collectively deal with that omission or hole in an argument - but one person could easily sweep any holes aside (1:13).* She pointed out too, that the shared leadership had of course, the external check of the Education Review Office reviews. Although these provided a useful validation, (see next section), Beth maintained that the internal checks on accountability were likely to be stronger in a co-principalship than in a single principal model.

Beth also said that she regarded herself as *being perhaps just as accountable as an employee of the school in some respects... I have an equal responsibility in a lot of ways*

(1:15). She said that the splits between board and principal's accountabilities are *very blurred ... If we talk about a governance management split, what is trying to be established there is a form of accountability hierarchy. But the objective is the same - to provide quality education for children, and here we are all involved - the board, the principals, and the parents too* (2:8).

When I interviewed the board members at the end of 1996 to see whether they thought that any problems had emerged around the area of shared responsibility and accountability, Dean summed up the responses I was given when he said, *If all the principal's duties are being carried out, there is not issue - it is not a concern for the board as to who within the principal's group was doing what* (Dean:11). When asked whether it would be a concern if one person wasn't pulling their weight, the answer was, *That becomes an issue within the group... and they resolve it. Perhaps within the group there has to be a self and peer assessment type of process, again with the assistance perhaps of an independent person who comes in and facilitates the process... but if the employing body is happy with the group, and it's not affecting the performance of the group, then it's not an issue for anybody outside that group - it's really up to them* (11). In William's opinion, though, *as a good employer, the board would have to voice its concerns - but it would be inappropriate for the board to say, for example, number three is not performing and we're taking her out of the co-principalship. The board should work through the group to resolve the issue.*

William, the longest serving member of the board of trustees, turned the focus on school and community responsibility around. He was frustrated about the Ministry's failure to be accountable to the school in not picking up what he considered to be their responsibilities in relation to school maintenance. He said, *We've got a drainage problem with our surface, where it flows over into the playground. We're trying to induce the Ministry to see that as partially their problem, but I don't know if they will - we'll probably have to find the money ourselves. They say they've transferred the power to the board but then every day there's a directive. You have to ask the question you know, who is really running the school? I mean there's so many hoops to jump through* (4).

The school community's views of the co-principalship

This section summarises people's views of the significant characteristics of this co-principalship. The many advantages and few drawbacks of the shared leadership that were identified by teachers, student teachers, board members, parents and children, are described and some stories are told to illustrate some of the gender factors that people commented on.

A team of equals sharing leadership: 'here there is no boss'

The co-principalship was seen as functioning differently to the ways parents and staff were accustomed to expect from 'the principal,' or even from a team leadership. Several people, including the co-principals themselves, described a shift from the notion and practice of team leadership as meaning 'a leader who builds a team,' to meaning 'a team of equals sharing leadership.'

Liz told me that in their co-principalship, *A leader isn't the person at the front any more. A leader is a person who can take on any role - for an idea to be successful, everyone has to feel at some time that they are leading it... you have to actually take on that responsibility... It's ownership* (Liz 2:13-14). Other people saw this being enacted. Nicola, a student teacher, put it like this: *I don't see the co-principals' job as clearly defined as other*

*principals who sit in their office and don't teach, who have a set task, to make sure every other teacher in their school is achieving to a certain standard and handling the work - they get that information through their senior teachers. Here you've cut out all of that and you have three people on a completely equal footing and with their good communication, its much better (4,5). Cherie Clark, who was appointed as a senior teacher when Karen resigned,¹²⁸ said, *This is definitely a team without a captain, where everyone is equal - it's a total team effort, where you can lead wherever your strength is, but you are still responsible as a team member (6). Beth described it as a unit of equal partners (2:2).**

Mary Stevens had worked as board chairperson with the previous team of teachers in the school as well as with the co-principals, and she compared the way the two groups carried out management and leadership roles. Although she saw these as to some extent shared by Jim, Felicity and Karen, she said that *in that team of teachers the roles were more set, where their strengths were and where they could contribute and where they couldn't - and Jim was always perceived as the leader (2).* She thought that the co-principals' approach to their liaison roles was more fluid and more negotiated than that of the previous team of teachers. In her opinion, this had influenced the way parents viewed the leadership team. *It is quite clear now that no one person represents the school and parents don't see any one person as the leader (2).*

Phil Cody was convinced that the principle of equality within the leadership team was a significant advantage for the work of teaching and learning in the school, enabling all three staff to contribute fully in the development of a whole school approach to meeting the needs of the children in the school community. In his reflections on the differences between the co-principalship model and current views of team leadership, he was critical of *the current industrial regime and the whole sort of team management stuff... The notion of quality circles, for example, does two things - it breaks down the horizontal connections between workers and it incorporates workers into the decision making process without actually giving them any significant influence or power ... It's a very nice way of hegemonising the model and the power of the foreman as the manager, as we can only make suggestions in that model. We can't effect change. The advantage of what we've got (at Hillcrest Avenue School) is that all the teaching staff have the same status. This came home really clearly to me last year, when one of the kids, in a discussion with Jane said, 'Well the difference between this school and others is that here there's no boss' (1:11).*

Working together across personality differences ...

The majority of people saw each of the three women as very much her own person and that their varying skills and different approaches were factors that contributed to the success of the Hillcrest Avenue School co-principalship. Rose Fleming commented that the women's differences *were very complementary*. Veronica's story earlier in this narrative, about how the three women responded to some parents' discontent about which class their child was placed in, is an example of their personality differences. Liz described these differences one day. She said, *We have three ways of working, three ways of thinking. We do think quite differently. I'm an 'I feel' person and I go - pow! which is often good sometimes. Because I mean some issues I deal better with because I have that emotive reaction. And sometimes it's not good. Sometimes it's off the top of my head and inappropriate, it's too hot... Karen's sort of quite analytical. Jane has this sort of wonderful sensibleness about her (2:8).* Anne commented that

¹²⁸ This situation is described in the next section.

the women negotiated their differences *sort of casually, like dropping ideas into a pot and getting responses, judging reactions* (9).

... to form a team that is 'connected,' 'like one organism'

Although there was this acknowledgement and valuing of differences among the women, Beth Lawson drew out how within the co-principalship, they had built, as it were, an alliance across their differences. Beth worked for a big corporation as a business analyst in the areas of decision making and problem solving, and she said that in her experience, *When you talk about management by consensus, or a high performing team, what is usually the case is that you've got many different characters that are each bringing their own skills. That kind of team member idea doesn't seem that clear here though. It is a very integral model here - the whole team is a high performing leader or manager, and it's not because of individual skills or weaknesses. It's just the ability to interlock and integrate their own personalities perhaps* (1:4). One parent said, *It seems to be quite seamless* (Parent, 31/3/94). Anna, a student teacher, observed that *They all go in the same direction in whatever they do* (3).

As she searched for words to describe the co-principalship, Beth said, *It's a conglomerate... The management is not split into categories. It's not linear. And it's not vertical. The structure is quite round - that's probably the best way to describe it. So it has no beginning, it has no end. There's no definable points ... It's a process that is circular, sort of like a solar system that's revolving, with the centre point being the need to administrate, to manage. But that point doesn't fall on a person. That's contained in the centre perhaps as a gravitational force by the revolving... And it's an even, flat structure - there are no reef areas, and no weak links. Though it's not even a chain. It's quite connected, and whole* (1:3). When I asked, *What is keeping it connected?* Beth replied, *I'd have to say, intuitively, it's just the communication flow, the openness. They have very clear and unified objectives, so there's no need to segment or to appoint project leaders for example - where there's a gap, you fill it... and there's an equal ability, it seems to me, to facilitate and mediate* (1:4). In Beth's view, the fact that there seemed to be *no obvious structure* in the co-principalship model, was because *the planning processes are done so smoothly it's sort of like it's already there. They've just got this big game plan.*¹²⁹ *It's easy to forget that there's a lot of work and effort that goes into that, because the administration side is wholly invisible as there's such a cooperative effort in the shared leadership* (1:2).

Karen laughingly commented that the co-principalship was *a bit like a three-headed monster! Not negatively, but sort of like one organism. Personal agendas got put aside when it came to thinking about major school issues and three became one to carry out the idea. That was how our shared leadership worked* (Karen 2:5-6). The result of many exchanges of views and careful listening to each other was that once shared understandings had been reached, *then that's it, there's no fuss, no bother, you move forward. We were like one brain, one organism... totally focused on what we were there to do... It was almost like you were the servant of the idea and there were three of you to carry it out* (Karen 2:4). Dean commented, *Sometimes I forget who I started a conversation with, whether it was Jane or Liz. I sort of almost carry on a conversation with the other one and if they don't know what I'm talking about, they pick it up very quickly and nothing is lost... They are very much the same person in some ways* (15).

¹²⁹ Although the three women valued fluidity in their approach, this did not negate for them the place of strategic planning. Liz said, *You must have forward thinking and plans, for teaching and learning, the budget and organising staffing and resourcing of things, but with a strategic plan you don't set it in concrete. If all of a sudden there is a crisis, you change direction* (1:16).

At a board meeting in October 1995, when board members were agreeing that there was very good communication and that they each found the co-principalship very easy to work with in this regard, William, who took responsibility for maintenance issues said, *I always pretend they are one person. I just see whoever is nearest. The communication is there.* Arthur, the treasurer agreed. *We can just feed in to any one of three.* William added, *It's a bit like having terminals everywhere!*

Focused on professional collegiality, inclusive of other people

A common perception among many of the people who talked to me was that a co-principalship would not work if the people in it were not friends. They referred to their perception, for instance, that the previous team of Karen, Jim and Felicity were friends who had worked and socialised together before they came, as a team, to the school. A distinction was made in the co-principalship however, between friendship and colleagueship. Liz, for example, commented, *I don't want to be Karen's friend particularly, cos she has different interests and things. But I'm really interested in her as a professional colleague... And what impacts on me in this job about Jane as a person, is her commitment to the job* (Liz 2:8). In fact, Liz, Jane and Karen thought that one of the things that contributed to the strength of their shared leadership was that they did not begin from a base of being personal friends. Consequently, they could not work from assumptions, but rather had to *learn about the other people and respect what they believe* (Karen2:2).

Staff in the school felt valued and included in this co-principalship. Veronica and Anne, who both worked at different times as principal release teachers, talked about feeling part of the team. Anne said, *shared leadership is practised all the time and all the staff are given power to be involved in decisions about even very minor details* (1). Serena, a teacher trainee, said *We are acknowledged* and the school secretary said, *I get lots of opportunities to be part of it and feel free to suggest ideas* (Joan:6).

The three board chairpersons commented on the collegiality of their relationships with the co-principals, and talked in terms of *us as a group* (Phil) and about working with the co-principals. Beth said, *When I come here it's a learning, helping situation. They're teaching me things about the school ... and about my role as chairperson. And I can bring in my experiences from my own different environment, feed in ideas* (Beth 2:6). Mary Stevens found a difference to her previous working relationship with a sole principal *The line was through him to the teachers... but with Jane and Liz (I wasn't chairperson with all three co-principals) it was very much a partnership* (Mary:15).

Parents said they felt fully consulted and made to feel welcome in the school, and saw the co-principals as being *very receptive to parent's ideas* (Parents 20/4/95). This feeling remained, even when the co-principals disagreed with a group of parents who wanted their children to be given more homework: *We keep saying it and they keep disagreeing - it's very amicable - and we are quite happy overall* (Parents 21/4/95). Typically, parents commented that the school was being run *as one part of an extended family* (Parents 21/4/95).

The children were observed by parents and other staff as also being included in the management of the school. When I asked one of the girls whether the co-principals asked the children what they thought about things to do with the school, Jill replied, *Yeah. Yeah, when they were doing a plan for the playground, we could put ideas in as well. The other playground was too big for the younger children they kept hurting themselves and stuff. So they asked us about it* (Jill 1-2). One of the student teachers commented that a *mutual respect* had been developed between the co-principals and the children. *For example, if Jane is talking*

with a child and one of the other principals comes in, she doesn't stop talking to the child - she finishes whatever it is, and says 'Excuse me' and turns to the adult (Phoebe:3).

Built on a shared vision ...

Serena, a student teacher, summed up the opinions of many people in the Hillcrest Avenue school community when she observed that the shared philosophy was at the centre of the success of the women's co-principalship model. She said, *Unless you've got an agreed vision of where you are heading and what sort of structures you want to put in place it's impossible. It would never work - and you'd have to have the authority structure as in the hierarchical model, where you've got this person who holds the overall control and who can work as a mediator between other people* (3). Most people agreed that the key philosophy of this co-principalship focused on developing children who could take responsibility for their own learning while also caring about others and assisting them to develop. Mary was not implying that these qualities can not be evident in other leadership approaches, but she wanted to draw attention to the way this co-principalship *pulled together these things in a common vision, a common understanding, that drives the systems and the processes.*

... and on-going reflective dialogue and review

In the views of people such as Rose Fleming, (who observed the three women during some of their professional development days), Veronica Cowley (the principal's release teacher), the student teachers, and the three board chairpeople who worked with them between 1993-97, it was the commitment of Liz, Jane and Karen to on-going dialogue and reflection about all aspects of their work that was a most significant factor in the success of this co-principalship. In their views this facilitated the development of their shared vision for the teaching and learning programmes and from this, common purposes for their shared management.

When they described how the co-principals talked with each other, each of the board chairpersons (Mary, Phil and Beth) was impressed with the ways the women constantly focused on the educational purpose of their collaboration, linking teaching and learning to the leadership practices they were engaging in. Mary gave an example: *It's recognised that Karen is the person who is very talented and interested in art, but the women might say, 'Would it be good to not have Karen present the art work in the showing? Let's think about this a bit more broadly. What would it mean to the children if someone else presented it?'* (Mary 3). Student teachers also noticed how the co-principals blended their teaching and management, rather than becoming *removed from everyday issues in the classroom* (Anna:3).

Many people also commented on how much honesty was stressed in the women's communication. Mary said that explicitness was what she saw as significant here: *It's not so much that the core values are sacrosanct. It's more that you make them explicit, so that they can be challenged... It allows you to open up and be transparent, not to be threatened to deal with things in a very practical, reasonable way* (20). Anna, one of the student teachers, noticed that the co-principals *really are more direct with us and each other than I see in other workplaces* (3). Terence, a board member, summed up the general approval of what he described as *having honesty within the administration and shared responsibility... and when you have honesty, good things happen* (Board meeting, 10/12/95:7).

Valuing debate ...

In this co-principalship, there were times when the co-principals disagreed with something that one of the other two said or proposed. Jane commented however, that because of their agreements over their base philosophy, *probably we argue more, have more rigorous debates* (2:11). At times when the women disagreed with something one of the others had said they would weigh up whether it was significant enough to say anything. Jane said, *I would think, is this something I want to go into battle on?*(2:13) If she thought it wasn't she'd let it pass. All three of them were pragmatic about the wisdom of sometimes 'letting sleeping dogs lie.' Karen said, *Out of conflict though, you have growth* (2:17).

Anne commented that because the three women were each very strong in different ways some people thought that *it might be very hard because they might clash. But they believe in the importance of communication and the acceptance of different points of view, and they had the ability to work through any problems* (9-10). In Anne's opinion, *the talking is actually reducing the conflict. I think having plenty of opportunity to talk about things means you don't have a 'winners and losers' mentality* (11).

There were occasional 'spats' with a parent or board member. On a few occasions, these could not be resolved to everyone's satisfaction. Jane said that there were parents in the community who thought they could *tell you what to do*, meaning directly to your face, and that they were not always happy when disagreed with. *They are the 'cut and thrust' type*, Liz said, and Jane added, *When they are annoyed, they'll think of every avenue that's likely to bring results. There's a small number like that* (JL:11). One parent recounted how *a board member was really into technology and was pushing a particular system and he said that the women were anti-technology. There was clash over this and he resigned from the board* (Parent 10/10/95:1). Soon afterwards, however, the school was featured in a news article as "responding to the IT challenge" by using a Ministry initiative to ensure all children had access to information technology throughout their schooling.

In the view of one parent, the shared leadership model could *push down some conflict* (Parent 10/10/95:1) and she described how she was not happy about one teacher's approach to teaching her child. She felt that not enough direction was being given. She said she could not talk to the teacher, because *I know I get her back up. And I'm not happy about the swearing in the school - I'm old fashioned about that. If you swear you got stood in a corner and wrote a 100 lines. Discipline should be more direct.* This woman was not comfortable about talking to either of the other two co-principals about these matters either, because *they would all agree* (Parent 2/10/95:1).

Jane, Liz and Karen were aware that they could be seen by others as collectively *formidable*, and they had tried to counteract this by, for example, not all being present at a meeting with a parent. They were also realistic about the possibility of others disagreeing with them however. Liz reflected, *Three years down the track if people were still feeling completely enamoured of us I would be very worried, because you must be disagreeing sometime - it's just the nature of a community. I believe though, that if you have conflict or disagreement you deal with it professionally, and professionally to me is out in the open, honest. It's not game playing stuff. When people are playing that sort of game with us we deal with it straight back to them* (JL:10). Although they were concerned about the possibility that someone might not feel able to come to them, they were also adamant that they would not get into what they called *guessing games* about such possibilities. They relied on openness and people coming to them to talk through issues with them. *If I heard through a third party about something, said Liz, I would just have to wait for them to come to me. I'd suggest to the other person that they tell them to do this* (JL: 11).

Along with the large majority of people in this school community, Beth was impressed by the willingness of each of the three women to *meet, mediate and negotiate*. *If there was a problem, it was, 'Well, can we resolve this? Should we have another meeting?'* (2:7) Soon after the above conversations, it was recognised by the women and the board, that the school needed a clearer process and guidelines for any parent who might have a problem about something happening in the school, but did not want to approach any of the co-principals about it. In 1996, they agreed that when children were enrolled at the school, parents would be informed that if such a situation arose, in the first instance the parents should go to the board chairperson, or a board member, and a resolution would be mediated with the co-principals. A note was put in a school newsletter to the same effect.

... and the building of trust

Although some people outside the school had said to Anne, one of the co-principals' relievers, there would be too much talk and *would anything ever get done?* she pointed out that because the women had developed a *common core of knowledge*, trust had been built between them that meant that *one person can do a task or make a decision that the others are going to be happy with* (11). Beth considered that it was a commitment to open, honest debate and sharing of ideas, that enabled the building of a foundation of trust, which meant there was as *an on-going 'sounding board' for each member and for others, something that is so valuable in problem solving, and planning and all other aspects of management* (1:2). Many people mentioned also that there was increased trust not just between the staff and between them and others in the school community. In an October 1996 survey of the parents, in which the co-principals asked them to comment on the advantages and disadvantages of the shared management, trust was mentioned by a majority of parents as a strength of the approach. (There was a 95% response to the survey.)

Advantages of the approach

The advantages that emerge in the preceding sections can be summarised as including: increased democracy and mutual accountability in organisational relationships, both between teachers and between teachers, board and parents (thus breaking down some aspects of a professional/lay divide and a governance/management divide); enhanced opportunities for drawing on different strengths and abilities of a wider range of people; enhanced involvement in development and implementation of shared educational purposes; improved transparent communication and quality of professional commitment and reflective review.

There was wide agreement in the school community that this co-principalship was a great success. Some people whom I interviewed thought that the chief factor contributing to this success was *the quality of the people involved*, as Charlotte, a board member, put it. There was almost unanimous agreement among the 36 parents I talked to¹³⁰ that each of the women was an outstanding teacher and highly committed to the school and the shared leadership. Some were also of the opinion that the small size of the school was a significant advantage. Their comments were echoed in the ERO Effectiveness Review Report statement that in a *small school ... communication is easier and more effective than in a larger organisation* (1994, p.5). It was widely agreed, however, that as well as good communication, it was the

¹³⁰ One parent was not happy with the way one of the women was teaching her child.

shared philosophy and the systems that had been put in place that made the co-principalship 'work.'

The 1996 parent survey specifically mentioned the following factors that parents appreciated in the co-principalship:

- trust it generates
- sense of cohesion in the school
- family atmosphere through lack of hierarchy
- greater collaboration between teachers promotes greater collaboration with parents and students
- no communication problems; someone always available
- each teacher is out of the classroom for management time, but one not out more than others; no class is penalised or given less attention.
- introduces management that is not bureaucratic, autocratic or hierarchical
- no pulling rank
- children are comfortable with it
- good role model. (I will return to these last two points in the next section.)

During the research, some further specific advantages were identified as follows.

Professional development for the staff

Intellectual stimulation and professional development was highlighted by the co-principals as a major benefit they enjoyed. After eighteen months of working with Jane and Karen, Liz enthused, *I used to think leadership was tiring, and I didn't know if I wanted it. I liked to effect change, but I didn't know if I wanted to do all that by myself. I just felt like it was too much, too much, couldn't do it all. But I'm loving it here. My favourite professional time is now. It's so stimulating. We have these wonderful meaty discussions on issues. I have thought more carefully about what I do as a teacher than ever before, and because of working with Karen and Jane I think I'm a much better practitioner* (Liz 2:9). Karen said, *There's been such intellectual stimulus, more than I've had that any other time in my teaching. Being with Liz and Jane has been a great learning curve for me* (2:5). Jane said, *Every day there's something firing my mind about the impact of what I'm doing. It's quite exciting* (1:13).

Other people, such as the board chairpersons, the relieving staff and the student teachers, also learnt a great deal from the women's approach to sharing leadership, as is attested in their comments in earlier parts of this narrative.

Reduction of principal stress

Most people recognised that this factor was a significant benefit of the model of shared leadership. For example Beth Lawson recognised the complexity of the work of principals and said that *the principal is the meat in the sandwich in that they are answerable to everyone - to the school community, to the children, the parents, and to the board. And they're answerable to SSC and the Ministry* (1:10). She was adamant that such a situation had to be stressful, and thought that the co-principalship model enabled a reduction of this stress. *It would be unusual, she said, if the principals here all had the same level of stress at the same time, so there's always a sounding board and an anchor - someone there to say, 'Yes but... don't forget...' and someone who knows the situation* (Beth, Board meeting, 10/10/95:11).

Liz illustrated this when she commented, *The other day with a problem, we talked about it for twenty minutes and thought of all the possible ways we could do it, worked out a*

plan of action and the consequences of each stage and how we would support each other. She pointed out that for her, If I was a principal on my own, even though I could delegate some of my workload, I would feel worried about that I didn't overburden people ... And to try and be a teacher and to administer at the same time, would frustrate me because I would feel like I was doing neither of them particularly well and I would strive to do them better and then I would end up 24 hours a day doing nothing else... And also the other thing would be the emotional pressure of me being the Principal. That would be too stressful for me... 'cos I worry. I still do worry now, but I don't stress out about worrying, am I doing this right? (Liz 2:8). The principal release teacher's comments validated these health benefits of shared support: I don't see the co-principals having to go off to the doctor like the previous principal was having to. The principal before him also wanted out because of health issues and because his family life was being compromised so much. Under the shared leadership, they have support for each other (Veronica:10-11)

Continuity

The advantage for the school of continuity, at times of principal release for administration, and of staff illness or change, was gradually realised by the board. Arthur (the school treasurer) said in 1995 that *If a sole principal was sick, then things would grind to a halt until she got better. We don't seem to have those continuity problems here* (Arthur). This advantage became very real though in 1996, when first Karen, then Liz left the school. That situation is described in the last part of this narrative.

No disadvantages?

Throughout 1994-1997 there were no broadly agreed on disadvantages identified by parents, children, board members or teaching staff. Indeed, the parent surveys carried out by the co-principals explicitly stated that there were no disadvantages. When Jane asked the seven F1 and 2 children if they thought there could be any difficulties in this structure, they replied in hypothetical terms, suggesting that, *There could be a problem if the principals didn't communicate or said a different thing - like one saying it was okay to go outside the gate and others said it wasn't; could disagree; it takes time to pass ideas on from one person to another and to make sure everyone agrees and knows what is happening* (Form 1 and 2 children, 1994). The children were perhaps reflecting the comments of their parents here, as the issue of time was mentioned by several people as a potential concern.

Time factors

There were mixed opinions about this issue, with many of the observations being expressed in hypothetical terms. The 1994 ERO Effectiveness report commented that, *Staff meetings are held at a separate time from management meetings, and the board chairperson meets once a week with the principals. These meetings are time consuming and could be a disadvantage of this form of leadership* (1994:5). Some people thought that sharing leadership would mean that reaching consensus on decisions would be very time consuming, and therefore a disadvantage. Others, though, made the point that *slow decisions are usually better. It gives a chance to explore every eventuality. And because decisions are collectively made, there's usually a greater commitment to those decisions* (Phil:18).

Some parents thought that the three women worked very long hours. They had observed the women leaving school quite late after having arrived at 7.15am. The point was

made by the board chairpersons, and the co-principals, that the teaching principal job was *big*. Phil said, *I've observed primary and secondary teachers working enormous hours (1:25)*. Veronica Cowley had worked in the school under the previous principal, and she thought that *in comparison with the time that he was having to put in as a teaching principal, it would be about the same amount of time the co-principals were putting in. At the beginning they all went to every meeting, but they've learnt to have a representative go and report back to the others. At first they seemed to have meetings every day, but that's been hugely cut back (10-11)*.

Each of the co-principals pointed out, if she was a principal on her own, she'd still be spending the same number of hours, but she would be getting stressed about the work and responsibility. Liz said, *Most days I work from 7.15 am to half past five at night. A couple of nights a week I might put an hour in at my own home, and on a Friday night I'll stay as late as I need to get all my preparation done for the next week. Though once a month, say, I'll come in on a Sunday and hang lots of things up. I've got two meetings here next week, at night, but that doesn't happen lots. So I'd work between 50 and 70 hours a week - depending on what's happening. We probably did spend longer in the first year, but it's shorter now because we've got so many systems in place. And we know each other. And it's just experience. I mean, I didn't know what principals do - and we're all getting better at that. Liz thought that she was a very good manager of time. I'm now very fierce about what happens in my life - I mean the school has this much - I will give this much energy to it. I'm really happy to do this, so long as there's other things in my life (2:17)*. Liz had no children of her own, and enjoyed what she called a *quiet existence* out of school. *I'm a gardener, I'm a sewer and I go to concerts and out to dinner and I spend heaps of time reading*. She, like Jane and Karen, however, had care giving responsibilities with her parents and wider family members.

Jane began to keep a record of the time she spent working one week, but stopped, horrified when she'd reached 40 hours by the end of Wednesday! *That was just bad luck*, she said. *I had three evening meetings - and that is unusual (2:20)* She thought that she probably did between 50 - 55 hours in a week that had no evening meetings. She said she'd also thought she didn't do much work during the holidays, but then added up the hours she had done in the May two week holiday, *just out of interest, and I'd worked 40 hours! (21)*. During a mid-term break, she had also worked *from 9 until one o'clock each day - I find writing reports quite difficult and I wanted to trial doing it then. That was quite satisfying, cos I went out to lunch at one, and in the holidays, one o'clock feels quite early, whereas in term time one feels the day should be over! (21)*.

Although Jane and Liz were reasonably happy with their workloads, Karen was less so. She had had no management training before she joined the co-principalship, and she completed Advanced Studies for Teachers papers during the first two years, as well as attending a reflective principal course. She said that for her, at the beginning the co-principalship *consumed a tremendous amount of time*. Karen liked teamwork, but she also liked *having autonomy ... at times, I wanted to say, let's do it! Let's act! But I had to learn to be patient and to hear other people's views right through (2:5)*. She felt that some of the collaborative processes the co-principals engaged in then could have been speeded up if *we had been prepared to have been a bit more ruthless. But because of the conditions around our coming together, we were very cautious, very sensitive with each other and trying to be extremely professional and not let anything cloud the issues (Karen 2:2)*. Perhaps it was because of these factors that she did not tell Liz and Jane that, *there were times when I got impatient, and I thought, you know, we were perhaps agonising over things a bit too much*. She thought though, that *my personality was a factor in my wanting quicker solutions*.

Karen also said that, *There was a lot to do and we've tried to do a lot. It's been productive for the school, but on the personal side I think it's been probably counterproductive, in that I have become quite dissatisfied with the amount of time I've got for myself to pursue my own interests, to develop friendships, and to actually still be a parent, a caring parent. My greatest difficulty has been trying to achieve a balance in my life. Though I think if I'd been a principal on my own I would have spent a lot more hours in the night worrying about things I wasn't doing, whereas now I find I don't actually have sleepless nights about the job (1:20).*

Salaries

Karen also raised the issue of remuneration and recognition. She said *I think our labour and our services and the dedication we feel just gets abused. There's no official recognition. Not that you only work to get recognised but, you know, we've got a contract but we haven't had an official salaries sort of agreement. You get very little thanks for what you do. In general, primary teachers are not recognised and we haven't had a salaries increase for five years (1:20).* Karen was particularly concerned here about issues to do with the general level of payment for primary teaching. The NZEI was negotiating pay parity for primary teachers in relation to secondary teachers at this time. The specific difficulties around salary issues in relation to the co-principalship were described in the third part of this narrative. Neither Liz nor Jane raised this as a problem for them in relation to the model they had established.

Was gender an agenda in the shared leadership?

This was the only area where there were distinct disagreements in people's judgements about the shared leadership. Although some people thought that there were clear advantages in having three women in the shared leadership position in terms of improving gender equity in education and in terms of having 'role models' of women in leadership, others were not so sure about these gender factors.

Women's (feminine) way of leading?

Some people thought gender was influencing the character of this co-principalship in terms of the leadership styles that were being enacted. There were comments such as, *The tone is all to do with the fact it is women making the decisions (Parent 21/4/95:2), and, Their style is a woman's style versus male management - Jane is right in the middle, bringing others in and coaching them, making them part of the team - it is much more democratic (Parent 20/4/95:1).* Serena, a student teacher, saw the co-principalship as *not having the same power structure of a single head or principal. I think the fact that they're females makes a difference. In the one principal model, you go up a hierarchy, and the boss is the principal - even though it's the board of trustees... cos they have the right to hire and fire, I think it is very much viewed as the principal is the boss, because he, and I use he because the majority of them are men in New Zealand, he has the authority for a lot of the decisions made in the school. And his authority is thought of very much as in the word power... Whereas in the shared leadership it's definitely an accountability structure and a different atmosphere, a healthier environment where everyone has a say (6).*

Anne was convinced too that, *The fact that it's three women helps enormously in this model of shared power and negotiation... Women have a head start here. They are used to working in that way. I'm not sure if it's a natural or a learnt behaviour - it's probably a*

practised skill - but women's skills of negotiation and communicating and listening are definitely more well developed. And the whole model of 'one leader' seems to me to be very much a male thing. Most of the men I know feel a lot more comfortable with sort of black and white - sort of, a decision is made and you follow that decision until it's proved totally wrong. You don't fluctuate along the way (11). She also said that, *The shared leadership requires a lot of talking, and this is something a lot of men, I think, feel very uncomfortable with, because of a feeling that you're not doing anything... Talking for them is a means to an end, much less people oriented. I think though, that for women talking is how the job gets done - and we don't only talk about a problem, we talk about what is working (11).*

Cherie Clark said that she could think of *only one male who I could work with comfortably in a model like this, and I've worked with three or four in every school I've been in. That man was very philosophical and into the learning of children and he shared everything in the syndicate (all women teachers) that he worked with. And he was very flexible (16).*

Others wondered about these ideas and comparisons between 'male' and 'female' ways of working, and were not sure about whether gender was influencing the model or not. One woman said, *I don't know whether it is their gender or the model. Like before we had a male as headmaster, and I don't know whether it's just people's perception of the male being the master of the ship, but there was more hierarchy (31/2/94:5).* Another parent thought that *men are more inclined to hierarchy than women and more inclined to choose a leader. The status thing is important to them (Parent 7/4/95:10).* Several had difficulty imagining the model working well with three men in it.

Still others were adamant that it was *just personality, not gender* that was the key factor (Parent 6/4/95:3). Charlotte, a board member, thought that *it's the qualities that they bring to the shared leadership that are more important (12)* and another parent pointed out that *not all women can get on with each other, or are co-operative (Parent 10/4/95).* Cherie agreed that not all women are collaborative. She described a male and a female principal with whom she had worked. Both had used *team management, but the man would delegate everything, to the point that basically left him with no responsibility and where people wanted guidance or help or things like that, he would say 'Oh go and sort it out yourself.'* The woman principal was *much more for shared responsibility. But although she preached Sergiovanni and truly believed in that sort of thing ... and she got everybody on board and was into team building and things like that, there were still times when decisions were made solely by her and when her vision wasn't with everybody else's. If anyone stood in her way that wasn't on. She was a fantastic principal and the parents loved her, but she was captain of the ship. I feel better with this school - with Hillcrest Avenue.* Cherie also noted that *there are lots of women who couldn't cope with this shared leadership philosophy. She said, This must sound awful, very stereotyped, but basically there are a lot of women who just want to teach because it fits in with their family and school holidays. And this style is one that they couldn't manage. It's not someone telling them and directing them and giving them straight leadership. They are the stereotypical 'women.'* Most of them are older women, in their 40s and 50s (15-16).

A feminist /collectivist approach?

When Jane and Liz were appointed, Naomi, a board member on the appointments committee who identified herself as feminist, was particularly adamant about the importance of the need to appoint more women into leadership positions to improve gender equity in this field. One parent commented, however, that she had had real qualms about the shared leadership right at the beginning because of her own experiences when she *worked with groups*

*of women where there was no leader, like during National Women's Year back in 1979. There were no structures, no systems in place. It was all supposed to be anti- hierarchical but basically very little actually ever got done from one meeting to the next. It was very frustrating (Parent 7/4/95:2). She said that she was very relieved when she saw the co-principalship getting things done. She added, *Indeed they have achieved much more than had been done under previous principals.**

As explained earlier, the co-principals were themselves, not in total agreement with each other about feminism or a specific form of feminist collectivity. Karen's aims were not about feminist politics but more about *standards and being rigorous in trying to achieve and driving hard. I know that in our group we had very strong beliefs in equity, but I don't know that I would call myself feminist ... and I'd be surprised if anyone else labelled me that way. I call myself a person who happens to be female (2:10-11).* Liz had set out to 'test' a feminist collective model for primary school leadership and both she and Jane were working for change in organisational structures and working relationships. Liz saw their model as also working for *a change in the power structure of society - based in a belief in the importance and power of women as key stakeholders in the way the world works (Liz 4:7).* She added though, that *I've learnt over the years not to bang my head on a brick wall ... I've learnt to be wiser. I'm sneakier, better at thinking a strategy through. Here, we're putting our energy and commitment into the ideas ... It doesn't feel right in education that there should be a hierarchy, and now, I think about that cause. I'm strategic. I actually want some movement on this ... and I want the parents, the kids to see that it works (8-9).* Jane (working from her largely liberal feminist base) had similar attitudes to Liz's in relation to being strategic. *I wouldn't now put my energy into consciously banging against things unless I really believed they needed to be changed ... but if others don't want to change the hierarchy in their school, I'm not going waste my energy on trying to do that in their school (Jane 3:16).*

Gendered power struggles?

A few people made references to what they saw as gendered power 'politics' as 'colouring' some people's views of and reactions to this co-principalship. One woman commented that her husband *who used to work so hard for the school has now turned against it - he's so sexist (Parent 20/4/95).* Another woman said her board member partner, who *holds strong free market views, wouldn't get into fighting with these strong intelligent women. They are definitely feminist women, and I wouldn't want to be in a fight with them about male/female issues! (Parent, 10/10/95:2)* Her partner told me separately that, *I would say that while the business world is built by men, the education and child-rearing world is run by women and it's equally sexist. As for the co-principals, Liz calls a spade a spade -she is more direct and Jane is more tactical, but she is no slouch - she will stand up for herself. But if I start to feel trampled on in any area of life, I'll say my piece, then get on with it (Parent, 11/10/95).*

At the board meeting in October, 1995, when I was reporting back on some of the research, during a discussion of the shared leadership there was a brief bantering exchange between four male board members. William raised the question of what might happen in a situation *if this present 'happy family' did unwind.* Other board members pondered the possibilities of personal and/or philosophical clashes, and were generally optimistic and in agreement with Karen's comment that *In a situation of conflict we just have to keep reminding ourselves, as we do in the good times, that we just think about what we're here for, which is for the children, And we have to focus on that (11).* William persisted though and said, *I can imagine the scenario that you're all wanting to censure a staff member - and you'd have to*

ask her to go out of the room so you can talk about it. Of course they'd know exactly why. Dean chipped in, *So we can send them all out and they won't know which is which!* Amid the laughter, William responded *Keep it random!* Terence joined in, *We'll draw straws!* and William said, *Five minutes of terror!* Arthur added, *Power!* and William asked, *We'll try that next time shall we?* None of the women board members joined in this 'game' and none of the women co-principals rose to the bait!

Jane commented about this time that she was aware of shifts occurring in her own and others' thinking about and enacting of gendered practices. She said, *This is one of the first schools I've been in where I've had men ring me to enrol their children and where they've brought the child in to visit. Which is good for me actually, because I have to think about it differently - I have to tell myself that this man knows just as much about dressing his child and organising the lunch as a woman would. Some of the men, like this man, are very very earnest about being nurturing and caring, and he told me he felt anxious about leaving his child.* She laughed as she added, *And I'm probably more praising of men like this in my head - like, thinking, isn't this man wonderful - and I have to resist wanting to pat him on the back!*

What can be said about the educational effects of the women's co-principalship on children, both generally and in relation to gender issues?

Educating children within a co-principalship

While an in-depth focus on the effects of the co-principalship on children's learning was not able to be developed in this study, comments were made about this by teachers, parents and children that are worth reporting. Teachers and the majority of the parents thought the model was generally educationally *good for the children* as the following comments illustrate.

Educational benefits for the children

There were several factors here. Liz said that in her opinion, *the children got a much better deal from us as teaching principals ... because none of us are distracted by the admin. Here the educational and the institutional leadership are equal ... Our leadership is all about learning and because of the way we split up our principal release time, we never really go off and leave our kids* (2:18) The parents I spoke to particularly appreciated this factor. A comment in the 1996 school survey summed up their opinions: *Each teacher is out of the classroom for management time, but one not out more than others, no class is penalised or given less attention.* This was certainly the case each time I was in the school on a Friday, which was the women's principal release day. Whoever was working in the office had the door open, and children came in and out, with requests to help with photocopying, to show their teacher a piece of art they'd just completed, to ask their teacher's opinion about a problem they'd encountered. Each of the women left the office regularly. As Liz said one day, *I'm going off now for a tour - I hate being in here by myself, and I'm really poky! I like knowing what they're all doing* (Fieldnotes: 7/10/94).

The value of the co-principals shared knowledge in terms of their communication with the children was observed as a significant educational advantage by student teachers in the school. *They tell each other what they're doing in situations and the kids aren't getting double messages* (Nicola:4). One of the children confirmed this opinion. Dierdre (aged 12) said, *When we had only one principal in the school, all the teachers didn't know what the principal was talking about sometimes. With this shared responsibility all the teachers know what they're talking about* (4).

Anne saw this as spinning off to the children's understandings that *talk is learning and while learning is their own responsibility they also are responsible for sharing their learning with others and not to stop them learning* (12). The 1994 ERO Effectiveness Review Report confirmed this opinion. It stated that *The emphasis on students being responsible for their own learning and being required to co-operate with others is enhanced by the Board's appointment of a staff of three as joint principals. The main factor influencing student achievement is the cooperative work of students, parents, staff and Board... The (collaborative) management style is effective and is dependent on factors such as personnel, strong community support, the structures in place and the determination to make it successful. The three principals share a similar philosophy and their goals are commensurate with the school's mission statement. They bring a variety of complementary strengths* (1994, p.5). In Anne's opinion, the result of these combined factors was that the co-principals were *achieving a lot more here than in a lot of schools I see, in terms of curriculum things* (12).

The 1994 ERO report further noted that: *The collaborative leadership model is implemented in the classroom. Students have the opportunity to volunteer to perform a number of tasks and take a range of responsibilities. They are publically commended for their efforts* (1994:5). The 'role model' argument, in terms of providing children with an alternative leadership approach to the traditional hierarchy, was a factor in the original appointment of Liz and Jane, and in the board's encouragement of them to develop a three way co-principalship. Liz, Jane and Karen believed that *if you have a power sharing way of working, those sorts of values will reflect in the way the children see each other. They may not necessarily take notice or believe in it, but they will have experienced it. Otherwise they will just think that things always work the same way - in a hierarchy* (Liz, 4:8). This element was commented on by many of the people who spoke to me - parents, student teachers and board members - who said things like, *The co-principals are modelling for the children that they could maybe work in a group or a team rather than to have the control* (Parent 9/3/95:3). Charlotte, one of the board members, said that she had noticed that in some activities, *there was some sort of shared leadership going on at the student level. Automatically. It looked like a bit of a flow on* (11).

Some of the children did notice that the three women had different ideas, and that their negotiation of these meant better decisions eventuated. Jill (aged 10) said, *It's good to have different people's opinions cos then you get - like if one of the principals had an idea then maybe the other principals might have a different idea so - they would add on to the other person's opinion - so like we're getting - um - better opinions* (Jill: 3). Deirdre, another one of the children, said, *I like it a lot this way. It's not as strict like before when the principal had the idea and that was the end, there weren't any different ideas. But now, maybe one teacher comes up with an idea and the other teachers might change it a bit... so it wouldn't be so strict, like I made this decision and you can't change it* (3). Jill also noticed that the teachers were making these processes explicit to the children. She said, *Like sometimes they say, 'Oh last night we three we discussed - we talked for a long time about this and we had so many different ideas and we came up with this one conclusion' - they usually say that* (laughs)(3).

Jane had talked about the shared leadership model with the seven Form 1 and 2 children in June 1994, asking them whether they *had any thoughts about having three principals, or any differences you might have noticed from having one principal. This is not about the individual people but more about the structure*. These four girls and three boys saw several advantages: *everyone gets to share their ideas; there seems to be more interaction between people; children can talk to all of the principals equally - if something happens you can tell anyone; there is equal teaching time per teacher, like one teacher doesn't have a whole day out of the classroom; it means you have a range of skills - someone might be good at budgets, but someone else good at organising trips; more things can get done - one can be*

doing one thing while another can get on with something else; because all are equal, no-one gets stressed out; no one person is really bossy or in charge - everyone has their say; if one person is sick, you can still have decisions made; you think of the people as teachers more - before people could be sent to the principal.

Educating children for gender change through 'role modelling'?

Jane said that early on in their co-principalship, a parent who was enquiring about enrolling her child asked as her opening question, *Does this school have a feminist base? I said that it probably did, and tell me a bit about yourself! She was wanting her daughter to have strong female role models* (2:1). From the following three stories, however, it seems unclear whether having three women as co-principals provided a role model for children of strong women leaders.

Anne's assertion that there were *lots of empowered girls in the school, girls who are quite good at taking on leadership roles, like Phillipa and Jill and Antoinette and Casey*, is illustrated in the following vignette.

A class meeting On 23 June, 1995, I observed Liz at about 11.10 am with her class of 7-9 year olds, as she introduced the idea of having a class meeting - *like the older children do. We'll run them weekly and you can bring up issues you want to discuss. Now who is going to facilitate? We need a leader - not a person who bosses, but someone to run a sensible meeting, help to keep people talking sensibly. And we need a recorder to take the minutes - someone who can write down what happens - someone who can write quickly. Think about who would be good at these things and think about an issue you'd like to talk about. We'll do this at about ten past twelve, until half past - lunch time. We'll have an election for the people to be facilitator and recorder.*

When it came time for the meeting, the children moved into the kiva (the school's round discussion space that had tiered seating) and expectantly seated themselves on its circles of tiered seats. Liz called for nominations for the facilitator. Phillipa, Andrew, Tammy and Murray were nominated by the children. Tammy looked very concerned at first, when she was nominated, but when she saw lots of hands go up when Liz called for seconders for her nomination, a small pleased smile crept over her face. When Liz explained what the facilitator's job was, however, Tammy interrupted and told Liz she did not want to do it. *That is okay Tammy*, said Liz and then she told the class to think carefully about who would be the best person to do this job. Phillipa was elected with a wide margin. The recorder, Katy, was quickly elected and Liz facilitated a discussion about of the issues the children had previously suggested they wanted most to discuss that day. They agreed on the topic of swearing and how to stop it around the school.

Liz put a chair at the front of the kiva for Phillipa and she took her place with a grin and asked for comments. As the children made some comments, Phillipa responded often with a comment like, *Yes, that's okay*, and quite often went on to offer an idea of her own. For example, she suggested, *If you dig a hole in the ground and then swear into it and bury it, that's a good idea*. Sometimes she explained why a suggestion might not work. Liz soon interrupted, *Phillipa, you don't have to do all the thinking!* She explained to the class, *Phillipa's job is to allow everyone to talk*.

The discussion became more animated and three boys who had been sitting up at the back of the kiva, and had been doing a lot of the contributing up to this point, moved out of their seats and gradually down to the front, until they were sitting in the front row, two kneeling up on the bench and the other squatting right at Phillipa's feet. They had their hands

up most of the time, eagerly engaging in what became a lively four way dialogue with Phillipa. These boys seemed to respect Phillipa's opinions as well as wanting to impress her perhaps, and she seemed to be enjoying the exchange.

While several of the other boys in the class contributed to the discussion, very few of the other girls had anything to say, though Liz told me that this topic was one that had been raised by some girls. They had said to her, *What will the younger children be learning if they keep hearing swearing around the school?* It was, however, definitely a topic the boys wanted to talk about and Phillipa was an authoritative 'adjudicator' who steered a mainly wise path through their suggestions.

After the meeting I was interested to find out more about what some of these girls thought about the way their friend had handled what became a 'full on' set of debates with the boys. I talked with a group that included Kate and Tammy and asked Tammy why she had taken her name off the list of nominations for facilitator. She said, *When Liz explained what you had to do, it didn't feel like me. I didn't feel I could do it. It didn't feel right - you have to have the right answers. And I didn't want to have everyone looking at me.* I nodded and said, *You didn't want everyone looking at you up at the front there?* and she agreed, *No - I didn't want to be facilitator, cos you have to sit up there with everyone looking at you.* Her friend Kirsty said, *Oh yes - I didn't want to be facilitator cos it would be embarrassing with everyone looking at you. And, broke in Amelia, if they start arguing, you've got to keep it under control, and if they start disagreeing, I just say, 'That's it! Have it your own way! I'm outa here!'* She raised her eyebrows and shrugged, *Someone else can take over! Phillipa though, she knows what to do - she's good at that.*

Samuel was sitting at the same table and he said quietly, *I didn't want to do it either.* His friend Peter said, *But all it is really is just making sure people get to talk.* Katy agreed with Amelia though, and added, *I don't like to take that seat at the front. I don't mind writing the minutes, but I don't like sitting on the seat like that - I like to just sit on the floor and do the writing.*

I said to the children that I had noticed that the boys seemed to do a lot of the talking, and I asked Tammy why she didn't say very much. She answered, *I don't want to argue. When I see someone up there like Phillipa, I sort of see how she might be feeling. I feel what she feels - so I don't want to make it hard for her.* Later on I talked with Phillipa, asking her if she liked being the facilitator that morning. She said, *Oh yes! I like doing that, being up in front of people.* I replied, *Oh - you don't mind doing that?* and she said, *Oh no! I love it! I take every opportunity like that. I like talking to people like that and acting and things like that.* I grinned and asked, *So what do you think you'd like to do for a job when you leave school?* Her response was swift. *Be a botanist, or an actor. I'm getting my photo taken for an advertising agency next week.* Liz told me later that all the children respected Phillipa. *They all see her as the leader because she thinks so clearly and is so confident.*

*

While this story does illustrate how girls can take authoritative leadership positions, it is also noticeable that few of the other girls in this class felt comfortable with such an 'up-front' role. The next story illustrates how another girl enacted a different leadership style. It also illustrates another point made by Anne, who said that *children very easily fall back into traditional gender roles. Like I think there's a feeling among the boys that they can sort of take over without doing the work - there's that whole sort of status thing among the boys, that 'I can wander around sort of macho' - that's there* (Anne: 15-16).

A group task On another occasion in the school, I observed what happened when, after a lesson on dealing with bullying, taken by a police educator (on 20 April 1994), Karen set her class of 9-12 year olds a group activity. The tasks were to sort out behaviours that could be classified as bullying and then to rank these in order of seriousness. She divided the children into groups, handed one person in each group a handful of cards (on which situations and behaviours were written), and told them that before beginning their tasks they should *sort out their group roles*, reminding them of the following chart that was pinned up on a wall in the kiva.

| How to Work in a Group | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Leader | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • makes sure that everyone gets a turn to speak • keeps the group organised • doesn't shout • is not bossy |
| Reporter | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tells class what the group had to do • presents to the class what the group found out • speaks clearly • uses interesting ways of presenting ideas |
| Recorder | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writes down interesting ideas • listens carefully • presents the ideas in a neat and clear way • clarifies people's thoughts |
| Group Member | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • co-operates with others • does not hog the group • includes other's ideas • acts sensibly • listens • lets people make mistakes • respects other people • does not interrupt • talks one at a time |
| Encourager | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gets everyone to listen • supports people in the group • encourages people to 'have a go' • includes other people's ideas |

I watched Cynthia's group of six children. Cynthia (aged 11) had the cards and she asked, *Right, who wants to be the leader?* Robert (aged 11) answered, *I do.* Cynthia said, *Okay, you're the leader. Now who will be the recorder?* Okay Jane, she said, then showed Jane (aged 9 and a half) where to place the heading on the large sheet of white paper they had been given for reporting back. She then asked Theresa (aged 10) if she would be the reporter and got 'volunteers' for the roles of group member (Tony - 10) and encourager (Evelyn - 9 and a half), saying, *I'll be a supporter too.*

All the time she was doing this, Cynthia held on tightly to the cards, clutching them to her chest when Robert tried to take them off her. He looked rather frustrated, but joined in the first part of the talking about the first situation Cynthia read to them. Then his interest waned and he began watching his friends in another group. After looking back at Cynthia, he left his groups and went over to the other one, hassling some of those children about their comments. Cynthia and the others in her group ignored his going and quickly finished their task of sorting out and ranking the cards.

At this point Karen called to the class, *Think about how you will present your work on a chart after you have reported back.* Cynthia asked her group, *What do you think?* Someone suggested a bar graph, and when they all agreed on this, she coached Theresa about what to say at report back time, reminding her to end up with, *We are going to do a bar graph. Is that all right?* Just as Karen called everyone to the front of the room, Robert came back, saying he'd help with the report back. As the class gathered, Cynthia went to the back and Robert jostled a couple of children for a place at the front near Theresa. When their turn came, he stood up beside Theresa, smiling broadly around the gathered class as she spoke and adding when she had finished, *Yes, we think the bar graph is the best way to do the chart.*

At the end of the lesson, Karen congratulated the children, telling them, *That was good group work and some good leadership.* I was interested, however, in what the children in Cynthia's group thought about this, so while the class was doing art during the next hour, I sat alongside each of them and asked, *In that last lesson, who was the leader in your group?* Evelyn said, *Robert was the leader. I was a supporter - to help people. Robert wasn't a very good leader though, cos he didn't tell people what to do.* Jane said, *Robert was supposed to be an encourager or supporter or something. He didn't do much - he mucked around.* I asked, *So did anyone lead then?* and she answered, *Cynthia did. She told people what to do. I was tired though, - tired of sitting for so long.* Tony seemed to have recognised what had happened. He said, *Um, Cynthia - or Robert - but Robert didn't do much. I liked our group though, because we didn't argue or anything. I wanted to be the reporter though, cos I like talking to the class.* Theresa said, *I don't know who was meant to be the leader.* I asked her, *What is the leader meant to do?* She replied, *Oh the leader takes charge and sorts people out. The recorder takes notes, the reporter reports back and the supporter encourages.* I asked, *So was there anybody being the leader then?* And she thought for a moment and said, *Cynthia actually. She took charge. She's a good leader, cos she's sensible.* When I found Cynthia and asked her who the leader was, her brief answer was *I was the leader.* I asked, *What about Robert?* She said in a matter-of-fact tone, *He wasn't doing anything, so I took over and organised things and made sure the work got done. I gave people jobs to do.* When I finally talked with Robert and asked him, *In your group before Robert, who was the leader?* he replied without hesitation, *I was the leader. It was fun - I got to boss people around!* I tried to hide my smile and said, *Oh - and did you have to do that much today?* No, he replied. *Only when others bossed me.* I asked, *So what was Cynthia doing in the group?* He said, *Oh she was the second leader, like the secretary - like in my Dad's business - she was getting things done. I was the leader, to give in some good ideas. Like to tell Karen that we were doing a bar graph. Cos everyone else was doing television reports, and we wanted to do something different. I like working in groups, cos then you don't have to work so hard.*

It is worth noting that during the group activity, I had heard one group of two girls and a boy saying to Karen part way through their discussion, *We don't have a leader, just like school!* I could not hear Karen's reply, but when I asked her later about this, she said these three were a *very mature group.*

While Karen had not noticed what had happened in Cynthia's groups, the teachers were very aware of what Anne described as *some of the boys' macho behaviour. Like the whole thing of the boys sitting at the back and challenging things all the time - like sitting on the tables when there's a clear policy in the school that you don't do this. And some of the bullying boys who put down other boys, like Samuel, who is smaller and gets on very well with the girls. It's very hard* (Anne: 16). The co-principals said that their teaching about how to work in a group and about how to deal with bullying, was not just about encouraging girls' leadership and voicing of concerns. It was also about trying to change *some boys' macho agro behaviour* (Liz 3:17), *bullying put downs* (Veronica:8) and *'big boy' behaviour* (Karen, Fieldnotes 23/6/95). Liz described how *the boys tend to take over*. She said she had initiated a 'wait time' strategy to counteract this. *Some of them have to wait for three other people to speak before they open their mouth again. I'm just sick of it so told them you can start controlling this yourself* (3:18). She was working to encourage other children to intervene by, for example, saying herself to one of these boys, *Oh you are taking up too much time*, then saying to the class, *Does anyone else feel like this? Can you tell them then? I don't want to be the only one - it makes me feel naggy. You tell them, 'You interrupted me* (Liz:17) She thought *we should do things like that - give them the language* (17).

Liz added though, that it was just as difficult to change the *girls' resignation and attitude of 'just get on then, if you want to pontificate,'* as it was to change the boys' negative behaviours. She said, *That is the females opting out - and I think they should kick them along a bit* (17). The stories show that some of the girls were quite capable of doing this in their own different ways, but they give also an indication of a 'mixed' picture about the effects of 'role modelling' and teaching interventions in relation to gender equity and children's learning.

What happens when one leaves?

In October 1995, Karen was invited to relieve in an educational agency position for seven weeks. The board gave her leave of absence for this period and she was replaced by Anne for the first three weeks and Veronica for the following four. Beth Lawson noted in her letter to parents informing them about this, *The request (from the agency) has served as a reminder of how much we take for granted the high calibre of the teaching staff we have. It is a credit to Karen's ability. Their support of this assignment also highlights the wonderful management skills and spirit of co-operation of Liz and Jane* (Beth Lawson, chairperson, 9/10/95).

Karen returned just before the end of the school term, and helped Anne and Veronica with the writing of the children's report cards. She was amazed at how much work had been done in her absence. She said, *There's so much paper work! It's relentless! And new proposals have been written, ends of old ones tied off!* (Liz, Jane and Karen:12). She found that coming back into the co-principalship was not like just slipping into a comfortable old shoe though. *Dare I say it's pinching a bit? I feel like I've been popped into a canon, shot out into sort of millions of pieces! And I've found that I'm the sort of person who likes to focus on one thing at a time, actually. Coming back, I know what I like - it's being able to sit down and do my work at my desk, neatly!* she laughed. Liz told her that it was great for her to have found out her *preferred thing* and Jane said, *You are wonderful at analysing things* (LJK:13). They were sad, but not surprised that Karen had accepted another further secondment for two terms in 1996.

Liz said that the first change was *not such a huge transition as we knew Anne and Veronica were so competent* (Liz, LJK:1). Neither Veronica nor Anne could relieve for such

a continuous period in 1996, however, so the school had to advertise for a new reliever. In December, 1995 Liz and Jane realised that they were going to have to think carefully about the next transition. They said that they had *probably got very used to not having to explain things. The systems are there and you just keep going* (Jane, JLK:4). Liz thought that the camp right at the beginning of term would provide good opportunities to induct the new reliever, *without pressuring them, into being willing to work in ways where children take responsibility for their own learning* (Liz, LJK:5). They included this point in their advertisement and decided that they would *dig with referees* to find this kind of person. They were a little worried though, about the amount of energy they would have to put in to support the new teacher at a busy time of year. They thought about doing things *like staff meetings where the focus is somehow getting the feel of the place... and making the culture visible, and like making sure we do our clean-ups* (Liz, LJK:6). Liz said, *I'm not feeling anxious about the management side of things, cos we'll just tick over on that. We don't expect the new person to do any of that. It's the teaching and learning. I mean I get anxious about the student teachers being in here!* The co-principals were also focused on supporting the children through the changes. Jane said, *They have just woken up to the fact that you can't always have just one person who is precious to you* (3). They were thrilled to hear one usually *flappy* child reassuring a younger one that *Change is good*. Jane said, *We are timetabling our worries about it all for the beginning of next year!*

At the end of 1995, Jane and Liz concentrated on getting someone to relieve. Because it was a relieving position, the co-principals did the advertising and interviewing. They wanted the board to be involved, but the board were quite confident that they could handle it. As term ended, they appointed Jackie Stark to the relieving teaching position.

1996: a year of changes

Jackie relieves for two terms

Jackie relieved for the first two terms and she coped reasonably well, according to Liz and Jane. However, Liz said at the end of February, *I miss the deep philosophical stuff! I feel like I'll never have a big idea again! We've been a bit bogged down in the classroom stuff - and we saw that we'd have to sort the filing cabinet out, sort out how we do things.* (Liz & Jane:1). Jane said, *We didn't have a lot of stuff written down at the beginning because we were sorting out our philosophy - and we knew each of us was competent and we could let each other get on with it at that stage. Now Jackie can't be left - she needs help.* Both women appreciated having Veronica continuing as a point 3 principal release. She gave them continuity and worked really hard.

Jane described how some parents, however, *reacted badly to Karen leaving. They thought she should have resigned. They had the attitude, 'How dare she inconvenience us?'* *This came from some people she would have regarded as friends. There was some selfishness and self interest there* (LJ:1). The co-principals and the board presented a *united front* to these parents. Liz and Jane thought that the parents' attitude was a direct result of *Tomorrow's Schools - there didn't use to be that 'ownership' of staff by parents* (Jane, LJ:2).

Dean commented that the parents' attitudes were shortsighted. *Karen can leave and we've lost a really good person and all her teaching skills and everything else but we've still got a principal. We've still got someone who understands how the school works and everything else so there should be hardly a ripple in terms of the running of the school at that level. Any other school if the principal left there'd be this sort of, gasp! while everything gets back up to speed and the principal learns how everything's done and re-establishes all those*

working relationships and perhaps introduces their own philosophy and everything. So one of the things that's come out of the process we've been going through is just this whole thing of continuity, the fact that it will smooth out a change. The new person coming in will add their own perspectives and have their own ideas to bring in but the school won't do a sudden step to the left or the right or anything else. They will be pulled into the culture of the school at that time (Dean:14).

Karen resigns

In the middle of the year, when Karen was offered a permanent job with the agency, she decided to accept it. She resigned from the school at the end of July. Jackie agreed to stay on until September, to enable the school to appoint a permanent replacement teacher.

When she reflected later on her time at the school, Karen said, *At times when I was at Hillcrest Avenue School I worried that I always had two people to bounce risks off before I made a judgment and I used to think, oh if I have to make a decision on my own will I be strong enough and brave enough to stand up and say, this is the way? So I'm quite pleased that I wasn't in that model for any longer. I'm not saying I lost my autonomy - I'm saying though that I worried that this could have happened (2:8)*. Karen said that she had learned too that, *I am a person who likes to balance my teamwork and my individual work. I work collaboratively in a team, but I value the opportunity to make decisions on my own as well... but there are times I'm happy to sit back and let someone else make the decision (9)*. In her new job, she was able to achieve this balance.

A new staff member is appointed

When Karen resigned, Liz and Jane worked with the board to find a replacement for her. Together they decided to advertise the position at the senior teacher level, with the potential for the appointee to join the co-principal team in the future. Among the applicants, Cherie Clark had the credentials, experience and values they were looking for. She had a degree, had worked as an assistant principal in a large primary school and as a whanau (syndicate) leader with responsibility for 5 staff and 150 children. She believed in sharing leadership and had demonstrated that she was able to do this. She was appointed in September, 1996. Soon after she had started work at the school, she said, *This is a big learning curve for me... Coming in, I felt nervous - that's probably just me not being very self confident, and just the fact that I thought these two have been together for four years and know each other really well, and who was I to make a suggestion? But it wasn't like that at all, and I was valued as much as they were and that was nice. I really like it here, and this model (Cherie 1, 5)*.

Cherie had been surprised, however, by the reactions to her appointment by others she knew, who said things to her like: *Why do you want to get into that sort of thing? Why can't you just accept that there is one principal? Isn't this a bit trendy lefty? I never expected that. People were afraid of what would happen if I didn't get on with the others - they said it's a very small school and you'll get claustrophobic, and, you know, that one person will really be in charge (6)*. She found none of these situations or feelings eventuated. She said, *I felt welcomed and everything is so open - like those ground rules up there. They really work by them. And there's much more philosophical thinking, more time making decisions, more negotiation on everything, much more talking and communicating - sitting down and listening and valuing what other people have to say (8)*.

Cherie found the children very open to learning and she was delighted by being *able to teach. I'm not being a nurse. I'm not being a dietitian. I'm not feeding children. I'm not*

dealing with behaviours that are just caused by a lack of parenting, or by violence in the home (12). She did worry a little though, that these children, if it was at all let go, could be arrogant and things like that (12). She said that at the beginning she was a little nervous about the parents in this community, but she found after a fish and chips evening, that they are very nice. But we have these hugely intellectual conversations that I wasn't used to having with parents.

She also was a little unsure about which co-principal did what in at the beginning. *Like when I started, my salary was all up the whop with Datacom and of course, the principal was the only one who was allowed to deal with it. So I thought, do I go to both of them and explain, or what? Well, both of them do it actually - but because Liz had mostly done it all, she knew it better, so she took the role with me. It's not like one person does this, and one does that - it's what skills they have - though actually, yesterday was Jane's release time, so she did it!... But if something wasn't done, because everyone's so open, you just say it straight up - like, I want my pay sorted out and are you going to do it or if you know you don't have time, shall I ask Jane? (14)*

In Cherie's opinion, the kind of person who would fit into the Hillcrest Avenue model of shared leadership was a person who was *assertive and confident within yourself, but you can't also be somebody who wants the limelight - the star. You have to be able to co-operate and work with other people (15).*

Liz resigns

Then, soon after Cherie had settled in, Liz decided that she really did want to go to university to complete her bachelor degree. She had only four papers to complete and she had wanted to do anthropology for a while: *the way groups and clans work together fascinate me*, she said (4:11). She said that after having thought about the possibility for a long time, she finally decided that she would get a part-time job for two or three days a week and *become a student again. I feel really good about it all - pleased about doing something that's been different, and feeling that it's been done really well. And I feel absolutely definite that I would never do this job unless I did it in a shared way (4:12).* She said that she had found the shared leadership *so wonderful and so exciting that you just obsess - obsess! (13)* She had come to the opinion that it was important for her to *diversify - to be not so wound up in work. So when I finish university, I am just going to teach - you see, I want my life back! (12)*

The board deliberates the future of the shared leadership

On 3 October 1996, the board met to discuss this new challenge and to decide what they wanted to do about the shared leadership structure. Liz said that she and Jane *opted to stay out of the session, because we think they need to make a decision about the model. So now the crunch is coming (Liz 4:11).*

Beth Lawson facilitated the discussion at the board meeting. She began with a statement that from the school review survey that had been carried out with parents, it was clear that they were happy with the shared leadership as a structure and process. She said that it would be helpful though, for the board to consider whether the co-principalship had met the original aims that Liz and Jane had set for themselves and the school when they were first appointed. She read out from Liz and Jane's original proposal each of the philosophical aims and protocol issues they had listed and these were discussed. There was a consensus among the board members that, *We have seen all those things come to reality (Beth, board meeting:2).*

The board were faced with several problems however. There was the issue of whether to appoint Jane now as sole principal, or whether to encourage Cherie to move into the co-principalship with her straight away. Jennifer voiced some concerns. *Jane has been established for a while, so when we bring in another person to share the leadership, then Jane would be deemed to be, in the community's eyes, the principal* (3). William thought that although initially there might be a reticence on the part of parents to approach the new person, this would pass.

The board was worried about the possibility of losing the culture of co-operative management that had been established. Edwin suggested that a new person could be inducted into the shared leadership during a transition process, *so people develop into their roles and Jane, having been here longer, carries the culture until the new people develop into it* (Edwin, 4).

William pointed out a different concern about the financial constraints. If the board disestablished the co-principalship with its protected salary pool, they would have difficulty winning this back at a later stage. William also talked about the advantages of career development for potential co-principals, but added, *We have got competing interests in terms of this idealised structure versus how much of the vote do we give to Jane* (8). The board were afraid that if they did not offer the principal's position to Jane, they may be insulting her. They did not want to lose her, but neither did they want to force either Cherie or the next appointee into sharing the leadership either too soon, or against their wishes. The difficulties were seeming to become enormous.

The board members began to think about what kind of person they needed for their preferred shared management model, and they considered again whether Cherie had enough management experience to equip her to move into the management job straight away. Dean said, *We actually need to decide what the minimum qualification for a co-principal is... And before we advertise this next position we have got to decide, probably in consultation with Jane, exactly what, you know, the best sort of a threshold is, which says that the person comes in as a senior teacher, co-principal or what - and what the qualifications and experience requirements are* (9). At this point I offered to contribute a point from my research into co-principalships, and when the board accepted this offer, I endorsed Dean's point. I suggested that the bottom line for the board might be for them to check out as thoroughly as they could a candidate's abilities to do the job, on their own if necessary, so that each of the co-principals had competencies that would enable a partnership of equals. Unintentionally, this planted the idea that the board should offer the position to Jane. They knew that she had a co-operative style and would run the school in ways they were happy with.

Dean interrupted however, saying that a model of at least a partnership of two was more likely to ensure that the co-operative structure remained in the school. There was a danger of losing that with an individual leader, he suggested, *however skilled and well-intentioned they may be*. He reiterated that the advantage of continuity was not included in the original proposal, *and we need to think about what would happen if Jane left* (Dean 11). He argued for the advantages of having *a half change in the management - new tensions, new directions, but also the advantage of having someone there who already knows the system*. The other board members took his point. *Change would happen, but it would not be as abrupt*, said Patricia (11).

The board then explored how they could appoint a new person in an 'apprentice' position, with the aim of moving them into the co-principalship after a probationary period and a review of their readiness. Dean reminded them that when Cherie's job had been advertised it had been indicated that there was the potential to move into the co-principalship.

By this time, the board were becoming more comfortable with their options. Beth asked, *Have we agreed then, that shared leadership is a reasonable and viable model for Hillcrest Avenue School?* Dean suggested that this could stronger - *that shared leadership is the appropriate model for the school* (16). Others nodded and Beth noted the point and Dean's next comment that, *The consensus is that you don't shove somebody into that co-principal position cold, that there is a probation period* (Dean:16). William said though, that he for one, needed to *hear what Jane's views*, and to get her response to their ideas (William:16).

At this point, Jane and Liz were invited into the meeting. Beth gave them a summary of the discussion and the issues the board had considered. When she asked Jane what she wanted, Jane replied, *I would totally support a shared principalship. I would prefer, in an ideal world, prefer Cherie, for her sake, to have more lead in time. I don't know how the Board feel about this, but I would like Cherie to be approached before Liz resigns officially and asked if she would be willing to move towards to it at the beginning of next year. Because I think that if there is any gap, and I was principal on my own, it would be very difficult then for it to be perceived as shared* (20). William said, *We saw another option. Yes*, said Dean, *We thought you might want to be principal*. Jane replied, *It's not that I don't think I could do it on my own, but just that I'm concerned for the shared management structure*. She paused and Liz said, *I'll say it for you! We feel very protective of the philosophy and at this stage, the idea of shared management still feels very fragile* (21). Jane agreed and said she was also concerned that Cherie should not feel pressured to move into the co-principalship, though she pointed out that Cherie had come into the senior teacher position with the knowledge that that was *not exactly the expectation, but getting close*. She said, *I would be doing more of the behind the scenes sort of stuff and Cherie would be apprenticing it. Obviously I would have a bit more knowledge, but I don't think her status should be any different. But I think it would be fair enough to have an appraisal at the end of December, say* (22). Jane also suggested that the next replacement position advertisement should give a clear indication that the position was a senior teacher position, but with an *expectation that the new teacher would become part of the shared management team, or something like that, and that the job description should say that this will be worked toward* (23).

The board agreed with these points. They decided that they would discuss with Cherie the possibility of moving her into the co-principalship at the beginning of 1997 and that they would, together with her and Jane, agree on what she needed to do to ready herself for this move. They recognised that this would help them to form the criteria for an appraisal at the end of the year. As Dean pointed out, this would also give them *a prototype for developing the job description or job progress needed for the next person so they know what to expect, even at the interview stage* (23). Beth agreed and added, *And it's not just management skills we'll be looking for then, but also we'll be looking at Cherie and Jane's skills and see what they both want in the new person* (24).

Patricia was still a little worried that moving Cherie up after just one term in the school might be too soon. Jane said that this could be the case from Cherie's point of view and that the board needed *ask her quietly how she felt* (24).

A process for inducting new staff is agreed

Beth drew the discussions together at that point, saying, *I like the terms we've been using - like apprenticeship, and junior partners and senior partners and the way it points to finding the right person for the job and how we need to say, right, what's the difference between this level and the next level and how do we assess that? And in thinking about putting this shared management into our charter, we also need to think that it should never be a given*

in the sense that it forces an incumbent into a position that's not right for them (25). Yes, said Jane, They come in with the knowledge that they work towards that, but it mightn't work, that's what you are saying - correct? Beth answered, Yes. So that shared leadership is what we want to stick to and what we would expect, but we need to have procedures to ensure that changeovers will work as smoothly as possible.

The board agreed that a 'probation' period such as had happened at the beginning with Karen, was the basis of the model they were now evolving for bringing new people into their shared management structure. They added a requirement for guidelines to be developed with the 'probationer' or 'junior partner' for what this person needed to achieve, and for an appraisal process to be completed satisfactorily before the 'junior partner' was formally moved into full co-principalship.

Jane was really comfortable with these decisions. She said later, *It's the cunningest way, because Cherie came in while Liz was still here, and while she was finding her feet we were modelling the culture (3: 4).*

Cherie moves into the co-principalship

This process and model was put in place, and negotiations with Cherie were successfully carried out during the last final term of 1996. At the end of the year, it was announced to the wider school community that from beginning of 1997, Cherie was to be a co-principal alongside Jane.

Jane said, *When Cherie was first appointed, I had a feeling she was the right person and I was very excited when, within a week little things that she would comment on made me realise that she was right. Like one day she was in the office and she said, 'I'm just doing my own planning, but why don't I go through the mail and see if there's things to file?' The fact that she took the initiative and she also took responsibility was great - like she came in from outside and said, 'I've just noticed that there's a crack in the fort post' that was really great. ... She was worried that I would be carrying her, but I said that was not the issue, and that when Liz, Karen and I were together, we did carry each other for a time when one of us was sick or whatever. It was whether we could say to each other when it had gone on too long, make a comment about it (Jane3:2-3).*

Jane was also excited about the new possibilities, about *making it work in a new way. Like Cherie has suggested that she coach netball after school next year and we've never done that. It would be cunning to do that - to just introduce something totally different and that makes a mark for her as a member of the team (3:3).* Jane was also encouraged that Cherie knew about *things like transformational leadership - you know, she's done some papers at Massey and actually, she's much keener on the model than Karen was four years ago. So it will be different... and it's also a challenge, because four years ago, we were coming in new and the only way was up. Now that it has worked, we've got further to fall (4).*

... and another senior teacher is appointed

During the last term of 1996, the position Liz was leaving was also advertised. The advertisement was for applicants for a senior teacher position, but stated that the appointee would have the opportunity to work towards becoming a member of the co-principalship. In the information pack sent out to applicants, the following statement about shared management, that had been written by Beth Lawson for inclusion in the school's charter, was included.

SHARED MANAGEMENT

Hillcrest Avenue School enjoys and is committed to a Shared Leadership style of management.

Philosophically this involves:

- The transformation of power from a single to a collective base.
- Shared responsibility and accountability.
- A school culture based on consultation and collaboration.
- A collective vision for the school not dependent on trends or the personality of one person.

In a practical sense, the board of trustees believes that the investment in a shared leadership model provides significant returns to the school by way of a quality education programme and effective administrative practices that reflect the consistent, resourceful approach to management.

The school community also identified advantages of this model relating specifically to the sense of cohesion within the school, excellent lines of communication and a good role model for children.

Shared leadership is not about sharing out the workload or disabling the principal by enforcing 'management-by-consensus.' Rather, it is considered that shared leadership essentially empowers individuals by placing them in a position of collective strength. Individual strengths are respected and used to maximum effect, while the opportunity to improve development areas is enhanced through a supportive and co-operative working environment.

Shared leadership is not necessarily 'easier,' but the combined effort makes it easier to focus on educational and professional goals and not personal agendas. It is also more fundamentally sound because of the inherent processes of quality assurance and continuous improvement.

Jane said that having included this material was a filtering mechanism in the sense that it would *put off a person who wanted to work in hierarchy.*

The board included Cherie, along with Jane and Liz, on the selection panel for the new staff member. Cherie said, *I have been majorly involved. I've rung referees, I'm on the interview panel, I've short-listed. I mean, I'm part of it... We read the applications together and we talked together and then we divided up equally ringing referees. In my last school, only the principal rang referees - and that inside knowledge becomes power really. So it's great - Liz is also on the interview panel as the scribe, but she gets to have her say as well at the end* (Cherie:19-20). Cherie found the board members *very open and they listen to suggestions, but they have their own ideas as well and they are not afraid to challenge and to ask. It's very much a partnership.* She said that when they identified the qualities they were looking for, *the board and co-principals defined essentials and desirables and they made shared management as an essential thing. The desirables were things like music that Liz had had, and we might not be able to get that. But I think we will be able to get someone who is ready for management* (21).

After the selection process, Terri Jenkins was appointed as senior teacher, with the expectation that after a year, she would have the opportunity to also become a co-principal. She began teaching at the school in 1997.

And so, by the end of 1996, co-principalship had become established at Hillcrest Avenue School as the accepted leadership approach and structure.

An epilogue

Jane, Cherie and Terri

During 1997, Jane told me that there were *a lot of practical things to work through*. *Making things visible is the hard thing when you've been used to doing a lot of it intuitively*, she said. She and Cherie invited me to the school again in March 1998, to spend some time with them and Terri as part of Terri's induction into the co-principalship. Jane asked me to explain for the others the way the co-principalship had been set up in 1992/3 and to give them my observations of how I thought the co-principalship was different from a sole principal position. I produced a summary sheet for them, and we discussed it together. (See Appendix 3.) Terri was a little anxious at this time about how she would fit in. Her comments sounded very like those Cherie had made when she was contemplating becoming a full member of the shared leadership. She made the transition very well however.

Charter

In 1998 the board up-dated the school charter to include the following statement.

Values

Hillcrest Avenue School believes that:

- The whole of the school community benefits from the provision of a happy welcoming environment.
- An effective school is achieved through a partnership of teachers, children and their families.
- Learning is enhanced by giving everyone the opportunity to work with a range of children and adults in the school community.
- Each child needs to take responsibility for their behaviour and learning. Both individuality and group co-operation are important.
- It is important to provide opportunities to develop self-confidence and leadership skills.
- Each child should be encouraged to realise their own intellectual, social, physical and creative potential.
- open communication is essential.
- As well as having a solid foundation in numeracy and literacy skills, children need to be taught a broad curriculum.
- The school benefits from, and has a significant contribution to, teacher training.
- The school's achievement statement and local goals should be central to the planning of learning programmes for children.
- Shared decision making and management is a fundamental philosophical value of the school. Shared management through co-principalship is not only an effective way of running a school, but also provides an effective role model for children.
- The school should strive to be innovative, versatile and successful.
- Respect for people and property is maintained.

(Hillcrest Avenue School Charter, 1998)

Co-principal contract

In 1998, the board also entered into further discussions with the Ministry of Education. They wanted to *regularise this arrangement and have it legally accepted and recognised*. They sent to the Ministry for review, copies of the principals' job description, classroom teachers job description, the principals' performance agreement, a specimen principal's contract and the policy on the co-principals representation on the Board of trustees. The letter concluded: *we believe that accountability can reside with more than one person. To interpret the education act in a way which requires there to be only 'one' principal is unduly restrictive. Further, EEO guidelines would seem to favour job sharing and it seems anomalous to the Board of Trustees that, as a good employer, we should be required to consider EEO initiatives in all but the area of principalship* (Hillcrest Avenue School letter to the Ministry of Education, 15/9/99).

A statement about principal succession was added, as follows:

It is the intention of you and the board that the Co-principalship would continue with any replacement(s) for the co-principals named above. However, both you and the Board agree to consult with each other in such circumstances with a view to agreeing together whether a replacement would immediately assume the position of Co-Principal or would undergo a process, acceptable to all existing co-principals and the Board, leading to possible appointment as a co-Principal.

(Hillcrest Avenue School Terms of Employment, 1998)

The wording about accountability was refined in the 1998 co-principal's contract to:

In your position as co-principal you will, jointly and severally with your Co-Principals, be responsible for performing the performance agreement as agreed with the board from time to time.

You acknowledge that the responsibility for carrying out the principal's job description and performance agreement is a joint and several responsibility. This means that no individual will be relieved from these obligations by suggesting that their performance was the responsibility of one of the other Co-principals. However, any criminal acts committed by one Co-principal shall be the sole responsibility of that Co-Principal.

(Hillcrest Avenue School Terms and Conditions, 1998)

The section on salary entitlements was also refined.

Salary

In each year you shall be entitled to:

- 1/3 of a co-Principal's salary at the appropriate qualification level;
- 2/3 of a teacher's salary at the appropriate qualification level set at the top of the scale;
- 2/3 of the senior teacher's allowance; and
- one model school allowance,
- Provided the rate is not inconsistent with the salary due to be paid under the terms of relevant Collective Employment Contracts.

(Hillcrest Avenue School Terms and Conditions, 1998)

Karen

Karen continued working with the educational agency. She enjoyed the challenges she was faced with there and remained committed to working with teachers and principals to improve children's learning.

Liz

After leaving Hillcrest Avenue School, Liz wrote to me that she *had a wonderful year in 1997!* She loved her university study and completed her degree. She worked part-time as a release teacher for a beginning teacher, did some visiting lecturing in a college of education, and did some private tutoring. In 1998, she began studying towards an honours degree in history and continued with her three part-time work positions. She saw Jane regularly, she said, as she *missed her quite a lot. I miss the 'philosophical' high of Hillcrest Avenue, but I don't miss teaching full time! My passion for the ideas probably intensified my commitment to the job and the amount of energy I put into it.* She continued with these activities in 1999 and 2000, completing that year her final paper for her honours degree in history. She was considering doing a history thesis and becoming involved in research in the implementation of the art and music curriculum. Liz retained her interest in developments in shared leadership models in this country and around the world.

CHAPTER 9

TELFORD SCHOOL NARRATIVE

Introduction

In 1994, Telford School was a full state primary with 32 students on the roll. Throughout 1995, after the establishment in the school of a Montessori and a full immersion Māori class, this roll grew, until at the time this research began in 1996, there were five classes, serving between 95 and 106 children. There were by then 53 girls and 53 boys. Sixty-two of these children were Pākehā, 41 Māori and 2 Pacific Islanders, with one child classified as 'other' (Ministry of Education, 1996).

The school's socio-economic decile rating was 7, but like St Mary's, this rating belied the diversity of its school community. Telford's application for Targeted Funding for Educational Achievement (1994) pointed out that *While some of the surrounding suburbs are among the highest average income in the country, in the area immediately adjacent to the school, which supplies the bulk of the children to the school, families are predominantly Māori and in low income jobs.* Under the regulations for 'Māori as a proportion of the school roll,' Telford was classified as in socio-economic decile 2. Later, in 1997, with the entry of some new families into the immersion class, there was a higher proportion of professional parents in the whānau. Several of these families lived in adjoining suburbs, as did many of the children in the two Montessori classes. A high proportion of the Montessori children *had professional parents and parents from higher socio-economic levels* (Montessori board member:8).

In their 1995 charter, Telford's board, staff and parents described their school as "unique."

It incorporates three strands, each delivering the national curriculum through its own method - two of these are strands of special character. As well as the original part of the school which provides a typical New Zealand state education, the school has a Māori language immersion unit and a unit in which the children are taught in accordance with the Montessori philosophy and teaching method. The special character of the school is reflected in the school's community which is made up of both those who live within, and those who live beyond Telford and its surrounding suburbs. More than a third of the school's pupils are Māori.

(Telford School Charter, 1995:2).

In 1995, the roll generated staffing entitlement for Telford was 5.4. Five full-time teachers worked in the school, two in the original (state system) classes, two in the Montessori classes and one in the Māori immersion class which included children from new entrant to Std 3 level. There were also two part-time staff; the principal release teacher, who worked for the equivalent of two days (this being the .4 staffing allowance), and the kaiārahi reo (assistant Māori language teacher), who worked in the immersion Māori class alongside the kaiako (teacher). The latter's salary was paid from Māori language factor funding, which in 1996, was at level two for 16 students (Ministry of Education 1996 records).

Partly as a consequence of its special character and its provision of both Montessori and full immersion Māori classes, during 1994-96 Telford experienced on-going staffing difficulties. It was difficult to find fully trained teachers who were fluent speakers of te reo

Māori to teach in Telford's immersion class. And in the Montessori strand of the school, problems around gaining Ministry of Education acceptance of Montessori teachers' overseas qualifications were compounded by fluctuating roll numbers. One year there was a sudden surge in the new entrant enrolments in the Montessori class, overloading that class while the numbers in the other new entrant class in the school remained constant. Because of the special character of the teaching in each strand, the school was unable to spread the increase evenly and the Montessori teacher had to cope with a larger class.

In 1997 however, the school was fully staffed with qualified teachers who remained in their positions throughout the year. The earlier problems were eased also by the school having two first year teachers who brought entitlements to .4 support teachers, and one teacher who was working .8 instead of her full-time entitlement. Thus the school had another part-time teacher that year. In that year, as in 1996, all the teachers in the school were women. (In 1995 the *kaiārahi reo* (Māori language assistant) was a man.)

At the beginning of 1995, when I first visited Telford, some building alterations were not quite finished. Two of the classrooms had been relocated and the building noise and the loss of adequate resource storage space over a long period of time had resulted in a stressful working environment for both staff and children. The staff had also been upset by the lack of consultation between themselves and the contractors (who had been funded by Montessori parents), and some parents were annoyed that a previously safe and visible playing area was lost. In the end, however, the physical environment of the school was an attractive one.

A pleasantly landscaped entry and drive gave access to four blocks of buildings that lay to the sun around an asphalted netball court. Beyond this was an expansive grassy playing area; in this respect, Telford was more fortunate than either St Mary's or Hillcrest Avenue school. To the left of the drive into the school was the two classroom block where the original classes worked. Adjacent to this was the building housing the Māori immersion class and the staffroom. These rooms had big windows that faced onto the netball court and a vista of the hills beyond. Next was the Montessori two classroom block and the block housing the Montessori pre-school, the school library (such as it was) and the school office space.

The staffroom was a pleasant space comfortably furnished with low lounge chairs placed around a coffee table that was often strewn with papers, the latest Gazette or some magazines. On two walls were the usual pinboards holding the agenda for staff meetings, the notices about up-coming meetings, racks for the Education Gazette, union newsletters and so on. Books purchased for the staff library were displayed on racks beside the noticeboards. To the left of the entry into this room was a small alcove with sink, fridge, hot water zip and tea and coffee making facilities. Visitors to the school were often welcomed into this staffroom and introduced to any staff there as well as to children who might be using this staff space for working on a project or some quiet audio-taping. Throughout the school there was an easy friendliness between adults and children, with all the children calling the teachers by their first names. A mutual respect was usually evident, apart from one day when a recalcitrant and grumpy misbehaver who had been placed in the small hallway outside the staffroom lay on the floor and flicked the legs of all who passed by!

The school secretary worked in the outer of the school's two office spaces, located in the library block. The photocopier was placed here, to the side of a small walkway into the principals' office. This quite good sized, but drab room, was furnished with three brown armchairs, a desk and some shelving. Despite its rather tired appearance, Kate Walker, one of the co-principals, found this space was *a haven sometimes*. The room did have a feeling of being cut off from the rest of the school and after she had become co-principal with Kate, Ann found working in it a rather isolating experience.

The board of trustees of Telford School reflected its three strand special character. There were two representatives for each of the original State schooling strand, the Māori whānau and the Montessori strand, along with the principal and the staff representative. Kate said later however, that each strand was a *tightly knit group* and there was little feeling of there being a united team. This daunted her somewhat when she first thought of the idea of initiating a co-principalship.

The narrative of the events that led up to initiation of this school's shared leadership at the end of 1994 and its subsequent fortunes is told in the following main sections:

- Ann and Kate come to Telford School;
- initiating the co-principalship;
- beginning work together;
- what happens when one leaves?
- can an alliance be forged across differences?
- reviewing the co-principalship;
- epilogue.

Ann and Kate come to Telford School

Background: Telford becomes a three strand school

Parents remembered that the early 1990s were a time of struggle for Telford School. Peter MacDonald had been appointed as a non-teaching principal at the beginning of 1991, but by the end of the first term, his position reverted to a teaching principalship because the school's roll was declining. This drop continued and some parents thought that the school was under threat of closing. Rawinia Hunt thought that this was a consequence of zoning being lifted and *people were taking their children away from Telford and sending them to schools in (neighbouring suburbs) ... though they weren't willing to come out and say what the problem was, why they were leaving* (Rawinia, Marg & Rawinia:1). Marg Tua (who became a board member in 1995), pointed out that *the school roll was then over 50% Māori*. She and Rawinia thought that some 'white flight' was occurring, but that some Māori parents were also taking their children elsewhere because *they couldn't see anything Māori happening in the school* (Rawinia 2:1). Kate Walker later agreed *there was real dissatisfaction with the school* (2:2). Phillipa Beecham, one of the Pākehā parents who later became a board member in 1994 and board chairperson in 1995, remembered that it had been a *real effort to keep our little school going, with only a few people with the time and resources to focus on its continuation* (2).

In 1992, as a way of increasing the school roll, Peter MacDonald explored the possibility of establishing a Montessori unit in the school. Ann Howells, who was a Montessori teacher and a member of the Montessori Association, said this association had earlier approached Telford about the *possibility of renting or leasing the empty classrooms to set up a class in the school*, but they had been turned away. Ann said that to her knowledge a meeting of the parents was held to ask them about this possibility, and she had been told that *the Māori parents agreed that it was a good idea to invite Montessori in, but after a bilingual class had been set up first. At the beginning, we (Montessori) were unaware of all the background though* (Ann 1:2). Immediately after this meeting Ann was contacted by Peter and asked to put in an application for the job of Montessori teacher. Ann said later, *I think the*

principal's view was that Montessori were upper socio-economic people who would come in with all this money (1:2).

Ann Howells comes 'into a hornet's nest'

Ann had trained as a teacher in the state system, graduating in 1968, after which she had taught for two years in junior classes before travelling overseas with her husband. While in England for two years she had taught for a while, but on her return to New Zealand with a pre-school aged child, she could not get a full time teaching position, because *the Education Board had a policy at the time of not employing married women who had had a break in service* (Ann, profile). She worked part-time at a university creche, and then part-time with an interior decorating firm, having another child during these years. Between 1977-1991, she worked for a time as a long term reliever at a girls' college and in two different Montessori pre-schools, gaining her Certificate in Montessori Method of Education, 0-6 years, and becoming directress in the Montessori pre-school where she was working at the time that Peter MacDonald phoned her about the Telford position.

She remembered later that Peter had said that she would be responsible for setting up the new Montessori unit at Telford School, as well as teaching its first class. She was attracted by this challenge, so put in an application and waited for a call for an interview. This did not happen: rather, Ann said, *I was just rung and told I had the job* (Ann 4:1). When she asked Peter, *'What happens if I don't accept?'* he said *'Well it will all just go - nothing will happen'* (Ann 1:2). Ann had felt *appalled* at the way she was appointed without any interview or checking. *They had no idea what I was like. You can't just put someone in and hope for the best*, she said (4:1). She accepted the position though, and from then on, *it all happened very fast - I was appointed on a Thursday, teacher only day was on the Friday and we had to open on the Monday - there was a class of three children* (1:2).

Ann quickly discovered that the Montessori group had *come into a hornets' nest that we weren't really aware of. The whānau were furious, understandably I think, because setting up the Montessori class had pre-empted the establishing of a bilingual unit* (Ann 1:2).

Rawinia endorsed this view. She said that the *Māori parents had been struggling for years to get a bilingual class up and running. It had been very difficult to get any Māori activity going in the school. We wanted kapa haka for our children, we wanted their needs met, but that had been overlooked for a long time* (Rawinia, M&R:1). She said that *Māori parents weren't heard - we weren't taken seriously by the management in the school and we were really upset when Montessori was invited in. Then all the Māori parents jumped up and down. We were not going to give in easily* (Rawinia, M&R:1). A public meeting was called, which Ann and the few Montessori parents attended. Ann said, *We went along to support it and say we agree, but it wasn't construed like that and we were asked to leave the meeting. It was very unpleasant actually. We were sort of told that we were privileged* (Ann 1:3). From Rawinia's and Marg's perspective however, the *Māori parents were angry about having been ignored. Marg remembered that Peter MacDonald was not very sympathetic to things Māori. You'd be trying to talk to him about the class and he'd just stand there and listen to you, but the next minute he'd be saying something to someone else while you were trying to have a conversation with him* (Marg, M&R:2). Rawinia added, *He'd write something done when you talked to him, as if he meant to take action on it - but nothing ever happened. He just didn't worry about us*. However, the *Māori parents continued putting pressure on the Telford board and principal, and this effort, combined with the previous lot of work by a few dedicated people over about a three month period* (Rawinia, M&R:2) was finally successful. In Rawinia

and Marg's view, Peter MacDonald was *pushed* into setting up the bilingual unit - *he couldn't get out of it* (2).

Telford consequently became a three strand school. Ann remembered that as she was establishing her Montessori class, working from scratch with parents who set up a trust to buy equipment for their classroom, Mere Katene, a young teacher in her first job, was working alongside the Māori parents who had formed themselves into a whānau support and management group, to establish a bilingual class.

From Ann's perspective, the two groups encountered similar problems. She saw both groups as *having a vision of where we were going, but meeting difficulties as well as advantages in being separate units in a state school. We in Montessori had seen the opportunity and thought - let's grab it. We couldn't expect the state to pay for everything, but we had the opportunity to be within the system and to mix with the whānau. That was quite a big drawcard - so the parents were prepared to put money in to be able to do it. For some parents that was a struggle, but they believed in it* (Ann 1:3).

The Māori parents also believed in their bilingual class, and Rawinia said that she found Ann helpful when she spoke with her sometimes about what was happening in each of their strands. However, she also pointed out that *when we got our bilingual unit established we were almost isolated. We didn't have the skill level or the knowledge level to do what we wanted to do in the class or to understand the whole system* (Rawinia, M&R:2). Neither did the whānau have the financial resources of the mainly better off Montessori parents. These differences persisted, causing some tensions between the three strands in the school.

Introducing Kate Walker

Kate Walker was appointed to Telford as a relieving principal, halfway through 1994, after Peter MacDonald resigned and moved to another school. Kate's teaching background was a wide one. After graduating from teachers' college with a Diploma of Teaching, she had taught for 20 years across the range of Std 1- F2 classes. For six of these years, she taught in England, working in three different primary schools, each with a woman principal. When she returned to New Zealand, Kate was shocked at how under-represented women were in school leadership positions and she was surprised that a hierarchical management model was still strong in New Zealand primary schools. She said, *In 1989 it was predominantly male principals and male deputy principals. But I just kind of rebelled against the style that was commonly used, the style of what I used to call the classic male primary teacher who created a sort of image in the school ... They were always doing the PE sheet and they were the disciplinarians and the kids had to be sent to them - the school couldn't possibly function without them, sort of thing. I worked in Brixton at the time of the riots in London and we had not one single man in our school, and it made no difference. But back here, there was a sort of controlling by fear* (2:6). Kate was disappointed to find that even the few women principals she knew then were also tending to work in hierarchical ways.

In the early 1990s, when she was appointed to a new school, she was delighted to find herself working with a male principal who *was really interested in education and as an educationalist he didn't have the image that a lot of other 'male-type' principals had. He wasn't 'one of the boys' at all. That he was so different made it difficult for him - he wasn't part of the groups that was there at the time. He had been influenced by another man, an inspector who had quite advanced ideas on management and schools ... He had some vision and worked very collaboratively with staff. I learned a lot from him* (2:6,10). She said that this man encouraged her *to sort of go for promotion*, a career decision that coincided with a decision to also have a family. *I was determined that I could do both. So I became a senior*

teacher around the same time as I had my first child (2:10). Not long after, she was again promoted, this time to the school's deputy principal position.

Later, she moved to another school, again as a deputy principal, to get a different set of educational experiences. At this time she got very involved in helping the creche where she had placed her children. *This workload became almost as demanding as a third job*, and this, along with stress emerging out of an increasingly unhappy workplace in her school, led Kate to decide to resign from her teaching job. *I knew that by resigning I was making a decision to actually cut the career path. It was very very hard - it was full of grief ... of regret for lost opportunity* (2:11).

It was just as Kate was getting used to the idea of giving up her career aspirations, that she saw the advertisement for the Telford relieving principal job. It referred to the bilingual unit and this appealed to her. She had always been interested in tikanga Māori, *perhaps because I had grown up in Glen Innes, which was predominantly Māori*, she said. *I took School Certificate Māori and continued with it while I was at Teachers' College*. Then, while she and her partner were in England (between 1978 - 84), she had seen the documentary 'New Dawn' and this had a profound effect on her. *I was excited and moved by the Māori renaissance and the documentary ignited for me a strong bond with the country we had chosen to stay away from and it awoke for me a sense of who I was as a person* (Kate 6:1). In 1984 the couple returned to Aotearoa/New Zealand, and Kate decided to become as fluent as possible in Māori. While she was on maternity leave, she attended a six week full immersion te reo Māori course for beginners, and followed this with another more advanced six week course. She said that as a result, she was able to use the language in her teaching. The Telford job requirement for bilingual skills appealed strongly to her. She said that she had *heard about this school and thought it would be interesting to work there* (3:11). Although she had gone through the trauma of *cutting off from teaching*, she thought that as the Telford position was a relieving one, she could *just see what it's like and if I don't like it I can leave* (3:11).

The Telford teaching principal job description

The information pack Kate sent for included a job description for the position of G2 principal at Telford School. This stated that *The primary functions (in order of priority) are classroom teacher, staff leader, administrative manager*. The board's legal responsibilities were described as being in *three broad areas of responsibility: policy and planning, resourcing and review and evaluation. These responsibilities extend across all school activities including curriculum, staff, finance and property*. The principal's role was then defined in relation to these board responsibilities: *to operate within legal requirements of legislation, employment contracts and the school charter; to be responsible for the day-to-day management and administration of the school; to be responsible for all professional decisions, classroom programmes, curriculum issues, teacher activity and pupil progress*.

The job description further spelled out the 'administrative model' that the Telford board operated within, stating that: *In a school with a teaching principal it is acknowledged that the ideal Governance/Management relationship between the Board of Trustees and the Principal is not always achievable. The board's priority is for teaching excellence and accordingly it is accepted that the principal will not be able to adequately fulfill all the administrative tasks that are required. It is the Principal's responsibility to identify all administrative tasks and to seek assistance from the Board of Trustees/parents as required* (Telford School, G2 Principal's Job Description, 1994.) Following this were detailed the key tasks for the position under the headings of classroom teacher, professional leader, staff

manager, pupil welfare, community relationships and administration. There was no mention, however, of skills or aptitudes related to the bilingual class.

Not put off by that omission, Kate sent off an application. She was interviewed and won the position, being appointed to relieve as acting principal for the second term in 1994.

1994: Kate begins working at Telford

Kate enjoyed her first term at Telford, finding a *strong sense of enthusiasm among the people there and a kind of release of tensions that had built up in the school*. She said that apart from the tensions around the setting up of the bilingual and the Montessori classes, *it had been really a quite unhappy place to work, with conflict between one staff member and the principal making things unpleasant - everyone just retreated into their classrooms (3:4)*. After those tensions, *I could have been anyone and it would have been lovely*, she laughed (Kate 2:2). She said that she and Mere, the kaiako Māori, worked well together. Kate strongly supported Mere's aim to make the bilingual class a full immersion te reo Māori, an aim that was achieved in the third term of 1994. Although philosophically she was not in such close agreement with the Montessori approach, Kate found that she and Ann Howells shared similar ideas about how a school should be run with open and shared decision making.

Philippa Beecham recalled later that the board were *delighted with Kate, with her energy, her vision, her way of managing staff (2)*. James Kent, the board chairperson at that time, agreed. *We were very impressed with Kate - she was a unique character (1)*. The board particularly appreciated that way that Kate could relate well to each of the three strands in the school.

Ann had decided before Kate had arrived, however, that she wanted to move from Telford. She had not enjoyed working under the previous principal, who she said *did not share information. It was very much, 'I'm the principal, you're there' and he would say 'I'm not letting you know about such and such because I'm protecting you from that - for your own good.'* *We had no idea what was actually going on in our own school (Ann 1:2)*. Mere agreed. She said that there were *no structures in the school - everything was 'I'll tell you what to do and you do it.'* *It was really hard (Mere:2)*. Ann had become increasingly uncomfortable with this, and because she also *wanted to see how another Montessori school worked*, when the opportunity to shift to one came up, she had applied for, and won, the position. Despite the happier atmosphere that developed after Kate's arrival at Telford, Ann honoured her commitment to the Montessori school, and she left Telford at the end of term two.

The board meanwhile, had decided that they did not want to lose Kate. They asked her to stay on and to apply for the permanent position that they were advertising in the third term. The board minutes for the August meeting record the following note: *Kate is happy to stay on as Acting Principal for the third term to retain stability in class and provide more time to appoint a permanent Principal. The position will be re-advertised. The Board Chairperson will contact applicants advising that the appointment will not be made at this stage and requesting that they re-apply when the position is re-advertised (Board minutes, 15/8/94)*.

Initiating the co-principalship

The idea of sharing the principalship emerges: Term 3, 1994

Kate enjoyed the enthusiasm with which the school community had welcomed and supported her. However, she was wise enough to recognise that *in a school, when there's new blood there is a new enthusiasm, but if you don't sort out the old problems, they come back*.

I knew that we had to address several issues (1:3). Kate was particularly concerned about what she saw as a lack of unity within the board and across the three different strands in the school. Along with many parents, she was also worried about staffing problems, including the number of relieving teachers the school was having to use. Of the five full time staff, three were relievers and the Montessori reliever was not Montessori trained.

The board were keen for Kate to apply for the permanent position of principal, but she felt torn. Although she was really interested in and enjoyed the challenges of the teaching principalship, she did not believe that the old model of the principal as the driving force for change was a good one. She felt disillusioned with the managerial emphases in the restructured approach to educational administration, especially with the emphasis on *control - and the stressing of clear boundaries as to where the responsibilities lie. I don't like what's happening with accountability, where you've got to be seen to be running a tight ship sort of thing. And there's the expectation from a number of people that management doesn't have to be connected to an educational philosophy - that what counts is your administrative ability* (Kate 2:7). Despite her resistance to this, she was starting to find that her energy was being increasingly taken up by administration. She said, *I could almost feel myself moving that way, where suddenly the administration stuff was becoming more important than what I was doing in the classroom, and I was starting to lose sight of the balance (2:7).* The problem was *the pressure of the work - the sheer workload of the paperwork, like in applying for the Māori language factor funding, and getting an extra teacher and having to read everything that comes from the Ministry really carefully, so that you don't miss out on something that you could get for your school. Financially we are really badly off. There are so many things needing to be done though, and we were spending money we didn't have (2:7).*

Kate was also beginning to get *a bit resentful* of the way the job was cutting into the time she could spend with her family. She said that the idea of sharing the leadership came to her partly as a logical way of achieving a sharing of the workload, but also as a way of developing a more collegial management model for Telford School. She said that she had *always felt that a hierarchy is not a suitable way to organise a primary school, and especially not appropriate in a small school like Telford (2:1).* This idea had been reinforced during her time in England, when she had observed what she described as the different leadership styles of the three woman principals with whom she worked. She said, *Each of those principals used to invite participation - things didn't come down as commands. No-one ever questioned the person's position and status ... but there was less distance between people and their positions than in schools I remembered in New Zealand (Kate 2:5).* When she returned to New Zealand, she was shocked at seeing *how hierarchical many schools were, but I worked for a time with a principal who shared a lot of responsibility with me.* She said this approach was further reinforced through her *reading a lot of Sergiovanni's stuff while on a reflective principal course during 1994, where they talked about the collaborative management style. I'd also read a little bit about the Selwyn College model and I knew about what was happening at Hillcrest Avenue school (Kate 2:3,4).* Each of these experiences was identified by Kate as shaping her ideas about shared leadership.

A way of 'merging the strands'

Kate's thinking about a collaborative approach to school leadership and management at Telford School extended beyond involving just the teaching staff in more decision making however. She thought that at this school, the staff and the board needed to work more closely together to find ways to straddle the differences between the three strands and to develop a management and leadership model that would reflect and enhance the value of diversity in the

school - the different backgrounds, aspirations and approaches to learning. Kate thought that a co-principalship could make a good contribution to this work. James Kent remembered later that she suggested to the board that *a co-principalship would be a good way of merging the strands together, and she gave us the idea that she wanted to do a co-principalship with Ann* (1).

During the third term of 1994, Kate had been keeping in touch with Ann and she had talked with her about the possibility of sharing the principal's position. She suggested that if Ann agreed, she could represent the Montessori strand, while Kate could represent both the state strand and, because of her familiarity with te reo Māori, the immersion strand. Kate was hoping that Mere could later join herself and Ann in a three way co-principalship. Although she said that she talked about this with Mere, Mere did not remember this conversation. In any case, at that stage it was not appropriate as Mere had not yet completed the work required for her to be certificated as a fully registered primary teacher. Mere also had some doubts about being so fully involved in the wider issues of the school when as a beginning teacher, she needed to be putting a lot of time into her class teaching. *There was no reading material and we had to fight to get back our Māori language factor funding in my first year* (Mere:3)

Although a three way share was not possible, Ann was attracted by the idea of a two way co-principalship. She said later, *I don't know how much I did want to apply though! Being honest about it, I had never thought of being a principal. It was not something I was interested in. Philosophically I didn't like that hierarchical aspect and I could never see myself fitting into that. And also being a working mother, I wasn't prepared to work those long hours at the expense of my family ... But I'm the sort of person who likes a challenge ... and I knew I could work with Kate. I had had a term with her as a relieving principal* (Ann 1:3). Ann said that she remained a little apprehensive about what she would be taking on though, and Kate remembered that she, too, *felt quite nervous that it would continue to be quite difficult - like, winning the job is a bit like winning the booby prize! (Laughs) We knew all the issues, though, which was good, and thought that if we could get through it would be great* (Kate 2:3)

Kate suggested to Ann that they could contact the teachers at Hillcrest Avenue school, and see how they had gone through the process and what they were doing. Ann decided that she *either had to leap in and do it now or not at all* (Ann 1:1), so together they visited Liz and Jane. After hearing how the Hillcrest Avenue women were working together and their views about the advantages of their shared model, Kate and Ann decided to go ahead with applying for a co-principalship at Telford.

Kate and Ann develop a joint application for a co-principalship

The two women met at Kate's house to work out their shared application, aiming to develop a model of shared leadership that suited them and their school. Ann said that Kate had a clearer idea about how the shared principalship would work than she did. *I had been out of the system for a while, teaching in a Montessori pre-school, and she was in the system, and in the school as acting principal* (Ann 5:2). Ann had had no management experience in the state system and although she had set up the Montessori class, she had not held a senior position in the school. However, the two women thought that they had similar philosophies for building collaborative teaching and management cultures. Ann said, *Even though I come from Montessori and she comes from mainstream, we have a very similar approach in our beliefs... like the idea of sharing as a good role model for the children* (1:1). Consequently, they prioritised an aim to try to involve all the staff in the development of shared decision making and responsibility. Ann said, *We didn't want it to be Kate and I up here, at the top, but*

more circular where everybody feels that they're of value and of importance. Like at staff meetings we wanted to have everyone having input and taking a turn at leading it (1:1).

Kate and Ann also agreed that the board needed to be more fully involved in what happened in the school and that this point should be conveyed in their proposal. Kate said, *We tried to subtly include a sort of statement that they would have to take on dealing with the problems that the school had been experiencing in a bit more of a constructive way. I did talk about this with some of them, but Ann and I sort of tried to make it clear in our proposal that we felt there needed to be a lot more consultation and a whole process set up, which would come under the heading of writing a charter, as the existing charter was totally non-representative (1:4). And to a large extent, our application and the proposal we put in was laying a sort of foundation for the board - like saying here is the model we want to work with, and the model the school and the parents should follow too (Kate 1:3).*

The proposal

The proposal Kate and Ann developed began with a Māori quotation and rationale that they felt captured the spirit of Telford school's unique character. Then, following Liz and Jane's model, in the second section they outlined the purposes for this co-principalship, some guidelines for how they would go about achieving these and how the model could be assessed. *We borrowed some of Liz and Jane's ideas and added ours,* Kate remembered.

**Kotahi te kohao o te ngari
E kohuna
te miro whero
te miro ma
te miro pango**

**The needle has but one eye
But it can be threaded with
Red cotton
White cotton
Or black cotton
(Tawhaio 1858)**

THE PROPOSAL

That Ann Howells and Kate Walker share the positions of Principal and Deputy Principal.
That the collaboration involve all teaching members, support staff and Board of Trustees.

RATIONALE:

A collaborative management structure:

1. Supports the intention behind Telford School's mission statement
2. Supports the philosophies of all three strands
3. Provides a model of co-operative decision making for the children.

PURPOSES - why?

- To develop a greater degree of consultation and collaboration with the school community and the parent communities
- To increase responsibility and accountability of all those involved
- To develop a collective vision for the school
- To acknowledge the differences in the school within the context of a single school setting
- To be more focused on learning and teaching, and less on ideas and personality of a leader
- To ensure that appraisal and professional development is shared among peers and monitored by colleagues from similar teaching environments
- To ensure that the school's emphasis is on values reflected in the three strands.

GUIDELINES - How?

- Priority will be given to establishing systems of
 - a) communication
 - b) decision-making
- Job Description to be rewritten with emphasis on self-management and collective decision making
- Regular review of decisions affecting pupil welfare, property, spending in curriculum, staff development, responsibility for which will be given to every staff member.
- Regular reporting back to parent groups and Board of Trustees with
- Introduction of mixed parent groups.
- Shared administrative tasks by the two principals with active participation by board of trustees.
- Greater sharing of ideas on professional development and opportunity to observe classroom programmes.
- Regular discussion of school-wide activities and/or activities by a particular strand are understood and supported.
- Invited 'consultants' will support an appraisal system that also encourages shared ideas within the school.
- All reviews begin with emphasis on priorities placed on children within the class/strand, children within the school, colleagues, parents.

What will be required:

Acceptance of the proposal by the Board of Trustees, staff and parents, with a commitment to working through all difficulties using a problem solving technique.

Clear understanding of all the implications of a non-hierarchical structure that does not put any strand above another.

Open honest discussions

How will we know it is working?

In one year we should see a school where:

- there is collaborative planning, shared decision making and collegial work in a framework of experimentation and evaluation
- there is school self-review of school and teacher development
- there are clear systems of communication and decision making
- people feel welcomed and involved
- administrative tasks are managed efficiently
- open honest discussions

(Kate Walker and Ann Howells, 1994)

Interviewing and selecting, or selecting and interviewing?

James Kent, who was chairperson of the board, could not remember much about the short listing process for the principal's position, but said that *someone helped him do it*. He said that when the Telford board had earlier *put the appointment on hold, we wrote to the three other applicants whom we had considered for the position, and told them we would reconsider their applications when the position was re-advertised* (1). Other board members also said they had only hazy memories about how the selection process had occurred, and there is no record of any of the discussions. Frances Edwards, who was the teacher representative on the board at that time, could not recall seeing any referees reports and said later that *from my*

memory, the proposal came to the board and it was approved by the board and that was it (Frances:1).

Kate remembered that she had advised the board not to disregard any of the other applicants, but she had the feeling that by the time of the interview a decision had already been made to accept her's and Ann's proposal. The tone of an item on the agenda sent out for the December meeting would seem to support her opinion. It stated: *NB. Please note the earlier time of 7.00pm start. The board is invited at 7.00pm for the interview of Kate and Ann for the Principal's position, prior to the start of the Board meeting. Could everyone also bring a plate for supper!* (BOT minutes: November, 1994).

Kate said that *It was a very informal meeting. We were having a normal board meeting and I was there and we'd arranged a time for Ann to come, and at that stage I went out and stood outside with Ann for a while they discussed a series of questions they were going to ask us* (5:1). Ann remembered that when she and Kate went in together to the interview, *They asked us some questions. Only one stands out in my mind and that was when one of my parents asked Kate why she wanted to be a co-principal when she was making such a good job of it - and Kate answered that* (Ann 5:2). The question that stood out in Kate's memory was to do with how decisions would be made. She said that this board member *felt that the processes of decision making would be so slow and cumbersome that nothing would ever be decided quickly. He had an assumption that that was how decisions were made. But any worthwhile decision making doesn't work like that* (Kate 5:1). She was waiting for the board to ask *some really challenging stuff, but it never came. It was more like a chat.*

The board did not deliberate on a decision but agreed unanimously to offer the two women the position. Ann recalled, *We were just told there and then that we had the job* (4:2). The board meeting minutes include the following record under the heading of *Staff appointments*.

An informal interview held by the Board of Kate and Ann for the position of Principal as a job-share situation, was held prior to the board meeting. As a result of that interview, the following motions were passed:

That the position of Shared Principal be offered to Kate Walker and Ann Howells to take effect from the beginning of Term 1 1995. (Proposer/seconder)

Kate and Ann accepted the position of shared Principal. The contract is to be negotiated. James will draft a letter to be sent home to parents notifying them of these appointments.

(BOT meeting minutes 12/12/94).

Both women were surprised by the appointment process. Kate said that it was *like an in-house appointment*, and added, *It wouldn't happen like that with the present board* (5:1). When she reflected later on what had happened, she said, *I guess they knew my work. I had worked in the school for two terms and the board could see that I related to all three strands - perhaps they knew that this was the sort of person they needed in the school, though they didn't at that stage operate as a whole group. That board never discussed the fact that they each represented separate very tight knit groups. I guess too that they saw us saying in our proposal that we would make the shared principalship work, so why not have it?* (Kate 5:1) The staff representative on the board, Frances Edwards, corroborated Kate's view. She remembered that although some of the board members had had a few *qualms about the idea of the shared position, they were prepared on the strengths of Kate's ability in the school to sort of go with it* (Frances:1). Philippa Beecham, who was a new board member at the time, said later that she greatly admired Kate's skills and she *would have done anything to keep her.*

So if a shared leadership was what she wanted, if those were the terms on which she would continue as principal of our school, then that was fine. That's why we accepted it. She had clear ideas on how it would work and on the responsibilities of the principal (Philippa:3).

Ann had some remaining doubts though. She said, *I can remember walking home afterwards thinking, do I really want this? Have I done the right thing? (4:2)*

(Not) consulting parents

The wider parent community was never consulted about the decision. Although many people were in favour of the idea, seeing it as *a helpful way of reducing the stress and workload of the principal (Parent)*, Rawinia remembered that the whānau *got a bit of a jolt to see the Montessori person in there being co-principal (Rawinia, M&R:1)*. She said that *We in the whānau were not consulted and I was not too happy about the co-principalship at the beginning*. Not surprisingly however, the Montessori parents were very pleased with the idea of the sharing. One parent said that when she found out about it she thought, *Oh good, our Montessori teacher is right up there, sort of at the top of the school management, we won't be overlooked, you know, we will be as important, will be seen as equal with the rest... this was especially as our other co-principal has no real contact with the Montessori strand (Felicity: 2)*.

Salary arrangements

On the matter of how they would be paid, Ann and Kate had agreed with the board that they would work out how they would split their salaries, and it was left up to them to organise this. They decided that they would add the deputy principal's and the principal's salaries, and divide these by two. Kate wrote to the payments' agency, explaining that she and Ann had been appointed to a shared principalship. She informed the agency that the salaries for the deputy principal and the principal's positions were to be added together and equally divided between herself and Ann. She said that there were no problems with this and Ann said that her salary advice notice always recorded the deputy principal salary and an extra amount, which was noted as a *top up*.

Kate said later that salary was not an issue for her. *The salary is a bit of a joke - you know, another \$2000.00 doesn't make much difference (2:12)*.¹³¹ Kate was clear that what she wanted was *satisfaction, job satisfaction, but the board needed to know that money relates to how people are valued. So what we wanted was for the board to agree to us being paid at the top of the available rate for a principal and a deputy principal in a school of this size and then we would split it. That came out to us each being paid \$37,500.00, which is less than I was being paid as an acting principal (2:13)*.

Both women wanted to stay within the collective contract. As Kate put it, *Philosophically, I'm committed to that (2:13)* and Ann agreed. Because it was a shared position though, they were not initially clear about how the contract details would have to be sorted out. At the beginning of 1995, Kate said, *We'll have to negotiate that. I don't want to be on an individual contract, but I know that the Hillcrest Avenue board chairperson has spent a lot of time negotiating something on Jane's and Liz's behalf (2:13)*. She and Ann realised that some principals were *negotiating really good deals for themselves on individual contracts*, but the two women did not want to *jeopardise the profession or others who will never be in a position to do that (get good deals for themselves) (Kate 2:13)*.

¹³¹ This was the case before the NZEI won pay equity between primary and secondary teachers.

A 'contract' is assumed

A formal contract was never signed with Kate and Ann, however. According to James Kent, there was an understanding that the women had been appointed jointly *as a way of building inter-strand unity. Neither could assume they had the position as of right. If one left, the other could not assume the position on their own* (1). Ann recalled later though that, *Requirements for different responsibilities and so on were never established by the board* (4:2). She added that *There was not even a letter of appointment. Kate thought the board chairperson just genuinely forgot to write the letter. It was the end of the year and near the end of his term of office.*

Although they were not too concerned about this at the time, later both women said that these processes were too loose. Ann said, *I'd like to think that the BOT had some idea of what their expectations would be, as well as us* (4:3).

1995: Beginning work together

Aiming to involve all the staff and the board in sharing responsibility

At the beginning of their work together in 1995, Kate and Ann agreed that they both wanted all the staff *to have a shared responsibility*, as Ann put it, *not Kate and I up here, but more circular where we'd all have an input, and take turns in leading staff meetings for example. We want everyone to feel that they are of value and of importance* (Ann 1:1). Kate reiterated that taking a shared responsibility meant both staff and the board taking a more active role in decision making and also some of the administrative work had to be done. She gave an example of collaborative work done in the previous year, when she had some input from Mere and some of the whānau parents who contributed guidelines for the development of the school's application for Māori language factor funding. Kate had found while she was acting principal that *the pressures of a teaching principal are huge. I didn't mind the administrative work, like developing the funding application, but when it came on top of putting in tenders for a driveway and checking plans for buildings, it was too much. I needed to be able to ring someone up and say, 'Here's a letter from the Ministry on tenders that needs to be actioned.' I needed that sort of support, and a lot of the parents in this community are very highly skilled ... One of the aims then of the shared leadership is to set up a style of management that will filter through to others, so that there will develop a community that's really focussing on its work here together* (2:8).

During her first two terms in the school Kate had also realised though, that an approach of being *consultative in decision making and committed to giving feedback* was not practised by everyone in the school, and indeed, *some people are not ready to, or perhaps committed to taking on that way of working. It's easier to work in a model where someone is telling you what to do* (2:5). Before their interview therefore, she and Ann had made sure that *all the staff had seen the proposal for the co-principalship. That was really important, that they'd kind of adopt it, agree with it* (Kate 2:4).

Frances Edwards, who taught in the J1-Std 2 mainstream class and was the staff representative on the board, said that when Kate and Ann talked to the staff about the co-principal proposal, *Kate made it very clear that the intention was that all the teachers would be part of the management structure and that they would be expected to make a contribution. It wasn't just going to be two principals* (Frances:5). Both Frances and Abbie Smith, who was the principal release teacher, accepted that in small schools like Telford all the staff have to

co-operate. Abbie said, *The jobs have to be shared out otherwise it's an incredible load for one person* (Abbie:1). These teachers were both attracted to the idea of a co-principalship. As Abbie put it, it was a supportive, collegial model that *was also a good model for the children, particularly in a school like this where you have such diversity. It is good for them to see the sharing of responsibility* (1). According to Ann, Deborah Cartwright, the other teacher in the Montessori strand was also supportive. Kate said however that Mere was objecting to the proposal that all the teachers should become more fully involved in school wide decision making and administration responsibilities. Mere said that she did not want to become more fully involved in school wide decision making and administration responsibilities because she saw her primary responsibility being to the immersion class. Kate felt a little worried about this but said later that she realised that she and Ann *would have to work round that* (Kate 2:5).

Ann to begin as 'Kate's apprentice'

Frances summed up the teachers' expectations at that stage for how the shared leadership would be developed when she said, *We thought that Ann would be Kate's apprentice and little by little she would acquire knowledge and then they would end up in a shared position* (Frances:4). Kate and Ann had been clear that the co-principalship would *take a while to work out*, as Kate put it (2:4).

The new co-principals began by attending each of the meetings held for the parents of the three strands in the school to explain their proposal, leaving copies with each group. They also used their proposal on their first teacher only day before school started, *as a way of introducing a brainstorm with the other teachers, Mere, Frances and Deborah, on what the focus of the school should be and what we should be doing as a staff* (Kate 2:4). Mere said later that it was great to *be getting some structures established* (2).

The first month passed quickly and Kate and Ann did not find time to work out any practical details of how they would work together as co-principals. At the end of February, Kate said, *Look at those three piles of mail there! We haven't actually had a chance to sit down and work out a system where we can both kind of deal with it - and deal with it quickly* (2:8). While she had been acting principal, Kate had developed her own 'system': *I would zip in here at lunchtime, flick through the mail, take out something that I knew I had to read thoroughly and save it for home, and throw the other stuff to wherever it needed to go. And if I didn't do that at lunchtime then I'd do it straight after school* (Kate 2:8,9). Kate thought that perhaps both she and Ann would have to do this sort of thing. She was hoping though, that they could develop a similar system to that used by Liz and Jane at Hillcrest Avenue school, one Kate described as *a diary system for keeping track of the jobs that have to be done*.

Kate was thinking a lot about how to best develop a good working relationship with Ann. She felt very conscious that she needed to give the collaboration time to develop and she thought that she needed *to hold back. I'm trying not to be bossy!* she laughed (Kate 2:9). She knew she was a forceful person. Frances described her as *very passionate about her personal vision. She's great - she comes up with some really amazing ideas nobody else would think of and that we might think are not possible and she can be very keen for you to go her way. So you have to stand up to her sometimes. Like in one situation her priority for me was in one area and my priority was in another. I gave all her all the reasons why I didn't agree with her and in the end she was happy with that, because I could show her why I wanted to do it differently* (Frances:5). Kate had lots of ideas about things that could, indeed from her point of view, should be done in the school, but she did not want to rush Ann. She was adamant that *Very rarely does a decision have to be made straight away on any issue, very very rarely. So*

as long as we can make time to sort of talk about the things that come up it will work out - as long as there is trust, and I do feel there's a good sense of trust here (2:9).

Kate was grateful that *although the first three weeks had been chaos, I haven't been alone in it, and I was last year ... The difference is that I can talk to Ann about what's going on and she can share her feelings about what's happening. And just being able to do that actually relieves the stress. Whereas before I was actually taking work home and I felt I was really carrying it all, I don't feel that now. So yeah, it's just been less stressful* (Kate 2:14).

For her part, Ann was feeling comfortable with how things were going. She said that she and Kate *have a very similar approach in our outlook and our beliefs ... Anything that comes up, I'll give my opinion or she'll give hers, and we'll both say, yes I agree with that* (1:1).

A change of plans: Kate is pregnant

Before the two women had a chance to work out systems and processes for sharing the leadership together, however, they were dealing with what for Ann was potentially a crisis. Kate found that she was pregnant. Ann said, *I immediately saw that it's going to be me. And I panicked - I thought that's not something I ever wanted. I thought, I don't even know if I can do this. Kate's got more experience than me - she's been in the mainstream longer and she's been a DP* (1:1). Kate and the other teachers were not overly worried about this situation though. Indeed, several people thought that it was actually good that when Kate went on maternity leave for the third term of 1995 this would give Ann an opportunity to develop, take the reins and put her own stamp on the shared leadership

The two women decided that Kate would keep in touch at that stage, and return to the school at the beginning of 1996, if all was going well in her family and with her own and her baby's health.

Kate identifies issues to be dealt with

Kate was concerned though, that during the first month of their co-principalship, she and Ann were working in what she described as *a react mode* (3:3). In her view, several issues were posing difficulties. She said that there were *all kinds of pressure stuff, and it was feeling a bit like being on a roller coaster*. She realised that *this was not allowing for any long term thinking*, so she sat down at home one weekend and *wrote down all the things that were going on, and why and what we had to do* (3:3).

Kate's list of issues at both the whole school level and at the level of her's and Ann's shared leadership identified the following concerns. The building and driveway reconstruction had dragged on five months longer than expected, causing disruption to classes and causing storage of resources difficulties. There were negotiations with the Ministry of Education about these issues and the fact that there were *complete strangers wandering around the school - they were builders and architects, making decisions between each other, but not taking any notice of what the staff had recorded as their preferred option for the alterations* (Kate 3:2). Kate was also picking up negotiations with the Ministry about reinstating property deferred maintenance and then there was the annual Ministry of Education March returns to be completed.

The board of trustees' elections were also about to take place and the principals' report needed writing for the AGM. Something needed to be done to ensure that children's special needs were being met and overall curriculum planning needed to be better co-ordinated, as did the organising of class trips and camps. Communication with parents had begun through the

meetings she and Ann had attended, but the school newsletter was due. The mail was piling up and she and Ann had not yet worked out how to best organise their principal release time. There were also staffing issues that included dealing with Deborah's qualifications as a Montessori teacher not being recognised. The principals needed to advocate on her behalf so that they could keep her in the school. The staff job descriptions needed revision and an appraisal system needed to be introduced. Kate jotted down her idea for an approach that would include shared planning and supervision.

When she looked at the list she had drawn up, Kate thought that she wanted to prioritise the development of open communication and shared decision making with all the staff. Because Deborah and Mere had had little experience in the state system (Deborah had just arrived from overseas and it was Mere's first teaching job), it was Kate's view that *Everything had to be discussed, like decisions on spending money, the issues around the classroom relocations, everything had to be talked about* (Kate 3:4). She thought that release time to do this needed to be built into the staff development budget and some of the co-principal release time could also be allocated to staff with specific responsibilities. She scrawled at the bottom of her list, *What can we do? How to plan a system to cope with managing it all?*

On Monday, back at school, she said to Ann, *Look, I sat down at the weekend and just jotted down all the things that are going on here. You might like to look at it and you might like to do the same thing, what's going on for you* (3:8). Kate told Ann that she thought that before she left at the end of the next term, it would be useful for Ann to share with her any issues she saw as needing addressing. Kate said that although Ann agreed that the issues Kate had identified were important ones, she did not get back to Kate with her own list, nor raise any matters during the following weeks for them to discuss together.

Kate sets up some systems for shared planning and decision making

Soon after, Kate suggested to the staff that she could arrange a new system for in-school shared planning. On a Friday afternoon everyone could be released except one person (and they could take turns as to who this is) who would work with the teacher aides and the principal release teacher to run sports for the whole school (Kate 3:18). During this time the other four teachers could either work together or pair up with a colleague in their own strand to develop specific policies or to do shared planning. It was agreed that this would be done and Kate invited the itinerant resource teacher Māori to come in on these days to work with Mere. Mere was delighted about this opportunity for professional development in her own area. She said, *It was a relief for me to have someone who had been teaching for a few years to sit down and talk to about what I could do - like, I'd say, " Now the school want me to do this - how could I implement that into something Māori?"* (3)

- but is worried about 'driving it' and 'being bossy' with Ann

By the end of the first term, though, Kate was becoming worried that Ann was not putting more time into building a shared leadership that involved working equally with her in the school wide administration and school decision. To her it seemed that Ann did not realise how much work there was to be done. Kate did not really know how Ann was feeling, as despite her attempts to talk about things with her, the two women had still not been able to talk through how they would work out their administrative systems. Kate said, *I think that Ann's vision for the school would be very close to mine, but it's the practicalities of getting there -*

in nitty gritty terms of doing the mail and communicating with each other and working out what is important - that I want to talk about (Kate 3:10).

Kate's consciousness of *being the one who's kind of 'driving' it* (meaning the co-principalship) was making her feel nervous about talking to Ann. *I'm really conscious that I'm actually, you know, quite bossy - I'm quite opinionated and in my two terms in the job, I've questioned and challenged quite a lot what was going on. Ann is not like that, so all the time it is kind of me saying, Why don't we do this, or that* (3:7). Kate was feeling even more strongly that she had to draw back from doing this. She was reminding herself that when she first arrived at the school she herself *did sit back and listen and suss things out, for most of the term really*. She thought that probably things were much the same for Ann.

As a way to open up discussion with Ann, Kate decided that she would suggest that she read David Stewart's book, 'The Reflective Principal.' Kate had found this book very interesting, and she thought it would be helpful if she and Ann could talk about the job description and appraisal models Stewart described before they developed their own. She thought that as Ann had never done any management training, this might also be a good way for Ann to begin some development here. She wondered too about suggesting that she and Ann go on some management training courses together, but reiterated, *I am a bit nervous about discussing it all. We do need to do it to build up - so that Ann can give me some kind of feedback on what I need to do, to actually withdraw, to allow her to come forward. That is what I want - what I want to hear is whether she wants me to back off. I mean it is very open on my part 'cos I joke with her about it, saying, 'tell me to keep my mouth shut.' But she kind of says, 'No - what you are saying is really important.' She can offer good insights you know. Like at a rather difficult meeting with Mere, she did ask a really brilliant question at one point, which did indicate that although she was very quiet all through the meeting, she was churning over what was being said, and she asked this crucial question. Afterwards she said, 'Look I'm sorry I didn't say very much - I couldn't. But I thought that what you were saying was excellent and I just didn't know that I could add anything to it.' And I said, 'No - what you did say was brilliant.'* So we give each other these little strokes, which I think is important (Kate 3:12).

Kate thought that Ann was going to have to take what she called a *more dominant role* however, particularly in board meetings. She was concerned that if she didn't, *the board may see it as unbalanced and I want them to have respect and faith in her ability to do the job* (3:12). However, she was reluctant to bring up this topic with Ann because she did not want Ann to think that she had not been doing the job properly. *I don't want to undermine her confidence at all*, she said. *And I don't want her to feel that I feel any sort of resentment, 'cos I don't. I feel quite okay about the work that I've done and about what has happened so far* (3:12). She thought that the best way to handle it was to ask Ann to tell her about any issues she thought she'd need to *be clued up on* before Kate left. At this stage, though, she was feeling reasonably confident that Ann would cope.

Ann is pleased about 'a good term of working together'

Ann did not seem to be aware of Kate's worries at this time. Indeed, she did not think there had been any difficulties in developing the shared leadership. *To my knowledge, I don't think we've disagreed on anything*, she said at the end of the first term, one that she described as *a good term of working together* (2:5). Rather than feeling concerned about not enough communication, Ann saw it as a good thing that she and Kate had *never had to sit down and nut something out so that we go with a united view to board meetings for example - we obviously agree on things* (2:5). She thought that the time would possibly come when they

would find they disagreed about something, but she said that *by then we will have built up a trusting relationship so neither of us will get upset by the fact that the other doesn't agree.*

Ann was particularly pleased with the way that the staff meetings had developed a *feel that is more circular than hierarchical* (2:2). She thought that perhaps this had happened because *we've got all women staff and they all immediately latched on to what we were aiming for. We didn't have to explain it. And in a small school we are all tending to share and take responsibility anyway. Now Frances is leading special education ... and we have all the teacher aides and all staff at the meeting on Tuesdays for special needs children so that hopefully everyone feels they are a part of it ... The meeting on Tuesday lunchtime is just for half an hour and the school secretary also attends that. We each take turns to chair the meeting and we have an agenda board that everyone can raise things to do with 'housekeeping' like playground duty. Then we can keep these things out of the staff meeting that is for policy and curriculum* (2:3). Ann felt that the shift to a rotating chair for meetings made it *sort of like a collective* (2:4).

Ann was not concerned about the way the shared leadership was functioning. She acknowledged that at that stage *some of the parents see Kate as being the principal. That doesn't particularly bother me though, because it's just a fact. She does have more knowledge and experience than me - and in a way, I've been more like a deputy principal* (2:4). She was beginning to feel that she did *know a little more about how the systems works and I'm learning what I can, I must admit, before Kate goes.*

- but is worried about Kate's pending departure

What was of concern to Ann was Kate's pending departure at the end of the second term. She said, *That gives me huge panics. I feel a little bit better about it now than I did at the beginning of the year when it was just about enough to make me run. I never envisaged doing it alone and the thought of her vanishing - yes it did panic me. At this stage though, I'm pushing it to the back of my mind - facing it when it comes. It's a bit scary - and it's looming up fairly quickly now - it's not that far away* (2:4).

- and workload

She was also becoming a little worried about her workload. She said that she and Kate had thought that having two of them in the principal's position would have meant that the workload would be cut back, but she was finding that she was working very long hours. She kept a record of one week in May and found that by Wednesday she had already worked for 60 hours, and she'd had three weeks like that. Ann was hoping that perhaps a little further down the track she and Kate *could take turns to do things like attending board meetings, rather than both having to go* (2:1).

- and Montessori issues

Ann's most immediate worries were in the area of the Montessori parents' relationships with her. She described an incident when two Montessori parents went to Kate with a concern about interactions between another child and their daughter. When Kate handed it back to Ann to deal with, she found that *They wanted me to remove the 'offending' child from the school. But I told them we could not do that and assured the parents that the school would speak to both children. At the end of term, though, it suddenly hit me that those parents are not speaking to me, but avoiding me. They were waiting to speak to the other teacher, and*

normally would have perhaps come up and spoken to me. I thought, now this is interesting. It's obviously got something to do with that issue ... Perhaps they don't see me as being sort of you know, the principal, or perhaps they see me as being the junior partner - or do they feel that we as a school haven't dealt with it in the way they wanted? (Ann 2:6). Ann was also noticing that the Montessori parents were *definitely not as friendly - they've put me on a slightly different level I think, which is interesting, because I don't think I've changed at all* (2:7). On thinking some more about what was happening she said, *When I was a teacher they would bring a problem to me and discuss it. Now they expect me to correct it.* Reflecting on what might have caused this change, she said that her initial group of parents was *very supportive, and we were more of a group. They were donating a lot in a monetary way to get things set up because the equipment was not provided, and perhaps when you are donating like this, then you have more of a 'hands on' thing - you know, I have a right to see where my money is going. Perhaps it started there. The Montessori parents question everything - why are you doing this or that* (Ann 2:8).

The comments of one of the Montessori board members, Felicity Wright, corroborated Ann's points. Felicity said, *We expect our parents to be involved and most Montessori parents are professional people who are not intimidated by teachers. Although I would not try to second guess Ann in the classroom, some of our parents would ... We offer suggestions and advice to our teachers ... We have this idea, because of our involvement in the parents' co-operative in the Montessori pre-school, and because this whole 'Tomorrow's School' thing justified it, we have this idea that the parents employ the teacher ... And the equipment our teachers use is paid for and owned by the parents so there is a sort of much greater feeling of ownership of a class of special character. Among our parents there has evolved a feeling that they are sort of guardians of the Montessori philosophy ... and we want to be sure that Montessori principles are being followed* (Felicity:10-11).

To help meet her parents' requests for information, Ann started writing a monthly newsletter, *just to Montessori parents. The Montessori Trust add in a bit about what they are doing* (Ann 2:8). She also started using her Friday principal release time to interview prospective Montessori parents. She did this so that she *could find out a little bit about the child before they start, like illnesses and that sort of thing. But it also gives them a chance to find out about Montessori, so they can't say later that they are not aware. I think that may be where some problems have arisen. I'm also doing a Montessori handbook, which will have all of this written down.* Ann was hoping that getting this kind of work done in the first half of the year before Kate left on maternity leave would help her to *get things stabilised so that when I am principal on my own, my time won't be Montessori dominated* (Ann 2:9).

- and worried also about whānau meetings

Ann was beginning to realise too, that another area of concern was that *Kate has always been able to go to whānau meetings, because she speaks Māori, and I don't. So I'm not quite sure what will happen there. There is no point in me going because they speak Māori all the time basically, so I wouldn't know what they were talking about. Kate and I have to sit down and talk about that.* Ann was feeling weary. She said that she had got to the stage of even thinking about leaving teaching. *I said to my husband 'I'm actually very tired of having everything on my shoulders'* (2:14). She added that when Kate was on maternity leave, *at least she'll only be a phone call away. It would be good to just have an ear - not to sort of expect her to come in - but just to talk to* (2:14). Ann did not raise any of these issues with Kate however, and she did not seem to be aware that she was not talking to Kate as much as Kate wanted her to do. There seemed to be a communication stalemate between the two women.

What happens when one leaves?

Term 3, 1995: Ann tries to 'keep things stable'

When Kate went on leave at the end of Term 2, 1995, Frances Edwards was appointed acting deputy principal for the third term. Frances took on this responsibility expecting to get some direction from Ann about her tasks, but she said *there was nothing there to say what my responsibilities were* (Frances:2). To Frances, it seemed that *Ann was acting principal, not knowing what she was doing, while I was deputy principal not knowing what I was expected to do. It was a very difficult situation* (Frances:2).

Indeed, Ann described it as finding herself in *a sink or swim situation* (3:1). She said that Kate had *put it very well at the beginning when she warned me that at times you'll find it like a runaway roller coaster. And that's exactly how I did find it in the beginning. Almost, I almost couldn't cope* (Ann 3:1).

Coping with Montessori staff changes

At the end of August, Deborah Cartwright, the other Montessori teacher, left. The Ministry had continued to refuse to recognise her qualifications and she was losing \$15,000.00 a year on what she could earn in her own country. Ann was particularly worried about the consequences of Deborah's departure. She said, *The main aim for the third term was to keep, try and keep it stable and just keep it running in terms of the classes* (3:2). She was worried that if the Montessori parents became concerned about who was teaching their children, then they might take their children away. *I thought we're going to have to play this very carefully this term - you know, being a small school we can't afford to have parents sort of walking out en masse and it only takes one or two and they can go. So I didn't want to take too many principal release days, or put anybody non-Montessori in my class because I thought, you know, parents are a little bit like that* (3:2). She seemed a little surprised that Frances Edwards had also had complaints from the original strand parents that she was out of the classroom so much. *She kept telling me to keep reassure her parents in the newsletters*. Ann wondered whether these complaints were new and thought that she needed to ask Kate about whether she had experienced them.

Trying to balance teaching and administration demands

Because of the Montessori staffing situation, Ann said that while she was acting principal, she only took *three or four principal release days, when I've been able to use a relieving Montessori assistant*. She quickly found that it was difficult to keep up with the demands of teaching while also trying to *cope with the office work - it has been heavy* (Ann, Kate & Ann 1:4). She reiterated that *some of the parents thought that being a teaching principal is a problem. They would rather I was there all the time - in the classroom, I mean* (Ann 3:3). In this situation, she said that *I was really glad to re-read the principal's job description, where it said that the teaching came first. And I thought yes, I must put this into perspective. I think that without realising it had got the other way round*.

Kate later sympathised with Ann here, saying that *the demands are just on you all the time. I had felt that towards the end of last year ... and at the end of the first term this year, I was beginning to feel it again too* (Kate, K&A 1:4). Ann said, *I hated it. If I feel my classroom's slipping away, yes, I hate it. You've got to put everything else aside and come back in to your classroom* (Ann, K&A 1:5). Kate agreed, saying, *That's where you're getting*

your feedback, from the children, and also, when everything's working well you've got heaps of energy for anything else.

Ann found though, that she did not enjoy spending time in the office. *There was one Friday when I was locked in there until 4.00pm, and I hadn't even got out and seen anybody. I went over to the classroom and realised that for a whole day things had gone on that I hadn't been part of and I thought, I don't like this* (Ann, K&A1:6). She said that on her first day in the office she had a long list of things she was going to do, but *by the second Friday I realised that you just don't do any of it ... people know that that is your day in the office and then they show up on the Friday to see you - and so it's a very wasteful day in some ways* (Ann, K&A1:6). Unlike Ann, Kate enjoyed the 'people' work that was part of the principals' role, and before she went on leave she had spent her release time talking with the secretary, the caretaker, observing in Mere's class (as part of her required supervision), rather than trying to do *admin stuff that you have to do for the Ministry that can require a lot of concentration* (Kate, K&A1:6). Kate had got into the habit of sometimes coming in to school on a Saturday at about 2.00pm and working through until 5.00pm to catch on that kind of work.

Ann was either not aware of that, or had forgotten that was what Kate did. She said she had not realised that there was so much Ministry mail to be read and processed and she found that she had to take it home to read it. *I couldn't sit in the office and take it all in*, she said. As the term went on, she became stressed by the pressure of tasks that mounted up. *I became terrified that I was going to misplace something, or forget to do something. There was one point when people would tell me things and I would have absolutely no recollection of it. So I bought a big folder and put 'Ann action now' on it in red and sat it in the staffroom and said to the staff, 'If there's anything that I have to do, put it in there so I'm not going to lose it amongst paper.' But even though I thought I was being organised, I still found I was losing things* (Ann, K&A1:8).

Kate eases back in

At the beginning of the third term of 1995 when she went on maternity leave, Kate stayed away from the school. Although she made herself available for relieving, Ann said that they tried not to use her, *to give her a break after her baby was born. But then we got desperate in the immersion class and she came in for a while. And in the last month of the year, she was obviously feeling better and starting to feel like getting involved again. Her main 'coming back' was for our teacher only day on 12th November, which was strategic planning for next year. She joined us for that day* (Ann 3:3). After that, Kate attended each of the staff meetings and she joined Ann for two of her principal release days, which they used for planning. Kate enjoyed being able to work on things like developing a peer appraisal system during this time.

Then, two weeks before the end of term, Mere, who had become pregnant and had been going to take maternity leave in 1996, decided to resign. (The issues related to this decision are described in the next section.) Kate felt very disappointed that with the loss of both Deborah and Mere, Telford would be facing beginning 1996 with *either relievers in a Montessori and the immersion class, and if not relievers, there's a big chance that we will have beginning teachers, because there are so few trained teachers out there in either of these two areas. So we are likely to have two people that will, once again, need a lot of input from us.* She sighed, adding wistfully, *It would just be nice to know that eventually that we will be able to have an equality of level of discussion about curriculum development, I mean equality in terms of experience. It's been a bit of struggle really in that respect because we have had teachers who have been either beginning teachers, or teachers not familiar with our system*

in this country (Kate, K&A1:12). Kate's own teaching load had increased dramatically during the first half of 1995. She had been teaching 16 Std2 - F1 children in 1994 and she described that class as *heaven*. At the beginning of 1995, however, the roll rose to 23, with a group of older children coming into her class from the immersion strand and, by the time she went on leave in the third term, there were 29 children. The newcomers were *mainly Māori children coming from (another school in a neighbouring suburb), whose parents were making a choice for Telford. There was also quite a large group of 'needy' children, who were not reading well - so it is quite demanding really ... with the administration and management and making decisions on top* (Kate, K&A 1:4,5).

Recognising that collaborative management is not an approach wanted by all

Although both Kate and Ann had hoped that all the other teachers would willingly join with the co-principals in sharing the decision making in the school, this had not eventuated with all the teachers. Towards the end of the year, Ann said that it had surprised her to hear *one of the part-time teachers saying that it would be good to go to another school and have a boss at the top where she could go and say something and he'd just say, do this, or do that* (Ann, K&A1:10). She was surprised that *not all women teachers necessarily liked a collaborative approach, you know, a circular kind of thing where everyone has some input*. Kate thought that although this might be so, the teacher's comment also reflected the high workloads of all teachers in smaller schools that had teaching principals. *As well as carrying extra responsibilities, the staff have to have more initiative and be more self-directing, though with the kind of peer appraisal system we are setting up, that does not mean there is no-one watching you. Rather, the contribution you have to make in all areas of the school is quite a big one* (Kate, K&A 1:11). Ann agreed, saying, *And because there's only five of us, if one staff member is not pulling their weight, then it puts pressure on to four others*. Both the co-principals were beginning to accept that some saw a *problem with a co-operative style of management in that it does demand more from people* (Kate, K&A 1:11). Like Ann, though, Kate was somewhat surprised to find that although she had *made assumptions at the beginning that all the staff would really jump at it, that's not actually what's happened* (Kate, K&M1:15).

In terms of their own shared leadership, at the end of 1995 Kate and Ann were aiming to *sit down and work out whether we can actually split some of the responsibilities and still keep an awareness of what the other person is doing* (Kate, K&A1:8). They thought that it would be sensible for Ann to take responsibility for all of the Montessori tasks and for Kate to work with the whānau. As explained at the beginning of this narrative, trying to build alliances across the three strands was an important aim for this co-principalship, however. The next section focusses on the work that was done towards this aim.

Can an alliance be forged across differences?

At the end of 1994, after she had worked for two terms as acting principal, Kate had felt strongly that *The board needed to set a direction for the school, because really there were three things going on but no one kind of talking openly about what their aspirations for the school were. No shared vision* (Kate, K&A 1:23). Although Kate's pregnancy and maternity leave interrupted her's and Ann's work together, during 1995 the new board, under the leadership of Phillipa Beecham, had taken responsibility for revising the school charter as part of the work of developing with each strand an agreed shared vision for the whole school.

Towards developing a shared vision through revising the school charter

Phillipa said later that Kate *pushed and pushed for revising the charter* (Phillipa:17). The existing Telford charter had been written in 1989 and in Kate's view it was fairly meaningless in relation to the current situation at the school as it didn't have any mention of the immersion class or the Montessori class. Kate recognised that in many schools the importance given to the charter had diminished. She said that *For many schools the National Administration Guidelines have sort of taken the supreme role now, and people say this is what schools are about. For most schools probably that's fine because of the homogenous groups of people who are in them.* (Kate, K&A1:22). She was concerned though that at Telford, *no processes and ground rules for working together were ever spelled out. They just sort of got pushed together and there were times when people on the board seemed to think they had to represent their own particular faction, rather than understanding the role of the board as one governing body* (Kate 2:2). Kate felt that it was only because the groups of parents were *quite keen to ensure that there was equity between the three strands and were quite committed to making it work, that the school survived all the hiccups* (2:2). She thought because of the continuing divisions between the three strands, an agreed charter was an essential *founding document* for Telford School.

Although Kate kept encouraging Phillipa to take responsibility for developing a new charter, the board chairperson was initially *slightly reluctant* to get involved. Kate said later, *I don't think Phillipa understood how important having an agreed charter was until she started talking to a friend of hers who's on a board of trustees too. Phillipa talked about the sorts of things that we discussed at our board meetings and this other woman said, 'What? You mean you talk about everything like that? You know, our meetings are over by 9.00pm.' But they don't have people pulling in other directions ... like we have a large number of people coming from outside of the local area with particular reasons for being here. It had to be important that they accepted what the school is about* (Kate, K&A 1:24).

Eventually Phillipa agreed. She said later, *Kate was absolutely right. One of the things that I value about her so much is that she has such a clear idea of not only the vision for the school, but of how that vision has to be worked out and practised. She was really clear that the school charter is absolutely essential as a corner stone of a vision for a school. Particularly I think, if you have got a community that's likely to have some areas of disagreement as indeed we have* (Phillipa:17). Phillipa said that these were a consequence of the way that the three strand character of the school had come about as a *pragmatic arrangement*, rather than because of any educational rationale. *The Montessori parents, for example, were choosing to send their children here not because we are a three strand school, but because they are choosing Montessori, which happens to be located at Telford. But they just can't come here and ignore the rest of us. That is not the basis for the school. That's why re-writing the charter was so valuable. We had big debates about are we just three cells here, sharing the same site? There were enough of us there that were not happy with staying as three separate 'cells,' so we battered out something that says we are more than that* (Phillipa:25).

Kate described the process that Phillipa facilitated. *Every parent was asked to fill in a questionnaire about why they sent their children to Telford School and then the strands met to discuss their own mission statements. Then all that information went back to Phillipa and she wrote a draft of the charter. That went out to parents to comment on and then it went to this full parent meeting of all three groups. People read it through and they pulled certain words out of each of the categories and some of those were discussed. I felt in that meeting that it was very clear that some people were unhappy about the way in which the Treaty, the*

expectations of the Treaty of Waitangi, were in there, but everybody basically agreed in the end, that this was the direction that the school should go (Kate, K&A 1:23).

The Telford School Charter

The following extracts from the completed revised charter indicate the importance given by the board and parents to the aim of building a strong core of values with which each of the strands could agree.

Telford School

The school is unique. It incorporates three strands, each delivering the national curriculum through its own method - two of these are strands of special character. As well as the original part of the school which provides a typical New Zealand state education, the school has a Māori language immersion unit and a unit in which the children are taught in accordance with the Montessori philosophy and teaching method. The special character of the school is reflected in the school's community which is made up of both those who live within, and those who live beyond Telford and its surrounding suburbs. More than a third of the school's pupils are Māori.

Our vision for the school

We want a school that has three strands contributing equally to the school as a whole, and each meeting the particular needs of its community of children, parents and caregivers. We want these strands woven together by co-operation, and tolerance to create a school in which diversity is valued and all children can develop to their full potential. We want a school that honours the Treaty of Waitangi.

Our mission statement - what we do

We aim to provide children with a quality education which inspires a love of learning. We do this in a stimulating, caring environment which fosters fairness, enjoyment of life and a feeling of self worth through the efforts of the staff, the students and the community of Telford School.

Our guiding principles

These are the most important principles that will be reflected in decisions made about how the school is governed and managed. We are working towards a school which demonstrates:

- a climate of tolerance, respect and care for others
- a partnership between parents and teachers
- a commitment to the whole school as well as to each of its parts
- a commitment to consultation and co-operation
- awareness and responsiveness to the individual needs of each child
- appreciation and care for the physical environment of the school
- a welcoming atmosphere for all who attend ...

Treaty of Waitangi

The school aims to actively demonstrate its commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi by:

- supporting the continued growth and strength of the Māori immersion class
- ensuring other Māori children in the school have their ethnic and cultural heritage affirmed as part of increasing their participation and success in New Zealand's education system
- ensuring that the entire school community learns about and respects the diverse cultural heritage of New Zealand people by acknowledging:
 - the unique place of Māori,
 - New Zealand's role in the Pacific,
 - the value and diversity of other cultures in the world

Communication

Our school aims for and expects:

- good, open communication within the school and between the school and the parents/caregivers of students
- everyone involved with the school to make a commitment to consultation and cooperation
- information to be shared freely between the strands of the school.

1996: valuing, or tolerating diversity?

Kate said later that she felt pleased about how the new board had *really got to grips with their responsibilities*. She admired the way Phillipa Beecham had personally facilitated the process and *worked really hard on producing the revised charter*. Kate said, *For me this was now kind of our bible. Everything that we do relates back to this and what we do can be justified, hopefully* (Kate, K&A1:8). Ann thought that the process of developing the charter had also *pulled the Montessori parents on board and some of them have realised that parents in other strands have got similar issues* (Ann, K&A 2:16).

Phillipa countered the view that there was general agreement however. *To be fair I think there are some of our parents who feel really happy with the charter and our direction, who really value the diversity that the school offers and there are others that simply tolerate it because they can get the style of education that they want for their children. So we are not talking about completely homogeneous groups of agreement here* (25). During 1996, there certainly was some talking past each other between each strand, as well as differences of opinion within the strands, about a shared vision and/or the benefits of being in a three stranded school

The Montessori strand

In Ann's opinion, *the original group of Montessori parents definitely wanted it to be one school and that was how they saw it. They tried really really hard to mix in with other parents and be involved in mixed fundraising. Unfortunately, just through their work, they all moved on and then there was a second wave that came in with different agendas* (Ann, K&A1:24). Despite her feeling that the charter exercise had developed some better understandings among the current group of Montessori parents, she thought that they remained more focused on building up their own strand than on making links with either the original strand parents or the whānau.

One of the current Montessori board members pointed out though, that there was a range of opinions among the Montessori parents about the value to them of being involved with the other two strands in the school. Felicity Jones said that when the board had met on a Saturday morning at the end of 1995 to have what she called *a strategy meeting to talk about the whole general picture of where we thought we were going, it became apparent that we were different schools operating on the same site ... and some of us have different objectives that are at odds with the objectives of the other 'schools'* (14). It was Felicity's understanding that *the immersion class basically wanted to be independent, to have nothing to do with anyone else. They want their own school and that's what they are growing towards. The only reason we can work with that is that they are not growing that fast* (14). Felicity thought that this was *fine*. She said, *To some extent the Montessori lot are like that too, but I think we can see benefits in the other strands*.

Personally, Felicity and her partner did not want their child to *just mix with our own type of people*. She said they thought it was a *real benefit to have the immersion class on the site ... Although my child is in a strand less affected by the Māori language, even he will correct me on the pronunciation of various Māori words ... He is getting more sort of familiar with the culture than we are. We would like him to be more comfortable than we are with Māori protocol and differences* (Felicity:19). The benefit to the Montessori strand of being on a site where state schooling was provided was not as immediately obvious to Felicity. She pointed out that parents had chosen Montessori education for their children for different reasons. *It is my perception though, she said, that many parents send their children to Montessori because they see it as a way of pushing their child. However, I like Montessori because of its philosophy that you provide children with opportunities to learn, and then step back* (Felicity:13). In her view, state education was authoritarian, with *teachers telling children what to do and my child does not respond well to that*.

The original strand

From her perspective in the original ‘state’ strand, Phillipa saw the Montessori strand as *a well resourced, articulate, energetic strand of parents ... who value different things from what I do* (22). She laughed as she acknowledged that she was what she called *an inverse snob. I have to fight my prejudices against people who go to private schools* (26). As the board chairperson, Phillipa resisted attempts by some within the Montessori strand to give extra resources to their classrooms. Like Felicity though, Phillipa also valued the opportunity for her children to attending a school where there was an immersion Māori class. *I value diversity. I want my children to be brought into contact with people whose lives are different from theirs. My children are going to learn more about themselves as a consequence and how to be in life* (22). However, Phillipa felt that in the Montessori strand there was *a group of parents who are quite inward looking really and they support Montessori because they say it is very child focused. It is, but they are also very structured and the children choose what they want to do from quite a proscribed range of activities* (Phillipa:23).

Although there were these disagreements over the ‘best way’ for children to be educated, like the Montessori parents, the original strand parents seemed relatively happy with the charter and their position within the school. The principal release teacher, Abbie Smith, commented however, that finding a common core for the three strands to come together on some activities would amount to working within the original strand structures *with some te reo added* (6). Phillipa supported the immersion class though. She had a long standing interest in *things Māori* as she put it, through her professional background when she had been exposed to bicultural debates. But she also agreed with Kate’s opinion that the Māori children in the rest of the school needed more assistance than many of the whānau seemed prepared to accept. This issue is described later.

The immersion strand

Although both the Montessori and original strands valued the presence of the immersion class, and although Marg and Rawinia said that they saw themselves personally as part of the school, Marg said that *the whānau don’t see any value in the other strands for the immersion class* (Marg, M&R:9). Some of the whānau parents had not found the policy and charter writing exercises a totally positive experience. Marg remembered that when the whānau group wrote their policy statement for the immersion class, *it was very direct in saying, you know, our strand should come first. The board thought it was very good, but then*

they wanted to know what we thought of the rest of the school, what we thought the rest of the school could offer the whānau and whether we see any value in being within this school. Rawinia said, *They wanted to know whether we see ourselves as separate. It seems really funny that* (Rawinia, M&R:9). Marg said that when she was asked this question by a board member, *I didn't know where she was coming from and I said, 'I really don't know - we haven't thought about it.'* And when I brought it up at the whānau meeting they just sat there and looked at me and some said, *'Oh my god, what do they want? Do they want to give us money? Do they want us to give them money?'* Rawinia interjected, *If they want the meat off the bones, then show us the bones, you know, and then we can get on with it. We haven't got time to run around trying to decipher what they really want.* Marg asked, *How much do they expect from us? I don't know* (M&R:10).

The question about the whānau seeing themselves as separate could have emerged out of the development of a marae in the school. As part of creating their teaching environment, the kaiako, Mere Katene, had worked with the kaiārahi reo and the immersion children, to transform their classroom into a marae. This was a very special place for the immersion class. Mere pointed out that *The children helped us lay down the tikanga of the room - went through the whole process. By the time we were finished they were the only ones who knew the true meaning of the marae* (Mere:8). Some in the school did not fully understand the significance of this however, and saw the setting up of the marae as separating the immersion class from the rest of the school. Mere did not speak of the marae as excluding others though, but described the Montessori approach as one that was *highly individual and they separated themselves from us in that way, because of their way of learning ... the children weren't grouped like they were with us and the mainstream* (Mere:12). Mere felt that it was a consequence of this emphasis on a highly individualised approach, that some of the Montessori children did not give Ann the respect due to her as an elder and she commented that her children noticed this in relation to what she was saying to them - *I was teaching my kids respect to elders, end of story whether you like it or not* (Mere:13).

Mere found that for her, some other conflicts arose out of the differences between the aims and teaching philosophies across the strands. For example, she felt somewhat compromised by having to speak English with other adults or children, such as when doing kapa haka with the whole school. She said, *I found that really hard, because I spoke Māori with my kids, but I had to swap in front of them for other adults and they were sitting there going, "Oh but you said you had to talk Māori to us all the time"* (1). Mere did prioritise talking and teaching te reo with her children, because she saw this as what she had been employed to do. She said that she and the kaiārahi reo *had a job to do and that was to teach Māori to the immersion class children* (Mere:11).

Rawinia's comments reinforced this view when she said, *We want our kids to learn Māori. We like to share our knowledge but, you know, all our energies need to go into getting this up and running and we can't do that if we have to keep giving out all the time. They (the board) seem to want so much from a small group of people.* She gave an example of what she called a *classic* kind of request from the board. When Marg presented the immersion class policy, a board member wanted the whānau to give a definition of te tino rangatiratanga. At the time Rawinia had said, *No. They have to find that out for themselves, because there's a depth to that that we can't give them in a definition on a piece of paper.* Marg agreed and said, *If they want to support what we are doing in the immersion class, they should already know these terms.* Rawinia added, *And funding is set aside for that, so just go and do it!* (Rawinia, M&R:10).

As one of the whānau representatives on the board of trustees, Marg found her position difficult. She said, *The whānau itself hasn't jelled together lately, so when Kate asks me things*

like, 'How would the whānau see this,' I have to be honest and say I don't know. I don't like to speak for other people, I don't know what they think - I can only speak for myself (Marg, M&R:2). Because of this, Rawinia had written to the board about appropriate consultation procedures with the whānau. She said, *The board has to learn that consultation is not, like, one hour - it's not like, now - yes or no. It takes time and they need to learn that.* Rawinia added, *I get very frightened for our reps on the board, because they are there representing our whānau and I don't want them being jumped on by the board and then being jumped on by the whānau when they have been pressured to speak and give an answer for the whole whānau* (Rawinia, M&R:4). Later, Rawinia commented that there was a lot of *talking past each other* happening (Rawinia 2:2)..

What is the role of the co-principals in negotiating these differences?

Marg and Rawinia had different opinions of Ann's and Kate's roles in relation to their issues. Rawinia thought that Ann was sympathetic to the whānau's struggles and saw some similarities between her own strand's negotiating of different purposes within a state school site and the whānau's wishes to have ownership over their class. She said that Ann clarified things for her sometimes. Mere also commented later that she saw Ann and herself experiencing some similar difficulties negotiating the demands of their parents. She said, *Ann was a lovely lady personally. She had a big heart. She was there to teach the kids and she was a kind lady ... but like us in the immersion class, it got stressful, because Ann wasn't always able to initiate what she wanted to do because it was always the parents - parent orientated and parent driven. Very very demanding - like Ann was asked, not asked but told, by her parents that they wanted this and this, you know ... and she had to accommodate it. I sympathised with her having to cope with that - I was going through the same sort of thing* (Mere:12).

Marg found Kate better to talk to than Ann though. Marg saw the complexity of Kate's work, as she worked with the immersion strand while also carrying responsibility for the original strand and the whole school. She said, *I see she does have difficulties to overcome and they're not easy, so I sympathise with her in what she tries to do for the class.* Rawinia felt though that in *doing things for the benefit of the whole school, sometimes our unit misses out.* Marg pointed out though that there were some people who *don't see the difficulties and stand back and kind of judge at a distance. They don't know the whole story, the little minor details of things that you've got to do. There are stages or procedures to go through in order to get what you want. You just can't click your fingers and away you go.* But, said Rawinia, *while that process is going on there's still a lack with our children. My main focus is with my child and if she's got to lose something because the rest of school's going to benefit, it doesn't sit right - yeah it doesn't sit right with me* (M&R:11). Marg and Rawinia wondered whether there was a need for someone in the co-principalship who did not wear two hats and could therefore fight more for their children and their issues. Mere later made a similar comment. She said, *As I look at it now, for a co-principalship to go really well, all the strands have to be quite strong in their arenas of education and have had enough experience to cope with what is going on* (17).

Speaking from the Montessori perspective, Felicity was personally really in favour of the co-principal model. *There is a lot of work for a teaching principal to do and it is better that that be shared. But perhaps even more important is that there is a fundamental philosophy in our school is this idea of diversity and having two principals encourages this idea of different perspectives working together* (18). However, Felicity also said that her group of parents *had no idea of course about how Kate and Ann work together privately, but in*

public, Kate is always the spokesperson. Ann very rarely speaks, even at board meetings, so it is perceived that she is not sort of pushing the Montessori perspective ... This is a concern for the Montessori strand, because we feel that Kate doesn't understand us ... Kate is quite a forceful person - fairly assertive. This is good, but we often wish that Ann was more assertive too (Felicity:17).

From her perspective within the original strand and as board chairperson, Phillipa was becoming increasingly concerned, however, about what she saw as an unfair load being carried by Kate. This was in terms of administration and staff management, but particularly in relation to the difficult work of balancing the three strands in the school. Phillipa thought that most of this work was falling on Kate's shoulders.

Different agendas for shared decision making and tikanga Māori in the school

From Kate's point of view, negotiating differences between the strands coalesced for a time around her relationship with Mere. Kate said that in 1994, when she first came to Telford, she and Mere had *a very good working relationship* (3:14). It was her view though that, *politically Mere started to change I think, and became a lot more separatist in what she thinks is important in the ways that her class should be in relation to the rest of the school* (Kate 3:14). Kate acknowledged that when she first arrived at Telford, she and Mere had discussed Mere's job description, and they *talked about what sorts of things we could include in the school wide area, the school management area. Mere said that she should not have to do any of those sorts of things. She said that I was the principal* (Kate 3:17). While at the beginning this was not a problem, Kate felt that from the introduction of the co-principalship in 1995, Mere's resistance to the aim to involve all the staff in school wide decision making and planning and activities was posing a dilemma for the approach she and Ann were promoting. Kate said, *I talked to Ann about it, so she's really aware, but she is quite nervous of the whole thing* (Kate 3:14). Kate found herself grappling with this issue largely on her own. For example, when Mere told all the staff at the beginning of 1995 that she did not think it was appropriate for her to be part of school wide things like assemblies and the sports, Kate responded, *'Well, we won't discuss that here, because that's not actually going to be your decision. If the parents would like their children to be taken out of all those things, then that's what we'll do'* (Kate 3:14). Kate thought that Mere was becoming politically committed to establishing the immersion class as a separate entity on the Telford School site, more like a 'school within a school' than part of a three stranded school community. She decided to raise this with the whānau, but, she said, as it turned out, she did not have to, because *at the next whānau meeting it came up - under the heading of the kind of directions for the class. The whānau made it absolutely clear then that they do not want two separate entities in the school. They really want to be very much part of the school* (Kate 3:14). Rawinia said that the whānau felt that Mere was wanting to *take them away from the school, like to set up a kura kaupapa, and this was hard, because we did not want that.*

Indeed, some of the whānau parents were asking Mere to ensure that their children achieved equally in te reo and English, tikanga Māori and the mainstream curriculum, and they wanted Mere to teach exactly the same curriculum to their children as was being covered in the original strand. When she reflected later on what was happening here, Mere said, *Really some of the educated parents were looking at it in what I would call a Pākehā way. They did not have a full understanding of what we were doing ... Like they would come in and we would be having karakia or mihimihi and they would say, "Why does it take so long to do that? In the mainstream it only takes ten minutes." I'm having to explain myself and to stick up for the kids. That was a real strain for me, because these parents didn't believe their kids were*

achieving ... And they wouldn't accept Māori on the children's report, but it was easier for me to stay in one language. If they needed to talk to me they could come and see me, but some said, 'My child does immersion, not me.' That really killed my heart - it was a big knife in my heart after a while. I would be teaching their kids all about whānau and how we need to have all the Māori values and it wasn't happening in front of them at home - only at school, nine till three ... The parents who hadn't had education themselves were fine. All they were worried about was that their child was happy and loved to go to school. They couldn't believe it that their kids loved to get up in the morning and go to school as it was a change from the older children kids they had, who by seven didn't want to go to school. It was more the ones that had gone back to school that said, "You're not up with the mainstream". But I was concentrating on te reo - I had no inclination to go into the mainstream. It got really stressful after a while though. Whānau hui were really horrible for me because it was always "Why haven't you done this? Where's this?" And I thought, I've explained to you what we are doing, where we are going, and it wasn't good enough - that's how I felt, it wasn't good enough for a lot of them (Mere:7). She was aware that not all of the whānau felt like this. Marg and Rawinia said that they were really pleased with what was happening in the immersion class. They appreciated that Mere used a lot of her own waiata and stuff from her iwi and her partner was very strong with the boys - the level of knowledge and tikanga and reo was very strong (Marg, M&R:8).

Mere remembered though that she had felt under pressure to achieve 'on all fronts' as it were and as part of keeping her focus on her aims for her class, she stopped going to the staff room for morning tea. She said later that she and her partner, the kaiārahi reo, sort of lost contact with what was happening in the rest of the school in a way, not by choice, but because we didn't want to get involved in the politics and in the running of it all. I didn't think I was capable enough to go into those other management sides of the school because I was only getting certificated as a teacher. I was getting caught in the middle of all the politics though, like with the Montessori parents being very business orientated and knowing how to do that management sort of stuff, and our parents saying, "Well why can't we get those resources and things?" Well I looked at it that if the Montessori parents had offered the school a whole new building, for example, I thought well they have the money and can afford it, so that's good let them do it. But some of my parents worried about the political side of things, sort of asking, what are they after? I was more worried about the kids I had and what I had to do as a teacher to fulfill my curriculum stuff (Mere:14).

The other teachers saw Mere as withdrawing from them and their work in the school, however, and Kate felt that although she did attend staff meetings, Mere was participating only on her own terms, with no input into discussions on the vision of the school whatever. This was hugely disappointing for Kate and in her view, it had a kind of demoralising effect on everyone else (Kate 3:14). With the windows of the immersion classroom blacked out, (when the immersion class had been transformed into a marae, kowhaiwhai patterns had been created on black paper that was pasted over the windows), some of the other teachers felt that some separatism was being instilled also in the children. One teacher commented that *the windows are now black, you know*.

There seemed then, to be some 'classic' talking past each other occurring at several levels between different groups of people during 1995. While Mere was being seen by Kate and some other teachers and Pākehā parents in the school as becoming political and separatist, Mere saw herself as *just keeping on doing what I was employed to do - teach Māori* (Mere:12).

Then, in the middle of 1995 an issue blew up around the taking of kapa haka for the whole school. Kate explained that *Fifty per cent of my class is Māori, and some of them have been in the immersion unit and they've come out because of their age, because that class only*

goes up to standard three. Mere and the kaiārahi reo refused to take kapa hapa with all the senior school though and that became a source of conflict between us (Kate 3:4). Kate felt that she had to discuss the issue with the whole board so that she could gauge what their position was (Kate 3:15). She wrote in the principal's report to the board that there were a large number of Māori children in the school who were not getting any language maintenance or cultural maintenance, and that the board needed to address this issue. At their meeting, *the board then asked why people in the school already couldn't do it, and I said that they felt that their energies should only go into the immersion class and not to anyone else. The board said that there's no money to employ anyone else, so they are going to have to do it, and that it was my job as manager to make that clear* (Kate 3:15).

Kate therefore wrote a letter that formalised a request to the kaiako and kaiārahi reo to take kapa haka an hour a week with the senior class. She said, *We had actually had a number of discussions about it, but when the letter came they took a great offense with it and said 'Well, if you're going to make us do that we will resign.'* Kate felt confident that the whānau parents supported her stance however, and she told the two teachers, *You work here and I suppose this is where the bottom line is in terms of the shared vision. This is the kaupapa of the school. This is what we are doing here. Basically the proposal we had accepted by the board is what it's all about and you are part of that or you are not. And if it doesn't suit you, you've got to find a job somewhere else. I didn't say that, but that was what was implied* (Kate 3:15). At the time Kate said she thought that *Mere really understands where I'm coming from and respected her for her efforts to learn and speak Māori, but in Kate's view, Mere was seeing her role as changing the parents' views, so that they become politically aware of the political issues around separatism also* (Kate3:14).

The three of them agreed that once again, they needed to discuss the issue with the whānau, who were by this stage nervous about losing these two talented people (Marge & Rawinia:4). At a meeting attended by Ann, Kate, the chairperson of the whānau, Marg, Mere and the kaiārahi reo, it was agreed that the two Māori staff would not resign and that Marg would suggest at the next board meeting that the board employ someone extra to take responsibility for cultural and language maintenance for the rest of the school. This was done. Privately Kate thought however, that this *undermined the authority of the principal, because I shouldn't be told by a group of parents that particular teachers shouldn't do this or that. I felt that the two teachers should not be putting all their energies into the immersion class but into the whole school. I don't mean by this that they should be teaching Pākehā children, as the kaiārahi reo is appointed to work with Māori children. What I was asking for was for them to work with all the Māori children. The application for funding that I put in to the Ministry in 1994, that had been developed with input from the whānau, outlined that view and it was on those grounds that we got the funding* (Kate 3:16).

Negotiating struggles over resources

Both of the co-principals and board members found that issues around limited funding and difficulties in finding and keeping trained staff took up time and energy in ways that produced anxiety and stress. Representatives from each strand spoke about the kinds of difficulties they were encountering.

Marg: negotiating board and whānau demands

Although Kate thought that the whānau supported her stance about the kaiako being involved in some teaching of kapa haka to Māori children across the school, the whole funding

area was a thorny one for them. Rawinia said, *We wanted our own funding isolated so that we could know what we were operating on, what our limits were. But the board accountant always said that they can't do that. It's too difficult to do because they all join together somehow. We don't have enough knowledge about how the whole thing works* (Rawinia, M&R:5).

Marg said that as a consequence of being on the board, she saw *both sides of the coin*. She said, *I explained to the whānau that the board had to work for the whole school, but some of the whānau couldn't see the whole picture. These people felt that the Treaty of Waitangi meant that we, as the tangata whenua, should come first. They thought that the whānau was more important than the whole school. It was Marg's view that all of the whānau needed to understand that the money that came into the school was rigidly controlled and that even though there may be \$60,000.00 say, that's not ours to spend, because we have to pay wages, and like salary for our kaiārahi reo, resources for the class, you know. And the money that comes in is not just for the whānau - it's for all the Māori children in the school. But some of the whānau get a bit of tunnel vision when they look at the Māori class. They think the Treaty says that this money should be directed into that classroom. But that's not how it is. There are Māori children in Kate's class whose parents - I don't know whether they don't want them to know about things Māori or whether they are just not interested and they just send their children off to school - but those children are the ones you need to target* (Marg, M&R:5). Marg could understand the whānau's concerns but she felt that the whole situation was more complex than some whānau members were willing to acknowledge. She said, *It's staffing levels and lots of things. It's more than the school or the board can handle. You know, we are bound by so many things. It is very draining* (Marg, M&R:7). She pointed out that *finding fluent speakers in urban areas is very hard. You know, they come from rural areas to teachers' college or wananga but they always go back home to the rural areas* (7). Rawinia saw that Marg's situation was like being *caught between a rock and a hard place* in this issue and in others.

For the whānau, these struggles had a long history. They and their children had not been served well by mainstream education. Marg said, *Those parents who leave, well you know that they have given up. I've thought of leaving and then I think, no, I was here at the beginning and I can see that it's going to take time. These things won't happen overnight. And even though you feel that your child's a guinea pig, that she's the one in an experiment, she's one stage better off than my mother was, you know, when they wouldn't let them speak Māori at all. Now she can talk to her nanny - she and her nanny just rattle on to each other. It's really exciting and my kuia tell me, 'Keep it up girl'* (Marg, M&R:7). Rawinia agreed that it was important to continue with the struggles. She said, *I'm at the stage of having to learn myself, and it's hard for me to keep up with my daughter who's way up here. Ninety percent of us in the whānau are like that, having to deal with finding out our own identity, plus finding out the rights that go with that identity, plus coping with all this stuff that's going on in the school, fighting the political struggles and finding out how things operate* (Rawinia, M&R:7).

Felicity: identity and ownership and how far should the rich subsidise the poor?

Issues of separate identity and ownership of an educational philosophy were also interwoven with issues of funding and staffing within the Montessori strand. Felicity said that she was not herself *fanatical about the Montessori philosophy and there is a range of opinions within the group about it, but we do get little 'heart burnings' about it every so often ... And I think, from listening to the whānau representatives talking at board meetings, the whānau believe they own the immersion strand in the same way the Montessori parents own their*

strand ... The whānau are only here really because they can not afford to be on their own. I don't see them wanting to be part of the whole school - they want their own school. And that's fine - to some extent the Montessori lot are like that too.

From her point of view as a Montessori board member and the board treasurer, Felicity felt however, that a lot of the school's problems come down to not having enough money from the government - we, the parents, have to make up the difference. I guess we expect more now - like computers in the classrooms, a whole corner of lovely books ... and your expectations differ according to what you have in your own home. I mean we have thousands of dollars worth of books in our home, we go to the library once or twice a week and we get books for our child every month from the book club. We worry though, about the children who are deprived because we have a particularly wide range in the school in terms of socio-economic background ... We are a sort of microcosm of the New Zealand community. There's an issue here that is an issue in the society at large, in to what extent should the rich subsidise the poor as it were - like to what extent should the Montessori parents subsidise other parents who don't put a lot of money in? (Felicity:7-8). Felicity said that a difficult issue for her, a personal one that I have never quite resolved, is that it is expected that the Montessori parents pay for their own teacher aid if they want it but it is expected that if the immersion strand need it, the school will pay for it (20). Although she acknowledged that the school did have Māori language factor funding that covered this, she saw the other two strands having an assumption that the Montessori strand can pay for its own things - it annoys us (20). Further, it was Felicity's view that the original strand would have died by now if it wasn't for us coming on to the site ... Now we have got all this new playground, new equipment, and we are financial again, but we are not sure that the original strand appreciates this. We have always felt that the original strand begrudged us being here ... We pay twice as Montessori parents - we pay school fees, but we also pay into the Montessori Trust for our classroom equipment ... and the Montessori parents have put in a lot of effort, in developing the playground and the library for example (Felicity 15 -16).

Phillipa: negotiating resourcing as a social justice and Treaty issue

As an original strand parent and the board chairperson, Phillipa found herself also negotiating tricky issues around funding and resourcing between the strands. She acknowledged that the Montessori parents have found it very difficult that the board has refused, on a couple of occasions, to let them pay for additional things for their part of the school. I have some sympathy with them because I can see that they are mystified by this. They say, 'But we are prepared to pay for it. We are not asking the board to pay for it.' And we say, 'No, sorry. You opted into a state system, so sorry guys, but you are basically running by the rules of a state system, not having the benefits of your teachers paid by the state system and being able to top that up for your own strand, with extra teachers, extra trips and so on.' It's more a board issue than a principal issue. I'm not prepared to see one part of our school become very clearly better resourced than another. I just think that for the long term future of the three strands, that is an unhealthy move (27).

Phillipa was a little uncomfortable however, about what she called *copping out a bit* in the area of Māori-Pākehā politics. We don't challenge the whānau about it in the same way that we challenge the Montessori parents. Yeah, they don't, the whānau don't participate much in the rest of the school and one of the things that I find really hard about it, and it's probably just my lack of understanding, is that they are very cavalier in their attitude to the other Māori children in the school. I supported Kate that some portion of the language funding be allocated to the children who were not in the immersion class and the whānau were very

opposed to that ... I had difficulty with the fact that the whānau seemed to not care about what the agenda is for those other children. I'm sure there are all sorts of reasons for that and I'm very willing to admit they are a very committed group of parents, but they are perhaps even more inwardly looking than the Montessori parents really. At least the Montessori parents sort of acknowledge that there are issues there about their place in the school and their relationship with the rest of the school. And I have to say, in their defence, that Montessori parents are very good at doing things like being involved in fund raising and if there is a school concert or whatever, they will turn up in big numbers, so they certainly do their share for the whole school. The whānau don't - well, the only times they will participate is if it's put to them as their deal and can be on their terms. Like sometimes it's a hangi and the immersion strand will do it on their terms and the rest of us will contribute to it, but if it's anything that is being organised elsewhere there's very unlikely to be any input from the whānau (Phillipa:30). In Phillipa's view Mere had taken a lot of the whānau with her in her thinking that 'we are here to do our own thing and if you don't support us, then you aren't supporting the kaupapa'. She was a great teacher and her kids' self esteem was great, but in terms of the rest of the school, it was really quite difficult (30).

In relation to the fundraising issue, Rawinia said later that part of the problem here was that *fundraising things like a wine and cheese evening at \$25 a ticket is not something many of the whānau could afford or would like to do. We would do a hangi. Many of us have worked in that way on marae, and we knew how to get things down quickly. We'd open it up to the school, but the other parents didn't have the contacts we had for, say a side of pork, and didn't know how to mass produce food quickly. It was easier and cheaper to do it ourselves (Rawinia 2:2).*

Phillipa had considerable sympathies for the whānau and she found herself caught between these and her desire for what she called *social justice for all the children in the school*. She said, *I can see that it must take, at all levels, in all ways, an enormous amount of energy and resources for those families to set up and continue a very different system for their children and wanting their kids to succeed in Pākehā ways as well. So if they need to conserve their energy, be inward looking and 'stuff the rest of you,' that's more or less fine. Well, not completely fine, but as a Pākehā and as a board, we have obligations under the Treaty - so I don't actually require too much back from them. I don't feel personally or as a board member sort of shut out. I can live with that*. She did worry though that she felt differently about the Montessori parents and required that *they get into line over this and that, and be part of the school and they look at the whānau and say, 'Well, it's not happening over there!'* (38). She said that her husband told her to *Just ask them when the Treaty of Montessori was signed! But they don't seem to understand that the Treaty gives us, both individually and as a board, a different relationship with the immersion strand to what we have with them.*

Phillipa was hopeful that a solution to these complexities could be reached at Telford School. *It could work, she said, if everyone had enough of a shared vision and values as well as an individual vision (Phillipa:43).*

Building collegiality into new staff appointments

Kate tried particularly hard to develop this balance of individual and shared vision within the staff relationships. Despite the difficulties that had been encountered during 1995, she remained convinced about the value of opening up the leadership and of working to involve all the staff as fully as possible *to have goals collectively decided and collectively kind of managed, with responsibility shared. I've worked in a school where I haven't felt very supported and I've shut myself in the classroom and thought never mind anybody else, yeah -*

I'm here and I'm with my kids and I'm going to do this, this and this and that's fine. But it's lonely. It's so lonely. And I just don't think you can sustain this, particularly like here, where we've got demanding children and demanding parents (Kate, K&A 1:8). She said that after the disagreement with Mere over staff involvement in whole school decision making, she felt it was important when new staff were being appointed *to make it clear to people that there are these expectations for shared responsibilities in the school (Kate, K&A1:8).*

Mere and her partner resigned at the end of 1995, (Mere said that she had burnt out from the struggles over aims and working with minimal resources). Although Kate drew on her wide networks to help in the search for teachers to replace these two talented people, it was not until just before school started again in 1996, that a young teacher graduate was appointed. Ruth Thomas was not fluent in te reo, so the whānau did not want to appoint her for the whole year. In the end they had to agree however, that it was unlikely that another fluent in te reo would be found quickly. An uneasy compromise was reached in their agreement to appoint Ruth as a reliever for a year to allow the school to mount a search for a permanent teacher for the immersion class. Meanwhile, the kaiārahi reo position had also been advertised and this position was filled by Janette Wright, a fluent speaker of te reo, who began working with Ruth at the beginning of the first term, 1996.

When Ruth was interviewed for the kaiako position, the expectation that she would be involved in some school wide activities and shared decision making was explored fully with her. Ruth was happy for this to happen. The new kaiārahi reo, Janette Wright was also supportive of the idea that at times Ruth might work with the other strands in some whole school activities.

At the beginning of 1996 a new teacher was also appointed in the Montessori strand. The search for a fully trained Montessori teacher had been unsuccessful, but Narita, who was a state trained teacher with past experience in three state schools, had begun studying for her Montessori qualifications and was strongly committed to the Montessori philosophy. She was also committed to collegiality between teachers and principals and was attracted to Telford because she had heard that it had a co-principalship. She said, *I was really excited that Ann was representing Montessori in the leadership. I thought this was a really good model (Narita:1).*

Kate said that with these three new staff appointments, the previous tensions among the teaching staff dissipated. Janette and Ruth both joined the other staff for morning tea and Narita and Janette commented that, *There's always a bit of joking going on.* Janette appreciated that she was invited to staff meetings, but she said that she felt that *Ruth is the teacher and she should go. I've chosen not to at the moment. I've also got four kids and the meetings are always after school (Janette:3).* Both Ruth and Narita also became involved in taking up a curriculum responsibility across the whole school. Narita was keen to share her skills in physical education. She said, *I could see that the school needed something doing in the PE area. I've been given the PE budget. PE and Health is my my area. Kate is supporting me though - she has told me that she'll come down with me to the PE shed and help do the inventory of the equipment, so I just have to buy the material and organise the PE shed (6).* Ruth took responsibility for the curriculum area of Māori technology and she became involved in school wide staff meetings and activities. Janette said however, that *It was hard for Ruth, because she got a bit of flak from the whānau because her language was not up to scratch. I was there for her support though, and I made sure that the children gave her respect as the teacher (Janette:1).* Janette had grown up within a family that spoke Māori at home while she spoke English at school. She used English as her main language when she went back to her community, because, she said, *I know others don't know Māori and I don't like to show myself*

up and put them down ... I can work with anyone though, tuakana, teina, it doesn't worry me. As long as I am treated with respect, I will give it too (Janette:2).

Building links between the children

The new staff believed that it was important to teach all the children in the school to value the differences between them, while also finding a common ground of respect. Narita said, *I think the valuing of differences has got to be worked on and the teachers can be the model for that. Differences have to be celebrated. I come from Singapore where there are four cultures. We grew up where we could all speak our language and all our national holidays were celebrated. If I had a Malay friend and they were celebrating a special day, they would invite all their Chinese and Indian friends to their house and we'd do the same, so there was constant cross-cultural grouping and you wanted to know about each other. That is what I would like to see happen here. But there is some real arrogance coming from both the immersion and the Montessori strands, arrogance in the sense that some children are getting the idea from their homes that they are more special than others. I just find that so silly. You're special, but so is someone else and let's do more than acknowledge each other - let's learn from one another (8-9).*

At the end of 1996, after a year of working in the school, Narita said, *I like the various cultures in the school. I like the idea of the three strands and watching it grow ... We've done a lot of whole school things like going swimming, like having our technology challenges, like we did a Sun Smart thing - having a hat parade and we all had to make and wear sun hats. The whole school has come together in things like singing, and the school sports day. We've had the junior and senior kapa haka, which means that with the children from right across the school working together according to their ages, so it's been cross grouping children. It will take time though. Like last week in the Montessori strand we celebrated international day and the children came in whatever their backgrounds were or if they wanted to represent a certain country that's fine. Some of the Māori kids were going 'Ooh yuck that fella's wearing a skirt!' because someone had come in a kilt. But Ruth said to them, 'It's no different to wearing a puipui you know,' and it suddenly hit them. We're only just beginning, but I'm hopeful to see it grow into something really strong (Narita:9).*

Narita was puzzled by what she saw as separatist stances by some of the Montessori and the whānau parents. She said, *How can they expect the cultures to grow together if they don't offer it? I know why you have to retain who you are. I do that. I'm bringing up my daughter to be able to speak my language and I'll push it to the limit you know, but we still have to live in a multi-cultural environment and you have to be able to relate to and value another one's culture you see. Though I think the Māori people are right in wanting to have their language and their culture re-established. It's vital to who they are (Narita:8,9).*

The teachers thought that a marae style stay over at school, held within a week of teaching and learning activities focused on tikanga Māori, had supported this aim. Kate said that it had *raised the profile of Māori language because all the kids had to learn a mihi. They had to understand that the mihi was about connections and it's about yourself and about your past and where you come from and all that, and so all of the Pākehā kids had an opportunity to talk about those things as well and value them. There is still a little bit of nervousness in these sorts of gatherings, like, you know, 'I can't do kapa haka' - or whispering 'I can't speak Māori,' but when a kid gets up and does a mihi it raises the profile for Māori kids (Kate, K&A2:14).* Ann said, *I think it has pulled the school together. There were two special things that were to do with both adults and children. The morning after the marae stay over, serving*

breakfast, all lined up together, were parents from the original strand, the Montessori strand and the whānau. And sitting at the tables were the children, all mixed up. (Ann, K&A2:11).

Janette was a little saddened however, by the response of some members of the whānau to the week of focus on tikanga Māori. *I felt that they thought that those experiences like noho marae, bone carving and kapa haka shouldn't have been taught to the other kids. That was theirs and shouldn't have been given out. I totally disagree with that* (Janette:3). Janette did not agree with the whānau members who *seem to think they should be by themselves. Both Ruth and myself would like to go across to the other strands, but some members of the whānau just want to have their children taught in Māori all the time - any time spent in other classes, like technology, would be time wasted when they should be learning te reo. That's what they want their children to have* (Janette:1). Kate acknowledged, however, the validity of *the fears of the whānau that their own focus might become watered down in such interactive projects. That's fair enough*, she said. *They are a threatened group in many ways* (Kate, K&A 2:13). Janette agreed that the whānau's focus on te reo in the immersion class was important. *That's their right* she said, *but I do think they should let their children experience other things too, now and then. They've got to learn to mix and to know other people's views* (1).

Kate and Ann thought that by the end of 1996, some of this was starting to happen. Although the children had gone back to their own groups at the end of the week of tikanga Māori, for example, both Kate and Ann thought that there was a little bit more interaction occurring between the children in the different strands. Kate said, *The kids in the school are becoming our best advertisement for what we are trying to do here. People are hearing about us and they are finding it really interesting. I think we need to promote that, and promote the school as being a very different place, one that is united by its common philosophy of respect, respect for each other* (Kate, K&A2:13).

Respect for other people was a value held strongly by both Ann and Kate. It was perhaps Kate's respect for Ann's personal qualities and being as a person that took precedence over her ability to challenge her when it became apparent that Ann was not contributing sufficiently to the work of the co-principalship. The next and final part of this narrative explains how this situation, which had become problematic early on in Telford's shared leadership, led to the demise of this co-principalship.

Reviewing the co-principalship

At the end of 1995, after her term as sole principal, Ann said that it had *probably been good for me to leap in and have to do everything* (3:3). She thought that as a consequence, *providing we're both still doing it next year, then we'll be able to divide it better than we could in the first half of this year* (3:2). Her proviso suggests that she was not sure then whether the shared leadership would be continued.

As has been noted in earlier parts of this narrative, Kate had become concerned that she was *probably carrying the shared leadership*, but throughout 1995, she had found it very difficult to talk frankly with Ann about several things that were 'not quite right' in the co-principalship. Rather than being direct with Ann about her lack of input, she continued to worry about being too 'bossy' or 'taking over.' The shared leadership continued therefore into 1996, assisted by the increasingly happy and co-operative teaching working relationships described in the previous section.

The teaching staff all thought very highly of Kate's abilities as a leader and administrator. Janette said, *Her style as a leader is strong, approachable, easy to get on with, not authoritarian - she speaks to you on the same level and values people's opinions*

(Janette:3). Ruth thought that Kate was *a great person. She models shared leadership and works really hard for the whānau* (1). She illustrated Kate's collegial approach by describing how she was Kate's peer appraiser, observing students' behaviours while Kate was teaching and Kate's pronunciation of te reo. Ruth laughed as she described how she had to reassure Kate that *the kids who were not keeping on task were always pretty bad anyway* (Ruth:3). Narita described Kate as *a brilliant administrator. I've never come across a principal who I feel so comfortable with. She never makes you feel anything but her equal and she's so relaxed in your company. She never tells you what to do - it's always a suggestion, so in the staffroom, for example, people feel comfortable about disagreeing and saying, like, 'I don't think that will work Kate. How about this?' This is good for new teachers in the school - you can actually voice your opinions* (Narita:4). Kate was also admired by the staff for her strong vision for the school operating as *a collective cooperative ... She is great because she comes up with some really exciting things that nobody else would have thought of and all the rest of us might be thinking, 'Oh no - that's not possible!' and she shows how it is possible* (Frances:4).

While the staff agreed that Ann was a really nice person, they were very aware that the co-principalship wasn't working as a fully shared partnership between Kate and Ann. Frances said later that *it was very difficult for the staff to actually get a clear handle on what the co-principal position actually meant in practice because Kate took the role of principal. I mean she always facilitated staff meetings and there was nothing to indicate to any of us that Ann was actually doing anything in a principal's role. She did not even lead an assembly. If Kate wasn't there, one of the others of us would have to step in because she - I mean it's just not in Ann's nature really to take that kind of role. She's such a gentle person - secure in her own classroom with younger children, but older kids and working with the whole school and stuff are just not her forte really* (5).

Within the Montessori strand it was also clear to Felicity, a Montessori board representative, that Ann was not comfortable in a leadership role. Felicity commented that *Ann is not assertive enough. She is such a nice person and lovely with the children, so it is not surprising that she is not very good at administration* (18). Narita admired Ann's *ability to relate to children - she never raises her voice and it's amazing how she can get them to work, but I think that she is not a pen and paper person. She tries to carry everything in her head and there comes a time when you will forget - and she does forget things. Like she can arrange a meeting with a parent and then not turn up* (Narita:3). As noted earlier, Ann herself worried about forgetting things.

Frances expressed some sympathy for Ann's position, however, saying that Ann was *thrown in at the deep end early on, with no support*. Frances thought that the co-principalship may have been more successful if Kate and Ann had been able to *give it more time together*. She qualified this point however, by saying *In any sort of shared job though the parties involved both need to be really committed and keen and clear about what it means for them, individually and collectively and I think it would be very difficult to set that model up successfully if one person was quite a lot, you know, stronger* (Frances:4).

By the middle of 1996, the board chairperson had become increasingly concerned about the imbalance within the co-principalship. Phillipa talked with Kate about this, telling her that she was very worried that she (Kate) was *going to be burned out and leave* (Phillipa:3). Although she was tempted to talk to Ann herself, Phillipa said, *I knew that the initiative to discuss it had to come from Kate because I thought that Ann did not actually realise that she was not doing the job. Kate assured me that she would talk to Ann, but after about six or eight weeks she finally told me that it was too hard and she couldn't talk to Ann* (4). Phillipa found this surprising as she knew that Kate was a forthright person and had been very active in union

politics where she had no difficulty confronting people and stating her point of view. She came to the conclusion that *What I think has compounded Kate's difficulty, and she probably wouldn't mind me saying this, is her pride. Kate has felt terrible because she organised the co-principalship and she has felt so responsible for landing the school in this situation that it has paralysed her from doing anything about it. What she has done is work harder and harder and harder herself in an effort to make sure that the output of the principal arrangement is adequate. And it is - it is more than adequate, I mean it's great. Kate is a wonderful principal. I just can't speak highly enough of her, but I am disappointed that she has been unable to tackle this matter with Ann* (Phillipa:3 - 4).

By July of 1996, Ann was recognising that her own skill levels were not on a par with Kate's. She said, *Kate always seems to be six months or a year ahead of me ... She has not only had DP experience but she also has a wide network of people that she draws on and ideas that she brings in. It has not been as sharing as it could have been* (Ann, K&A 2:1). In Kate's view, this was partly because the two of them had been *driven by the demands of the job and we don't spend a lot of time sitting down and working out a vision, if you like, of the sharing* (Kate, K&A 2:2). Kate also thought that because Ann *hadn't had much experience in management, at the beginning we should have taken a role of me demonstrating the way a deputy principal worked*.

The matter of whether the co-principalship should continue or not was soon to be taken out of their hands however. As time went on, Phillipa decided that she had to do something herself. She told the co-principals that it was time that a principal's appraisal was carried out, and she wanted this to be an individual appraisal with each of them. *Kate was very keen for the position to be the focus of the appraisal, but I really was not, as this would not help our situation. The job was being done more than adequately - it just wasn't being shared* (Phillipa:5). Phillipa could not therefore, see any benefit in the co-principalship and she wanted it to be *discontinued. I wanted Kate to continue as principal and to have the extra release time and the authority. She was making all the decisions anyway, and I thought that she did not need all her energy going in to keeping up a charade of a co-principalship* (6).

Kate was upset that Phillipa had insisted on going ahead with personal appraisals, and had challenged Phillipa, *Look, if the job is being done, why is it a problem?* She wanted to finish defining the principals' job descriptions and performance agreement first, but said *there was never enough time and Phillipa pointed out that the appraisal process has to happen so in the end I accepted that* (4:14).

Co-principals' appraisals and revising the job descriptions

Phillipa worked with two other board members using material from the Ministry of Education to construct a questionnaire for feedback on the co-principals' performance. These were sent out to *between 15 and 18 people with whom the principals have key relationships, asking them how well Kate and Ann performed in each area, what their areas of strength were and what areas they needed development in* (Phillipa:5). Phillipa then collated the comments and discussed the areas that had been identified with each of the co-principals. Most people felt that the co-principalship was not an equal partnership. Phillipa discussed this with both women and identified areas where she thought some professional development would be helpful.

After these meetings, the two co-principals and the board chairperson agreed that before any professional development was embarked upon, more clearly defined job descriptions needed to be written. The three women met together every Monday for a number of weeks to work on this task. Kate felt though, that she *wasn't getting enough feedback from*

Ann to indicate that she really understood what it all meant (4:13). She decided to suggest to Ann that they should go back to Kate being principal, with Ann as DP.

Ann said later that *going back to a sole principalship was in the back of my mind and Kate must have been thinking about too, because on one Monday towards the end of the second term, when Phillipa could not come in, Kate brought this up and said to me what did I think about it and maybe we could talk about it. I said, you know, that's okay by me. I felt a bit disappointed, but also relieved* (4:4).

Reflecting on what went wrong and what could have helped

When she looked back on what had happened over the nearly two years of the co-principalship, Ann said *I'm not looking for excuses, but I think support has quite a bit to do with it. We went through a personal crisis at the beginning of the year. My husband merged in another business and that fell apart, leaving my husband and his partner with a huge debt and people suing them. It was absolutely horrors and for six months he didn't take any salary out. It all had to go to pay back the debt ... Then out of the blue, my father in law died in England and we went through trying to work out, do we go to England or do we not. So that was really stressful and on top of that, in my class, there's always this feeling that some of the parents only tolerate me until they can get an overseas teacher. Last year I was really, really annoyed that a Montessori board member suggested that I talk to the parents and say how I was fit to take the children in a Montessori way, and I thought, no-one else has to get up in front of everyone and say that. I'm not doing it* (Ann 4:1).

Although she did mention to Kate that her husband's business was in difficulty, Ann did not talk to anyone at work about these matters. She said her mother had brought her up to *not talk about personal things*. She had hated this and consequently, in her own family she said, *we share everything*, but she did not talk about her own worries with her colleagues. She said that at the time of her family difficulties she thought that she was *coping fine anyway. I didn't realise what I was like until we had a teacher only day and Kate had our itinerant teacher who has also done counselling, do a session with us on workload and stress. I found it incredibly difficult. We were meant to talk about our stresses and how we were feeling and I couldn't do it because I knew if I started I would burst into tears and I thought I'm not coping as I thought I was. So I said to Linda, 'I think I'm going to need to talk to you privately.'* But then I didn't need to because I thought I'm coming out of this, I'm fine. So I haven't done anything about it (Ann 4:2). She added, somewhat wistfully, that Kate was really open, really communicative, but for herself, *I find it really hard to talk, to open up. Really difficult. That's where I think a course on communication skills, something like that would be really good. Kate is fortunate too, in that she has a great sense of humour and she can make people laugh and that's a great thing to have ... I can't crack jokes and I envy people who can do that, because it helps* (4:3).

Ann wondered too whether one of the problems was that she was not a very organised person. She described how one day Kate had come in to the staffroom and said how she was *in a staff of airy fairy people - or something like that. She said, 'Ann has got little piles all over the place!'* And I do. I do at home too, and I keep trying to organise them but I don't, you know. Kate was laughing and we were all laughing and joking about it but I don't know, I mean maybe, maybe she found that hard (Ann:4:4). She did not feel able to bring this up with Kate however.

From her point of view, Kate agreed that for a co-principalship to succeed there needed to be very good communication. *It depends on the degree to which somebody can be open and cope, or be in touch with your own fears* (Kate 4:6). Kate had confided some of her feelings

about the problems within the co-principalship to Frances Edwards, who had said to her, *Don't tell me - tell Ann* (Frances:8). Frances recognised the difficulty of the situation, but in her view, in a co-principalship each partner had to give to the other *permission to be honest* (8). She believed that sometimes *it can be more damaging if things are let go. Giving things time to work themselves out can just make the problem worse*. When she reflected later on her own part in the breakdown of communication between herself and Ann, Kate said however, *I find it very difficult to front up to people who I don't think emotionally will take it very well. Like I would be concerned about doing damage to Ann's self esteem - she seems too fragile really. It sounds a bit 'matronising,' but Ann doesn't have a power base, like the board do for example* (4:7). Kate remembered that *someone once told me too that I was quite frightening. I know I can be, like in a union situation I don't have any problem about getting up and ranting in front of a crowd of 400 people, you know. But socially I'm quite shy really - I knew that I had to do something about it all, but it just got harder and harder* (4:8). Kate's solution had been to *just get on and do the work*. In Frances Edwards' view though, there was no advantage in being *a martyr to the job. Kate seemed to always be prepared to keep taking everything on, but if you do that then other people will allow you to do it. Being a superwoman can kind of also diminish other people's confidence in a way too. It's when you say 'No, I'm not going to do this because I haven't got the time,' that's when other people are forced to start taking some of the responsibility* (8).

Kate realised later that when she had invited Ann to apply with her for the co-principalship, she had not really worked closely enough with her to really know her approach and particular skills. In hindsight, she thought that this was a factor important for others contemplating sharing a leadership position. She also pointed out that the board selection and appointment processes had not been thorough enough in their case. Phillipa acknowledged this. She and Kate both said that when appointing co-principals, checking people's qualifications, experience and ability to do different aspects of a principal's work was crucial. Phillipa said that if a similar situation arose again, she would *look for demonstrable skills from both applicants* (43).

Phillipa also said that she would require *a firm commitment from the candidates to discuss the process as it was going on, discuss it if necessary with the board chair, or on their own. It needs a clear recognition from the start that the job share itself needs some attention regularly ... so you review it, not just the performance of the principals but the processes happening in the job share itself, and you set up from the outset how this will be done* (43, 45). From her perspective as staff representative on the board, Frances agreed that the board also needed to monitor more carefully what was happening, *right from the beginning, and put more adequate supports in place, like assisting with the development of job descriptions earlier on and requiring feedback about some of the processes and what each person was doing and was it appropriate* (Frances:9).

A commitment to shared leadership remains at Telford

Although Ann and Kate's co-principalship was disestablished, both original strand and Montessori strand board members supported the principle of shared leadership given the provisos outlined in the previous section. An original strand board member said, *I am enthusiastic about anything that increases flexibility for women and I would always support it if other women wanted it. Felicity remained convinced that co-principals are the preferred model in this school. It fits in very well with our charter and our emphasis on diversity. I think it is important to have principals from different backgrounds working together and I'm really sad it hasn't worked out this time but I'm still very positive about co-principals* (Felicity:22).

Phillipa would also support a co-principalship though she personally preferred to work on her own, because this allowed her to *just rattle through things and get things done* (Phillipa:6). Marg and Rawinia were a little doubtful however, about whether a co-principalship was such a good idea, although Rawinia thought that she *could go with the model* at Telford School if it was a three way share. *That could be nice*, she said (Rawinia, M&R:12).

Despite the difficulties they had experienced, both Kate and Ann remained believers in co-principalship as a leadership approach. Ann hoped to try it out again some time in the future, perhaps in another school, and Kate said that she would definitely re-consider it with someone else. Kate worried about the failure of the Telford School co-principalship, however. She said, *I get concerned about how people perceive the fact that it hasn't worked and this will confirm all their prejudices about it. That really bothers me. I feel worried that it could reinforce a dependence on sole leadership ... It has not been a complete failure in this school though, because during this year the other staff have taken on a lot of responsibility, so it is becoming more shared in the sense of the whole staff* (4:3).

The teachers who worked at Telford in 1996 agreed with this view of a shared leadership that went wider than just a co-principalship. Abbie Smith summed up, *I'm a great believer in co-operative teaching and collegial sharing and I see all the teachers taking part in shared leadership, not just the principals. You can be a leader in terms of professional development, you can have vision but you also need skills of leadership with children. In this school, it is important that all teachers are proactive, that there is leadership on all sides, in all strands* (6).

Epilogue

Ann Howells continued as deputy principal at Telford School until the end of 1998 when she was granted study leave by the board to enable her to gain her Montessori qualifications in primary teaching. She resigned from Telford soon after however, and took up a teaching position in a Montessori pre-school. Later, after she had read this case narrative, she wrote to me that reading it had been helpful for her. She had found being in the co-principalship was a valuable learning experience for her and she had gone into her next job being more assertive.

In 1997, a teacher fluent in te reo was appointed to the position of kaiārahi reo, and although Janette Wright described her as more radical than herself, the immersion class remained involved with whole school activities. Janette went on into teacher training herself, and in 2000 accepted a full-time position in the second Māori immersion class that was established in the school. Rawinia said after she had read this narrative early in 2001, *Things are improving at the school, and though there still needs to be some growth in the area of the Treaty and biculturalism people are approaching the issues with more respect* (Rawinia 2:2). Marg agreed. She said that by then the children were mixing more across the strands and she was proud of what had been achieved in the provision of kapahaka for the whole school.

Narita continued to take initiatives in involving the Montessori strand with the other strands and in 1999, Frances Edwards and Abbie Smith were appointed as co deputy principals, job sharing the position on a 2.5 split.

Kate remained as principal at Telford School. According to her, Phillipa continued make a big contribution, articulating issues for the school and clarifying governance and management issues. The issues around finding fully trained Montessori staff, and around autonomy, ownership and control in terms of the school's three strand structures kept coming up. This was all exhausting, Kate said when I spoke to her in September 2000, but she added with some satisfaction that *there is a maturity in the discussions now*.

CHAPTER 10

ST MARY'S SCHOOL NARRATIVE

Introduction

St Mary's School was a Catholic integrated full primary school. During the time of this research, it served a roll of between 111 - 124 children, from J1 to Form2, that is, Year1 to Year 8. In 1995, of the 62 girls and 49 boys, 77% were Pākehā, 3% Māori, 17% Samoan, and 3% Asian. This ethnic mix remained fairly constant between 1995 - 1999, during which time all the teaching staff and the school secretary were Pākehā women. Funded for 5.7 teachers, there were five full time and two part-time staff, the latter being a .2 reading recovery teacher and a principal release teacher employed for 12 hours a week. The school's physical size and situation meant that its roll was capped at 124 students.

The school had a relatively high socio-economic decile rating of 8. It served, however, a community that was described by Wayne Anderson (who was board chairperson 1992-95) as *a very diverse pool of people, from the extraordinarily wealthy to the very impoverished* (Wayne:11). He, and others, said that the school was not well off, despite the fact that many parents contributed heavily to fund-raising events to improve its facilities, such as increasing the stock of its meagre library and fund-raising \$70,000 in 18 months when a new building was needed for the school's survival. In its original charter, the school community described St Mary's as *a small parish school with a low pupil/teacher ratio. A close relationship exists between the children, staff, Parish Priest, parents and parishioners. It is one of the few schools in the (area) which maintains the tradition of celebrating a weekly mass and the staff extend these Christian values into all facets of school life. Parents share a strong commitment to the school, to a degree usually associated with rural communities, and assist with cultural, creative and sporting activities* (St Mary's School Charter:3).

Living in the school's immediate environment of a pleasant and green suburb of mainly villa and bungalow style houses, were the majority of the Pakeha families, a group described by a board member, as *a very tight knit community*. These were mainly two parent families, (in many instances, both parents being professionals), who held high expectations of the school's provision of education for their children. Most of these parents were *very articulate, not afraid to stand up and be counted. They know what they want, they know where they're going - they're looking to employment and success later on* (Board member: 6).

The small group of Samoan families whose children attended the school, lived further away, in a poorer, ex state housing area. In many cases there was only one parent living at home in these families, and/or only one parent in paid employment. One of the Samoan parents thought that it was this situation, combined with what was described as *trouble with the language* and shyness with the *English* parents, that contributed to the fact that these parents *often send their kids to something happening in the school rather than going themselves. The teachers are trying to have more Samoan in the school and the co-principals are very good. But I don't think that some of the English parents think very much of our parents as we are low income people. They don't understand us* (Samoan parent:1). The board chairperson said the school board had difficulty maintaining Samoan representation among its Pakeha membership.

In 1995 the school's three small classroom blocks were tucked into a fairly small area adjacent to the local church. These buildings encircled an asphalted playground - like many other city primary schools there were no extensive grassed playing fields. To a casual observer,

the school buildings, painted a quiet grey, looked to be in reasonable repair. However, when the drains blocked, the women co-principals dug out the mucky mess. It was also they who painted their tiny converted storeroom office, transforming its dingy interior into vibrant emerald green and royal blue walls sparkled with a bright yellow frieze.

Just along the corridor from this office was the staffroom. This multi purpose room had been converted from an unused classroom and had three main areas. In the 'staffroom' section, partially screened by movable room dividers (covered with pinned up notices and information), a large round table doubled as meeting and eating space for all the staff. Along one wall was the 'kitchen' - sink, zip for heating water for drinks, fridge, a small microwave oven, and in pride of place, a dishwasher that had been donated by a parent. Pinned up on this wall was a series of cartoons, (one bemoaning, *God put me on earth to accomplish a certain number of things, but right now I'm so far behind, I will never die*), wise sayings and the cleaning-up roster. On the facing wall were weekly planners and notice boards detailing events that were underway or about to happen. Here too, a whiteboard on which staff wrote agenda items for the weekly staff meetings. Below these boards were racks of year planners for each of the subject areas, with information readily accessible in neat clear file folders. A developing staff library filled the rest of the wall.

In the second area of this large room, placed to the right of the corridor door, was the school photocopier and work space. Beyond this was the 'school office,' a space backing on to windows that overlooked the playground and accessible to that area through an outside door. A curved workstation, separated from the rest of the room by an upstand bar, furnished this office space where the school secretary worked: processing accounts, dealing with the word processing and the faxes, answering the phone and children's, staff's and parents' queries.

Between 1995-97, the board of trustees included four Proprietors' Representatives (from the Catholic church), four elected parent representatives, one staff representative and the two co-principals. Wayne Anderson was the board chairperson who facilitated the introduction of the shared leadership at the school. He was a man who believed in thinking things through very carefully, considering the potential problems *and 'what ifs' a zillion times*, according to David Sullivan, his close friend and successor in the board chair role. Wayne's careful approach, combined with a strong belief in open communication and wide consultation, was important for the way the co-principalship was initiated at St Mary's according to Brigid Kirkwood and Carrie Perkins, the two women who were appointed to share the leadership in 1995.

The narrative of the St Mary's School co-principalship is told in six main sections:

- initiating the co-principalship;
- negotiating the contract;
- establishing shared leadership;
- tensions in governance/management relationships;
- what happens when one leaves?
- epilogue.

Initiating the co-principalship

Introducing Brigid Kirkwood and the idea of a co-principalship at St Mary's

Brigid Kirkwood was described by teachers and parents who knew her as an outstanding teacher, dedicated to her job, enthusiastic and skilled. She had entered teacher training straight from school in 1978, and after graduating and teaching for a year she travelled overseas. During two of the six years that she was overseas, she worked in part-time teaching positions and after returning to New Zealand, between 1987-93 she taught across all year 1-8 levels. In 1993, she won promotion to the deputy principal position at St Mary's School.

Brigid was a person who believed strongly in teamwork and she worked closely with Fred Lewis, the then teaching principal in the school. She said, *Working closely with other people is just the way I've always liked doing things - like I always asked advisors to come in and watch me in my teaching and help me by making suggestions. It's commonsense to me - I don't know really why. Perhaps it came from being brought up in a family with five sisters, where we always sat down and talked through decisions together - like going on holiday, who would do what, and when my father died, deciding about the funeral and so on. Perhaps it was living in big flats with lots of other people when I was away overseas for six years - everyone had to muck in and do their bit. You didn't survive if you couldn't get on with others. Even before I became DP at St Mary's, I'd sit down with Fred and talk things over with him. I could see that he was getting snowed under and was struggling, and I didn't think it was fair that he should have to carry it all* (Brigid 2:2).

During 1994, Fred Lewis found the increasing demands of the teaching principalship more and more difficult to deal with (Fred:1). As deputy principal, Brigid tried to support him as much as she could and she helped with many of the tasks, but she felt that *there was a sort of distinction there - I didn't have the knowledge, and I didn't feel that I was in a position to take things over and say, well I'll do that* (Brigid, Brigid & Carrie 2:1).

Then in mid 1994 a crisis occurred and Fred took extended sick leave. Brigid was asked by the board to take over as acting principal. She did this, but said that she did not enjoy the experience. She said *I was swamped by the paperwork. I didn't have enough time to sit down and think about it, let alone do it* (Brigid, BC 2:12). She also found it a very lonely job: *Often at the end of the day, I was the only one left here doing things and making decisions* (8).

Brigid did such a fine job however, that when Fred decided to retire, the board asked her if she'd be interested in applying for the position. Brigid did not jump at this suggestion. She had felt herself under huge pressure during the stressful time of the principal's leaving, and her belief that *one person shouldn't hold all the responsibility* (Brigid, BC 1:1) was reinforced by the experience of being acting principal. She did not want to apply for the principalship at St Mary's.

About this time one of the other teachers in the school resigned and an Education Review Officer (who had been involved with the review of the school earlier in the year and who knew about the Hillcrest Avenue School co-principalship) suggested to Brigid that because there would be two vacancies in the school, she could apply for the principal's position in partnership with another teacher. This idea of a joint application for a co-principalship had great appeal for Bridget. She was attracted to innovatory ideas, and said with a grin, *My sisters say things like, there goes Brigid - doing her feminist lefty thing again. And it's funny, 'cos I wouldn't say that about myself. Perhaps it's just because I'm very different to them - always have been really, right from being a small child* (2:2). The idea of setting up a co-principalship seemed to her, though, to be a very logical way of dealing with the huge workload issues that beset sole teaching principals. As she considered the review officer's

suggestion, she thought that her friend Carrie Perkins would be the perfect person to share the leadership with her. *There are very few people I'd be happy to apply for a co-principalship with but I knew Carrie was an excellent teacher and thought along the same lines as I did. I knew I'd love to work with her in the school*, she said (Brigid 1:8).

Carrie Perkins

Four years earlier, Carrie had worked in Bridget's classroom as a third year student teacher doing her sole charge teaching practice section. Although around the same age as Brigid (both women were in their mid thirties), Carrie had entered teaching as a second career, after first working as a lab technician, and then caring for her family of four children. She and Brigid developed a close friendship during the time that she was relieving in St Mary's for six months after graduating from teacher training and completing her BA (Education), and they kept in touch when she got her first permanent position.

Carrie was also a very talented teacher and she quickly won promotion to deputy principal in her school. Although she felt a little nervous when Brigid invited her to join her in a joint application for the principalship, she also felt excited and honoured as she admired Brigid greatly as *a brilliant teacher*. Although the idea for sharing a principalship had *come out of the blue*, it felt right and there was a certain serendipity about its timing for her. While deputy principal in her own school she had worked briefly as acting principal and she felt ready to move into this position. She saw the opportunity to share the teaching principalship with Brigid as a good opportunity to learn and as she said later, *My long term goal is to become non teaching at some stage, go into a non teaching principal's position ... I want to go out and give it a go* (Carrie BC 3: 4).

Carrie was a little worried that she hadn't had as much experience as Brigid, having taught at that stage for only three years. She said, *I was thinking, I hope I can live up to your expectations of me* (Carrie 1:2). However, she knew that she had a good knowledge of education and that she and Brigid agreed on their basic philosophy about teaching. She had also *done lots of other things, like I've had my own family and I've worked on committees and little things like organising parent groups. When I was a lab technician I ended up running the lab - I seem always to take on the leadership thing. People seem to look to me to tidy up shambles* (1:6). She said that as a deputy principal she didn't have a clear job description *and there were a lot of things I did that as a deputy principal I probably shouldn't have done. But it was a joy to be able to change some things when I was briefly also acting principal* (Carrie, BC 1:9). She saw Brigid's suggestion as an opportunity to work in this way with her.

Both women agreed that sharing the responsibilities and tasks of a principal was not something to be entered into lightly however, and they wanted Wayne Anderson, the board chairperson, know their intentions before he received their formal application. They agreed that Brigid would tell Wayne immediately that they would be putting in a joint application for sharing the positions of principal and deputy principal as co-principals.

The board's reaction: consult, consult, consult ...

For Wayne, the idea of having a co-principalship was *a shock to the system - draw breath and think about that!* (1:4) He realised immediately that there was a lot of groundwork to be done, starting with a search (with himself as the *primary sleuth*) for information about whether the school could even consider such an option. He began consulting straight away.

Consulting the agencies

The State Services Commission (SSC), the Catholic Education Management Board (CEMB), the Ministry of Education and the primary teachers' union (NZEI), were all asked for advice. *But, Wayne said, they were not particularly helpful, other than to say no, you can't do it. The primary reason was the law says you have to have a principal... NZEI were quite sympathetic, as they felt that in the contract rounds there would be some facility for shared principalships. But they still said, at the moment you can't do it (Wayne1:8,9).*

Wayne had a strong awareness that he was consulting on behalf of the St Mary's School board, and despite the advice the agencies were giving him he was determined to keep an open mind on the issues that were raised. He told the SSC representative, *You are essentially advising us, but we are in charge. I'll listen to your advice but you have to bear in mind who's running the ship, and we are, not you. At the end of the day we'll do what we think is best for the school community, and if that means going against your advice, well - so be it. I knew this was what the board thought - we'd discussed that sort of thing. There was a bit of a gasp and a gulp when I said that, but I meant it quite seriously and I invited them to sack us as a board if they didn't like what we were doing. They didn't wish to do that really (1:5).* He said that was probably not surprising given the huge amount of time he was putting into the work of St Mary's School board, about 20 hours a week on average. He did concede though that *what these people had to say was useful, in that it got us to consider a lot of the ramifications (1:6).* Consequently, he said the board *educated ourselves about what the options were, both in terms of traditional and co-principal concepts (1:12).*

Consulting education professionals

A teaching principal in another school was consulted and she told Wayne that she did not really agree with the idea of sharing the position as she thought that the work could be done adequately by one person. She was interested, however, to follow developments and agreed to help the school with its interviewing and appointment process. (Ironically, this principal left her position six months later as a result of stress caused by a heavy workload).

A senior teacher in a different school who was known to have experience in staffing matters and a background of work with NZEI was also asked for her opinion. This person thought the idea was *worth a go*, though she warned that some variation from the collective employment agreement might be needed. She raised a concern about the possible effects of teachers with different grades or qualifications being appointed, asking, *What if one of the two gets sick of dragging the other up to a pay rate that one of them would not have obtained normally?* (Wayne's personal notes, October '94). When the Catholic Education Management Board was consulted, a different set of issues was brought up. The CEMB officer was concerned about three things: setting a national precedent, issues of accountability and legality, and how the idea would impact on the Special Character status of the school.

Appointment committee considers issues

Wayne took careful notes from all of these discussions and took them to a meeting of the board appointment committee held on 24 October 1994. This was the first of several special board meetings that were held to explore the issues and the potential consequences of establishing a co-principalship. *A lot of time was spent mulling it over, Fay O'Reilly, one of the board members, said later (1:1).*

The appointment committee meeting had been originally arranged to action some of the initial tasks involved with finding a new principal (such as drafting the job advertisement) and to advertise for a junior teacher. As this committee discussed the pros and cons of introducing a job share situation, they identified the following questions.

- Was the board prepared to entertain this concept?
- How could it work?
- Would we accept joint or individual applications?
- Would both principals attend board meetings?
- Would a joint applicant be prepared to do the job alone?
- How would resignation\termination affect the employment arrangement?
- How would the principal's release day be worked?
- Would there be a balance of power problem?
- How would a job share situation affect the rest of the staff?
- Would a long term sickness of one staff member be a problem?
- What advantages\disadvantages were there for the school?
- Where (in terms of teaching class level) should the principal should be located?
- Does the board have the right to dictate the location of executive teachers in the school?
- Do we wish to exercise this right if we do have it?

The question about where the principal(s) would teach particularly worried some members of the committee. Their concerns centred around the need to make the best use of resources, in relation to the principal release time and the needs of the children in particular class levels. If the teaching principal was placed in the senior class, when those children went to EBIS, release time would be available for the principal. On the other hand, in a class that included Std 4 children with F1 and F2 children, this arrangement would not work as the Std 4 children would still need teaching. The committee also knew that some parents were worried about whether it was desirable to have children preparing for secondary school not being taught solely by their own teacher.

The committee decided that the whole board should meet to discuss the questions they had thought of, and a notice was sent out requesting all board members to attend a special meeting to be held the following week. It began, *We have for some time been working towards restructuring the management of the school. We must now ensure that the necessary framework is constructed in order to provide a working environment satisfactory for the BOT and school management in the foreseeable future. Please read and consider all the material provided and be ready to discuss the issues raised* (Notice to all Board Members 24/10/ 94).

Consulting the Hillcrest Avenue School board chairperson

Wayne began this board meeting by explaining that an advertisement had been placed that included the point that role-sharing would be considered for the position of principal, as well as stand-alone applicants. During his consultation on behalf of the board, it had been pointed out that if role-sharing was not mentioned in the advertisement and this option was pursued at the interview, then there could be criticism from the NZEI.

Wayne had invited Phil Cody, the chairperson of Hillcrest Avenue School, to contribute to this meeting and after introducing him, Wayne opened up the discussion by asking Phil to describe how the Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship worked. The meeting minutes recorded that Phil said that the *arrangement eases the workload for the principal, and*

recent surveys had shown an increase in principals' workloads. The effect on school culture and the sorts of modelling that get played out are beneficial in three ways: i) positive changes in community relationships at the school between pupils and staff and parents and school and a greater sense of comfort between parents and the school; ii) relationships between the board and the staff have changed for the better; iii) changes in the ways in which teaching and learning take place (Board minutes:3). Phil commented later that he saw *increased confidence and self-reliance in the children*. He had noticed that the Hillcrest Avenue School children were taking a more active role in resolving playground disputes. He conceded though, that the latter effects could be because of the calibre of the staff they had in the school: *They are very good at motivating the children*, he said (Board meeting minutes 2 /11/ 94:5).

Phil also told the St Mary's board that he saw two *downsides to role-sharing options for Hillcrest Avenue school*. *The entire staff of three share in the position so all spend more time in meetings and discussions*, and there was more work involved for the board in setting up the co-principalship (though he suggested that this could be easier for St Mary's as a consequence of the information people like him could share with them).

During the meeting's ensuing wide ranging discussion of the appointment committee's list of questions, Phil offered advice on various issues. He outlined how Hillcrest Avenue had dealt with the *ultimate legal requirements for one person to be named as principal each year*, by using the Selwyn College model of having one of the co-principals designated each year as principal. He explained that in effect they rotated (in name only) through that position title, although in reality *they all had the same job description and conditions under which the management was shared* (Board minutes:3) He said that in developing their model, the Hillcrest Avenue School board had drawn on the teachers' collective contract and the principal and deputy principal contracts to define responsibilities across each of these areas. These had been collated into the co-principals' job descriptions, which were also linked to specific performance agreements. In regard to questions about how the principals' duties should be allocated, Phil said that at Hillcrest Avenue School it was up to the principals as to how they split up their duties. He saw them as quite different individuals but the good balance of skills and goodwill between the three co-principals meant that there was *no sign of any uneven workloads or shirking of duties*. He also thought that a peer appraisal process worked well for them.

Issues of competency worried Wayne however. He asked Phil, *What happened if one partner was not playing their part, something that could impact on the performance of the rest. What does the board do - sack one person, or all in the shared role?* (Board minutes:4). Phil Cody suggested two approaches here. Either an individual competency approach could be used, based on the individual's contract and overall work. Or a 'take a break' method could be invoked, where the one who was not performing well applies for leave and the board brings in a long term reliever who would not be part of the principals' team. He preferred the latter option, counselling that *it is not easy to say you two are not performing. There would be a need for close liaison by board members* (Phil, Board minutes: 4).

In the situation of one principal leaving he suggested that the board needed to *always give yourself an 'out' - the remaining one becomes the principal, and then you talk about the shared position* (Board minutes:3). Hillcrest Avenue's approach to the payment of the co-principals' salaries through a pooling process was also described. Here, Phil stressed the point that other funds could not be transferred into the salary account.

Theresa Powles, who was then the staff representative on the St Mary's School board, was asked how the staff felt about the issue of what was described as *ganging up*, meaning how would the staff feel about having two principals presiding over them. Theresa said this would not be an issue for the staff: indeed she said that they thought having a co-principalship

would be better for them and the school because of the sharing of the work of the principalship. Brigid added that it was possible that parents and staff would relate better to one principal or the other and Phil commented that Hillcrest Avenue's parents had *found it more comfortable to talk to their child's teacher who just happens also to be the principal* (Board minutes:7). Wayne pointed out though, that there could be a potential problem if parents wanted to complain about their child's teacher. Who could they take an issue to if that teacher was also the principal? Phil suggested that he, as board chairperson, could go with the complainant to one of the other staff members.

The last topic raised was the question about where, in the sense of class level, the principal should be located and the board explored whether they had the right to get involved in this kind of decision. They agreed that they *have to be able to say what they think, although difficulties arise when lay people express interest in these things. The feeling was that the Board does not have the right to dictate the location of teachers in the school, but should be able to express interest* (Board minutes:9).

As the discussion was concluding, one of the board members expressed interest in the possibility of all five teachers sharing the principalship. Phil advised caution here though, as he thought too much change all at once could be harmful.

At the end of all this discussion, it was moved that the Board accept in principle the concept of role-sharing and take it into account when appointing a new principal (Board minutes:9).

Consulting (educating?) parents

After having reached this agreement, the board decided that the next move was to tell the parents that they had accepted in principle the concept of a shared leadership and ask them what they thought. One board member said that *there was a need for a major education programme for the community and that this would be a big job, but the board should not be put off by the enormity of the task* (Board minutes:9). Phil endorsed this, saying that discussion with the school community was vitally important (an opinion that was not surprising, given the furore that had occurred in his school community when the board did not take this step early enough).

So a newsletter was sent out to all parents, inviting them to come to another board meeting where a discussion and vote on whether or not the board would accept applications on a shared basis would be placed first on the agenda. Wayne was expecting some opposition at this meeting to the idea of job sharing. He said, *We were already getting notes from people saying it's a great idea, and others saying if you do this we are going to take our children out of the school* (1:13). Fay O'Reilly pointed out that in their school community, *Parents are very keen on voicing their opinion and very forthright* (1).

Only eleven parents turned up to the meeting held on 16 November, however. Wayne began the discussion by reminding everyone of the stress suffered by teaching principals and the role this had played in Fred Lewis's resignation. He explained that *Brigid was interested in applying for the position along with another teacher, and the school has the opportunity to look at role sharing as a means of off-loading work from the teaching principal* (Board Meeting with Parents 16/11/94, Minutes: 1). He outlined Hillcrest Avenue School's procedures and history and said that while the board had voted to look at role-sharing, they were clear that they were *looking at the best package for the school, whether it be stand-alone or role-share* (Wayne, Board minutes:1).

The issues already discussed in the previous meeting were re-canvassed, but some different points were raised by some parents. One objected to the role-share as a solution to

the work overload problem, arguing that it was the principal release time that needed adjusting, because there was not enough of that. *Funding would be needed to boost this, and the school would need to raise the difference*, was the answer from Wayne. Another parent thought that the role-share should be trialed for only 12 months. Wayne responded that the collective contract made this kind of arrangement difficult and thus *the school had to get it right at the beginning. The school could have to enter into a variation on the collective contract with the SSC* (Board minutes:3). Questions about the how the model would work in practice were raised, with a particular concern focussing around *Who would a parent see when they had a concern: would it be one principal one day and another the next?* Brigid answered that *parents would be able to choose to go to the person they felt more comfortable with* (Board minutes: 4).

The meeting got a little heated towards the end of the time allocated for discussion, when one parent wanted to move that another open meeting should be set up for the wider school community. The minutes record Wayne's response: *This meeting has been well advertised with 8 days warning, and if more people had wanted to be there, they would have come* (5). Wayne recalled later that it was at this point that he felt *fed up. I thought they were out to shanghai the meeting and I pointed out that only board members could move motions. There comes a time where you have to draw a line in the sand, and I quite forcibly pointed out that we had been elected as a group of responsible parents to run the school. We'd been here for three years slaving our guts out and, I said, you come along here having given something a couple of minutes thought over a beer and tell us how it's going to be. If you had been prepared to make these decisions, you'd be here on this side of the table! I thought you've got to give them an out though, so I said if you lot go away and organise a petition of 10% of the school community that you want another meeting to give some instruction and guidance to the board, then that's what we will do. We never heard any more from them though, and that was the end of that* (Wayne 1:13).

Before they left the meeting though, one of the parents asked the board how they were going to go about making the appointment, as she knew of some schools who had made big mistakes. *Would they go in with an open mind and look for the calibre of applicant or tend to look towards the role-sharing?* (Board minutes:6). The minutes recorded that *Wayne replied that the board would be absolutely open and had the ability to make awkward decisions* (7).

The day after this meeting, Wayne sent a fax to the CEMB, stating that *There has been open opposition from only four families and they, I believe, are opposed due to a reluctance to accept the need to reduce the workload of a Teaching Principal. (Change the face and all will come right)* (Board chairperson personal fax record 17/11/94). He also informed the CEMB that because the school might not end up with a job-sharing situation, not all the details had yet been worked out fully at that stage. Thus a role-shared job description would not be developed before the selection of the new principal, but the existing principal's job description would be sent out to applicants.

Later, Fay recalled feeling a little surprised at *how the community accepted the idea of a co-principalship*. She added though, that on the whole the parents *trusted us as a board and took our word that it would work* (Fay:3).

Brigid and Carrie's joint application

While the board was undertaking all this work, Carrie and Brigid were developing their joint application. Together they wrote statements detailing their aims and beliefs and their collective skills and experience in management and teaching. They submitted these statements along with their individual CVs, which were quite different in character. This, they thought

was a strength of their application. They said later that they had found the process of developing their application very valuable in itself. *It made us evaluate and assess what we were doing*, said Brigid (BC 1:4).

**Carrie Perkins
Brigid Kirkwood**

**Joint application for the position of
Principal, St Mary's School**

**Our aim is to work towards creating a school where those
within the school community follow a shared vision.**

Excellence in communication both written and oral, is essential to this position and may include facilitation, negotiation, counselling, mediation and motivation.

The ability to earn the respect of children, teachers and community is paramount to a successful working relationship.

We believe that we can provide these qualities along with the ability to motivate, set goals, delegate and provide strong leadership for children and staff.

We have a commitment to the teaching practices of the Catholic Church.

We are dedicated to our careers and to the benefits of a shared load. We believe that shared input leads to shared ownership and commitment and maximises the quality of the decisions made at the management level.

Collectively we offer:

- commitment and an ability to uphold the special character
 - a desire to uphold the Treaty of Waitangi
 - a desire to affirm and recognise the cultures within the school community
 - innovative educational and professional leadership
 - an ability to meet deadlines, prioritise, delegate, work under pressure
 - proven administration and management ability - a proactive approach to teaching and management
 - an openness to innovations and a willingness to investigate and peruse new ideas where appropriate
 - policy writing experience
 - budgeting expertise
 - ability to work as members of a team - positive relationships with staff, B.O.T. (As staff representative and principal) Principal's Cluster Group
 - knowledge of school development models
 - experience in appraisal systems
-
- knowledge of school and local community, including professional support agencies (network in place)
 - a belief in the absolute importance of parent education
 - knowledge and experience in a variety of communication strategies, resulting in positive relationships with children and the ability to empower them to develop their skills of communication. The following courses have enhanced our skills in this area: Transaction analysis, Assertive discipline, Communicating with children, Peer mediation, Educational psychology, Guidance counselling

- involvement in community activities, including Samoan community, Plunket/ kindergarten committees, Civil defence, PTFA and BOT, Sport (out of school)
 - associate and tutor teacher experience
-
- proven ability as successful classroom teachers
 - knowledge and experience in recent educational innovations, including involvement in curriculum development contracts
 - a commitment to on-going professional development for ourselves and other staff members
 - ability to teach at any level in the school
 - an ability to integrate special needs children
 - commitment to make Māori language an integral part of the classroom programme
 - recognition and affirmation of the varied cultural groups in the classroom
 - and holistic approach to programme planning resulting in exciting innovative learning environments
 - a willingness and ability to implement the new Religious Education curriculum

***This will result in a management team with broad vision,
dual accountability and wide-ranging expertise***

(Brigid Kirkwood, Carrie Perkins, December 1994)

The selection process

There were not many applicants for the job. As David Sullivan who became board chairperson in 1995, said later, *To be a principal of a Catholic school, you have to be a Catholic, so that knocks out a lot of applicants* (David 1:2). Wayne commented that the job was huge, and asked, *Who would want to be a stand-alone teaching principal?* (1:14). However, the board did receive enquiries from some people who wanted to know what the board meant by job share and asked, *Will you accept an application from someone on a stand alone basis?* They were told, yes (Wayne 1:14).

The board appointment committee short-listed for interview one stand-alone applicant and Brigid and Carrie. Wayne said, *Nobody had the inside running. At that stage none of the board had met Carrie. She was a dark horse. We interviewed Carrie and Brigid both as individuals, put them both through what we put the stand-alone applicant through - and we asked both, if they were offered the position, would they take it on a stand-alone basis* (1:14). This was done in fairness to the single applicant. The board was also concerned that if they decided in favour of a co-principalship, *if it doesn't work any longer, or one leaves or whatever, then one of them would be able to carry on as acting principal* (Wayne 1:14). Carrie commented that *The board was making a new issue out of an old situation here really, because if a principal leaves, then the deputy principal takes over* (BC 1:14), as indeed, had already happened at St Mary's.

The selection process was described by Brigid and Carrie as *a grilling*. After the morning interviews, the appointment committee told Brigid and Carrie that they wanted them to make a presentation on their proposal in the afternoon, *to sell the co-principalship to us*, as Wayne put it (1:16). Carrie said, *And so we went off to the café and sat there frantically saying, OK, this is what we'll do. In the afternoon we started it off but then they just began this bombardment of questions* (Carrie, BC 1:5).

Brigid felt that during the selection process, *some of the board responses were quite negative* (BC 1:5). She described how they were asked how would parents know which person to go to with a problem and how when she said that parents would have a choice about who they could see, the response was, *Oh come on Brigid! But*, she said, *I really believe this is a strength of this approach. People do have preferences and find some people easier to talk to*

than others (BC 1:5). She thought that this question emerged out of a perceived need *to have someone to nail to the wall*, and she did not think she had persuaded this person to change her mind about this issue, despite the fact, as Carrie pointed out, *they actually get two people to nail to the wall* (BC 1: 5).

The two women felt that many of the issues that were brought up were ones that occur in a stand-alone principal situation. They thought the board's view at the time was that the principal and the deputy principal worked in the way that Brigid and Carrie were saying the co-principals should work, so they discussed with the board the differences they saw in these two kinds of relationships. Carrie explained that *The deputy principal and the principal do work together often, but at the end of the day the principal is the one that can take the last step* (Carrie 1:4). Brigid added that as a deputy principal, she had not felt she had enough knowledge to be able to take part equally in all aspects of the principal's work.

Fay O'Reilly recalled later that the two women couldn't really tell the board exactly how the co-principalship would work. Wayne thought that Carrie and Brigid were a little vague on this, what he called *the nuts and bolts of it*. However, one of the things that appealed to Theresa Powles, who was on the appointment committee as the staff representative, was that Carrie and Brigid *didn't bring too many hard and fast ideas to the job. They'd both been in a position of responsibility but not long enough to have any set ideas about how things should be done. So they didn't talk about what they were going to do precisely, but said, 'We'll see what works best.'* *We sort of got the feeling that they were going to try various combinations* (Theresa 1:1). She thought that this was a good thing. Theresa was also impressed with all aspects of the interviewing and selection process. *We had an outside principal as part of the team and this helped us cover all things - the teaching aspect was looked at first and then the sharing of responsibilities* (Theresa 1:14).

Throughout the whole of the selection process, the board felt under no pressure to appoint: they were willing to advertise again if none of the applicants was felt to be appropriate. The committee took their time to discuss each of the applicants, using a technique of looking for negatives, asking 'Why wouldn't we give this person the job?' in their deliberations.

Although one of the board members had told Brigid and Carrie in their individual interviews, 'I'm not really in favour of this,' she shifted in her opinion after hearing the two women present their case during the afternoon session. Wayne said that during this session Brigid and Carrie 'sold' the idea of the shared leadership very successfully (1:16).

Co-principals are appointed

In the end, the committee was happy to *take the plunge and appoint the two because we knew the staff applicants had everything to lose and we as a board had everything to gain* (Wayne 1:16). The committee felt that Carrie and Brigid were both *very keen and very sincere, and very aware that they were taking a step out of the norm and that it was going to be a milestone in their careers, perhaps their tombstone if they didn't get it right* (Wayne 1:16). The consensus was that *One of the two women was not quite ready, but would make an excellent principal, especially with the other person there to hold hands and confer and talk at times. The other we thought would make an excellent principal too but didn't have the confidence to do it on her own* (Wayne 1:16).

Although there were some reservations about changing the leadership model, the appointment committee *thought the benefits would hopefully outweigh anything that came up as a disadvantage* (Fay:3). In particular, the board hoped that the shared leadership would ease the high workload and potential stress attached to the teaching principalship. The parish priest

commented, *In our situation we have two ladies who seem to get on very well together and who will be able to work well together, so we are prepared to make an honest attempt to address some serious issues with leadership roles in our schools ... As far as the board are concerned we appointed a joint leadership that would be on an equal footing, people who would be complementary one to the other to share the leadership and lighten the burden, able to discuss as equals problems and issues that come up. We courageously went ahead, convinced that this was the right way to go* (Parish priest 1:1).

On 22 December 1994, the board held a special meeting to ratify the recommendation from the appointment committee to invite Brigid and Carrie to take up the appointment of principal and deputy principal. This wording was deliberate and significant, as will be explained in the next section.

Negotiating the contract

The next steps were taken over the Christmas holiday period. Wayne was mid way through his study at the time for a Diploma in Industrial Relations, and he was *particularly interested in the whole employment thing* (Wayne 1:12), so the board were happy for him to negotiate the co-principalship agreement with Carrie and Brigid on their behalf. Carrie said, *We didn't talk to SSC or the Ministry - we just did it ourselves* (BC 1:14). The results of the discussions between the three of them were recorded in a *Letter of understanding* that they signed in the presence of a witness on 5 January, 1995.

INTRODUCTION OF CO PRINCIPALS AT ST MARY'S SCHOOL

Letter of understanding between St Mary's School Board and Co - Principals.

Brigid Kirkwood and Carrie Perkins, herein after referred to as Brigid and Carrie.

The Board and the Co Principals are committed to ensuring the efficient management of the school. Both parties to this employment arrangement understand the novel nature of it and agree to work towards the smooth introduction of role sharing within the industrial and legislative frameworks. It is expected that this will involve input from NZEI, STA and the SSC.

It is agreed that further negotiation will be necessary to meet these objectives.

Our understanding of the Co-Principalship is that the traditional management function of the school, as performed by a Principal and Deputy will be carried out by equal sharing of these responsibilities in every respect.

The following has been freely agreed to in order
to facilitate the introduction of Co-Principals at St Mary's School.

CONDITIONS OF INITIAL AGREEMENT.

1. Brigid and Carrie are to be appointed as Co-Principals within St Mary's School. This arrangement will continue until such time as the Principals' Collective Employment Contract allows for role sharing of the Principal's position. Initially Brigid will continue as Acting Principal until such time as Carrie commences work with St Mary's.

NOTE: While employed by St Mary's School as Co-Principals, for the purposes of complying with the legislative framework, Brigid will continue as Deputy Principal and Carrie will fill the vacancy of Principal.

Both Carrie and Brigid will be held **equally** responsible to the Board for the running of the school. This responsibility includes, but is not limited to the normal responsibilities of the Principal and the Deputy Principal.

2. Should the new CEC not include provision for role sharing of the Principal's position then the St Mary's School board agrees to investigate ways to introduce role sharing.

3. The St Mary's School Board reserves the right to discontinue working towards role sharing of the Principal's position should it become impossible to comply with the various industrial and legislative requirements. Should this occur then the Co-Principals will revert to their positions as Principal and Deputy Principal.

4. It is agreed that the costs of setting this system in place should be minimal (not more than \$2000) and that all work should be completed prior to the end of the 1995 school year.

5. Rates of pay. The Co-Principals agree that one will be paid as Principal and the other as Deputy Principal. These rates of pay will continue until other arrangements can be made in accordance with the legislation and appropriate employment contracts. The Co-Principals agree that St Mary's School Board will not be required to pay any more than the total payment required for a normal Principal and Deputy Principal. The Co-Principals agree to advise the St Mary's School Board chairman of rates of pay prior to commencing work as Co-Principals. Advice to be in writing.

6. This agreement may be negated at any time through normal disciplinary procedures or as the result of resignation or retirement of one or both of the employees concerned. Should this occur then the remaining employee will continue as Principal or will be required to act as Principal until such time as a replacement is found.

7. It is agreed that role sharing of the Principal's position is limited to Brigid and Carrie as agreed to by the St Mary's School Board.

8. The Co-Principals agree to maintain the confidentiality of this agreement. Distribution of detail contained within it is to be limited to NZEI, STA, SSC or other agencies with the mutual agreement of all parties.

9. The parties agree to commit themselves to role sharing for a minimum period of 3 years.

10. It is agreed that introduction of Co-Principals will require the rewriting/reviewing of the job descriptions and responsibilities of staff. This will include the formulation of policies and rules as and when required.

11. Regular meetings are to be held between the Co-Principals and the Board's representative tasked with regular Board-Principal liaison. At these meetings discussions are to be held regarding the work of the Co Principals. The purpose of this discussion is to assist with the smooth introduction of Co-Principals within the school. At the request of the Board or the Co Principals, an agreed Principal from another school is to be employed to assist.

Keeping it legal by naming a principal

The St Mary's board had decided that they would not challenge the legal requirement to have a single person named as principal. They wanted a *legal agreement* rather than what was seen as the Hillcrest Avenue school's *essentially illegal* arrangement (Wayne 1:7). Thus Wayne negotiated with the two women that Brigid would be appointed as acting principal until Carrie could join her in April of 1995, when she would be named (on the contract) as principal, and Brigid's acting principal status would revert to deputy principal. (It was important for Carrie that she be named as principal, even though this was not going to be made public.) Fay saw this as *just one of those technical things that have to be done* (1:2). In his letters offering Brigid and Carrie the positions, Wayne wrote, *The status is for recognition by outside agencies. Within St Mary's School you will be Co-Principal with all the attendant responsibilities* (Letter offering employment as co-principal, 5/1/95.)

Wayne said later that the St Mary's board members agreed that there was a need to prepare job descriptions that would amalgamate the existing ones for the principal and the deputy principal. However, they did not feel comfortable with the model of each person rotating through the principal position. *We wanted it to be quite clean, something that if the school board was sacked, would be irreversible... or if we all resigned en masse, the staff would be secure in their jobs* (Wayne 1:7). He said that it was important that the agreement also ensured that if the next board was unhappy about the co-principal arrangement, they *would not be able to undo it without going through a fair process... so we were trying to protect them (the co-principals) ... and I think we have done that quite well*. For all these reasons, he was pleased that the agreement meant that *We have a principal in law* (1:7).

Although they agreed that on paper Carrie would be named as principal and Brigid as deputy principal, all three were all hoping that the NZEI negotiations in 1995 for a new collective contract would include details that covered sharing the principalship. Carrie said, *We're counting on that really, counting on the negotiations sorting this out*. Brigid added, *Because the staff don't know that's the way it is. We don't want people to know - it's being kept very quiet* (BC 1:15).¹³²

... and keeping it quiet

The board agreed that the information about who was to be named as principal should be kept confidential. Wayne said that *for the co-principalship to work in the community, it was important that they were seen in every respect to be equally important ... If some people had discovered that a pecking order had been established, the co-principalship as it works co-operatively could be undermined, and that was something we didn't want. The only people in the community who know the detail are the co-principals, myself, the current board chairperson and the parish priest. We wanted the school community to see them both as being on the same level so they could go to either and get a similar result - and so they would both be seen to be speaking with an equal level of authority* (Wayne 1:9).

Fay was a witness to the signing of the contract, and she knew at the time who had been named as principal. She said later that this *wasn't an issue and really, no secret was made about it, though I can't say we broadcast it from the hilltops* (Fay 1:2). (In fact, she did not remember accurately who the named principal was, saying later that it was Brigid.)

After the new board was elected, they were informed that *The current legislation requires the school to nominate our Co-principals with one as Deputy and the other Principal. We have done this but it will not be known by the community* (Board minutes, 19/4/95).

Salary arrangements

The board had some difficulty accepting that they could not pay both women a principal's salary. *We have a principal in law being paid the principal's rate of pay, and we have a deputy principal in law, being paid the deputy principal's rate of pay* (Wayne:7). Fay

¹³² During the 1995/6 contract negotiations, NZEI was under pressure from SSC to agree with bulk funding. At this time the primary teachers' union was also negotiating a pay parity claim for primary teachers that would mean that primary and secondary teachers with the same level of qualification, responsibility and years of service would be paid the same salary. A clever media campaign included the use of a striking set of posters and leaflets asking what difference a learners shoe size should make on the salaries of their teachers. After a difficult period of negotiation and conceding on performance related pay progressions, this claim was won. Unsurprisingly, the issues around shared leadership at the level of principals' positions, were not a priority during the contract negotiations.

said though, that when they were interviewed, the two women *assured us that this was the least of their problems and they'd sort the money out between them. We never heard another word about it so I presume they are happy with it* (1:2).

Wayne thought that the women had come to an arrangement whereby they 'divied' up their salaries so they were both paid an equal amount. He said, *I guess they sit down every now and then and have a cup of tea and a cheque changes hands* (7). In fact, Carrie set up an automatic payment into Brigid's account, putting in each fortnight a sum that equalised their salaries. The difference in superannuation was sorted out by the *piffling amount* (as Carrie called it) being paid into a savings account.

The effect of these arrangements was that *from the actual payment of salaries side of things and from the Ministry side of things, the co-principalship doesn't exist* (Wayne1:8). Wayne felt however, that the St Mary's School arrangement was *the right way to do it, in that we are getting what we want, and we are also obeying the law* (1:9).

Accountability

Fay O'Reilly had some particular concerns about accountability. She said, *Accountability was an area I was a little wary of right at the beginning. It's very easy to pass the buck if there are two ... and I was a little uncomfortable as to how will they stand responsible for their actions, either as separate people or as joint people?* (Fay 1:4). The parish priest felt comfortable however, that Carrie and Brigid were compatible in their temperaments, teaching abilities and philosophies. For him, this was the important thing in terms of accountability within the co-principalship. In his view, *Although the law requires there to be one person who would be accountable, the law is one thing and human nature is another. And we have never been able to legislate entirely for human nature. People who are appointed as co-principals must be people who are able to work together and complement one another. If that isn't happening, then there will be no accountability and it won't work. It will just collapse, it won't last* (Parish priest 1:5).

Worries about tracing accountability within the co-principalship were not an issue for Wayne Anderson. He said, *We have a contract with them that says they are equally responsible in every respect to the St Mary's School Board for the management of the school* (1: 8). He could not see any reason why this should not work. He reflected, *I guess the problem is that we are used to having a hanging tree and kicking the box out from under somebody's feet and feeling justice has been done. But I'm not sure that having any one individual who is held responsible in a school situation is going to help* (1:9). Wayne compared it to the situation of a pilot and co-pilot. *If something goes wrong, they both die with the aircraft. So the co-pilot will have no hesitation in telling the captain that, 'with all due respect you should reconsider what you're doing,' and the captain will do the same... In the co-principalship, someone can be responsible for one area and someone for another, and while that person might be responsible, the other one is just as responsible for keeping an eye on what they are doing* (1:10-11).

Wayne was also confident that the agreement he had sorted out with Carrie and Brigid would work to *ensure that they as a pair couldn't gang up on us as a board or we as a board couldn't gang up on them*. There was a facility for the board or the co-principals to *call in an outside agency or person who will act as an advisor ... if we couldn't resolve any problems ourselves* (Wayne1:17). The letter of appointment to Brigid and to Carrie was supportive and stated that *The St Mary's School Board is committed to ensuring that our Co-principals are given every assistance possible in order to ensure the smooth and efficient running of our school* (Letter offering employment as co-principal, 5/1/1995).

On the eve of Carrie's arrival at the school, Wayne wrote to Brigid on behalf of the school board, expressing their gratitude for the work she had done as principal during the preceding twelve months. He stated, *I have been impressed by your dedication, commitment and ability. Your open and honest approach to management issues has made it a real pleasure to work with you. I wish you well as you embark upon the new management of St Mary's School as Co-Principal* (Letter to Brigid Kirkwood, 27/3/1995).

Establishing shared leadership: 1995

While Carrie was working out her notice at her school, she and Brigid continued to have a lunch or coffee together. *We're good at café jumping!* Carrie said. When they met they talked about their schools and their hopes for the future, but they agreed that they should not become involved in planning at that stage, because they thought that *there was a danger of formalising things too much. We needed to see how things pan out* (Brigid, BC 1:13). They did attend together a meeting where David Stewart (a Massey University consultant) talked about job descriptions for principals and staff, but once again decided to wait until Carrie started work at St Mary's to begin designing theirs.

Carrie took up her position as co-principal at St Mary's School on 3 April, 1995. She felt a little anxious when she first arrived at the school, especially about living up to Brigid's expectations, but after two months in her new job she said she was feeling *really lucky coming to a school where people have been so supportive*. Carrie's previous job had been *fairly 'full on'* and she found herself *walking down the corridor at St Mary's and thinking 'What is it I'm not doing?'* *I had this feeling that suddenly something's going to hit me!* (Carrie 1:6). For Carrie, the biggest challenge was to *get to know the school in a few weeks. For example, I knew we had a problem with the school roll being closed, but when there was a phone call from a parent who was coming into the area and wanting to enrol her child, I had to say, 'Look I'll take your name, but I can't promise you a place,' go and check it all out and then get back to her.*

Communication and shared practices grounded in personal friendship

Carrie and Brigid quickly found that, not only did they agree in relation to their philosophies about teaching, they were also *on the same wave length* about how to manage the school (Carrie 1:1). They said they did not have to talk much to each other about the process of establishing their co-principalship because they knew each other well enough to get going straight away, finding practices and approaches that would work for them as they went along. Although they were both *pretty independent people*, they said it was their friendship and prior relationship that enabled them to move so quickly into supporting one another as they shared the work (Carrie, BC 1:14).

Theresa said later that she thought that *the whole essence of the co-principalship is the friendship that they had before they even considered doing this job* (1:4). In Theresa's view, *you'd have to have that basis really, to make it work*. She said, *They obviously have very good communication between them - you know that when you speak to one, the other will hear about it, so that's good* (1:1). The other staff agreed that the two women very quickly developed a shared knowledge and understanding: as Holly Morgan put it, *They both equally know what's going on with everything*. In the co-principals' view, this was facilitated by their early decision to do most things together, *80% collaborative, 20% other*, said Brigid. *Even things that I was used to doing automatically, we did together so that Carrie could see how*

those things work. And I've quite enjoyed being able to talk about things with her. When I explain how something is done, she'll say, 'Have you thought about doing it this way?' It's great having her bringing in her ideas (Brigid 1:8).

Carrie commented that *people often ask, 'How do you sort out differentiating the roles?' People really want to know what each of us does. But if we differentiated the roles it would make it quite difficult to manage quite a lot of things. And the bonus of this approach is that it doesn't matter who is available because we can both deal with something* (Carrie, BC3:5). She added that *if we had delegated roles, we would both still want and need to know what the other person is doing, so you'd have to have that getting together and reporting back anyway*. She said that their shared approach also gave them more confidence to act decisively: *Like if there are two of you saying about a piece of mail, 'tip it into the rubbish' then you do that and move on. It's quite reassuring really* (5).

Building shared leadership that involves a collaborative teaching team

During 1995 the shared work of the co-principals was focused first of all on administration and management tasks, but then more on finding ways to involve all the staff in planning and development, a team based approach to teaching and learning in the school. The next sections describe how this happened.

Organising the sharing of administration time and tasks

At the beginning Thursdays were allocated as the co-principals release day for administration, but, Carrie said, *We saw straight away that it was going to be quite complicated dividing up our principal release day because the morning and afternoon hours were not equal. So we switched around: one person does the morning this week and the afternoon next week and vice-versa* (1:1). The two women noted tasks they had to do on a sheet of paper to begin with, but soon realised that *a folder could get messy, so we started an exercise book. We meet together first thing on a Thursday and we keep the minutes of our meeting written into that book. Any tasks that have come up during the week are also written into it. So on a Thursday the person in the morning just basically goes through, doing the tasks, noting down any relevant details, ticking off jobs. Anything that still has to be done gets done in the afternoon* (Carrie 1:1). Holly Morgan, a year one teacher noticed how at lunch time the two women would up-date each other before the changeover: she commented that the co-principals had *good communication between them* (Holly:2).

Marie Watson, who was responsible for the junior classes, noticed that later on Brigid and Carrie split some tasks so that each could do *what they liked best. Carrie loves doing the mail - she gets all excited when she sees the mailbox filling up and Brigid hates that part of the job. She's happy to hand it over, whereas she loves the whole PE thing, and I'll go to her for anything to do with that. And I go to Carrie for anything about technology - she's really into computers* (Marie 3). Carrie explained later how the co-principals developed some distinction in their two different areas of curriculum strength. *I've never been into phys ed, but it's a big thing in this school as it's not only in the curriculum, but it's in the attitudes in the school and the playground and things like that. Brigid is really taking that on board and I support her morally rather than physically* (Carrie 2:2). Holly Morgan said that the co-principals had strengths that *complement each other*, however she also pointed out that *they've both given me good advice on a whole range of things* (2). Like Theresa and Marie, she felt comfortable about going to either woman when she needed help or information, as did Theresa.

Developing job descriptions and a collegial approach to staff appraisals

At the time when Brigid and Carrie were appointed, the Ministry of Education was requiring all schools to develop appraisal systems that were linked to clearly defined job descriptions. A priority task for the co-principals, that had been agreed with the board, was to develop both and they focused on these tasks during April and May of 1995. Carrie said, *We did our initial planning for our job descriptions, and the staffs, 'on a Sunday afternoon at a café. They went through the David Stewart model, but felt it wasn't right for us. We developed working documents that hopefully people will refer to in their work. We've got a section called 'Action' where people can comment, 'I haven't managed to do this,' or 'I'll get help to do this.' We're encouraging people to scribble and cross things out* (Carrie 1:3).

The co-principals used a staff meeting to explain the job descriptions and appraisal system to the staff, telling them that in preparation for their appraisal interviews, *We want you to think about what you're doing well in advance, and how you're going, anything you want help with, anything you think you'd like to share. We want you to tell us if you've got a better idea about something we've written here, or have something to add, or you don't like something* (Carrie 1:3). Carrie reflected later, *We sort of tried to make it positive, rather than an interrogation. We had strong feelings about things we saw as possible goals and changes, but you have to try and sort of draw those things out of them, without telling them. Appraisals are sort of more at the level of individual development, the teacher's weekly plan, and their classroom management and so on* (Carrie 1:5). Brigid thought later that being able to work with Carrie on the planning and carrying out of the interviews as well as the later writing up was very valuable. *We were able to discuss the wording of the records in quite a lot of depth* (Brigid 1:7).

Their approach was appreciated by the teachers. Each of the staff met for their appraisal interview with both Brigid and Carrie, but teachers did not feel that there was a 'ganging up' situation, such as has worried some of the board earlier. Theresa said, *It's really nice to have both of them there as they have different suggestions to make... and if we panic and say like, oh I haven't got everything ready, they say, well neither have we but we'll just work on what we have managed to do, and this makes you get on and do it* (1:11). Her comments summed up Marie's and Holly's feelings when she said, *Appraisal is there to help you improve what you do. It's not there to pull you down* (1:10). The November 1995 Education Review Office Assurance Audit Report on the school noted that *Staff consider the new approach to performance appraisal, based on interviews with staff, classroom observation and individual goal setting ... to be a positive and constructive experience* (ERO, November 1995, p.6).

Achieving a balance between management and teaching

At the beginning of working as a co-principal, Brigid found balancing her teaching and principal work required a lot of work. She said that when he was relieving for her one day Fred Lewis, the previous teaching principal, told her that she would have to *accept that your classroom work is not going to be as up to scratch as it would be if you were a straight classroom teacher. He said that he could see that I hadn't accepted that yet - that all my records were up to date and my planning was thorough. He said, 'I just think you have to let something go'* (Brigid 1:13). Brigid acknowledged that she was very hard on herself. But she was adamant that *Although I could see that we can't be expected to always have everything perfect, you can't let your class suffer.*

Carrie agreed. She said, *The classroom programme is so important, and as a manager of the school, it's important that you ensure that's your key aim.* She felt less tension about balancing teaching and management than Brigid though. For her, the most satisfying and successful thing about the co-principalship was *being able to run a classroom and be a principal - together. There's always more work to do, but I feel like I'm surviving* (1: 7). (Indeed, David Sullivan took some pride in pointing out later how much had been achieved in terms of new curriculum initiatives and establishing of management systems by the end of 1996.)

Despite Brigid's initial worries about balancing her teaching and her management responsibilities, a rather unexpected bonus of having Carrie in the school emerged early on. Brigid described how when one of the teachers was sick, *Carrie and I took our children together and we really enjoyed it. That hadn't happened here before ... and I love team teaching - it's really exciting - for us, and for the children too. For me it's great to be working in a room with another adult and I love the sharing of strengths. Like Carrie's got this bent for art, and she's given me a lot of such good ideas. And I've given her a lot of my resources too and ideas for her children. And now, we're hoping this will spread, to the other teachers* (Brigid 1:9).

From this experience, the co-principals saw that more team teaching throughout the school could help enrich programmes while also providing some relief in planning through the sharing of ideas. In the second half of 1995, therefore, they focused on developing strategies that would enable closer co-operation between all the teachers.

Involving all the staff in sharing knowledge and resources

They began by suggesting that everyone could take responsibility at staff meetings for reporting on the curriculum area each had responsibility for, up-dating staff for example, about new resources or issues that had been communicated by the Ministry. The co-principals modelled what they wanted to happen in the way they both facilitated other meetings. One morning, they went through Ministry mail and brochures that had come in that week, giving staff a potted summary about the content of each, and telling them where it was being filed so that those interested could find it later and read it themselves.

They found though, that staff were not coming to the weekly staff meetings adequately prepared to report on their areas, and too much time was being wasted. Some were bringing material to the meeting and *reading and presenting it at the same time*, Brigid said. *So we talked about it a couple of times at the staff meetings, but in the end we formalised it - we gave them all a memo that said how we wanted the staff meetings to be.* Carrie said, *We had to make it sort of 'official' and it is now working much better* (BC 2:8). The staff quickly got into the habit of writing up their agenda items on the staff meeting agenda whiteboard in the staffroom.

Marie Watson later attributed the teachers' increased sharing of information and resources to the co-principals' collegial leadership approach. She described how they worked. *Carrie might start a meeting by saying, 'Well today we'll all go through the science cupboard' - instead of telling us to go and look, we do it together. I now know what resources are in the school, things I wouldn't have known were there!* (Marie: 10). She said that Brigid had similarly involved her in the assessment course that she was attending, and how that had brought a consistency in the assessment techniques and recording systems in the senior and the junior school.

- in problem solving

Early on in their shared leadership, the co-principals found that *people were off-loading their worries and frustrations at the staff meetings and they were dragging on* (Brigid, BC2:9). They decided to set up a separate meeting for discussions about special needs children and requested that topics for discussion at this meeting be entered on the weekly agenda. *Now we use a special Wednesday morning meeting specifically for discussing any problems and for brainstorming suggestions for either dealing with behaviours or for resource people who could help* (Brigid, BC 2:9). This not only resulted in each of the staff meetings becoming more defined and *streamlined*, as Brigid put it, but in staff feeling more supported in their teaching.

Theresa had taught at St Mary's for several years and she said that it had been the *style* in the school for teachers to work together, but the co-principals had enhanced shared decision making. She said, *At meetings now, after we've been discussing something, someone will say, 'Would you like me to go away and formulate something and come back with a proposal?' and the rest of us will say yes* (1:7).

- in school wide curriculum planning

In 1995, the co-principals also began involving staff in planning for particular curriculum initiatives. They both believed that this was *a positive way of encouraging people to come on board with the development. Rather than saying, let us help you do this, you make it into 'Let's all do this together,'* said Carrie (BC 2:9).

They began with a focus on physical education initiatives. This was Brigid's area of special strength, but Carrie said that Brigid did not *take control* of the initiative. Rather, she asked the PE advisor to come into the school and work with everyone, she and Carrie included, to plan and develop a school wide PE curriculum. Marie Watson particularly praised this aspect of the co-principals' work, which she described as *a woman's way of doing things* that resulted in all the staff becoming more enthusiastic and knowing what was happening in each of the class levels (Marie:9).

Marie also commented on the value for the staff and the school of the co-principals' ability to *network with other people. They know what is going on*, she said, *which Fred just didn't really have time for, because of his workload* (Marie:9). She said that by the end of 1996, the staff had been *really brought up to date*, in the social studies and technology curriculum as well as the PE area. Brigid said later, *I think we've used every advisor there is! It's been fantastic and I told them how lucky we feel to have them come in. They said that they enjoyed being part of this school, and if they didn't feel valued they wouldn't come* (BC 2:10).

- in taking responsibility for budgeting

As part of their aim to involve staff more, the co-principals gave each teacher responsibility for spending in their curriculum area. Marie explained that *If I have bought some books for social studies, I have to write it in the book how much I've spent and how much is left and that's open for the whole staff to look at. I find it a bit daunting at times, but there is more accountability as a result* (Marie:11). In Marie's view, because St Mary's School had a very small staff, everyone had to work together, and it was important for each of them to realise *that one decision can affect someone else. You can see when there's no more money, say for the junior area* (11). She saw the co-principal's *more open leadership style* helping to develop this awareness and she appreciated the increased responsibility. *The co-principals put*

the ball back in our court - like if there's still money in our budget and we need something, Carrie says, 'Well go and spend it.' They make us responsible, which is good.

The co-principals' 'low key' leadership and management style

As they established their co-principalship, Brigid and Carrie were aiming *not to enforce the shared leadership model on people*, but to keep it *quite low key* (Brigid, BC 2:12). Their 'low key' approach to shared leadership and management was reflected in the ways they carried out their own planning and meetings together. Carrie said, *We tend to chat. We'll go and sit in a café and chat over things. We'll go out for tea and take paper and have half an hour sharing ideas then put it away. It's good to get away out of the school - away from interruptions. Sometimes we'll come down to the school at the weekend. They're not the sort of meetings where you get stressed out. It's quite nice really* (1:2). They would also grab a moment, such as five or ten minutes before school, or at lunchtime, *to talk over something* (Carrie 1:2). As Brigid noted, an important spin off was that she worried a little less. *And if I worry now, I can ring up Carrie and we can spend some time on the phone - it's shared. It's good to know too that we worry about the same things! It's also been a lot more fun - I mean we've been able to laugh about things, so the enjoyment side of it has risen for me* (1:14).

Their relaxed style influenced the way they carried out management tasks such as preparing principal's reports for board meetings. Carrie said that she *used to spend many hours slaving over principal's reports - it's a real trap. But we do them together. We get our diaries out and talk it - we've got a fabulous secretary who shorthands it for us and then we just go through and amend bits and pieces* (1:1).

Being relaxed did not mean being unsystematic though. Carrie described later how, while they talked about an area needing work, *One of us will say, 'Well, I'll get that done.' And we'd do it. We'd be quite systematic. And we've been able to trust each other that when we say we'll do something, we know it will get done. We've trusted each other all the way along* (2:4). Marie said, *You hear them at lunchtime, when Brigid will say to Carrie, 'Will you finish that off at playtime? I started two phone calls on it, but didn't finish.' And you know, that must be a help to each of them, to be able to go back to their classes and know that a job will be finished that day* (Marie:18).

When asked how she would describe their leadership style, Carrie said that she saw it as *being able to take on board what people are feeling and wanting and helping them to move forward. Like in a staff meeting when people say, oh I wish we could... then saying, well how can we make that work? It's like looking at the whole picture and pulling the threads together and helping people to move forward* (Carrie 1:3). Carrie summed up their approach as being *facilitative. It's not us standing over people and saying right, now we're going to do this or that. If things aren't moving along and you have to do that, or inspire people to get the ball rolling, I don't think that works, because it's not owned. Part of our leadership job is to make sure that everybody owns it. She felt that as leaders, you do have to set up your vision and your long term picture, but you don't have to do this by yourself. You do it at, say, your teacher only day, where everyone looks at where you're going. You look at what the needs are rather than imposing your own views... that way you build on what people have already got and you learn from others too* (1:4).

Brigid said, *There are a lot of components of leadership - like someone leads by example, has a clear vision, works collaboratively. Bringing other people on board means that you talk to other people about your ideas, but to me it is important that you talk to them about their ideas, not my way all the time. Vision is a direction, where you look ahead and say this is what is important, what I'll be working towards. What we've done is sit down with the*

whole staff and say, 'What is your vision for the school? What do you see as important?' We did this in a frame-up. What you have is like a picture frame, and outside of the frame is the question. They write down all their ideas and then each person talks about what they have written down. Then if everyone else agrees with what they've said, it gets written in the middle of the frame. So you end up with what you've collectively agreed to. This is quite a structured way to be collaborative, but I think it works well. There has to be a shared vision (3:6).

The staff appreciated the co-principal's approach. Holly Morgan said, *We all feel a part of it because it is so shared. They keep everything very open with us. We know what's going on. Perhaps this is also part of being a small school. They are out there teaching as well, so we see them all the time* (3). As a first year teacher she found it *really good to see what is involved in running a school*. The older teachers also commented on how much thought and time Brigid and Carrie were putting into their work together. Marie said, *This gives me confidence - I know things are being done. Fred was so stressed and things seemed to pile up. He was nipping in and out of the office all day. They seem less stressed and it's a bit of a relief really* (1-2).

Marie also described the co-principals' leadership style as being *quite a gentle approach* (1). She thought that some people might be misinterpreting this though. She had served on the school's board before she had come back into teaching in the school and she said that Brigid and Carrie's manner might *slack some parents off - like at board meetings they listen to people right through, and answer questions by saying, 'We do this because....'* Often they talk quite quietly, and I sometimes think that if they said things more loudly, they would sound more authoritative (4). These are interesting comments in the light of the simmering governance/management tensions in the school. These are described later.

Co-principals' appraisal

When Brigid and Carrie were appointed, Wayne Anderson did not like the requirement for boards to appraise principals. He said, *As a vet, I'm not sure that I would accept a teacher assessing my performance, so therefore I'm not sure that I can assess a principal's performance* (1:9). Wayne said he was *condemned by ERO for not doing a principal appraisal, but I pointed out to them that I didn't think I was qualified to do it. I refused* (1:24). He felt that the board *had enough to do without us meddling in professional education issues. Let's have someone who is qualified come in and do it*.

In June 1995 however, the new board set up a sub-committee for employment matters and their responsibility included the co-principal appraisal. Carrie said at that time that she and Brigid would be appraised by the committee, *probably separately and maybe together as well... and that will be interesting, because there has never been an appraisal system for the principal in place here* (1:2). Both women were comfortable with this. The board appraisal did not eventuate though. The ERO Assurance Audit Review noted that *At the request of the co-principals a performance appraisal, in terms of the job description, was undertaken in August, by another principal* (1995, p.6).

Brigid said that at the local principals cluster group, other principals were talking about how they were doing each other's appraisals, so she and Carrie decided to ask another woman principal to appraise them. This involved a shared interview and observation of what was being done around the school. The evaluation was tied to the principal's job description which listed the key responsibilities to lead, co-ordinate and facilitate the learning community, manage and develop the school culture, take responsibility for school communication networks, play a figurehead role in representing the school, and engage in professional development. In her report, the appraising principal noted many achievements in each area.

Her comments included the following statements: *Three parent information evenings have been held relating to the learning focus ... co-principals have used many advisors and many teaching and learning modes have been presented to staff ... Staff regularly set goals which are achievable ... An outstanding system of interview, recording and evaluating of staff ... Assertive discipline policy most successful and peer mediation process being implemented ... Limited facilities have been re-organised to optimise space available ... A strategic plan for communication within the whole school community has been drawn up ... Principals are respected by colleagues, parents and board members known to the appraiser ... The way the school is managed reflects a wide breadth of knowledge based on sound educational theory (Co-Principal Appraisal Report, August 1995). The appraiser concluded: *I congratulate Brigid and Carrie on their wonderful efforts and the management strategies they have put in place over an extremely short period of time. I have come away with some great ideas.**

Brigid and Carrie had not thought of involving the board in this first co-principals' appraisal, as they thought that it was like the teachers' appraisal, *like, for us*, Brigid said. The women noted though that ERO pointed out in their report that, *The board needs to formalise procedures for future appraisals of the co-principals* (ERO 1995, p.6), and they recognised that *the board do need to know, so next year we'll have David involved as well* (Brigid 1:23). In 1996, David joined the principal appraiser when she interviewed the co-principals and he said he was *really happy with it. I was new to it and I was watching what was going on. They concentrated on curriculum* (David 2:1). He thought that the work the co-principals were doing in that area was *amazing*.

Tensions in governance/management relationships: 1995 -7

In the ERO Assurance Audit Report released in November 1995, it was stated that *The Board has been innovative in appointing co-principals to the school. This has achieved the planned objective of reducing the heavy workload of the previous principal. New management structures are negotiated and developed as a result of the appointment. These support effective curriculum delivery* (1995, p.2). This report was very complimentary about what had been achieved in the first nine months of the co-principalship. Some tensions in the area of governance and management that had been evident before the appointment of the co-principals, were continuing to simmer throughout this period, however.

Earlier tensions

Fred Lewis, the previous principal, had found that under *'Tomorrow's Schools' the job of principal had grown enormously* (Fred 1:1). He had helped the first board develop the school's policies and charter, but as Wayne later put it, he was having to work *with a board that didn't really know what they were supposed to be doing* (Wayne 1:3). Wayne described tensions that had arisen when *that board started to take control and have more input into running the school. Fred didn't find that easy to accept to start with, but he had to. When we came in as a new board though, we relied on Fred heavily for the first six months and listened to his advice and counsel* (Wayne 1:3).

However, Wayne's board then decided that they wanted to tighten up the budget and they began to take over more of the financial management. There developed what Wayne described as *a period of mistrust... We as a board wanted to get more control, have more input ... in order to protect and assist the staff. Their workload was high ... and if anything did go*

wrong they weren't the ones to be held entirely responsible ... So we were trying to be forceful and supportive at the same time ... This was difficult for the principal (2-3).

Wayne explained that Brigid, as deputy principal, *had watched all this happen around her... but she stepped in and did a fine job when Fred took stress leave* (4). Wayne was very impressed with Brigid's work, and when he negotiated the co-principalship contract with her and Carrie, he was determined that the agreement would protect them from any possible intervention by a new board that might attempt to undermine the shared leadership contract. This was a possibility that he thought was quite likely.

Who answers to whom in the new co-principal/board relationships?

After Brigid and Carrie were appointed, at the last meeting of Wayne's board there was some debate about whether the co-principals should have one or two votes at board meetings. Wayne thought that both women should have a vote, but it was decided by his board that this matter should be left over for the new board to decide at their first meeting (Board minutes, 19/4/95). At that meeting, David Sullivan, the new board chairperson, reported that Wayne had suggested that both the principals should be able to vote, but he also pointed out that *under Section 94 of the Education Act there is one trustee principal, and therefore co-principals should only have one vote*. After some discussion, the new board accepted the parish priest's suggestion that both co-principals should attend board meetings, but take turn about to vote (Board minutes 2/5/95).

A more volatile issue emerged at this meeting however. Brigid described how one of the board members said to the co-principals, *You'd better behave yourselves girlies, because we're your employers now* (1:3). David Sullivan said later that when he heard the board member say this he thought, *Oh no! Right you're off the board!* but he did not intervene at the meeting. Brigid took exception to what was said though. *I wasn't going to let that pass*, she said. *I knew I'd take it home with me otherwise - it had to come out in the open, so I said, "That sort of comment is inappropriate"* (Brigid 1:2). Although the board member responded that it was just a flippant comment, Brigid said that similar comments were made at the following board meeting. She felt then that *the governance/management thing was something we had to sort out fairly smartly* (1:2). She was surprised and concerned that *at the very first meeting some people were so outspoken and I thought, gosh, if they are saying things like this at the first meeting! I said to them, 'I think people need to realise that we all want the same thing, you know, to have the very best for the children in the school'* (1:16).

Brigid found this new board *a completely different kettle of fish - this kind of thing didn't happen with the previous board. Previously I felt all the board were on our side, but now there are some people who are making things really quite difficult* (Brigid 1:4). At the time, she thought that *two of the new board members have hidden agendas for coming on to the board and they don't realise the dynamics of how boards work* (Brigid 1:3). She illustrated this with an account of an issue around one board member's disruption of a board sub-committee's development of policy in an area that affected this board member's son. She said that during this episode, there was considerable tension at the sub-committee meeting, with another board member asking whether the questioner's concerns were grounded in her own *vested interests* or in the interests of the school as a whole. *It was obvious how stressed everyone was because everyone just kept making excuses to leave the room to make a cup of tea* (Brigid, BC 2:25).

Colleen Murphy, the school secretary, observed some of what was happening between the new board and the co-principals. She commented later, *The board are not there to manage the school, but there are some with a bit of a silly attitude about that. A lot of boards have a*

bit of trouble sorting out their governance and management and it tends to place a lot of demands on the principals, I feel, until the board get their head around the fact that they are not there to tell the principals how to manage the school or the staff, or how to run their day to day work (Colleen:2).

Brigid continued to worry about what was happening and she contacted another principal in the area to ask her whether she could come to talk to the board about governance and management. This person advised Brigid to use STA, as *otherwise it might be perceived that this is just another principal coming in. She gave me a couple of names and I suggested it to David. The board were actually going to a training thing that night, so he said, 'Let's just see how that goes and whether it irons out any of those sorts of things'* (Brigid 1:16). When nothing eventuated, a few months later she contacted a representative from Teacher Support to see whether anyone was available to offer the board some training. She suggested to David that he follow up on this person's offer to *work these things through with the board* (Brigid, BC 2:26), but she said he did not seem to think the person was appropriate and the training did not eventuate at that stage. Brigid remained concerned about this, but did not want to be *telling the board that you have to do this, this and this. I'd like them to find out for themselves*. She said at that time, she and Carrie were also *sort of letting David find his way too* (Brigid, BC 2:27).

Although they were experiencing tensions in their board/principal relationships, in the beginning Brigid and Carrie felt that overall they had an ally in their board chairperson. Although they thought that he did sometimes need to have things pointed out to him, they said he did listen to what they had to say. Carrie gave the example of when they told him that *we were in fact being bullied about some things by some of the people on the board to do things in certain ways, and that he needed to say no to this, he said 'Oh yeah, I can see that'* (Carrie, BC 2:27). Brigid said that he was *very supportive of Carrie and I. Early on he made one of the difficult board members the secretary to keep her busy, he said, so she won't have the energy to put into too many extra things* (1:5).

David acknowledged later that it was *a tough board - demanding. Full of highly talented, but emotional people* (David 1:5). He wanted to help the co-principals and commented, *When I said at a planning meeting with the co-principals, 'What else can I do?' they said, 'Just keep the board off our backs'* (David 1:4). He supported the co-principals during some debates that arose around the introduction of increased principal release time.

An issue over co-principal 'release time'

During their first six months in the job together, the co-principals found that when a crisis occurred (such as a suspension case) they had to get in a reliever to release them from their teaching so that they could deal with it. They also realised that they needed more time out of their own teaching responsibilities if they were to achieve the whole school curriculum and professional development that they wanted to embark on. *So, Carrie said, we started taking an extra release day. We talked about it with the budget person on the board and it just sort of grew into a pattern from that* (Carrie, BC 2:1).

Having the release teacher in for another day caused a problem with some parents however, according to David. He said, *Whenever the regular teachers are out of their classrooms, for whatever reason - whether they are sick, or on a course or whatever, what will happen is two or three parents will go in to pick up their children and the teacher's not there. They then say to a board member, 'Why is there a relief teacher in there with my child?' And it built up to several parents complaining about the number of relief teachers in the school. And the board get upset because they say the co-principals haven't told them* (David 1:5).

David had some sympathy with the co-principals here though. He said, *The co-principals haven't told the board why they are out of the classroom, because they won't say, 'Look we were dealing with a sexual molestation case,' or 'We were dealing with social welfare, or the police.' That's not something the community needs to know... One of the board members is a bit of a gossip and he takes things home ... and nothing travels faster than rumour you know* (1:6).

David supported the co-principal's request to the board that they allocate a sum of \$2000 to fund the extra release time for them until the new Management Responsibility Grant (MRG) would be available to the school in the 1996 financial year. He pointed out that *with only one release day, there was too much pressure. It was incredibly unfair as there is exactly the same amount of work for a school this size as what there is for one with 500 pupils where you would have a walking head* (David 1:2).

One member of the board remained unhappy about the expenditure however, and wanted to see some more justification for it. So Carrie and Brigid prepared for the December 1995 board meeting a report which began: *We realise that in order for you to support us it is important that you understand the nature of the teaching principal's job and how the provision of an extra release day has contributed so positively to school development* (Memo to board of trustees, 4/12/95:1- 2). They listed the details of their work with advisors and initiatives in science, maths, art, religious education, music, English, health, physical education, maths, technology, 'brain gym,' Māori and Samoan, many of which they said, *would not have happened if it were not for the extra release day* (p.2) They also recorded developments in the staff library, a policy review calendar, new report forms, development of the caretaker's job description and appointment of a new office person. They concluded, *One release day each has also meant that we have been able to keep up with mail. In the past we have missed out on offers which would have benefited the school, particularly in regard to availability of advisors. This list is not exhaustive, but we feel it will give you a useful insight into what our job entails and what the extra release time has meant* (p.3). This report appeared to satisfy the board member and the issue quietened for the time being.

The extra .06 principal release time not only helped both women cope with what David called the *big and ugly job of a teaching principal*, but also enabled them to rationalise their contributions to teaching. They employed a release teacher for four mornings a week, during which time she took Brigid's class for maths from 9.00 - 10.30, and Carrie's class for maths from 11.00-12.30. Continuity for both the children's learning and the co-principal's management work was more easily achieved. *We can start one job one day, and either finish it or over morning tea I'll tell Carrie, 'These are the things I've done,' and she can carry on with it.* Carrie added, *And instead of having to leave it for a week, it can get completed.* Both women were grateful for the extra release time arrangement: *It takes a huge load off our shoulders. We don't have to plan for a whole area of the curriculum* (Brigid, BC 3:1).

Relationships of trust and/or accountability?

Although from the co-principals' point of view the issue around release time and the use of relievers was successfully negotiated, they found the episode a strain. By the end of 1995, both Carrie and Brigid were feeling that the new board did not trust them. Carrie said, *It's a bit of a 'them and us' scenario - it's a bit of a power game actually* (Carrie, BC2:13) and Brigid felt that from the beginning of the shared leadership, the co-principals were having to deal with *a lot of confrontation* (Brigid 2:30).

The underlying tensions here were not apparent to the Education Review Officers who visited the school in November of 1995 however, and the ERO Assurance Audit Report stated

that, *The governance and management issues that existed at the time of the previous Education Review Office visit (in 1994, before the co-principals were appointed) have been resolved. The appointment of co-principals from the start of 1995 and the Board elections in March provided an opportunity for a redefinition of governance and management responsibilities. Governance is now delegated to all Board members through sub committees in which staff are also involved. Each committee has defined tasks which are stated in a strategic plan as part of the board strategic plan. This organisation has resulted in positive working relationships between Board members and staff. Mutual respect is evident between the Board and the co-principals. All of these factors support co-ordination and unity of the Board and staff in establishing and implementation plans for school development* (ERO, November 1995, p.3).

As part of their commitment to their shared leadership, both Brigid and Carrie attended the board sub-committee meetings at the beginning of their work together. They thought this was important both for the guidance of the new board, and for their own development and keeping in touch with what was happening. Brigid observed, *Although it's taking time now, it will lessen the workload eventually* (1:15). They said later though, that not all the committees remained as focused or unified as ERO reported. The co-principals felt some board members were not as committed to their areas of responsibility as they hoped and some other board members did not trust them to make decisions but kept asking questions and wanting documentation. When Brigid told the board that it seemed to her that *If people really trusted us they would not grill us as much as they do, someone said 'I think you're taking it too personally'* (Brigid 2:31).

Fay O'Reilly was one of the board members who was asking for reports that would prove to her that the co-principals *were accountable in their administration of the school* (Fay 1:5). Fay felt frustrated that she *had no idea what they are supposed to do as principals, so how am I supposed to be able to judge whether they are accountable or not? ... I will say to David Sullivan, 'Gee it cheeses me off!' and he's very good, but he's very naughty. He says, 'Go for it!' He enjoys a good fight on the board, a strong disagreement, something that gets the adrenalin going. He feels it brings out different aspects of board members and he knows I'm a right bolshy bitch and I'm quite happy to argue something because he's asked me to or because I feel strongly about it. So he would quite often prod me, or raise an eyebrow and I'd wade in with another question* (Fay 1:6).

While she was on the board Marie was frustrated by this sort of thing. She described how Carrie was quizzed over making sure the computer she was recommending was suitable for the school, with the board *telling her to make sure it could take the school rolls - but anyone walking into the staff room would know that Carrie is up to date in that area* (Marie:12). In Marie's opinion, some of the board did not understand *how competent the co-principals are*.

Tensions around communication with parents

The issue around the principals' release time also became entangled with some issues around communication with parents. Some saw this as inadequate communication from the co-principals to parents, while some others saw the problems as being caused by the board not fulfilling their communication with parents adequately.

The fact that some parents had complained that they did not get enough information about what was happening in relation to the number of relievers that were being used in the school, was seen by David as, to some extent, the co-principals' fault. Although he thought that the school had very able teachers, and that both Brigid and Carrie were doing an excellent job in relation to their own teaching and leadership of the school, in his view, the co-principals

were not good at dealing with the community... We have committed parents and therefore we have huge expectations. I tell them they've got to get out to the front gate more (1:7).

However, Marie Watson said, *I wouldn't say the lack of communication usually comes from the co-principals. It's the board not keeping people informed* (14). Marie saw communication to the parents about staffing matters as being the responsibility of the board and she felt that in this matter, the board should have been correcting a misunderstanding on the part of the parents about the role of teachers who were, in fact, not relievers, but part-time permanent staff employed for principal release and for reading recovery. This did not happen and the discontent continued to be felt by some parents.

Colleen Fleming, the school secretary also pointed out that *the parents' expectations here are probably unrealistic and a lot of parents tend to not find out all the information before they sound off... Parents here are incredibly demanding of the school and the principals and their own children* (1). Colleen had children in college and had served on that school's board as well as St Mary's parent teacher committee. In her view, *With the new Tomorrow's Schools and new boards, parents have been expected to take more of an interest. It's very easy for a parent to come in though, and say 'My child's not achieving, and what are you going to do about it?' rather than 'My child's not achieving, and what can I do to help?' It can be pretty stressful for a teacher in those situations* (1).

Brigid did find some of the parents very demanding, though she felt that *as a group, the parents in this community are just wonderful* (Brigid 1:12). She described how in the first year, *a lot of them came and asked, 'How's it going?' It's nice that people are genuinely interested to see if the co-principalship is making a difference and it's nice to be able to say that I think it's going wonderfully well. I feel as if a load has been lifted off my shoulders* (1:17). However, she also said, *But I guess it's like anything - you get your few who make life very difficult. There are a few parents here, who, if they don't like something say 'Well, I'll take my children away.' They say those things, and they say that other parents say them. So, on one occasion I actually rang the parents. I said, 'Look, I hear that you're maybe going to take your child away because (name) is teaching in your child's class.' And she said, 'Oh I'm sick of people saying I say things that aren't true! There's no way I'm going to do that!' She said, 'I am going to move Janice, but that's because I always said that at the end of Std 4, I wanted her to go to (name) college. She's been booked in there since she was a baby.' So then I rang and told the other parent this and I said to her, 'Look, I think you should check your facts are correct before you start saying that sort of thing'* (Brigid 1:12). Brigid thought that it was much better to be *direct* in this way, rather than to let issues simmer underground.

The parish priest wondered though whether perhaps the co-principals were not promoting themselves and their achievements strongly enough with the board and the parents. He said that the co-principals had a gentle approach and he approved of this because he did not like *strident people*. However, he added that *to lead... you've got to be up the front and out in front of people. You've got to be seen - and I think that maybe when you've got joint principals, maybe they tend to step back from that responsibility... There could be times when they need to be up there saying, like, we are achieving, the children are achieving... like, trust that they have a vision* (Parish priest 1:7).

Later, after David had been putting some pressure on the co-principals to *get out to the front gate with parents* as he put it, Brigid described some of the parent information evenings they had run and said, *We are communicating with parents, but one or two complain. And actually, part of the problem is there's still one board member who doesn't listen when she has things explained to her. She is focused on her own children's needs and has not really worked out that she is there for the good of all the children. It's quite exhausting really* (Brigid, BC3:10).

By the end of 1996, David acknowledged that communication problems with the community were not just centred on the co-principals. He said that the board PR person *hadn't been very successful at communicating with parents and she would get off the board if she could. She said that she was sick and tired of hearing people saying that they are not informed of what's going on. She wrote a board newsletter every week and they still said that* (David 1:10). He also said later in 1997 that he himself had had some difficulties in communicating with the community. *One of the things I thought I'd be really good at was communicating with the community and I've found it much harder than I thought it would be. You get to the point where you think, oh **** them, I've told them so many times ... There are 10% of the community who niggle and nag and there are 90% who are really happy with the school. You can't afford to be constantly aware of the 10% who take your attention away from the 90%* (David 2:3). He said he had not talked about these experiences with the co-principals though.

Gender and leadership: entangled issues?

During 1995-6, a set of gendered dynamics was also simmering within what the parish priest called *an entangled area* of perceptions about the shared leadership. He said that while there was *certainly a wide satisfaction with the co-principalship at the moment*, there were some people in the community who were finding the co-principalship *a little - um - unsatisfactory I suppose. I have asked one or two and a few have said, 'Well you don't know who you should be seeing when you go there.'* Others then say *they think that, well, you know, we have an all female staff, but we would like some male members on the staff... I think that's it. The other is that people see the play area as being small and there's not really enough area for play and that perhaps the two principals don't encourage the children, particularly boys, to - ah (laughs) to be involved with certain sports like cricket and rugby. Others may have a very high expectation, and others say 'I like to go along and meet the person who is in charge and who'll be prepared to accept responsibility ... and those people might be very well satisfied if it was just one person there ... It is a very entangled area and I feel that working the whole thing through with these people, well you might very well be intruding in an area which is better left and at the end of the day you may achieve nothing except to stir* (Parish priest 1:2-3).

Marie said that the community was *quite conservative* in terms of some of its attitudes (Marie:22). She saw the cricket match episode as illustrating some underlying gender politics that were being challenged on the one hand by the co-principals and teachers in the school, and being resisted on the other by some parents who she saw as having *quite entrenched attitudes in this area*.

That's not cricket!

Marie described how *Brigid has really promoted fair play within the school - like instead of F2 boys dominating the whole field with cricket, she said that the girls must have a turn in the space ... and I think this has got up people's noses* (Marie:20). She remembered hearing David telling one of the parents to go down to the school to see the feminist down there (meaning Brigid) when he was asked about a cricket match that some of the dads wanted to organise between our school and another one. *This parent rang me up and said would I ask that feminist in North Street if she would talk to the staff about it. He said 'We want a dads' match.'* So I filled him in on how we have this fair play policy within the school and that if it was going under the school name, it would be good to have both males and females and just call it a parents' match. *Well it got into this great big thing with letters flying here and there -*

I don't think the community was ready for it. But it ended up being a parents' match on the flyer that finally went out.

On the day of the match, one of the men hit the ball right out the park four times in a row and there was all this cheering and carrying on! And I said to the person sitting next to me, 'Just wait till the women get out there - it will go right over the houses!' But, well none of the women even got a turn to go out there. One woman who turned up with all the white cricket gear on (and didn't know any of the wrangling that had gone on beforehand), well she had put her name down, quite high on the list because she got there early. We just thought it was, you know, first in first on the field sort of thing. But she never got called up. She was most upset.

On Monday, we talked about it as a staff because we did really feel it was a staff issue, although it had come originally from a parent. We decided that if anything went out under St Mary's name again, it would be parents as such. I followed up and spoke to the chap in charge and I said that it had to be a fair thing, you know, first in - first play. But we haven't had another game (Marie 21-22). Marie remained amazed that people think in those ways, and are still so firmly entrenched. It's stupid isn't it?

Challenging traditional expectations

Brigid said later that One of the biggest difficulties we have is the community being quite traditional. I think a lot of people would like to see a male principal still. We got a lot of flack about introducing other sporting activities in the playground. The boys used to totally dominate it before we put our foot down, but now we have people saying it is a girls' playground and the boys are not getting a fair go. At the end of last year we had this wonderful concert, but there's been a lot of talk about the fact that we had the boys holding hands for the folk dance. This is the kind of thing we are working against. There are some people who think we just can't change things in these areas (Brigid, BC3:10). She described how when the EEO policy was being developed for the school, it came up that we've got no men and that we should be actively seeking men. I said we should be putting down that we always seek the best person for the job, whether that be a man or a woman. I also pointed out that we should be actively seeking a Samoan person, as it is important to recognise ethnic minorities and we have an important Samoan community in this school (Brigid 3:5).

Brigid felt disheartened by what she saw as minimal efforts by the board to involve the 17% Samoan community in the work of the board. She felt that cultural factors around the style of board meetings and procedures put Samoan people off. In her view, It's another aspect of this traditional community that the board just don't realise what an asset the Samoan community are ... Carrie and I have run a couple of parent evenings in their suburb, taking the school out to them, but other things have taken over and it's never been followed through. We went to White Sunday last week - I had put a notice in the school newsletter inviting people to attend and I was really impressed that one family did turn up and I saw four Samoan families go up to them and really look after them. And I thought that if it had been reversed and a Samoan family had come down here, they'd probably get ignored. It would have been nice if someone from the board had gone along - that's what needs to happen - the board need to get to know the Samoan community (Brigid 3:7).

David said later that the board had tried to get more Samoan parents involved on the board, And we had one Samoan person come along and unfortunately it was right in the middle of a suspension and he looked at the way this palangi board went at each other for five hours and he didn't want any of that, so he backed off. Others did the same (2:11). In his view, Our principals are very thoughtful of the Samoan community... and we do care greatly about

them, but they are happy not to be represented. One of the Samoan parents described some of the difficulties she had experienced, though. She had been asked *three times to go on the board, but, she said, I'm too shy and my English is not so good. People talk too fast and they use those hard words to understand ... The pressure is language, working, solo parenting and being too shy. Our parents were never involved in the school - in Samoa, they left the teaching to the teachers ... My community is very hard to communicate to also. If I come to them from the board with something to do, some will do it, but some will say, 'Yeah, yeah, yeah' and then they don't turn up. Some of my friends told me that some won't listen to me, but when an English person tell them, they do it. They might listen if Miss Kirkwood and Miss Perkins came to a meeting and told them that we want all the community to get involved in the school ... The teachers are trying to have more Samoan in the school - Miss Kirkwood likes us to come and do Samoan things with the kids, and I like to do that too, but my difficulty is to explain things clearly* (1:2).

One of the staff members described Brigid as a *change agent* particularly in equity areas. Brigid herself wondered how much the co-principals' pushing for improvement in equity issues had contributed to their difficulties with some parents and board members. *In a community such as this, I'm seen as a feminist. I see it as a way of life ... though I let it go that David continues to call us girls, she grinned. But, I think that if either Carrie or I had been men, we might not have been challenged as much as we have been* (3:5).

Despite these difficulties, the co-principals were excited about the success of their co-operative learning programme for the children. Carrie said, *We had quite a group of boys in the junior school who were anti certain girls and quite pathetic really and we introduced this mixed gender 'think, pair, share' activity where one child talks for a minute about an idea which is then reported back to the class by the other. They know that if they want to have their idea shared they have to say it clearly to their partner and the partner knows that they have to listen because they may be asked to report back ... The positive spin off is great! Where once the kids would have said things like, 'I don't want to work with her,' now there is no hassle* (Carrie, BC3:12).

David and two 'powerful' women

David Sullivan said he admired the work both women were doing. *That Brigid Kirkwood, she's an amazing woman! She's a very powerful person, afraid of nobody when she knows she's right. There was this guy here, a big mean tough guy, who swore in front of some of the kids, and she faced him down - he's six foot four - and she said to him, 'You're not going to come back to this school and swear in front of the children.' He said, 'Well they were all over us, and I just lost it temporarily,' and she said, 'How do you think we feel?' I was amazed. I wouldn't have confronted him like she did. That's the measure of that woman. She has incredible steel up her back* (1:12). David's awe in this situation was not surprising: Brigid was quite a small woman, standing no taller than 5 foot.

David also found Carrie strong, saying that *she is equally as powerful as Brigid. They beat me every time*, he said with a grin. He described the two women's ability to *not weaken*, as he put it, despite the demands of the job. He said that some principals like his friend, *who's your archival old time principal, you know, big guy, tough, well organised - he hates it. If he could get out he would. He's had it - but not our principals. Even after two years and getting pissed off at times like all teachers do, I've never heard them talk about leaving - perhaps because they share the burden* (David 1:11).

Although David admired Carrie's and Brigid's abilities and strength, he was somewhat amused by the gender politics in his relationship with the co-principals. He said, *They are very*

PC and insist on calling me the chairperson and I'm not! I'm the chairman because I'm a man. All the letters that come out of here have chairperson on them. I've signed the last ones because we needed to get some stuff out, but I've refused to sign anything else! Looking on, Marie (who was one of David's friends) noticed that with the co-principals, *David makes stupid comments, which they see, and it's a gender thing really. They take it quite sensitively and he wouldn't have meant it that way... he's a bit flippant* (Marie:15). Marie also wondered though, whether David was feeling *maybe overpowered by Carrie and Brigid* (Marie:13).

Wayne Anderson commented early on, *I think the principals can be seen, and I'm not saying it is happening, but they can be seen to be a closed shop from the board's perspective ... There are two of them to bounce off each other and they could insulate themselves from the people they really need to be conferring with* (Wayne 1:22). There certainly were differences between David's and the co-principals' perceptions about what are appropriate communication styles and processes.

David wonders, "Are women from Venus, men from Mars?"

When he was reflecting later on what was happening in board meetings David said he thought that there were differences between how a group of men sort out a problem and how women do. He described a situation where he and Alistair, the treasurer, disagreed about a budget item at a board meeting. *There was a lovely moment at the last meeting when he said to me, 'You can't do that!' There were the two of us looking at each other, with me saying, 'I want to do that!' and him saying to me, 'No you won't! You haven't got the money!' That's how I'd like to see the principals work with the board. Argue and fight. But they withdraw, they clam up if there's a disagreement - clam up. Walls go up* (David 2:3). He described how during 1997, the board had got someone to come to work with the board on how to run a board and how to chair board meetings, *'cos it was very male oriented you know - it was me. There were only a couple of men on the board and I was running it like it was a bunch of men... But if it was all men, we'd have got that meeting over and done with in about half an hour. Like - what's the status of the school? Good. What's the situation in the accounts? Fine. What else do we need to do? Oh fix this and that. Good. Who do you need to do it? Oh, so and so. Have it ready by next week? Yeah. Good. Done. See you!* (David 2:3). In his view though, this approach *did not work with women. What would happen is that you'd make a decision and then the women would come back to the next meeting and say, 'I'm not very happy with that idea - we'd like to talk some more about this'* (2:8). Brigid saw one of the problems here as *people not always having the necessary documents to read before the board meeting and sometimes they would be trying to catch up with the issues as the decisions were being made.*

Talking past each other across professional/lay divides

During 1996, David described feeling a little like 'piggy in the middle' between the board and the community on one hand and the co-principals on the other - caught between *parents and board members ringing up and saying that the co-principals did not tell them enough about what was going on, and his own understanding that the co-principals could not always tell the community what was really happening, such as when they may have been working with a social welfare or police officer.* He said, *As the chair of the board I could demand that they tell - I'm the employer and I could demand... but as Wayne says to me, you've got three years to totally cock up the school and then get off, but the principals have to stay here* (David 1: 6). David and Wayne were close friends and when they went out sailing

together, he would tell Wayne about some of the things that were happening and seek his advice or comments.

The co-principals had some understanding of David's situation. Brigid pointed out that one of the difficult board members would talk to David about her concerns but not to the co-principals themselves. However, eighteen months into their co-principalship, she and Carrie were also feeling disappointed that *Although David always says 'I'm there to support you' he doesn't necessarily do that* (Brigid, BC 3:15). Carrie recognised that David would not see that. To me though, supporting us would be stopping things when they go on and on. That's the sort of thing I see a chairperson needing to do - steering the ship. Brigid added, *He has some good skills and his heart is in the right place, but I think he's still finding out what his role is and there are some skills, like good chairing skills, that he doesn't have.*

As time went on, the relationship between the board chairperson and the co-principals became a little strained. David decided that the reason his relationship with Brigid and Carrie was altering was because the co-principals were *becoming introverted. That's where the relationship has changed. Whereas before it was great and we were joking about this and that, as I've understood my role more, the joking has gone and there's a level of frustration in my dealings with them. When I first started I was one of them, but now I'm part of the community* (David 1:7). He described a disagreement between himself and the co-principals about a letter he drafted to the parents to accompany the results of a parent survey to assess parents' satisfaction with the school. He said, *I wanted to include some statements about what would be done to improve on areas that some parents were dissatisfied about, such as what was seen as poor discipline in the F1/F2 class. There are some new parents worrying about whether our kids are getting the best education to take them on to college. Staff say, 'Yes they are - of course they are,' but the community don't know that* (1:9). He thought that there should be a meeting set up the next year with the deans of the local high school *to tell the parents about what we expect you to do to help your child, so the rules and standards will be set.* He wanted to write about this in the letter, but the co-principals thought that the survey should just be sent out as it was and this is what happened.

David felt that the co-principals were not listening to him. He decided that *The principals and I have got to iron some issues out ... they don't know it yet, but Wayne Anderson and I are going to get together and we're going to do an appraisal on the co-principalship and is it working* (David 1:11). He planned to let the year run out its course and then do this review at the beginning of 1997.

From Carrie and Brigid's perspective, however, David and the board were not listening to them. In their view, *the board had been a disaster*, as Carrie put it. She said that *board meetings have been really frustrating and long because David does not have good chairing skills. He has conversations with whoever is sitting next to him while we're giving our report for example. To me that is not only rude, but it is saying that what you are talking about is not important. It's all to do with chairing skills. Deep down he wants to support us and he believes he is supporting us, but he doesn't stop things. He lets the negativity build up. To him it is good to let people get things off their chest, but an AGM is not the place to do that* (Carrie 2:3). She also found it inappropriate that *People could pop up and challenge you - with surprises, things that are not on the agenda.* Brigid said, *With Wayne I knew before we had an AGM that he would have seen, read and taken account of our principals' report and we'd have seen, read and discussed his chairman's report, and I would have gone to the AGM knowing that what was on the agenda was stuck to and it would be a pleasant evening, as it should be - with no surprises. Whereas I would go along to some of our meetings in absolute trepidation because you never knew what was going to happen. And you never knew how it*

was going to be dealt with. You need to meet together to talk about things before the board meeting (3:3).

In Wayne's opinion, the co-principalship was achieving what his board had hoped for, but he stressed that *Communication is really key. It has to be open and there has to be absolute trust between the board and the principals and it has to be flowing both ways. There has to be acceptance that they will make mistakes and the board will make mistakes, and people just have to get on and get the job done for the betterment of the school and the children and the whole community. The board need to accept now that we have a co-principalship and it's there to stay and let's make it work* (1:22).

Brigid and Carrie continued to feel though that the board had not 'gelled' as a team and differences among them were working against co-operative work between the board and the co-principalship. Carrie said, *They're all playing their own little game... I think that there are some who just like to be on the board because it sounds good. There are others who are on because they want to know what's going on. They don't want to have any particular work to do, but they will put in their little comments that sort of muck up everything you are trying to do without being constructive. It's not a constructive board really* (Carrie, BC 3:8). The women also felt frustrated that teachers' work was generally not valued and they talked about this with David. Brigid said that he told them that *he was going to have a meeting with the board without them and talk to them how they could be valuing the staff* (Brigid, BC 3:17).

Fay's comments illustrate some of the dilemmas some of the board members felt themselves to be confronting at this time. She said, *It would be very difficult to train parents or even to give them any guidance in what a teacher should be doing or how they should be doing it. You have to be a fairly senior teacher to be able to judge whether a teacher is doing a good job or not* (Fay 1:7). She acknowledged that when asked about an area of the children's learning, *the co-principals were more than happy to go into detail about various things and I'm sure that they are very competent and good at their jobs* (1:8). Sometimes, though, when what she wanted was to be given information such as another teacher would get in answer to a question, she felt that she was being treated as 'just a mother' while they were the professionals. Fay also felt that the co-principals *tended at times to take things personally*, but when she asked questions she did not want them *to get upset and then bombard me with useless information as I would be tempted to do if I was in their situation* (1:8). She added that *I do feel a bit disappointed in myself though that I haven't got the information I need. I don't feel I'm doing a particularly good job and I know by asking questions I'm just going to add to their workloads and their stress levels. Not only because they will feel they are being criticised, but also because it means they are put in a position of 'Gosh, how are we going to explain to lay people what we as teachers automatically know because we've done it so long all these years it's just second nature to us'* (Fay 1:9).

Fay continued to worry about how the co-principals were managing the school. She was concerned, for example, that the school survey of parents reported that some parents were unhappy about the discipline in the F1 and 2 class and she wondered *how the co-principals were working with the young teacher in that class. And I sat and listened as the principals said, 'Yes, we are looking after her, we are making sure she has enough back up.'* But what are they going to do? How are they going to address it? What are they going to say to this young lady? And I thought, *don't fob me off with 'It's a management issue'* (1:8). Fay said that she did not distrust the ERO report that said that the school was running well, but she thought that it *focused more on the teaching rather than the co-principalship model*. For her, a peer review of the co-principalship was what would put her mind at rest. Though even here she worried. *I presume that they (the appraising principals) would be professional enough to overcome a natural bias and just go by what they saw working in this school as opposed to*

the way it was working in their school (1:11). (She did not seem to be aware that the co-principals had been appraised twice by another principal.)

From the co-principals' perspective, the on-going problems were to do mainly with governance/management issues emerging out of what they saw as the failure of the board to understand their roles as governors and to be committed to their own particular areas of responsibility. Carrie and Brigid felt frustrated that there was so little available for board training. Carrie said, *It would be just so nice if there were a little piece of paper somewhere that said, right - here's what the board should do, these are your roles.*¹³³ But it is all so wishy washy. I went on a course a little while ago where everybody shared what their board members did, and I gave David a copy - he was quite interested. There were some boards that do write policies, some are totally responsible for maintenance and property. Brigid added, *We do the lot, even to the drains out there that we had to get replaced. It was us who got in touch with the Ministry - if we hadn't done that the school would have had to pay for the lot (BC 3:17).*

For his part though, David was becoming increasingly frustrated that *The co-principals will listen to other professionals, but not to the board - they don't respect the board and if someone disagrees with them, their barriers go up and they withdraw (David 2:3).* On reflection however, he said, *That's with pretty good reasons, really. Like, I don't know what I'm talking about. Even though I was a teacher years ago, I don't know how a school is run. Alistair, our treasurer, doesn't know how the finances work. He does work very hard on it though - he knows what money we've got and won't let us commit ourselves to something we haven't got the money for. We're going to employ a firm of accountants to do our finances (David 2:3).*

The parish priest's comments seemed to sum up the situation when he said, *The jury is still out for boards of trustees in schools. When you live next door to someone and there are things happening like school appointments and so on, there are great pressures. After all, we are not professionals - we are people from the community who are trying to do our best (1:4).*

'Tomorrow's Schools,' today's problems?

Wayne Anderson's comments throw some light on the difficulties that were occurring within the co-principals/board relationships at St Mary's School. He said, *My personal view on Tomorrow's Schools is that the boards have been given far too much to deal with. You have got good people who are interested, but who don't have the skills or qualifications. And they don't have the time to deal with the problems that arise ... I think there are insufficient support mechanisms for school boards. The School Trustees' Association is fine but the board is paying for that. The board is now being asked to pay for any advice, like if you picked up the phone you know, you are paying per minute for the advice you are getting. And as a board chair you are forever conscious of the fact that you are spending the schools' money. Most of the educational courses I went to were a complete waste of time. They struck me as an ego trip for the presenter rather than good, informative information for the people that were paying and we were being asked to pay good money, without really knowing what you were going to get. So as a board we stopped spending money on board education. What we tended to do was to make as many phone calls to people that were prepared to advise us as necessary and then make up our own minds. I mean for a small school like ours the budget, if you take away the wages for staff, that are somewhere between \$80-100,000 for the payment of the secretary, the*

¹³³ This was in July 1996, before the Ministry of Education published in 1997, *Governing and Managing in New Zealand Schools: A Guide for Boards of Trustees* (Wellington: Learning Media).

caretaker, the running of the school, all the normal bills etcetera, there really isn't much there (Wayne 1:18-19).

Wayne also pointed out that *A lot of people thought that board members should not take their board fees - it should be a donation of your time. And I can recall ERO saying to us that we should be spending more time here and doing this or that, and I said, 'Look, I'm getting paid less than 70cents an hour for my board work!' We are encouraged to fund raise to enhance our child's education but this is a joke - not every school can fund raise and when we got our relocatable building, it is just that - relocatable. You have no control because you don't own the buildings. Boards need to be careful that they don't spend their community's resources on things that can be taken away* (1:19-20).

Wayne's view of what schools were being asked to do was that *The whole thing is less than satisfactory - there is a gross duplication of effort with the boards of each school all doing the same thing, but with insufficient support. Although the board of trustees model was sold to us as a way of having some input into your child's education, it didn't do anything for my children. We tried to have some input through going the co-principalship way and doing a few things we wanted to do, but they (the agencies) certainly didn't help us* (1:21).

The co-principals said that there was little support for them either. For example they said that *There was no guidance from the Principals' Federation in teaching us or telling us how to deal with certain situations, so we're sort of finding out by being involved in them. It would be really useful to be able to get advice or positive strategies for dealing with the sorts of things we've encountered* (Brigid 2:32). Both the co-principals felt that it was ending up as their responsibility to sort out the problems in a community/school climate that had changed under *Tomorrow's Schools*. Brigid felt that within this climate *Things have got out of perspective. For example, we accepted a Muslim family last week and I knew there were some people who were unhappy with that. So I wrote a note in the newsletter just giving them a bit of background about how the family had come from Kuwait and they'd be granted refugee status and how they'd had a very rough time and how it was a wonderful opportunity for us to put in place the special character that makes St Mary's the school it is. But this parent who could not get into the school because of the roll restriction complained to others (she did not come to us) and said how important was it that we let these people in ahead of them? Parents have got more demanding of schools I feel* (Brigid 2:29).

David also held this opinion. He said, *I think Tomorrow's Schools has increased the amount of conflict in communities as some parents now think we've got a right to have our say. He found that he himself was coming under fire and said, I stopped going to some social occasions because I wanted to avoid being asked a particular set of questions by some people* (David 2:5). Wayne commented that *The hard thing is that you become an unpaid public servant and people think that your time is no longer your own, that you've become their property* (Wayne 2:5).

1997: The co-principals take stock and re-think

After two years of sharing the leadership, Brigid and Carrie took some time to 'take stock.' Carrie said, *In a school like this, there is a principal's job and the deputy principals supports the principal. What has happened with us over the two years though, is that we have given ourselves two principals' jobs - we've made the job bigger. Brigid agreed. We went into the co-principalship together to make things a bit easier and in reality it has made things difficult because we took on so much* (Brigid 3:5). Brigid had been spending a lot of time in her weekends and holidays at the school and she said, *I realised that I couldn't do justice to everything if I was constantly tired* (3:5). She resolved to cut back to a few hours on a Saturday

and a few days in the holidays. Carrie had been taking a lot of work home to do in the evenings after spending time with her family of four children, and she decided to cut back on how much she was taking home. The co-principals also realised that they needed to take time to consolidate all the things they had initiated. While Brigid had undertaken a full year Multi Serve (a professional development consultancy) course on whole school assessment, Carrie had been involved in a course on school management and they wanted to work some more on these areas.

Despite their resolution to cut back however, during the year they both continued to work on tasks the board had not completed. Brigid finished the school charter and Carrie completed the EEO policy - *That was a board person's task, but I ended up taking it on because she did not have the information to finish it*, Carrie said. *The third term had been just crazy - a thousand and one things to do, with lots of things started and very few finished. Lots that we shouldn't have had to do, like the strategic plan - I did the final checking this morning between 6.00 and 8.00am* (Carrie 2:1).

As part of the initial St Mary's School co-principalship agreement, Carrie and Brigid had committed themselves to the role-sharing for a minimum of three years. During 1997 however, both women began thinking about moving on. Carrie applied for a principalship in another school, but was not successful. Brigid became interested in undertaking some more study in a field of special interest, and became more keen on the idea of a study break when the opportunity arose for a year's paid study leave.

When Carrie said that she'd be happy to carry on as sole principal in her absence, Brigid wrote to the board explaining the course and asking whether the board would be willing to support her application. She stated, *This area has always been one of interest for me and I feel this would be a wonderful opportunity for not only myself, but also the school to benefit from the knowledge and experience I would bring back to St Mary's. If my application is successful, the Ministry of Education will continue to pay my salary as well as the long term reliever's. Therefore, no cost would be incurred to the Board* (Letter to David Sullivan, Chairman, Board of Trustees St Mary's School, 1/7/1997).

At their July meeting, the board discussed Brigid's request, and noted that *A study award was available which would allow leave with pay to be given* (Board minutes, 2/7/97:2). They agreed that it was an excellent opportunity for Brigid and David wrote to her to confirm that *the board was delighted to support your application* (Letter to B. Kirkwood, 14/7/1997).

Brigid was pleased. She said, *I'm ready for a change. If I'd had a different board and if things here had been better, I may not have been as ready to move on. But I don't really want to go on being part of these stresses. Some very trivial things have become major, and I want to enjoy my classroom ... Next year it would be nice to come back into the co-principalship and put into practice all the things I've learned on the course - that's one option* (Brigid 3:4).

What happens when one leaves?

1997: Reviewing the co-principalship contract

When it became clear that Brigid was going on study leave for the whole of 1998, she, Carrie and David agreed that it was important to clarify what should happen, both when Brigid left and in the following year when decisions were being made about her return to St Mary's. Brigid thought that this review of their contract was particularly important for Carrie's protection. *The board have never really entirely supported the co-principalship. Wayne did,*

but the rest may not be that keen (Brigid 3:4). The co-principals and David agreed that it was appropriate to include Wayne in this discussion and in a memo to the co-principals, these two men stated, *Let's keep it informal and constructive. The co-principalship has been a great success and you both deserve full credit for the work you have put in. We believe that there now needs to be a paper trail laid covering the past and what we all expect for the future in order that there are no nasty surprises for any of us* (Memo 15/12/97:1).

At their meeting held on 15 December 1997, Brigid, Carrie, David and Wayne agreed that it was *important to tidy up loose ends* and to produce a document that would detail the background and record an agreement that would cover Brigid's leave of absence and return to the co-principalship. The following Background details were listed:

- Brigid and Carrie were appointed Co-Principals by the Board in 1995.
- 'In law' one is the Principal and one is the Deputy Principal.
- Both are **equally responsible** to the BOT as Principals.
- The BOT has given Brigid a year's leave of absence (1998) for study purposes.
- Carrie is to continue as acting 'stand alone' Principal.
- (Name) has been employed for one year as DP to assist Carrie in Brigid's absence.
- The school is reverting temporarily to a traditional management structure

The memo also noted the following points for discussion: *There must be a joint effort to clearly define the role of Co-Principals. This should be set out in the form of a job description. There should be a full review at this stage of the Co-Principalship. Sit down with the Co-Principals and discuss the way it has worked, why it has worked and how it could be improved. Perhaps in the future there should be a formal regular review of the Co-Principalship. This review should be conducted at six monthly intervals and be informal, constructive and designed to enhance an understanding of all parties, including the school community regarding the unique nature of our Co-Principalship. There should be a formal meeting between the board chair and the co-principals to specifically discuss the resumption of the co-principalship, prior to the commencement of the 1999 school year* (Memo, Draft ideas on Co-Principal reassessment, 1997:2).

It was agreed that during January/February of 1998, Carrie and Brigid would meet to look at their existing job description and make notes on what they had done together as co-principals so that there could be an evaluation of the model. It was also agreed that within the performance management system, appraisal of the co-principals should be kept separate from any review of the co-principalship model (Field notes, 15/12/97). Wayne suggested that *perhaps there could be a need for regular 'gripe sessions' between the board chair and the co-principals, with an agenda set out for these meetings* (Wayne, DWBC, 3).

Although Wayne and David had suggested in their memo that Brigid should sign an agreement with the board that *she will not return to the school other than as part of her studies for the duration of 1998* (Memo, p.2), Carrie said, *This is not a necessary statement to be included in the agreement - it's Wayne's industrial relations mind working overtime!* (Fieldnotes). It was acknowledged by the other three though, that Wayne's worries were justified when he raised the possibility that the new board, to be elected in March of 1998, might want to disestablish the co-principalship. He said, *Let's take the situation that David and I and our families move out of the district. You get new representatives on the board, who are all from families who come in during the year and you get newly elected people who don't know Brigid from a bar of soap. They're really impressed with the way that Carrie is working and there is nobody on your side Brigid. What is needed is an agreement saying to the next board, this is what you are going to do, binding them* (Wayne, DWBC:3). David said, *That is dead right - when I think of some of the people who would like to stand!* (3) Wayne

emphasised that *when the co-principals were appointed, the whole concept of the co-principalship was built on trust and there needs to be a clear understanding of what it is about. I think this is the worst year you could take leave Brigid, with a new board coming in. David agreed, and added, If it had been my board, I don't think the co-principalship would have happened (6). Brigid agreed. Realistically, the board we have just had has been one of the most difficult boards we could have had, she said (6).*

After a lot of discussion about the need to protect Brigid's position (which was 'in law' the deputy principal position) the four people agreed that what they wanted recorded was that *In October of the following year Brigid, Carrie and the board will meet to discuss the resumption of the co-principalship (David, DWBC:6), and that this would give sufficient time for the board to re-sell the co-principal concept to the school and the community (Wayne:6).*

The following agreement was drafted.

Agreement

between the St Mary's School Board and Co-Principals Brigid Kirkwood and Carrie Perkins

This agreement is additional to and follows on from the original agreement and letters of appointment between the Co-Principals and St Mary's school.

The original Co-Principals Agreement did not envisage the granting of leave of absence to either or both of the Co-Principals.

It did, however, envisage the termination of the Co-Principalship and proviso was made that neither Co-Principal would of right be appointed as the 'stand alone' Principal.

In the event that one of the Co-Principals was to leave the school, it was agreed that the remaining Co-Principal would remain in a caretaker capacity until the Principal's position was filled

This agreement is made in order to ensure that:

- the Co-Principals retain the right to re-establish their management roles when Brigid returns from her leave
- the new school Board about to be formed has a clear understanding of not only the Co-Principalship, but also the transitional arrangements agreed in order to facilitate Brigid's leave and ensure efficient management of the school during her absence and on her return
- both Co-Principals and the Board understand the obligations the parties have to each other during Brigid's absence and in the event that the Co-Principalship is terminated through resignation or other method.

Leave is granted to Brigid Kirkwood for the 1998 school year contingent upon the following conditions:

- Carrie Perkins will continue as stand alone principal in the interim
- Brigid has accepted her study leave which will be from 28 January to 19 December 1998. She will be returning to the school after that date
- Brigid agrees to advise the Board that she will be returning to St Mary's as Co-principal on or prior to 1 October 1998.

In the event that either Carrie or Brigid resign, this will terminate the Co-principalship agreed to in 1995 and the Board will take steps to put in place suitable management structures.

In the event that Brigid returns the Co-Principalship arrangement will continue as per the 1995 agreement until such time as it is terminated through resignation or other method.

In the event of a dispute involving this agreement the parties agree to appoint an independent arbiter, the costs of which will be borne by the Board.

Considering the future: opinions about co-principalship

Carrie and Brigid: to be, or not to be a co-principal?

Carrie did not want to advertise for someone else to come in with her as a co-principal while Brigid was away. She said, *I just could not imagine, the way we've made it work, having somebody else work that way. If someone came in now, you'd have to sort it out again - no relationship is ever the same (2:5)*. At the end of the 1997 year, she felt that *It was good for Brigid to have a change and for me to have the experience on my own if I want to move on ... I'm excited about it in a way cos it's something I really wanted to do, and I probably would have left at some time, so it's good timing really. Though it's a feeling of grief in a way as we're dissolving the whole staff (2:5)*. Two of the other staff were leaving at the end of the year, one retiring and one moving on to a new job. Carrie decided that she was going to treat it like *making a fresh start. I want to have a go on my own as eventually I want to go to a larger school as a non-teaching principal. This is one thing where Brigid and I differ, and I'm only just beginning to admit it. I do like the admin side of things and I could let go of the teaching. I dearly love it, but I could be a creative teacher who just goes in sometimes and takes groups ... and take time to support teachers and give instructional leadership... Brigid is a teacher first and she's wonderful at it ... I like organising people and getting things looking good, polished and laid out nicely (2:5)*.

Brigid remained adamant though, that *The co-principalship is the only way I'd be a teaching principal. The major thing is sharing the load and the ideas. The more people that are involved the better the decision. In a small school like this one, I'd have all the teaching staff sharing, as long as they were all on the same wave length. Though perhaps beginning teachers may not be ready for that kind of responsibility like more experienced teachers who've got their teaching practice firmly established ... If Carrie left during the year, I certainly would not come back in on my own - I'd be looking for someone else to share it (3:4)*.

Brigid said, *I know that in some of the things I've said, there have been quite a few negatives, but I certainly don't feel negative about the school - it has just been the board (3:2)*. *Despite those pressures, she felt excited about the things Carrie and I have done. It has been a more exciting school to be in than when I was principal on my own (BC 2:12)*. The one other thing she identified as a disadvantage was that because she and Carrie had taken on so much, their workloads were quite high and this had cut out time for reflection. She felt that on the occasions when they did stop and look back on what they had done, *it was like coming up for breath (BC 2:21)*.

The board: to have a shared leadership, or not?

Wayne Anderson remained convinced about the value of co-principalship. He pointed out that *The school had had two committed and hard working principals for the price of one ... The school principal's role is a varied one: they are a social worker, a teacher, a disciplinarian, a manager, an employer - you could just go on and on. But with a co-principalship you've got two individuals and if they are prepared to be open about their strengths and weaknesses, then you've got a real winning situation (Wayne 1:11)*. David agreed. *We've had the benefit of two very good teachers and the benefit has been the amount of administration and curriculum development they've been able to get done (2:9)*.

Despite his reservations about some aspects of the co-principals' approach, such as their style of 'leading from behind,' the parish priest was adamant that *The shared*

principalship is a valid form of leadership in our school. Despite some minor shortcomings, it has served our school well. It has succeeded because the people involved are committed to working as a team, sharing responsibility, mutually supporting each other and being prepared to listen to parents, adapt and make changes after consultation. The gifts, talents and skills needed for stand-alone principals are also needed for joint principalship. In my view, the latter has its own special charisma in that it eases the stress factor and fosters a greater sense of team leadership throughout the school. It certainly is a viable alternative (Parish priest 1:7).

During the meeting between David, Brigid, Carrie and himself at the end of 1997, Wayne reiterated the centrality of trust for a co-principalship. *The board trusted you as a pair and individually and obviously you had to trust us*, he said (Wayne, DWBC:6). Fay, however, was still not totally convinced about what she saw as some *accountability 'fuzziness.'* And, despite his support of the co-principals at the meeting in December, David felt more comfortable about the prospect of dealing with only one principal in 1998. He said, *Though Carrie is fiery, you can talk things through with her - actually, on their own, I can negotiate (2:4).* Both David and Fay had a perception of Brigid as a more stubborn person and they both found her less easy to deal with.

The staff

The staff of St Mary's school were of one mind however: they agreed that *A real advantage of the shared leadership model was that it's easier to access the principals - there's always one of them available (Theresa1:1).* Theresa's comments summed up Marie's and Holly's opinions when she said that *the school was getting a double benefit (1:5)*, in that the co-principals had different strengths and interests. She saw benefits for decision making: *Two heads are better than one*, she pointed out, and for the principals' own health and relieving of stress: *a problem shared is a problem halved (1:15).* Under Brigid's and Carrie's shared leadership, she and the other staff found the school *a much more relaxed place to work in.* She attributed this to *the lessening of pressures that are so great on the sole teaching principal (1:1).* She also thought that *It is so easy for a principal to get out of touch with what teachers' needs are. So a co-principalship is a very good model (1:2).* Marie also thought that in terms of accountability, the co-principalship was *more thorough. I think things could slip through the cracks with one person trying to do everything.*

1998: Brigid prepares to return ...

Brigid found her course exciting and useful. She loved being exposed to new material and being able to return to full time study. Throughout 1998, she also returned regularly to the school, contributing in a range of ways that included: running a six week peer-tutoring programme with 16 students; working with staff and some students on co-operative learning strategies; relieving in the school during the ERO review; helping the school prepare for a special celebration; organising a sports day for the school and community; attending special school church services. She enjoyed these occasions and worked hard to make time in her study and leisure activities to fit them in.

Then, as agreed earlier, Brigid contacted the school in October to confirm her return. A meeting was set up for 10 October to renegotiate the review as nothing had been done on this since last year. It is a great new board though, she said (Brigid 4:1).

... but the board is 'reconsidering'

However, this meeting was cancelled. Instead, David phoned Brigid to tell her that the board was reconsidering the co-principalship. He said that one of the new board members, a lawyer, had been delegated to carry out a review and he would be contacting her soon to interview her. David told Brigid that the board did not want Wayne to be involved in the review.

Brigid was shocked. She said, *It seems to me that they want to end it. It seems that Carrie has really enjoyed being stand alone principal and stepping back would be hard for her. But I feel I've been cut out of the decision. I would have looked for another job before this if I had known* (Brigid 5:1).

Carrie confirmed that yes, she *had had a very fulfilling year* and she had greatly enjoyed being a 'stand alone' principal, but at that stage she and Brigid had *not talked about the arrangements for going back into a co-principalship in any great detail* (Carrie 3:1). She added, *It seems that the board would be happy for Brigid to come back as deputy principal* (Carrie 3:1). Communication between the two women was becoming strained.

The co-principalship is reviewed

From this point, both Brigid and Carrie were excluded from any of the board discussions about the topic. According to David, *The whole issue was being dealt with in a strict following of a legal process* (David 3:1). David said that *The new board was very competent, with members who were lawyers, company secretaries, accountants - things are procedurally correct* (3:1). The board had moved into committee at their 19 September board meeting to discuss an employment policy report. Following this a personal grievance procedure had been developed and this was adopted at the board meeting held on 28 October, 1998.

On 30th October, Brigid and Carrie were each sent a letter from the board member delegated to undertake the review. They were informed that, *The board has resolved to review the co-principals arrangement in consultation with you both ... It was agreed that I initiate the review by writing to you to set out some issues that I would like to cover. I propose that when you have had a chance to reflect on the following questions, we meet separately to discuss them. This will enable me to form a picture of the arrangement, its effectiveness and its future. The issues I would like you to think about are: 1. Why was the co-principalship arrangement initially proposed? 2. What was it seeking to achieve? 3. Has it achieved its objective(s)? 4. In what respects has it been successful? 5. What difficulties, problems or impediments to success have been experienced? 6. How has the arrangement changed or developed? 7. Do the reasons for proposing it still apply? 8. What are your current expectations or aspirations relevant to the arrangement? I would also like to go through with each of you, the letter of understanding dated 5 January 1995. Feel free to discuss your thoughts with each other if you wish, but I would like to meet with each of you separately* (Letter to Brigid Kirkwood, 30 October 1998).

For Brigid and for Carrie, October, November and December were particularly gruelling and stressful months. Carrie had been feeling somewhat torn about going back to a co-principalship for a while. She said, *I never wanted to stay as a co-principal for ever and ever, and have enjoyed being on my own. I've been buzzing around, being stupidly busy and I feel like the school is mine now. Before, it was sort of Brigid's school. Even going back into the co-principalship now, that will be better because I feel I have more ownership. I don't know that I could passionately fight for the co-principalship though. I am not that committed*

to it personally ... I loved working with Brigid, but this year has proved to me that I've loved being a principal on my own ... I have not achieved as much as the co-principalship achieved, but it has been like being in a new school. There are three new staff, a new secretary and only three of the original members still on the board. And they've all worked for me, been so obliging, fantastic (Carrie 4:1). However, she was finding the current situation was quite a dilemma, morally. Brigid was the one who came up with the co-principal idea. If the board break this agreement, that is very difficult. She should have the option to be co-principal. We're back in the position of having to persuade the board all over again (Carrie 4:2). It was beginning to seem that Wayne's words the previous year were prophetic. Carrie felt that she could not push David back into a co-principalship, but it does not help to pretend. I've been honest with Brigid - I've got a path to follow as far as my career is concerned and she knows that I'm going to look for new work (4:2).

After Brigid, Carrie and David had been interviewed, on 18 November 1998 a confidential report was presented by the board reviewer to another 'in committee' board meeting. David sent a copy of this report to Brigid and to Carrie with an accompanying letter that stated: *The Board considered the report on the co-principals, reviewed the arrangement and considered the options relating to the future of the arrangement in a serious, sincere and open discussion. At the end of that discussion, the Board passed a resolution, a copy of which is attached. In accordance with that resolution, you are requested to meet with the representatives of the Board for this purpose to discuss the matter further. You are welcome to bring someone with you to those meetings, at which two of the board representatives will be present. Separate meetings will be held with you and Carrie, but I would encourage you and Carrie to discuss between yourselves the future of this arrangement. There is some urgency to this matter and the board would like to resolve it as soon as possible. I wish to assure you that the Board is committed to considering it in a professional and compassionate manner* (Letter from David Sullivan, Chairman, Board of Trustees to Brigid Kirkwood, 20 November 1998).

Brigid immediately responded to the board reviewer, challenging several points made in his report and seeking clarification of others. Her notes taken during a meeting she attended subsequently with her own support person and two board members, give an indication of the board's position. She wrote that, *The present board is looking for direct lines of accountability and responsibility. The concept of shared leadership is not favoured by the majority - there are not sharp enough lines of leadership. The current year demonstrated the possibility to run the school with a single principal. Clear that commonality of purpose initially was not the case any longer and this is seen as a weakening of effectiveness. The current BOT is no longer committed to the concept* (Notes of meeting, 24/11/99:1-2). One board member asked whether Brigid could still work with Carrie, knowing that her ambitions centre on sole principalship? Brigid replied *Yes, I sincerely believe we could.* The board member replied that *There would have to be different responsibilities, and would these be designated or allocated?* Brigid responded that the board would be kept fully informed about this. It was indicated that if Brigid returned the management structure would revert to a principal and a deputy principal. At this point Brigid's support person said, *If you revert to a principal/deputy principal structure you will more than likely lose one of them. The reply from the board member was, No pain, no gain. On being challenged, he said that it was a flippant comment, to which the support person responded, These are people's livelihoods, and their lives that the board is tinkering with. You are here for three years as a board member and then move on. This is their livelihood* (Notes of meeting:3). The meeting was obviously a tense one, and it was drawn to a conclusion with one of the board members again expressing doubt about whether Brigid and Carrie could work together if Carrie was applying for jobs elsewhere. Brigid reiterated that that

had been the case earlier *when Carrie had applied for jobs in 1996 and in 1997*. She again made it clear that she *wanted to return to the school as co-principal* (Notes of meeting: 3-4).

A parent who, along with several other parents, attended one of the board meetings held to make decisions about the co-principalship, said, *We went to ask some questions, but all we did was ruffle feathers. We were told that Carrie was looking for other positions, so even if Brigid came back, we might lose Carrie. The board had passed that 'in principle' they did not agree with shared leadership any more. We felt this was a bit of a fob off, and told them that we thought that they had forced the situation, but they denied it* (Parent, December 1999).

In David's opinion, however, *the process had been a fair one. I was cut out of the decision making, and everything was neutral and impartial, with everyone being interviewed, me, Carrie and Brigid ... The board looked at the rules and regulations around the principalship and this co-principalship doesn't follow the rules. It has no legal standing. This board are hard-nosed business people - captains of industry types. There are no weak links. And in our work, we are used to dealing with one person - we'd be happy to have a co-principalship if they had split responsibilities* (David 4:1, 3). The board member who had carried out the review later commented, *The board felt that they needed to take the school back to the usual model of principal and deputy principal, with clear lines of accountability. The co-principalship had the capacity to blur these lines. There was not enough documentation and a review of the co-principalship kept getting put off* (Board member, December 1999).

David approved of the processes the board used, but the staff representative who was present at most of the board meetings criticised what had happened. In her opinion, *the board did not act as good employers - the whole process was started in committee and the board voted on grounds of the personalities involved. They needed to look more at the co-principalship as a model, its strengths and weaknesses, and aim to fix the weaknesses they perceived* (Staff representative:1-2).

In late November, Carrie said that *The whole experience was not pleasant. I don't know anything and I'm finding it really difficult. I have had a really good relationship with the board, with good results and good support. But this has taken the shine off everything.* (Carrie 5:1). She said, *I've found that I love being a principal. When I began on my own, it was like walking into a new school - all new staff, and they've worked hard for me. They have been so obliging. She was finding the review, the whole thing, quite a dilemma, morally, because it was Brigid who came up with the concept of sharing the leadership. And Brigid is feeling quite stink* (2). Brigid had been considering taking further action and had consulted NZEI, who had offered her support. She was feeling very saddened by what had occurred however. She said, *I don't think Carrie has been entirely honest with me. This was not something I'd ever counted on - though I do believe that our friendship is worth preserving* (Brigid 6). She began to explore other job options.

By 15 December, Brigid had received a letter which suggested to her that the board had changed their stance. She said, *They want the whole thing worked out amicably, and offered the options of me going back as deputy principal with Carrie as principal, and both of us to re-apply for the principal's position, or to continue the co-principalship until the beginning of 2000, with each of us having very clearly defined roles* (Brigid 7).

By that time though, Brigid had begun to come to terms with what had happened. She said, *I'm starting to feel not so bad, and it is time to move on*. She was applying for three other jobs in her area of special interest.

Brigid resigns

On 22 December, with great disappointment, Brigid tendered her resignation to St Mary's School. In her letter of resignation she expressed her concerns about the co-principal review, detailing *a lack of consultation with the wider community, the professionals involved in the school and the key person who was involved in the initiation of the co-principalship, Wayne Anderson*. She wrote that she was disappointed that she had *not been invited to attend any of the full board meetings at which the co-principalship had been discussed* and that *the meeting held in December to discuss the new proposal made no final decision, so the matter was left unresolved until 15 December, the last day of the school year*.

It is clear from her letter that for Brigid, it was the nature of the review process that hurt most. She wrote, *After a positive, eleven year association with St Mary's I was astounded and hurt by the impersonal and overly formal nature in which the review process was handled ... I felt totally isolated. I have been associated with St Mary's since 1987 and I have enjoyed being part of a school that bases its very existence on gospel values. It is because of this that I feel devastated at the very way relationships have been minimalised throughout the review process*.

She concluded, *Despite everything, I hold the children of St Mary's close to my heart and it is for this reason I wish the school every success* (Brigid, Letter of resignation, 22 December 1998:2).

Board newsletter: 'significant changes to the School's management structure'

In the first St Mary's School newsletter for 12/21999, Fay O'Reilly, by then the board acting chairperson, informed the school community about what had occurred. She wrote:

The first meeting of the Board of Trustees for 1999 held this week was the first opportunity the Board has had to note the significant changes to the School's management structure which have occurred since the last meeting held in 1998.

After four years as Chairman, David Sullivan resigned from the board with effect on 31 December 1998. In proposing a vote of thanks to David at the final meeting, Father (name) recorded the guidance, enthusiasm, way of relating to people, leadership, ability to deal with crises and understanding of human nature that David had brought to the sometimes difficult role of Chairman. In reply, David noted that he felt passionately about St Mary's School and was proud of what had been achieved. He commented that duty and commitment went together and it had been a pleasure for him to be involved with the School in such a way.

Brigid Kirkwood has resigned from the position of Co-Principal and teacher to take up a position with (name). Although on study leave last year, Brigid had a long and extremely valued association with the School as an exceptional teacher, acting Principal, and more recently Co-Principal. In the following note Brigid expresses her feelings about ending her long association with the School:

"It was with regret that I resigned from my position as teacher and Co-Principal on 23 December last year. Up until 16 December, I fully intended to return to St Mary's and looked forward to the challenges of teaching the Year 5-6 class and introducing some of the new ideas and skills I had learned in my year of study. However, late in the year, I made the decision to pursue a different career path following a board resolution which stated that it was no longer committed to role-sharing or the co-principalship concept. After discussions with Board representatives, and much soul searching, I felt I had no option but to resign as I firmly believe in the philosophy of co-principalship.

Reaching this decision was very difficult and it saddened me greatly as I have had a very happy association with St Mary's since 1987 when I was employed as a relieving teacher. I have many fond and happy memories that will always remain with me and I am pleased that my new position will see a continued association with the school. I look forward to the opportunity to say goodbye to the students and parents in the near future."

Brigid Kirkwood

The Board wishes Brigid every success for the future and is delighted that she will continue to be associated with the school in her new position. Brigid's resignation brings the Co-Principalship to an end, and in terms of that arrangement, Carrie Perkins assumes the position of Principal. (Name) has been appointed as Deputy Principal. Later in the term there will be an opportunity for the whole school community to acknowledge the very substantial contributions made to the school by David and Brigid in their respective area. Look out for more details in subsequent newsletters.

And so the co-principalship at St Mary's School came to an end.

Epilogue: some reflections.

In March, 1999, several people shared with me their thoughts about what had happened. Carrie said that while the board thought they were being open and fair in their reviewing of the co-principalship, she had been excluded from the meetings. She found this very hard, and said, *I feel guilty now that I didn't stop it. But I did offer to step down and be DP. The board said though, they find it easier to deal with one person, and David found it difficult to work with both of us.* She added that she had felt during the co-principalship that some of her own autonomy died. *I came in on what Brigid had built and established as DP and acting principal. I've been able to take ownership now - now it's my school.*

Fay said that, on reflection, *As friends the two women worked well together - they had different strengths and compatible personalities. They did work extremely hard for the school. In her view though, personal prickles had become obvious in the body language between Brigid and David. Brigid is a fabulous teacher, but she can also be stubborn. I found her hard to deal with at times* (Fay 2:1). She thought that the new board, who had had no experience of working with a co-principalship, liked *the way that the buck ended with Carrie.* There was a note of regret in her voice though, as she said, *There were only 3 or 4 parents who thought that the lines of command were not always clear.* The parish priest concurred that, *While the majority of the parents were happy with the co-principalship, and saw it working well, the new board was not so committed to a co-principalship. When it became clear that Carrie wanted to be a principal on her own, the board could see that there might be huge problems ahead, re-establishing a working relationship.* He felt that if a splitting of responsibilities between Brigid and Carrie had occurred earlier and been established as the shared leadership approach, that would have been better.

It was also reported to me by a parent that a number of the parents were very upset by what had occurred; but none took their children away from the school. The staff representative on the board lost confidence in the board, however. She said that *some of the board members had not given adequate recognition for what had been achieved by the co-principalship.* She left the school at the end of 1998.

Brigid and Carrie's friendship survived the trauma of the demise of the co-principalship. Although no longer as close, they kept in touch. Brigid's new job took her into the school on occasions to assist with some of the school programmes. By the following year, the two women had started meeting now and then in a café to have dinner together. In 2000 Carrie was still working then as the principal of St Mary's School and she was continuing to love her job. She said it was both challenging and fulfilling. Brigid felt that she had 'come home' in her new career position of working with an educational agency to support schools. She found her love of teamwork and shared leadership was being fulfilled in her new working relationships, where her colleagues were exploring different approaches to co-operative work and shared decision making.

PART III

THEORISING CO-PRINCIPALSHIP

As I explained in Part 1, my view of the co-principalship initiatives has been shaped by my feminist interests in issues around gender and leadership and in particular, in understanding how the co-principalship initiatives emerged somewhat paradoxically within what seems to be a taken for granted ‘normality’ of hierarchical single line structures of management, accountability and control in schools. My analyses and reflections in this last part of the thesis are organised around the theoretical questions that I came to focus on as this study progressed. That is: How did the women come to understand and construct their own individual subjectivities as ‘a co-principal’? How did they develop, inter-subjectively within each of the three schools, their different collective co-principalship identities? What impact did the above processes and understanding have on the different trajectories and outcomes of the three co-principalship initiatives? In what ways did the different school contexts and wider socio-cultural processes impact on all of the above? What issues emerged at the intersection of the co-principalship initiatives and the NPM market discursive environment?

Following Foucault (1980), I use in these chapters what could be called a bottom up analysis. Foucault argued that to identify who is being affected by particular claims to the truth, and how these claims are being enacted, an “ascending” analysis of power is needed. That is rather than starting at the centre of “regulated and legitimate forms of power” and attempting to trace how its mechanisms permeate down into the most “molecular elements of society,” analysis should look at the “extremities... the ultimate destinations ... those points where (power) becomes capillary” (Foucault, 1980, p.96). Foucault suggested that an ascending analysis could start with “infinitesimal mechanisms”, trace “their history, their own trajectory, their own techniques and tactics” and after demonstrating these, see how these mechanisms of power have been “colonised ... annexed ... and altered” by ever more global forms of domination that transform, displace and extend them (p. 99). In Chapters 11 to 14, therefore, I explore parts of the co-principalship narratives as examples of “infinitesimal” exercises of power by individuals and groups at local school levels and trace how the strategies they engaged in extended into struggles at the levels of institutional rules and regulations and state policy and legislation. My aim here is not to focus on developing an inter-case comparison of the co-principalships, but rather to use different aspects of them to draw out different theoretical arguments and insights.

Overall, my analyses will show how the co-principalship resistant practices presented different kinds of challenges to hierarchical and individualist forms of leadership and managerialist discursive exercises of power. I will draw on examples in the case narratives to discuss what works and what does not when individuals set out to develop collective

leadership practices and mutual forms of responsibility and accountability within a New Public Management environment of economically rationalist forms of governance and management. I will examine also, how an “annexing” of the shared leadership initiatives back into the dominant regimes of truth was being attempted by some within these struggles over what should count as appropriate school leadership and management.

I begin these analyses by exploring in Chapter 11 the similarities and differences between the women who became co-principals and focus on Liz and Kate’s stories to examine in some detail how these two women came to understand and construct their own individual subjectivities as ‘a co-principal.’ I am interested here in exploring feminist poststructuralist theory about how individuals live their lives and take action within a range of competing and often contradictory discourses, discourses that are both constitutive of and constituted by individual subjectivity. I use Liz and Kate’s stories to reflect on and engage in feminist debates about fragmented and determined or choosing subjectivity.

In Chapter 12, I link these interpretations to an analysis of the significance of inter-subjectivity in attempts to develop collectivity. I use here the Hillcrest Avenue School example and focus on the ways that Liz, Jane and Karen developed their co-principalship “collective identity”(Fraser, 1997) and shared leadership practices. I look at how gendered discourses were variously taken up, challenged or seemingly ignored by these women co-principals and others in their school community. I also begin here my analyses of the impact of governmentality (in terms of internalised self surveillance) on different people, continuing these threads of discussion in the next two chapters.

Chapter 13's discussion of the Telford school co-principalship examines factors that led to the breakdown of the Telford co-principal partnership and looks at how wider socio-cultural hegemonies of ethnicity and class can be seen to be intersecting with the dominant discursive practices of school organisation and leadership in this school. I tease out how discursive and material relations of power were interacting in what McNay (1992, p.27) has called a “ symbiotic relationship,” significantly shaping that school’s attempts to establish a ‘coalition across difference.’

In Chapter 14, I focus on how issues around accountability, governance and management have been played out in quite different ways in the co-principalship initiatives. I develop a comparison between the approach taken at Hillcrest Avenue School and that at St Mary’s School. While the former co-principals worked with a very supportive board to challenge the state discourse and legislation in these areas, deliberately blurring the mandated governance/management split, Brigid and Carrie’s co-principalship at St Mary’s was dogged by struggles over governance and management where the board blurred boundaries by crossing at times into management areas in ways that the co-principals experienced as mistrustful.

CHAPTER 11

'CONSTRUCTING' A CO-PRINCIPAL SUBJECTIVITY

Introduction

One of the ways I addressed the questions of why and how the co-principalships were initiated, was to ask the women co-principals in each school to tell me about this in relation to themselves. In each case, they drew on their memories to tell stories about personal experiences, events and interactions that 'made sense' about how they 'became' a co-principal. In this chapter, I interpret these stories within feminist poststructuralist ideas about discourse and the formation of individual subjectivity. I will argue in this and the following chapter that one way of understanding the seeming paradox of the emergence of these forms of shared school leadership within the increasingly top down form of managerialism instituted into education within the market NPM discourse, is to look at how the co-principalships developed within individual and collective negotiations of a range of different discourses. I am exploring here Butler's theoretical argument that agency occurs in practices of "subversive citation" from within particular discourses and "inadvertent convergences" with other networks (Butler, 1995, p. 135). Fraser put this point more simply in her claim that within conflicting discourses possibilities for agency can be found where "the culturally constructed subject can rewrite the script" (Fraser, 1997, p.214).

Thus, the main work of this chapter is to address the research question, How did the women come to understand and construct their own individual subjectivities as 'a co-principal'? As I explained in Chapter 4, feminist poststructuralists argue that individual subjectivities are actively "produced or generated" in discourse (Butler, 1990p.147; Weedon, 1987). This is understood as an on-going process of "selving" (Davies, 1997), through which individuals form their (shifting) senses of who they 'are.' This understanding can be linked to the idea that when people tell stories about their lives they are also creating their 'selves' (Denzin, 1989). Such personal story telling simultaneously shapes the lives of the storytellers while they are living their lives in the light of their "already formed story-in-progress" (Elbaz, 1990, p.31).

When I listened to the women telling their stories, I noticed how they developed a rhythm and a flow of anecdotes of events and ideas that suggested a rationally ordered progression towards the point of 'becoming' a co-principal. Such a thought through progression was unlikely to have been the case, if we accept Foucault's argument that historical events are not as logically ordered or connected as historians have presented (Foucault, 1977). As Plummer (1995) has pointed out though, life stories flow from cultures and back into them, and within the persisting social hegemony of a liberal humanist view of

the self as autonomous, rational and unitary, "to be inconsistent in our society is to be unstable" (Weedon, 1987, p.112). Academic research also privileges, of course, a logical approach to investigation and interpretation, so it is not surprising that in answering my research questions, the women wove into their stories their own logical analyses (Reason and Hawkins, 1989) of how they had travelled to the point of initiating or joining a co-principalship. As such, the women can be seen to be engaging in their own life narrative inquiries as they were living/making their 'selves.'¹³⁴

As an academic researcher, I have felt also, of course, a pull towards developing a rational coherent account and my structuring of the narratives within a blend of chronological and thematic ordering reflects that pull. As a feminist academic researcher I have felt a further pull towards writing a progressivist interpretation of the co-principal initiatives; that is, to present them as examples of coherent and consistent agentic resistances that are part of a wider movement against masculinist hierarchical managerialism and oppressive forms of power.¹³⁵ My attraction to Foucault's (1980) suggestions that through bottom up analyses of local discursive practices we could identify not only the techniques of power that cohere in ever more global strategies of oppression, but also the nature of resistances and struggles against such forms of power, pre-disposed me towards the latter approach: so too, did feminist injunctions such as Hekman's call for a deconstructive/reconstructive politics of change. Hekman argued for analysis of the categories of knowledge/power that oppress us so that we could "disturb, disrupt and explode" them and develop local solutions to particular regimes of repressive power (Hekman, 1990, pp.180 -182).

Privileging such a positive version of rational resistance in my analysis could have resulted, however, in glossing over the contradictions and disjunctions that I noticed interrupting the coherence of the women's stories. This, in turn, could have obscured consideration of the effects these kinds of contradictions may have been having on the co-principalship practices. Therefore, in the first part of this chapter, I take some time to draw out some patterns and some contradictions and/or inconsistencies that I have noticed in and between the women's stories about what 'led' them to become a co-principal.

In the second, and main part of the chapter, I use parts of Liz's and Kate's stories to explore feminist poststructuralist arguments that inconsistencies are part of the way that individual subjectivity is formed in fluid, shifting, 'always becoming' processes that involve the negotiating of potentially conflicting subject positions available within circulating discourses (Weedon, 1987; Davies, 1993). As such, subjectivity is considered to be non-

¹³⁴ In Chapter 5 I argued that Clandinin & Connelly's (1994) distinctions between research participants' stories and researchers' analytical inquiries were to some extent a false distinction that privileges the researcher's rationality over that of their informants. I will return to this point in the last chapter, when I will discuss some examples that demonstrate the women's own reflective 'researching' of their collaborative processes.

¹³⁵ I remind the reader here, of my earlier accounts of how my own personal experiences and theoretical ideas have influenced the shape of this research.

unitary, fragmented and “always open to new ways to understand the world and the self, to act in and upon the world and to think about experiences” (Bloom & Munro, 1995, 1995, p.101). I draw on Liz’s and Kate’s narratives to show that although an individual may not be a totally free agent (in the sense of being able to choose from an unlimited field of possibilities how she will live in this world), she can be an “active player” in constituting her ways of being (in this case, as a co-principal) within the range of discourses that are available to her (MacNaughton, 2000; Davies, 1993; 1997). These ideas and discussions open up ways for thinking about how, while individuals’ lives may be shaped by the dominant discursive formations within which they live, those discourses do not determine lives in any mechanistic way.

Constituting co-principal subjectivities: similarities fractured by differences

While this study is quite narrowly bounded within a very specific institutional site (New Zealand small primary school co-principalships that were initiated between 1993 and 1994), and focused in the first instance on a very small group of seemingly similar women, the following analyses will demonstrate that these women cannot be treated as a homogeneous ‘sisterhood’ who have taken similar routes towards becoming co-principals. While we might expect such a group to have the same kinds of values, aspirations and work patterns, there were as many, if not more, differences between these individuals, than close agreements.

These seven women were all Pākehā, middle class and trained as primary teachers in the New Zealand state education system. At the beginning of their co-principalships, Brigid and Carrie were aged 32, younger than the others: Liz and Kate were in their early forties and Jane, Ann and Karen were in their late 40s. While Carrie had had only six years experience in teaching and had not travelled or worked overseas, all of the others had between 15 and 20 years teaching experience, including teaching overseas. All the women had had some experience in positions of responsibility. Karen had been a senior teacher; Carrie, Brigid, Jane and Kate had all been deputy principals and for brief periods, acting principals; Liz had been a deputy principal and an education advisory officer; Ann had been a “directress” (the Montessori term) in a Montessori pre-school. Thus all of them had made a step, or some steps, ‘up’ the traditional professional career ladder. Each of the women also talked about how caring for either their own husbands and children, or for their elderly parents and/or other family members, were significant responsibilities and commitments in their lives.¹³⁶ They all had experienced therefore, the strains of the now well researched ‘double shift’ of juggling family

¹³⁶ While at the time of this research Carrie, Kate and Ann lived in nuclear families with their husbands and children, Karen was separated from her former husband and lived with one of her two adult children, Liz and Brigid lived with flatmates and Jane lived alone. The women thus had varying levels of personal day by day home-based support and demands on their time and activities outside of school.

and paid work/career demands (Blackmore, 1999; Court, 1997; James & Saville-Smith, 1989; May 1992; Middleton, 1988; Shakeshaft, 1989).

Despite the 'surface' similarities, there were some marked differences in the ways the women had reacted to particular professional and personal experiences, and in the ways these had impacted on their decisions to initiate, or join a co-principalship. It is particularly interesting to note how individual women had responded differently to the experience of working as an acting principal before she became a co-principal.

From acting principal to co-principal

When she worked as an acting principal, Kate quickly came to resent the way that a managerialist emphasis on accountability was constructing this work as "running a tight ship." She disagreed with the "emphasis on control ... and the expectation that management doesn't have to be connected to an educational philosophy." She also disliked the amount of time that was being taken from both her teaching and her family to complete paper work to meet the increasing management demands. These factors were part of her motivation to share the work of the principalship with Ann at Telford School. For her part, Brigid felt very stressed by the extra workload of being an acting principal at St Mary's School and she hated being the only one left at school when others had gone home. These factors were influential in her decision to initiate a co-principalship with Carrie.

These kinds of motivations have been found also in other studies. Establishing a co-principalship as a way of managing the increased demands of the school leadership has been found in most of the overseas studies that I reviewed in Chapter 2 (Dass, 1995; Gordon & Meadows, 1986; Groover, 1989; Korba, 1982; Shockley & Smith, 1981; Strachan, 1997; Thurman, 1969; West, 1978). Studies have further agreed that co-principalship can provide support and camaraderie for those in positions of school leadership, breaking down isolation, lessening stress and "doubling the insights" (Gordon & Matthews, 1986, p.29; Dass, 1995; Strachan, 1997).

When she had worked as an acting principal however, Carrie had been stimulated by the extra demands and the opportunities to effect changes in the school where she was then working. It was her enjoyment of this experience of management responsibility that contributed to her seeing Brigid's offer of a co-principal partnership as an opportunity to further develop her skills as part of a career path towards a sole principalship. Some studies that have focused on women's shared leadership initiatives have also found that these are a useful professional development strategy for them (Court, 1994c; Øverbye, 1984; Tjeldvoll, 1985), as well as a way for women with family care-giving responsibilities to manage the dual demands of home and school (Gordon & Meadows, 1986; White, 1991). Carrie seemed to have no difficulty 'juggling' the higher workload of the acting principalship with the needs of

her family of four children, however. (Later as a co-principal, she was quite disciplined about leaving school at 4.30, taking work home to do after her children were in bed.)

Jane had no children of her own, but like Carrie, she had been stimulated by her experience in an acting principal position, although for different reasons. Jane had made it clear when she was asked to take up the acting principalship that she would do it only if collaborative team approaches could be used. Consequently, she was not troubled by the stress of lonely decision making and high workloads emerging from mounds of paper work that Brigid and Kate had experienced. Jane's different experiences of professional teamwork fed into her belief that traditional ways of working in leadership and administration could be challenged and changed. Part of her attraction to the idea of joining Liz in a co-principalship at Hillcrest Avenue School was that they could together bring about a structural change that, in her words, "could validate collaboration."

Liz's and Jane's aspirations resonate with the ways some other co-principalships in Norway, the US and Aotearoa/New Zealand, have aimed to build wider democratic processes into schools (Bergersen & Tjeldvoll, 1982; Tjeldvoll, 1985; Dass, 1995; Glenny et al., 1996). In the latter study, the co-principals of a large secondary school relinquished their veto power over decisions made by teacher project teams (Glenny et al., 1996), while in a more radical vein, some schools have eschewed appointing a principal altogether. Researchers of the resulting teacher team leaderships have shown how this approach has enabled all the teachers to be involved in policy and decision making in their schools (Barnett et al., 1998; Bergersen & Tjeldvoll, 1982; Gursky, 1990). This was the approach Liz and Jane initiated at Hillcrest Avenue School.

From just a brief resume of the women's stories then, we can see that different kinds of experiences helped to engender different motivations for becoming a co-principal. When the women's accounts are examined more closely, different kinds of negotiations of the discourses of professionalism and managerialism can be identified also.

Speaking and working within and against the grain of professional collaborative discourse

Blackmore's (1999, p.188) finding in her study of Australian women educators that the "discursive realm of professionalism was taken for granted by many women," is echoed in this study of women co-principals. This is in the sense of professional collegiality in the areas of teaching, learning and leading. While I was carrying out this research, some people commented to me that co-principalships would only appeal to those people who enjoyed working in teams. My feeling was that collegiality was a widely accepted part of professional educators' discourse, and although my aim was not to research that idea, the case narratives demonstrate that all of the women co-principals had a strong sense of themselves as professional collegial practitioners. Although Carrie's early accounts of her motivations

towards co-principalship did not initially highlight the appeal of collaborative teaching and leadership, as the St Mary's shared leadership developed, this became increasingly evident in her stories. All the other women's descriptions of the educational working relationships they had enjoyed most before they became co-principals were framed within a professional collaborative practitioner discourse. They said things such as, "we had complementary skills and were used to cooperative ways of working together" (Karen). "There was a lot of power sharing and that was quite influential for me" (Jane). "I worked with a very collaborative principal who had some vision and worked very collaboratively with staff. I learned a lot from him" (Kate). "Working closely with other people is just the way I've always liked doing things" (Brigid). These collaborative relationships were described as existing between women and between women and men.

Some seeming inconsistencies cut across these accounts however. Brigid said that she favoured and enjoyed working closely with other people, but she had never worked in a team teaching situation. Although Ann regretted that she had not had more experience of working with a collaborative kind of principal, she was anxious about whether she should take up Kate's invitation to join her in a co-principalship. Karen had enjoyed working previously in a close teaching team, but she found it difficult at the beginning of the Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship to envision a 'team principalship' as a viable alternative to the established model of the single principal. She had previously positioned herself within the dominant discourses of teamwork, such as that propounded in Belbin's (1993) analysis¹³⁷ and in the bureaucratic discourse informing the document *Management and Administration*, which I discussed in Chapter 6. That is, she saw herself and her previous colleagues (Felicity and Jim) as having particular skills that could be used within an unproblematised senior management team headed up by the principal, and she did not think shared leadership could be enacted in any other way.

At the beginning of the co-principalship in her school, Karen had not studied in the academic field of educational leadership, but Liz, Jane and Kate had all attended reflective principal courses and studied the transformative leadership 'hybrid'¹³⁸ of professional collaborative leadership discourse that I also analysed in Chapter 6 (Sergiovanni, 1991; Stewart & Prebble, 1993). Indeed, Liz and Jane had taught other teachers about this in middle management courses. Yet while they and Kate challenged the 'elitist' hierarchy embedded in

¹³⁷ Belbin (an influential writer in business management) advocated that a team leader should gather around him/her individuals who had a range of different skills. The team leader should work to devise roles that suited their different capabilities and mould them into a cohesive, efficient entity. In his view a leader should have "the driving force to project a vision... and the preparedness for the confrontation involved in defending the vision successfully and seeing off rival visions and goals" (1993, p.96). His discussion of team leadership is highly individualistic, combative, competitive. It is the version of team leadership that has been commonly promoted in much of the literature as the kind that an enterprise culture requires.

¹³⁸ This is Frazer & Lacey's (1993) term for a discourse that emerges within a discursive formation, becoming a distinct version with its own particular focus, language and practices. See discussion in Chapter 5.

that discourse,¹³⁹ and wanted to change the structures of leadership in their schools, (for each of them the co-principalship was a conscious "challenge to the system of management in schools" as Liz put it), none of these three women were averse to using management strategies (such as strategic planning) where and when they thought these would be useful. This may seem to be contradictory within the framework of transformational leadership, but their approaches support Southworth's (1993) argument that the theoretical split that has been constructed between transformational and transactional forms of leadership (Sergiovanni, 1991) is a false dichotomy in practice, as principals employ both of these approaches in their daily work.

Different negotiations of the NPM discourse

All of the women were, of course, working within the market NPM discursive environment (that I discussed in Chapter 6) at the time this research began in late 1994. The effects of that discourse and practices that have been noted in other studies (for example, Sullivan, 1994; Wylie, 1995) can be discerned in some of the women's stories. For example, they talked about the stress and high workload associated with increased paper work and demands for accountability. However, in the women's accounts of the beginnings of their co-principalships, new managerialist discourse did not feature as strongly as I thought it might have done when I originally designed this study. While there is some evidence that some of the women were consciously resisting the 'new' managerialism as part of 'becoming a co-principal' (Liz, Jane and Kate in particular), as I have already suggested, Carrie, and Kate to some extent, took pleasure in the management parts of their work (such as being strategic in their planning, organising the files and/or changing systems). Indeed, like one of the feminist principals Strachan (1997) studied, Carrie had no arguments with the new demands for increased management documentation of performance and accountability systems. Strachan's principal was consciously appropriating parts of the new right business and accountability discourse in her approach to leadership: Carrie's attitudes, however, may have been more a consequence of the fact that she had had little experience as a teacher in the education system prior to the administrative reforms in 1989. This kind of selective taking up of elements of what may seem to be contradictory discourses is not surprising, however within feminist poststructuralist understandings of the ways that subjectivity and agency are constituted within a range of discourses (Weedon, 1987; Davies, 1997).

However, while all of the women expressed at some stage a distaste for hierarchical, authoritarian approaches, these were more commonly linked to professional practices than to the new market managerialism. The stories told by Ann, Kate, Jane and Karen show that during the 1970s, 1980s and indeed, the 1990s, the principal's positioning at the head of a

¹³⁹ Liz said for example, "I used to think good principals were charismatic visionaries. I don't think that any more. Vision is important, but no one individual is more important than anyone else" (1:6-7).

hierarchy of control had remained as a largely taken for granted part of primary school leadership. This reflects the picture of the discursive construction of educational leadership that I presented in Chapter 6. That discussion showed that while the principal may have been constructed within professional discourse as an instructional team leader working collaboratively with staff, in practice this was enacted through a bureaucratic senior and middle management hierarchy that gave status, authority and control to him/her (Department of Education, 1976; 1984). The shift in academic literature and professional training programmes to a transformative leadership discourse during the late 1980s and early 1990s in this country, did little to challenge that status and the embedded understandings of the principal as the final 'authority,' as my discussion of the Stewart and Prebble (1993) extract demonstrated. These educational leadership practices have an historical genesis and a grounding in wider social practices, as I explained in Chapter 6, that makes them resistant to academic discourse.

Thus the NPM version of principalship instituted in Aotearoa/New Zealand the late 1980s (Department of Education, 1988b), was not introducing a new version of hierarchy. It was re-embedding a stronger form of top down management control within a centralised decentralisation (Blackmore, 1999) that was bolstered by increased accountabilities of teachers through the principal, to the school board, parent community and the state. As I will show in later chapters, it was this factor and issues around the increasingly individualised and managerial forms of accountability that were constructed within the NPM discursive practices, that were significant constraints on the establishment and practices of shared school leadership within co-principalships.

Taking up and negotiating different gendered discourses

In the preceding discussions I have been showing how the women were speaking and acting within and against both professional and managerial discourses. I want to look now at how the co-principals' understandings of gender and their positioning of themselves in, or out of, feminism varied, impacting differently on their personal goals as educational leaders and where they later put their energy as co-principals.

Blackmore found in her studies of newly appointed Australian women principals who had lived through the feminist politics of the 1970s, that while many "had fought for equal pay and equal opportunity legislation and actively worked as change agents through the 1980s, others had little need to reflect on gendered politics once in power. Gender was not part of their sense of individual ability and worth" (Blackmore, 1999, p.193). Both Grace (1995) and Hall (1996) reported similar findings in their studies of women educational leaders in the UK. Each of these researchers have noted also that several of their women leaders specifically disclaimed any feminist affiliation. These dynamics and differences were evident also among the New Zealand women co-principals.

Carrie did not talk about herself in gendered or feminist terms at all, and Karen explicitly disavowed any form of gendered identification for herself, calling herself "a person who happens to be female." However, Karen had taken it for granted that she 'should' put her own career on hold while she devoted herself to bringing up her children. She did not recognise this as a gendered discursive imperative, but described it as emerging out of her own commitments to her family, as part of her personal integrity as "a good parent." For Karen, the material realities of being a sole parent, who needed to work to support herself and her children, intersected with the cult of domesticity discourse of mothering as women's primary role. Consequently any idea of moving into a more responsible and/or demanding career role was not seen by her as viable while her children were growing up. As I will show later, Kate negotiated this discourse rather more painfully.¹⁴⁰

Blackmore found that while not all of her Australian women educators identified themselves as feminist, many were drawing, albeit it unknowingly at times, on "particular readings of feminist discourses" (1999, p.196). The most influential of these were "liberal feminism with its emphasis on individuals and proceduralism, and cultural feminism's advocacy of caring and sharing" (ibid). Blackmore argued that for the women she studied, these discourses "were more comfortable than radical or socialist feminisms which focus on gender politics, difference and conflictual social relations"(ibid). My study of women co-principals shows that while liberal and cultural feminisms have been influential for some of these women, significantly shaping their understandings of themselves and their ways of practising school leadership, radical feminism was also being taken up by some of them.

Brigid described herself as "probably a liberal feminist." She was interested in working for change in equity areas, but she laughed about her sisters' comments, "There goes Brigid, doing her feminist 'lefty' thing again," because she saw the gender and cultural equity programmes she had initiated in her school as "natural" ways of working as a concerned educator. Brigid's feminism was not articulated by her as an influential factor in her decision to initiate a co-principalship with Carrie. Nor was her feminism as consciously politicised as that of Liz and Jane.

Liz and Jane had both helped to develop gender equity resources at a national level to effect changes in anti-sexist curriculum. These two women had belonged earlier to active women's groups and they had both studied and taught locally in courses about gender and about educational leadership. Liz consciously named her beliefs as radical feminist, and she linked her radical feminism to her commitment to women's activist groups and feminist unionist collectivity. She presented these experiences as shaping her approach to co-principalship as a "woman-centred ... challenge to managerialism." I will look at her stories in more detail later, to explore some of the inconsistencies that emerged within her

¹⁴⁰ I am reserving for the second part of this chapter an analysis of how she negotiated personal conflicts that emerged out of her positioning of herself within some elements of liberal and radical feminist discourse alongside elements of the conservative cult of domesticity discourse.

negotiations of her cultural, radical and collectivist feminisms in relation to her understandings about differences between individual women.

While Liz prioritised a woman-centred radical feminism in her understandings of her own identity, Jane, like Brigid, constructed herself as a liberal feminist. Jane linked her feminism to her past experiences of unfairness and exclusions in political and institutional systems that affected especially women, but also men, such as her own brother. A significant memory for her was about an incident that had alerted her to the flaws in a so-called fair and egalitarian system. The difficulty she experienced getting back in to teaching after being out for three months looking after her brother's children highlighted for her some contradictions between the rhetoric of liberal egalitarian discourse and discriminatory state educational employment practice. (During the 1970s, all those who had had continuous teaching service were given access to vacant positions ahead of those with broken service: the latter were mainly women who had had 'time out' for childcare.) When Jane and her friends lobbied politicians about her situation, and Jane was subsequently offered work, she was appalled by this, saying that "It was political - the classic 'who you know.'" Jane's comment indicates that this incident had alerted her to the power of elites to work the system through knowing the rules and being able to manipulate them when necessary.

Foucault's argument about the links between discourse, knowledge and power further illuminates her experience, however. While a dominant group can have their views of the world normalised within institutional practices, the exercise of power is multi-dimensional; for example, it can be 'bottom up' as well as 'top down.' Jane discovered that an individual could take action on her own behalf, even at the highest levels of the state. Foucault's analysis of power as produced in social interactions rather than being owned by an individual or group and always exercised repressively to the disadvantage of a subordinated individual or group, provides useful insights here. He stated that:

All those on who power is exercised to their detriment ... can begin the struggle on their own terrain ... In engaging in a struggle that concerns their own interests, whose objectives they clearly understand and whose methods only they can determine, they enter a revolutionary process... in specific struggle against the particularized power, the constraints and controls that are exercised over them (Foucault, 1977b, p.216).

Jane had also learned about the ever present possibilities of resistance during her study in a gender and education university course, which had introduced her to liberal feminist critiques of gender discrimination in education and work. In her stories about the influences that had 'led' her to joining Liz in a co-principalship, she placed these accounts alongside her experience of a male principal's professional collaborative power sharing approach and her own collaborative practices as an acting principal. Her interest in validating collaborative leadership through a structural change to school principalship can be seen then, as emerging out of a combining of both professional and liberal feminist discursive concerns and practices.

Although she did not call herself a feminist, Ann described collaborative decision making as constructed within a 'woman's way of leading.' She saw this as exemplified in both

her own and Kate's approaches, which she understood as 'naturally' anti-hierarchy.¹⁴¹ Ann can be seen to be drawing here on the cultural feminist discourse of 'feminine leadership' that I discussed in Chapter 3. Blackmore (1999, p.188) found that most of the Australian women educators she studied drew unproblematically on this discourse, an indication, she argued, of the extent to which it has become a feminist regime of truth in the field of educational leadership. While only Liz and Ann among the women co-principals subscribed to this way of thinking, many of the other teachers, parents and board I talked to drew on the 'women's ways of leading' discourse, suggesting that the co-principalship was a to-be-expected outcome of women's 'natural' affinities for relational ways of working. These assumptions were mostly located within the traditional preconstructed discourse about gender differences between women and men. Hennessy has explained that:

As the discursive space where the 'always already there' secures a hierarchical social arrangement through an 'obvious' set of oppositions, the preconstructed serves as an anchor in the symbolic order for the articulation of subjectivities across race, class, gender and other salient differences ... (A)s such, the preconstructed constitutes one mechanism by which hegemony operates across social formations (Hennessy, 1993, p.78).

Some of the women's stories also show how continuities and contestations around discourses of teaching and leadership, gender and feminism, were cut through further by different experiences of, and commitments to, struggles over ethnicity and class. As McNay has stated, in people's lives, there are:

multiple factors which conflict and interlink with each other, producing differential effects. An individual's own identification with and investment in different subject positions and power relations makes it difficult to speak of gender as some kind of unifying or bonding experience (1992, p.65).

For example, as part of her feminism, Brigid was working for greater recognition of the needs of the mainly working class Samoan families in her school community. Ann was trying to be supportive of the whānau in her school, but was constrained by her inability to speak Māori and the confusion she felt as a consequence of charges from the whānau that she was "privileged." Ann's positioning within the Montessori strand was perceived by most of the Māori parents to distinguish her from them, in terms of both class and ethnicity. Kate was not viewed the same way by the whānau however. She had a strong commitment to supporting Māori initiatives, both at a personal and institutional level, and this gave her credibility with most of them. The Telford case study reveals, however, how discursive struggles around Māori/Pākehā bi-cultural relations were a significant influence on both her's and Ann's experiences. I will examine this part of their story more in Chapter 13.

¹⁴¹ Ann was later very surprised to find not all women appreciated participatory decision making.

To sum up thus far

The preceding discussions have aimed to show that this group of women primary school co-principals did not have the same aspirations, desires, values and understandings in relation to shared leadership. As recent studies of women in educational leadership are showing, different women's varying styles and practices of leadership emerge out of complex interactions between individuals' personal values, beliefs, cultural values and practices in different school contexts (Weiner, 1995; Strachan, 1997; Smulyan, 1999). Such differences exist also among men of course, and they will have underpinned the different international practices and approaches to co-principalships that I described in Chapter 2. However, apart from Dass's (1995) study, the research into co-principalships has not highlighted these factors, having focused mainly on examining the models that have been promoted and/or adopted.

This current study is moving beyond those studies, in its illustrations of how the differential impact on women teachers and principals of wider socio-cultural hegemonies of gender, class and ethnicity, is further cut through by individuals' varying positionings of themselves in intersecting and often contradictory discourses. In the following chapters I will explore how these factors can be seen to have had a significant impact on the ways different understandings and practices of shared leadership developed at within three very different co-principalships. Before that though, I want to explore in some more detail the stories of Liz and Kate, to demonstrate how individuals do not take up just one discourse or another as they 'make' themselves 'leaders.' Within my discussions I focus on exploring some of the ideas that have emerged within feminist poststructuralist debates around the nature of individual subjectivity.

Discursively generated non-unitary subjectivities

There has been an emphasis in much poststructuralist theorising on understanding subjectivity as fragmented, non-essentialist, non-unitary identities which are constituted within shifting, multiple and contradictory experiences and positionings in different discourses (Davies, 1989; 1993; Weedon, 1987). Before I move on, I need to point out that it is difficult to capture the fluidity of this on-going process of 'selving' (Davies, 1997) within the medium of a written analysis of interview transcripts. My approach in the following discussions, as in the previous ones, is to use fragments of the case narratives (written as they have been, from transcripts of conversations with the women) as 'frozen moments' for developing insights into how, when they talked with me, Liz and Kate were constructing from their memories of previous ideas and experiences, as well from their perceptions of current events and interactions, their understandings of themselves as co-principals. The interview transcripts are a little like snapshots, however: they can capture only a partial mood or aspect of a person at a particular moment within their lives. As Plummer pointed out, even a full life history study

cannot capture 'the life.' "Whatever else the story is, it is not simply the lived life ... which is in principle unknown and unknowable" (Plummer, 1995, p.168). In this sense then, all of my analyses can only be 'broad brushstroke' attempts at understanding the discursive influences on each individual's shifting understandings and experiences of 'becoming a co-principal.'

Liz: 'crafting' a woman-centred, professional co-principal subjectivity

Despite the fact that Liz said, "I would probably be a reasonably radical feminist in my personal beliefs," her 'co-principal self' is revealed in her accounts as a blend of different, and not always consistent, discursive elements. In her stories about the initiation of the Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship, she can be seen to be taking up particular subject positions with which she identified, 'crafting' her subjectivity as a women-centred co-principal in ways that fitted with her sense of herself as a feminist professional collaborative practitioner. In these not always conscious processes, she was positioning herself, with sometimes contradictory effects, within feminist radical, cultural and 'difference' discourses of collectivity.

When she talked with me about her background and the influence of feminism on her taking up of the idea of shared leadership, Liz referred first of all to some radical and lesbian feminist struggles that she had observed in a woman's centre, over different meanings of 'sisterhood.' While she described these as "destructive battles," she retained (somewhat contradictorily) a belief that all women have "feminine qualities of being inter-connective, sensitively listening, caring and nurturing." The latter comments are redolent of the beliefs about women that underpinned the early feminist collectives that I described in Chapter 7, collectives which aimed to build among women a sense of community and sisterhood based on "bonds of friendship, equality and respect" (Mansbridge, 1994, p.551). Liz articulated this feminist collective ideal within a cultural feminist discourse about the importance of 'feminine' qualities and linked this into a radical feminist commitment to bring about change in what she called "the power structure in society." Liz's understandings of power can be read as also shaped within a feminist collective discourse's criticisms of hierarchical leadership and rationalist, bureaucratic systems in public organisations. The latter were seen as masculinist, impersonal and controlling by the early feminist collectives which wanted to evolve alternatives to those structures and approaches, dismantling in particular, elitism and hierarchy (Broadsheet, 1974; Freeman, 1973; Fergusson, 1984; Leidner, 1991; Mansbridge, 1994; Vanderpyl, 1998).¹⁴² The processes of de-articulation/re-articulation of elements of discourse, such as Hennessy (1993) theorised, can be seen to be occurring in Liz's story as she 'picks up' particular discursive ideas and works them together.

¹⁴² The Broadsheet collective's statement was typical of the approach. "We believed in the idea of a loose collective where everyone who was around was involved in decision making" (Coney & Cederman, 1975, p.31).

When she worked with the NZEI feminist union collectivity, Liz experienced, however, a political activism that acknowledged and drew on women's differences in work for change. As I explained in Chapter 7, although there was an ascendancy of radical feminism within the women's movement in Aotearoa/New Zealand during the 1970s and 80s, (Jones & Guy, 1992), very early in the feminist collectives that were established here, there grew an awareness of the importance of acknowledging differences between women.¹⁴³ Liz wove this 'difference' discourse into her story about the value of collaborative approaches. As she talked though, she seemed to be unaware of (or unconcerned about) some of the contradictory discursive constructions of women that she was evoking. For example, she insisted on the importance of recognising and valuing what she described as "difference within women's styles of working," while almost simultaneously saying "I like the way women work." The contradictions between the former description of difference and the latter cultural feminist discourse that treats all women as the same, are 'patched' together. Armstrong found some similar contradictory dynamics occurring in what she described as the "scrappiness" of her teleworking women subjectivities, which as a consequence of conflicts within home-based experiences of teleworking entrepreneurialism, were "more like unravelling rag rugs than neatly applied patchworks" (Armstrong, 1997).

Liz, however, can be seen to be 'darning over' her earlier experience of the radical and lesbian feminist "ugly battles" with her description of the unionist feminist collectivity that acknowledged and valued differences between women. Her descriptions of the latter echo ideas articulated in a 1975 Broadsheet article about feminist collectives, where the sharing and debating of different ideas and political opinions were presented as being educative, energising and contributing towards the building of 'sisterhood' and the women's movement (Diane, 1975, p.24). Drawing on this version of a feminist 'alliance across difference' discourse appeared to enable Liz to 'seam up' the disturbing unravellings of feminist collectivity that she had encountered previously. She said that the NZEI union women had given her "a strong political sense of myself and an analysis of myself as a woman and as an activist." It is understandable therefore, that she maintained a strong emotional investment (MacNaughton, 2000) to this version of feminist collectivity and she promoted its values and arguments for co-principalship when she talked later with Jane and when they negotiated with Karen how they could work together in the co-principalship.

While my discussion presents Liz within a feminist poststructuralist understanding of a non-unitary 'self' as discursively constituted and reconstituted, fragmented subjectivity (Weedon, 1987), Liz did not portray herself as an inconsistent person. Her unconscious weaving of contradictory elements into a coherent account of herself is illuminated by Davies'

¹⁴³ This was articulated by one feminist collective writer in terms of differences of sexual orientations, political persuasions and feminist theoretical positioning. She wrote: "There are the usual divisions that are apparent in the feminist movement as a whole - between lesbians and 'straight' women, between socialists and non-socialists, between lesbian and lesbian/feminists, between feminists and radical feminists" (Diane, 1975, p.24). The last phrase indicates that ascendancy of radical feminism at the time.

argument that individuals are not always aware of their own inconsistencies and fragmented subjectivity: Davies argued that this is because "liberal humanism constrains each person to constitute themselves as rational, unitary and non-contradictory, and as if they were distinct and fundamentally separate from the social world. This prevents them from seeing the multifaceted and fluid nature of their own experience" (Davies, 1993, p.10).

Loveridge has recently looked at the debates around unitary versus fragmented subjectivity from a different angle. She has argued that poststructuralist understandings of subjectivity as formed within multifaceted and contradictory experiences do not mean necessarily that we must "jettison the idea that there may be a coherent core of individual identity" (Loveridge, 1999, p.230). Loveridge's research into how people 'become' parents has illustrated the ways that within their daily lives and interactions, people "achieve" a coherent sense of their "continuing self." She maintains that this is not to revert to a humanist understanding of a core self as autonomous, rational and unified, but rather to think about how people create their own distinctive identities and personal coherence through incorporating "elements from different settings into an integrative narrative" about themselves and their experiences (ibid, p.230). This argument further illuminates the ways in which Liz was constructing herself: that is, she was achieving a coherent sense of herself as a woman-centred and professionally collaborative co-principal.

A 'choosing' or determined subject?

A difficulty that feminist poststructuralists have encountered within their insights into the nature of the non-unitary subject, is how to understand individual 'thinking agency.' As I explained in Chapter 4 a debate has arisen within feminism over whether an individual can consciously choose possible ways of 'being' from those constituted within the discourses available to her. Jones (1997, p.263) has argued that a Foucauldian feminist poststructuralism means that the subject is largely determined by "the discursive practices which produce it." Weedon maintained though, that while an individual may not always be consciously aware of the ways that her subjectivity is being shaped by different discourses, through the conflict between discourses she can become alerted to the "possibility of new ways of thinking and new forms of subjectivity" (Weedon, 1987, p.39). Sawicki's reading of Foucault's view of the subject supports Weedon's argument, maintaining that Foucault's analysis "presupposes a critical subject, capable of critical historical reflection, refusal and invention ... able to choose among discourses and practices available to it and to use them creatively" (Sawicki, 1991, p. 103. See also Davies, 1997; Hennessy, 1993; Fraser, 1997). Butler's (1990) argument pointed out, however, that the subject does not 'pre-exist' as a separate rational being outside of discourses, but is "generated" within discourse through an individual taking up the discursive "tools" that are "lying there." That is, the constitution of subjectivity is entwined with discourse.

This debate raised the question for my study of whether the idea for a co-principalship emerged out of an individual's critical reflections on existent discourses, or within these discourses, in the sense that it was 'already always there'? An argument that to be constituted by discourse is to be determined by discourse, would seem to suggest that the women had no individual agency in constituting themselves as co-principals; that is, no agency in the sense of a free will choice from a range of possibilities, or in the sense of 'thinking up the idea from nowhere.' Rather, the possibilities were already there within existing discourses, and the resultant co-principal 'subject' is the "discursive practices which produce it" (Jones, 1997, p.13). If this is so, what were the discursive influences that have 'made' the co-principalships? Some answers to these questions have been already given in the previous discussions, but I want to explore the debate about a 'choosing' agent further now, in relation to Liz.

Liz's story does show her taking up at particular moments for the construction of her co-principal 'self,' discursive tools that became available to her (Butler, 1990), such as the feminist political activist subject position. Her story also suggests however, that knowing about contradictions between discursive constructions (such as those within feminist collectivity between a radical 'heterosexual supportive sisterhood' and a lesbian 'separatist identity') will not always spark new understandings and possibilities for new forms of subjectivity for those who observe such contradictions, such as Weedon seemed to suggest. While Davies (1997, p. 276) argued that once "the constitutive power of discourses is made available" for an individual, "there is room for movement (for) the reflexively aware subject," Liz's story indicates that there is an unevenness and fragility in such possibilities. She was dismayed by the clash between radical and lesbian women, but this did not seem to alert her at the time to either the 'constructedness' of their discourses, or the possibility of deconstructing them. Neither did those struggles seem to open up for her any room for movement within a feminist understanding of herself "as a woman," to use her words. When I listened to her talking about all this, I thought that a logical move for her at the time would have been a rejection of both forms of feminism. This did not seem to happen though. It is almost as if she put her radical feminism 'on hold.' In Liz's account, it was when she later met the union women, that she was "given" an understanding of herself as "a woman" who could simultaneously be a radical feminist political activist while valuing different forms of "woman-ness"(as she put it). From her story, it was the example of the union women's accommodation and constructive use of differences between women that opened up this possibility for her.

The question of whether there is a choosing or discursively determined subject is not necessarily answered from this part of Liz's story, however, as it is not clear that she consciously reasoned through how the radical, lesbian and unionist women she had encountered were treating the question of 'how to be a woman' differently. What can be noted though, is the point that the question itself sets up a binary opposition between determination versus free will. This dichotomy can limit our ability to think outside its frame and to see that,

while Liz was not a fully free agent, neither was she a subject totally determined in discourse (McNay, 1994; MacNaughton, 2000; Sawicki, 1991). The question obscures an understanding of the ways that Liz was enacting her subjectivity at that stage of her life as a blend of different discursive elements that were available to her. Her radical feminist and cultural feminist identifications with the idea that all women are part of a caring nurturing sisterhood (despite the fact that they could become engaged in ugly destructive arguments) can be seen to be running beneath, as it were, her taking up of a discourse about women's differences. These discursive strands were threaded together in her stories, with their contradictions being held "in tension ... in a multiple layering" (Davies, 1993, p.11). Davies used the metaphor of "palimpsest" to describe this process as like:

the way new writings on a parchment were written over or around old writings that were not fully erased. One writing interrupts the other, momentarily over-riding, intermingling with the other; the old writing influences the interpretation of the imposed new writing and the new influences the interpretation of the old. But both will stand, albeit partially erased and interrupted. New discourses do not simply replace the old as on a clean sheet. They generally interrupt one another, though they may also exist in parallel, remaining separate, undermining each other perhaps, but in an unexamined way (ibid).

Pecheux expressed a similar idea in his notion of preconstructed discourses (as the "always already there" that conveys the sense of "what everyone knows") persisting within 'new' blends of discourse and practice (Pecheux, 1977; Hennessy, 1993). These analyses illuminate how Liz was threading together different strands of discourse in her belief that women in all their differences, could be united in working together in a more democratic form of school organisation and leadership. She acted on this (discursively shaped) belief in her initiation of the Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship. In this way then, we can see agency as enacted within discourse, and as Fraser maintained, "the culturally produced subject can rewrite the script" (1997, p.214). I have been showing how this can occur through practices of "resignification, redeployment, subversive citation" from within particular discourses, along with "interruption and inadvertent convergences with other such networks" (Butler, 1995, p. 135).

Agency as discursively shaped 'tactics'

In her conversations with me, Liz drew on her past experiences to explain how and why she had initiated the Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship as a politically motivated "challenge to the structure and the system of management" in schools that was "driven by feminism." She described her action as "tactical," telling me that she had learned from her time with the NZEI collective that "women could be very strong when they worked together as a group, really good at thinking through a strategy ... cunning and wise." She traced her learning of political tactics back to that time, and described how she had become aware, for example, of the political significance of language. She recognised that using a word like "oppressed" to

describe women constituted her as a radical feminist (though she did not use that poststructuralist explanation), so she had stopped using that language, because, she said, "that would only get you a backlash." As I noted earlier, Blackmore found that many women in her studies had eschewed using the word feminist. This was because it "smacked of politics ... and working for social justice (being feminist) was about overt value commitments that could be labelled as 'ideological,' thus undermining women's much sought after public credibility" (Blackmore, 1999, pp.188-9). Hall also found in her study of women headteachers in the UK, that they eschewed the label feminist because they felt it would attach them to "unwelcome stereotypes" (1996, p.193). I note here, that over the time I was researching the co-principalship, Liz 'hid' her radical feminist identity. It was only when I asked her the direct question about feminism at the end of the study that she exposed this part of her subjectivity to me. Her motivations were not so much about public credibility, though, as about becoming more strategic, as part of working as a change agent in areas of gender equity and management change.

This motivation emerges in her description of how, after working with the NZEI women, she "tested out" feminist ideas and practices of collectivity in her own professional practice, and then later thought about these in relation to some of the academic literature about transformational leadership (Sergiovanni, 1991; Stewart and Prebble, 1993). She explained to me that consequently, while she used to think leadership was being visionary and charismatic, she had rejected this idea in favour of endorsing a participatory collaboration where everyone at some stage "led the idea." While she did not talk explicitly about the kinds of problems in rhetorical and contrived forms of collegiality that have been discussed by Angus (1989) and Hargreaves (1991),¹⁴⁴ the case narrative shows that in her practices she had eschewed the embedded elitism in the professional transformative leadership discourse of the principal as a visionary leader.¹⁴⁵ (For example, Rose said that while the ideas of transformative leadership and distributive leadership (meaning all teachers participate in leadership activities) had been discussed at the management course she led, and Liz and Jane attended, she had observed during visits to their schools how both those women already putting these ideas into practice with their colleagues.)

Weedon's (1987) argument that it is through the conflict between discourses that we can become alerted to new ways of 'being,' suggests that it was Liz's exposure to conflicting constructions of participatory decision making (different feminist collective versions and different professional versions) that opened up for her possibilities for the new co-principal

¹⁴⁴ I explained in Chapter 6 how these problems can constrain a fully democratic organisation of the work of teaching and learning.

¹⁴⁵ Angus drew attention to the ways that participation is "shaped in this perspective by the larger-than-life leader" (Angus, 1989, p. 83). As I noted in Chapter 6, within both critical (Grace, 1997; Smyth, 1989a) and poststructuralist (English, 1994; Maxcy, 1995) analyses of educational leadership, there have been calls for a radical re-evaluation of hierarchy and "salvationist" or hero mind-sets that lead people to accept that some people are born with leadership qualities and that institutions and organisations need such people.

collectivity. Liz's stories also suggest that it was her earlier experiences of unionist feminist collectivity that enabled her to reflect critically on the hierarchy and elitism that was normalised within professional bureaucratic and transformative leadership discourses.¹⁴⁶ We can read in her accounts evidence of her drawing on these areas of subjugated feminist knowledge and practices in her initiation of a local, site-based resistance to dominant hierarchical discourses of school leadership. A Foucauldian analysis of discursive struggles as strategic and tactical resonates strongly with these parts of her story.¹⁴⁷

While Liz's story suggests that an individual can be indeed, at times, a consciously reflective, "active player" in the field of discourse, (Davies, 1997; MacNaughton, 2000), it also provides evidence of the ways that developing new ways of understanding and acting in the 'cracks' between the contradictions of circulating discourses is a rather precarious process. Her accounts show that knowing about different discourses is not the same as experiencing them in the sense of taking up and becoming emotionally invested in a particular subject position which is offered within them (Davies, 1993; MacNaughton, 2000). This point is related to the fact that people live their lives and make meanings about themselves and the world as thinking and feeling beings (Weedon, 1987). I turn now to parts of Kate's story to explore these ideas some more.

Agency as discursively shaped desires and emotional investments

As she talked about how she came to be a co-principal, Kate's stories revealed how she was drawing on not only within a professional discourse of collaborative leadership, but also within the traditional cult of domesticity discourse that 'women's primary role is that of caregiver' (James & Saville-Smith, 1989), alongside a liberal feminist discourse of women as able to have a professional career as well as 'being a mother' (Friedan, 1963), alongside a radical feminist discourse that critiques a 'male' domination of educational leadership (Shakeshaft, 1987).

In her reflective accounts of her past professional experiences, Kate invoked the latter discourse when she said, "In 1989 it was predominantly male principals and male deputy principals, but I just kind of rebelled against the style that was commonly used." In her description of that 'style,' she showed an awareness of the socially constructed nature of a discourse of authoritarian macho leadership, which she described as a "sort of image" and

¹⁴⁶ As I stated earlier, when I began this study, I thought that I would find that the co-principalships were initiated as a resistance to the ways that principals were being increasingly constructed as managerialist chief executive officers. However, Liz's, and many others' critiques of hierarchical leadership was expressed more in terms of a critique of a traditional discourse of the individual visionary, charismatic leader.

¹⁴⁷ Sensibly, Liz kept quiet about her radical feminist beliefs. In this school's mainly affluent professional families and "nanny culture," (as the women called it) it seems to me that 'coming out' as a radical feminist could indeed have damaged her credibility, as Blackmore (1999) suggested in her study of Australian women educators.

position of authority as “the disciplinarian” from which control was exercised through practices that engendered fear. Her challenging of this approach by applying for leadership positions herself and trying to set up a different, more collaborative practice (which she linked to styles she had experienced while working with women principals in the UK) illustrates a Foucauldian understanding of resistance as “freedom’s refusal to submit” to dominant discourses and exploitative exercises of power (Foucault, 1982, p.221). As I explained in Chapter 4, power is understood in Foucault’s work as produced within everyday social practices and relations of “reciprocal incitation and struggle” (ibid., p.222).

Kate seemed less able, however, to critically reflect on the discursive nature of the conflicts she had experienced between her own family and career aspirations. She had decided to give up her career for her family’s sake when the demands of a triple load of supporting her child’s creche as well as being a mother at home and working full-time became too difficult to manage. She said, “I knew that by resigning I was making a decision to actually cut the career path. It was very very hard - it was full of grief ... of regret for lost opportunity.” She described the necessity for this decision as emerging out of her personal desires to have both a family and a career. She did not seem to recognise that the conflict was not just a personal trouble, but a consequence of a clash between her positioning of herself as a ‘good wife and mother’ within the cult of domesticity discourse,¹⁴⁸ and aspiring as ‘a woman’ to the position of ‘a professional leader’ within what are largely still masculinist discourses of educational leadership.¹⁴⁹ While some of the discursive contradictions between the cult of domesticity ‘caregiver mother’ and a ‘career woman’ were smoothed out during the 1970s within a liberal feminist discourse that constructed women’s role as in both spheres,¹⁵⁰ the actual embodied realities for women of trying to accomplish both roles successfully have proved to be very difficult for many, as Kate’s story demonstrates. This is because there have not been equivalent substantial shifts in many men’s perceptions of themselves as equally responsible in home and family roles, nor in many school communities, it seems, in social attitudes about ‘male

¹⁴⁸ Within the cult of domesticity discourse, a preconstructed heteronormative strand assumes that social relations are organised around heterosexual couples where men are positioned in paid work as the primary ‘breadwinners’ for the family while women carry primary responsibility for care-giving and domestic work in the home.

¹⁴⁹ A liberal humanist construction of civic and institutional authority has been shown to be continuous with a white male bourgeois discourse of men’s superiority in “spheres of life concerned with ambition, competition and paid work” (James & Saville-Smith, 1989, p.34; Fraser, 1997; Blackmore, 1999). See Chapter 7 for my discussion of the historical developments of this discourse and critiques of liberal egalitarianism as a normative neutrality that obscures the facts of individual embodiment in material relations of gender, race and class power inequalities (Frazer & Lacey, 1993, p.74).

¹⁵⁰ A liberal version of the cult of domesticity discourse frames teaching as “a good job for a girl” (Buchan, 1980) because she can marry and bring up children ‘in between’ continuing with her ‘career.’

authority' as the norm for leadership.¹⁵¹ As I showed in Chapter 1, the statistics on women's appointments to principal positions have shown only minimal change over the last decade (Ministry of Education, 1999). For many people, the traditionally constructed conservative discursive assumptions about men's and women's different 'natures,' capabilities and roles have sunk into an unconscious form of commonsense, that is, hegemony (Gramsci, 1971). As Fraser (1997, p.157) commented, hegemony can be thought of as "the discursive face of power" as dominant discourses "establish authoritative definitions of social situations" which exclude alternative definitions and understandings. These theoretical ideas go some way towards explaining Kate's seeming blindness to the nature of the gendered discourses and unequal power relations that were constraining her career aspirations.

It surprised me, however, that in describing her grief and sadness about her 'decision' to give up her career, Kate conveyed no sense of injustice. Rather, she seemed to blame herself, seeing what had happened as the consequence of her (unreasonable) desire to have both a family and a career. Foucault's analysis of the "subjectivizing" (McNay, 1994, p.122) force of discourse is illuminating here. He argued that the links between discourse and power can be identified through examining how an individual "turns him - or herself - into a subject" (Foucault, 1982, p.208), meaning both a subject of a particular discourse, and subjected to its constructions of reality. In the latter sense, a discourse can discipline, or govern us through the ways that we construct and understand ourselves within its categories and ordering of 'reality.' Feminist poststructuralists have argued that particularly significant in these subjectivizing processes are our emotional desires about how we want to 'be' (Davies, 1993; MacNaughton, 2000). These desires are associated with our past experiences of pleasure or pain in getting our social positionings 'right' or 'wrong;' that is, according to normalised views about the best way to be, as, for example, a 'good woman,' a 'good mother,' or a 'good leader.' Our personal emotional investments in particular positionings are shaped within wider ascendant discursive and moral systems of what is currently judged to be 'right' (MacNaughton, 2000, p.104).

Kate's stories and other people's stories about her in the Telford narrative, show her strong emotional investment in her positioning as 'a good mother.' In taking up this subject position, she had accepted the bulk of the responsibility for her child's welfare, including working after school at the creche where she was leaving her daughter during the day. This may have been empowering for her sense of herself as a good mother, but it was disempowering in terms of her professional leadership aspirations. "Caught at the crossroads of contradictory patterns of desire" (MacNaughton, 2000, p.104), Kate had decided to give up her professional career, taking up instead the position of a 'good mother.' As such, she can be seen to have made herself a subject of and to the cult of domesticity discourse, and to have excluded herself from a position as an educational leader. The subjectivizing force of

¹⁵¹ It is interesting to reflect here on Rosaldo's argument of 30 years ago that "When a man is involved in domestic labour, in child care and cooking, he cannot establish an aura of authority and distance. And when public decisions are made in the household, women may have a legitimate public role" (Rosaldo, 1974, p.39).

discourse is evident here, but for Kate the links between discourse and power in the discursive influences on her 'choices' were obscured.

As was seen also with Liz, Kate's experiences and actions as a career professional who decided to initiate a co-principalship, illustrate how an individual's subjectivity is not fixed within a singular identity. A range of subject positionings and ways of viewing and acting in the world are available within the circulation of multiple discourses. These open up different possibilities for resistance to the negative effects of power that we may experience within one kind of positioning. Kate's story shows her earlier constructing of herself as a 'New Zealander' within a Māori discourse of bi-culturalism, had led to her strong interest in Māori educational initiatives. When she heard about an acting principal relieving position at Telford School that included responsibility for supporting a bilingual class, her interest was sparked. She told herself she could apply and as it was only a relieving position she could always leave if it was too much work, or if she did not like it. Then, when she heard about Liz and Jane's co-principalship initiative, she began to envision a way that she could combine her professional and personal aspirations. Sharing the leadership could help her to cope with the workloads of being 'a good mother' and 'a professional principal;' it could satisfy her desire to be a professional collaborative leader; and it could also enable her to work towards her social justice goals through being a supporter of the whānau's bilingual educational initiative.¹⁵² At the beginning of the Telford School co-principalship it seemed, then, that Kate had successfully negotiated some previously painfully conflicting discursive subject positions and made for herself a way to achieve her personal aspirations.

I will explore some more in the next chapter how these aspirations foundered, partly because of Kate's emotional investments in being a supportive, nurturing partner for Ann. Feminist poststructuralists have pointed out that the emotional, embodied parts of experiences are not always fully "knowable" or "communicable in language" (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 1999, p.385). Thus:

(t)he relation between theory, language and experience is always problematic. People certainly make sense of what happens to them in terms of the language and meanings available to them, but the inter-relations of different levels of experience ... (events, the social, embodiment, emotions, values / ethics, and theory / language / discourse / meanings / communication) ... means that language is not all there is to know (ibid).

While 'scientific' approaches to management have previously rejected emotionality as having no place in educational leadership or 'rational' decision making, I have tried to show in my preceding discussions how different emotional reactions to and investments in feminist, professional and managerial approaches to educational leadership were important aspects of

¹⁵² Strachan argued that while feminist leadership might emerge out of women's beliefs and experiences, it goes beyond these and a focus on sharing power or decision making, to prioritise "an emancipatory agenda" of bringing about "improved social justice and equity for all members of the school community" (Strachan, 1997, p.25). Although Kate did not describe herself as feminist in these terms, the latter goal was certainly was one of her aims for the Telford school co-principalship.

both Liz's and Kate's experiences. As other researchers such as Beatty (2000), Blackmore (1996), Hargreaves (1997) and Sachs and Blackmore (1998) have argued, the place of emotionality in relation to educational leadership and management needs re-assessment and further research. My analyses of how the three co-principalship initiatives evolved will continue to show how it is a significant part of workplace interpersonal relationships and practices, for men as well as for women.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the women's constructions of their individual subjectivities as co-principals as represented in their narratives about their experiences. My analyses firstly drew out some of the differences and inconsistencies in and between the women's accounts. I then focused on exploring, deconstructing and re-formulating a dualism between agency and discursive determinism that has persisted in some theorising in this area. My discussions thus far have supported Fraser's (1997) argument that elements of critical theory and poststructuralism can be usefully integrated in analyses of subjectivity and agency. In her critique of Benhabib's (1994) support of a critical approach and Butler's (1994) anti-foundationalist postmodernism, Fraser maintained that false antitheses and either/or choices between these two theoretical positions have been generated. I have shown how dichotomous questions about agency can set up dichotomous answers that obscure how subjectivity can be "conceived as endowed with critical capacity and as culturally constructed ... critique as simultaneously situated and amenable to self-reflection, as potentially radical and as subject to warrants" (Fraser, 1997, p.219). I have also noted, however, that agency is enacted within an individual's emotional investments in particular subject positionings, and that such desires are themselves shaped within the normalising power of discourse (MacNaughton, 2000).

In the next chapter, I will explore how it is not only in "the constitutive force of discourse that agency lies" (Davies, 1997, p. 272), but perhaps even more importantly, that people construct their understandings of themselves and take action in the world within thinking and feeling interactions with other people. That is, inter-subjectivity becomes the focus of analysis of the development of the different co-principal collective identities and shared leadership practices.

CHAPTER 12

'MAKING' A CO-PRINCIPALSHIP AT HILLCREST AVENUE SCHOOL

Introduction

When I began this study, my thinking was influenced by Hekman's argument that feminists could identify the categories of knowledge/power that oppress us and use analysis to "disturb, disrupt and explode" them and develop local solutions to particular regimes of repressive power (Hekman, 1990, pp.180 -182). I was wondering then, whether the co-principalships might be a radical approach to shared leadership that was emerging out of this kind of critique of the currently ascendant NPM and market discourses of educational leadership and organisation. I was also interested in whether the women might be drawing on ideas about collectivity that have been produced in both professional collaborative and feminist discourses about organisation and leadership. My analysis thus far has shown that while the women in each of the three schools were indeed working within professional collaborative and feminist collectivist discourses (albeit it in different ways and to varying degrees), they were also critiquing and challenging forms of hierarchy that have remained largely unproblematised in some professional collaborative discourse and practice.

I explore this theme further now, by examining the nature of discursive "echoes" (Loveridge, 1999) that appear in the text of Liz and Jane's Hillcrest Avenue School co-principal proposal. I use the tools of feminist poststructuralism to analyse these and to show how a counter discourse was being constructed. I then examine how intersubjectivity, in the form of meaning-making interactions with each other and other people in and beyond their school communities, can be seen to be an important part of the building of this co-principalship's collective identity and shared leadership practices. In these interactions, the women were constituting each other as co-principals and the discussions will show how sometimes they 'got it wrong.' Although I am using the Hillcrest Avenue School co-principalship as my primary example for this analysis, I will return to these ideas in my discussions of the Telford and St Mary's initiatives in the next two chapters.

Before I begin, let me foreshadow the critiques and feminist poststructuralist arguments that I am developing in this and the following chapters, in relation to understandings of the 'self' in community. In Chapters 6 and 7, I explained how the theories that underpin the NPM discourse have been developed within a neo-liberal version of theorising of oppositions between the 'self' and the 'other,' individual and community (Fraser, 1997; Frazer & Lacey, 1993; Mouffe, 1995; Young, 1990). In the public choice strand of NPM, the self is understood as autonomous and opportunistically self-interested and social interactions are seen as

contractual forms of agreements between individuals. Society is thus conceived as made up of “atomised, competitive and acquisitive” individuals primarily seeking opportunities and making choices that will better their social, economic and political situations (Middleton, 1998, p.10). In contrast, within feminist poststructuralist understandings of individual subjectivity as constructed within discourse and in meaning making interactions with other people (Davies, 1989; 1993; Weedon, 1987), mutuality, as the “recognition both of and by another,” is understood a “pre-condition for self-consciousness” and for the building of social collectivity (Fraser & Lacey, 1993, p.175). While Foucault argued in his later work that the self is social (Foucault, 1988), Grimshaw (1993, p. 68) has criticised him for paying “lip-service” to this idea, because “there is no sense whatever of the importance of collective goals or aspirations, or the ways that individual lives might be lived in the light of something that transcended these” (ibid). Therefore, feminist poststructuralists who draw on both Foucault and ideas developed within critical and post-marxist approaches, aim to theorise intersubjectivity in ways that build in more adequate considerations of ethical forms of interdependence.

As part of this work, Mouffe (1995) has argued that a radical understanding of collectivity could be conceptualised as a convergence of different privately negotiated subject positions around a shared ethical and philosophical commitment to community. She was drawing on Benhabib’s earlier understanding of collectivity as formed around “a common, shared perspective that we create insofar as in acting with others we discover our difference and identity, our distinctiveness from, and unity with, others (Benhabib,1986, p.348). Benhabib considered that such a “unity in difference comes through a process of self transformation and collective action” (ibid). That is, in the process of forming new forms of collective identity, previous understandings of both the ‘self’ and the ‘other’ will be changed.

Fraser (1997) built on these ideas to make the following suggestions about how group formation could be understood. She argued that within on-going struggles over discourse, people’s understandings of who they ‘are’ shift, in relation to other people and discourses. In this process, previous strands of identity that may have been submerged in an individual’s sense of self can reappear, “as the nub of new self-definitions and affiliations with others” (Fraser, 1997, p.153). Fraser further maintained that in these processes there is a re-making of social discourse. In the negotiation of new forms of identity, previously established positions and perspectives of “cultural authority” are contested and challenged (p.154). In her view, using discourse analysis to examine how this occurs would “help us to understand how, even under conditions of subordination, women participate in the making of culture”(ibid).

In this chapter I follow Elbaz’s suggestion that one way of understanding how collective social identities and practices are both “constituted by and constitutive of the discursive field in which members of the group live and function,” is to focus analysis in the first instance on the interconnections between the language and practices of a group (Elbaz, 1990). Thus I begin my discussions by considering the proposal the women produced for their

board, thinking about the words and phrases they used in relation to their stories about how they had come to the idea of initiating or joining a co-principalship. I am aiming to show how the proposal can be understood as a blending of the women's individually negotiated subject positions and discursive investments in shared leaderships. I explore how the women were both reflecting and challenging elements of professional discourse, while also drawing on feminist discourses, to argue for a structural change to the principalship that could "validate" collaboration. I then examine the uneven nature of the discursive processes of disarticulation and rearticulation (Hennessy, 1993)¹⁵³ in which they were engaging (albeit not consciously, as in the feminist poststructuralist approach to discursive critique suggested by Hekman, 1990). While in the proposal some elements of dominant discourse were challenged, others seem to be uncritically re-inscribed.

In the middle sections of the chapter I discuss how these kinds of negotiations and discursive discontinuities were being reconciled in Liz, Jane and Karen's building of shared understandings and collective practices. I focus here on the examples of "open, honest communication" and "teamwork." In the latter section, and in my consideration of how a gender discourse of difference persists in Karen's arguments, I reflect on the question of whether the women's practices can be seen to be impacting on dominant discursive constructions of educational leadership. This leads me into the final section, where I begin an analysis of the nature of governmental power relations (an analysis that I will pick up again briefly in the next chapter and focus on in the final chapter's discussions of school governance, management and accountability). I reflect here on how discursive power, in the form of governmental internalised self regulation, can work to constrain individuality within a highly integrative form of collectivity.

The Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship proposal

Liz and Jane proposed a shared leadership that would change the structure and the power dynamics of the principalship to enable it to be more focused on learning and teaching. They developed their ideas within a NPM market environment in which the principal is constructed as a chief executive who focusses on rationalising the management of staffing, finances, plant and curriculum to make the school enterprise more efficient and effective, and, therefore, competitive, in an educational market.¹⁵⁴ These discourses hardly feature in their

¹⁵³ I explained in Chapter 4 how Hennessy (1993) used Gramsci's concept of articulation alongside Foucault's analysis of discursive formations to theorise how, in struggles over meaning-making, ruling groups are able to incorporate other knowledges into their discursive formation through processes of de-articulation and re-articulation. I use her terms to describe how discourses are sifted for elements that can be lifted and re-forged in new configurations.

¹⁵⁴ As I explained in Chapter 6, in the NPM dual strands of *market* and *managerial* discourse, increased management controls over staff and plant are seen as necessary for the principal to oversee the driving up of standards that will help a school to win and keep clients (parents and students). While the *Picot Report*

proposal, however. Rather, the proposal reveals traces of Liz and Jane's slightly different feminist understandings and positionings 'blended' into an argument that is constructed within and against the grain of versions of professional collaborative leadership. The following discussions examine each of these points.

Reflecting and challenging professional collaborative leadership discourses ...

I argued in Chapter 6 that a bureaucratic version of professional collaborative leadership was predominant in Aotearoa/New Zealand during the 1970s and 80s, and could be seen to be persisting within many professional understandings and practices into the 1990s. In this discourse, the principal is constructed as primarily an instructional team leader, working collaboratively with staff through senior and middle management structures that formalise and specify duties and responsibilities in job descriptions for each level. Information and influence are seen as flowing through formal channels and systems of communication, such as meetings, newsletters, manuals, assemblies. Collegial relationships are constructed as collaborative in the sense of the principal "working with" others within these staffing structures and "developing" others through "instructional leadership," that is, through providing "in-class supervision, in-service training and observation opportunities" (Department of Education, 1984).¹⁵⁵ A transformational leadership 'hybrid' of this discourse,¹⁵⁶ which has been more recently promoted in education by theorists such as Foster (1989) and Sergiovanni (1991), has constructed the principal as an ethical educational leader engaged in a form of servant leadership that aims to raise both leader and followers to a higher moral plane of shared commitment to educative principles and democratic collegial participation.

(Department of Education, 1988a) constituted the successful principal as "a professional and instructional leader," whose collaborative relationship with staff "must be protected and enhanced" (p.51), it also endorsed a version of the principal as an executive, with the responsibility of working with the board of trustees to define "a hierarchy of objectives and priorities at all levels of the administrative structure" and to establish clear "lines of accountability" (p.42, emphasis in original). *Tomorrow's Schools*, however, reduced the principal's leadership role to one of being a middle manager, implementing state and board policy and carrying out tasks such as preparatory work on the charter, allocation of duties among staff, development of performance objectives for staff and measures to assess that performance, supplying information about registration of beginning teachers and keeping parents informed about their children's progress (Department of Education, 1988b, p.11).

¹⁵⁵ Cardno, for example, defined collaboration as "partnership, co-operation, agreement, consent and working together to accomplish institutional objectives" (Cardno, 1990, p.2). She presented a collaborative school as having sound leadership, knowledgeable staff, teamwork at all levels with clearly defined roles and responsibilities and mechanisms for collaboration, with problem solving linked to professional and school development.

¹⁵⁶ A theory proposed originally by Burns (1978), an American academic in the management field, argues that transformational leaders are not concerned so much with transactional, bargaining aspects of influencing others, but more with engaging with others "in such a way that the leaders and the followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality... working for common purposes ... (having) a transforming effect on both" (Burns, 1978, p.20).

In Aotearoa/ New Zealand, Stewart and Prebble's presentation of the principal as a reflective leader 'wedded' the bureaucratic and transformational leadership discourses within an organisational culture management approach. They presented the principal as centrally concerned with developing a vision for the school, "identify(ing) a set of core values, beliefs and practices and socialis(ing) teachers into these ... through collaborative decision making, through shared planning and evaluation ... and through constant discussion" (Stewart & Prebble, 1993, pp. 188-9). In this version of transformative collaborative leadership as cultural management, the aim for the principal is to encourage organisational members to develop a "passionate commitment" to the core culture, transforming it into a learning community (ibid, p.199). Stewart and Prebble's analysis also portrayed the principal as the school's communicator, negotiator and figurehead, and community partnership as professional consultation with and reporting to parents.

Both Liz and Jane had read some of Sergiovanni's books on moral and collaborative leadership and they had both attended David Stewart's reflective principal courses which promoted the latter discourse of transformational culture management. This discourse permeates much of the text of the Hillcrest Avenue proposal. For example, it was stated that a co-principalship "transforms power from a single to a collective base," that it could "promote a collaborative school culture," that "shared vision enhances commitment (ownership)" and that the co-principalship would be committed to "collaborative planning, shared decision-making and collegial work."¹⁵⁷

A more democratic professional discourse of school/community partnership has been also in circulation, however, during the late 1970s, 80s and 90s. This discourse arose partly out of concerns that the large majority of 'lay' people were not able to influence school decision making and calls were made in the Towards Partnership review, for more collaborative relationships with parents (Department of Education, 1976). These calls were taken up later in the 1988 *Picot Report* review of educational administration, which argued that schools were "partnerships between the teaching staff (the professionals) and the community" (Department of Education, 1988a, p.xi). Liz and Jane's proposal can be seen to be taking up the 'democratic' version of collaborative leadership endorsed in both of those reviews. The NPM construction of partnership, as articulated in *Tomorrow's Schools* (Department of Education, 1988b), shifted the Picot construction of the collaborative principal into a more entrepreneurial relationship with parents however, presenting parents as 'consumers' (theoretically) able to 'choose' the 'best' school for their child. As I have already

¹⁵⁷ Supporting arguments were couched in terms of professional commitments to "school self-review; experimentation and evaluation; teacher development and appraisal systems and the monitoring and evaluation of children's progress." Liz and Jane stated that the co-principalship would also support a "Greater degree of consultation and collaboration with the school community." The last statement reflects the way that a professional bureaucratic discourse may have largely normalised a split between professionals in the school and parents in the community.

indicated this market discursive construction is not evident in Liz and Jane's proposal for shared leadership (nor in their later practices).

While Liz and Jane's proposal can be seen to be strongly reflective of professional discourses about the work of school leadership, in some sections, it can also be seen to be challenging and deconstructing some of the taken-for-granted elements of professional collaborative discourses. In particular, it challenged the discursive construction of the principal as a charismatic individual in a position of status and influence, who "personifies" the school, its culture and its mission, as Stewart and Prebble put it. These writers wrote that, "In this respect, the principal is like the decorated prow of a ceremonial canoe: at the head of the institution, showing the way, leading by example and extremely visible" (Prebble & Stewart, 1993, p.191). Liz said however, "I used to think that good principals were charismatic visionaries. I don't think that any more. Vision is important, but no one individual is more important than anyone else." She and Jane argued instead that a co-principalship would be "less (focused) on trends and the personality of the leader and more on teaching and learning."

... and drawing on feminist discourses

In Liz and Jane's statement that a co-principalship would "transform power from a single to a collective base" (my emphasis) the word "transform" has been disarticulated (Hennessy, 1993) from its 'parent' discourse of transformative leadership (where it is used to refer to the work done by the visionary or 'servant' leader to raise followers and the leader him/herself to a higher commitment and moral plane) and re-articulated within a radical feminist discourse about collectivity that aims to transform power relations. I read here echoes of Liz's interest in changing hierarchy and unequal power relations that radical and collectivist feminists have seen as emerging in bureaucratic organisations which endorse singular, masculinist forms of leadership (Rothschild, 1994). As I showed in Chapter 7, in the early feminist collectives, leadership was eschewed altogether on the assumption that it would lead to hierarchy and the capture of power and control by an individual, destroying group cohesion.¹⁵⁸ Egalitarianism was stressed as a fundamental value, with the aim of every member having equal status and rights of participation. There was an assumption that singular power was 'bad' and collective power 'good.' Both assumptions have underpinned a radical feminist understanding of power as exercised oppressively by men (as individuals in personal relationships and collectively through patriarchal systems) to subordinate women within a male dominated society.

Within a feminist collective discourse, women's collective power is understood as beneficial however, enabling individuals to support one another to develop their personal potential and to contribute to building a sisterhood for political change in patriarchal gender

¹⁵⁸ It was argued for example, that the creation of 'stars' through practices such as a woman becoming spokesperson to the media, should be avoided.

relations. My discussions in the previous chapter showed how Liz was drawing on these kinds of ideas in her understanding of the co-principalship as a woman-centred collectivity that could challenge the managerialist 'system' in education - a system that as I have been showing in this thesis, has been analysed by some as not only hierarchical, but also masculinist (Blackmore, 1999; Collinson & Hearn, 1994).¹⁵⁹

Freeman's (1973) analysis of the tyranny of structurelessness within collectivities warned however, that there were dangers in negating all forms of leadership or organisational structure. She argued that structurelessness could mask the formation of an elite (often friends) who through their socialising outside of the organisation, for example, could become a powerful, perhaps the only, communication network. Coterminously structurelessness could mask also the formation of unspecified rules shaping decision making and the general aims and philosophy of the group. Some feminist collectives in Aotearoa/New Zealand experienced some of these difficulties (Coney & Cederman, 1975; Vanderpyl, 1996), and Liz herself had observed struggles that emerged in one women's centre over the 'correct' feminist way to build a 'sisterhood.' As the case narrative illustrates, while her commitment to a radical feminist discourse survived this experience, she had learned how differences between women could result in nasty struggles over power. In another of the proposal's statements that the co-principalship "Acknowledges differences and sameness," there is an echo of these experiences and a pointing to a potential way to avoid conflicts and share power constructively within the co-principalship. (The women later encouraged debate over their different ideas.)

... to argue for a structural change that "validates" collaboration

Jane's stories in the case narrative show that she, like Liz, valued people's differences and that she agreed that the co-principalship was about power sharing. Jane's positioning of herself within both professional and liberal feminist discourses¹⁶⁰ can be read in the second of the proposal statements, that "Structural change validates a collaborative school culture." A liberal feminist discourse appears in the word "validates" which suggests that there cannot be a 'true' or 'legitimate' culture of collaboration in a school without changing the (implied

¹⁵⁹ The market managerial construction of the principal as a 'chief executive,' is highly compatible with powerful or hegemonic forms of masculinity (Connell, 1987) that are inflected with technical and calculation skills ('necessary' for balancing the ever tighter budgets) and a confident, competitive toughness (as 'required' for marketing a school's image, or for ensuring staff 'measure up'). Inequalities grounded in 'differences' of gender, ethnicity and class are legitimised through the notion that in competition, 'the best man (sic) wins.' It is worth noting here Grace's (1995, p. 183) finding in his study of British headteachers, that the notion of winning or losing within a market environment influenced the responses of male headteachers, but not those of the women headteachers: "their aspirations were expressed in language largely devoid of market values."

¹⁶⁰ As explained earlier, her experiences of the latter had been developed not so much within feminism as in her professional experiences. Her comments about professional collaborative power sharing approaches were placed alongside her accounts of the development of her liberal feminist interest in open and fair procedures that could protect the rights of individuals.

hierarchical bureaucratic and managerial) structure that positions the principal at the head of a pyramid of authority, status and control. Both liberal feminist and professional discursive elements are articulated in this second statement within a more radical discourse about structural change, however, illustrating a blend of Jane's and Liz's discursively shaped ideas and understandings.

The structural change that the women were promoting, as already noted, was aimed at changing school leadership power relations to enable a more effective form of collegiality. This point could do with some more elaboration. In Chapter 6 I explained how as a consequence of a split in school organisation between the leader(s) (the principal, and perhaps senior management) and the followers (teachers), inequalities of power and influence have been embedded into educational workforce relationships. Within the still largely bureaucratic and managerial organisation of schools, the principal is positioned at the head of a chain of influence and control, holding veto power and final accountability for all management decisions. While the transformational version of collaborative leadership seems to 'soften' these power and control elements through its arguments about collaborative servant leadership (Sergiovanni, 1991), collegiality between the principal, senior managers and teachers has been shown to be riven through by various manifestations of power inequalities and micro-political struggles (Ball, 1987; Blase & Anderson, 1995; Hargreaves, 1991; Wallace & Hall, 1994). For example, the principal is still usually presented in transformative leadership discourse as the person with the responsibility to "shape and share a vision which gives point to the work of others" (Handy, 1992; Stewart & Prebble, 1993). Such a view presents vision as owned by an elite few and hooks us into old ideas of leadership as based in personal charisma, as reflected in both Stewart and Prebble's and Carlson's (1996) analyses of leadership. Angus (1989, p.87) argued that in a more democratic approach, "power and authority would be regarded as reciprocal, relational concepts... and reform can be asserted from below by participants," supporting Foster's (1989) view that leaders have to negotiate visions and ideas with followers. In the latter situation, the followers "may in turn, become leaders themselves, renegotiating the particular agenda" (Foster, 1989, pp. 42-43). Foster was pointing towards a democratic reformulation of leadership, although he was not envisioning at that point a remaking of career structures and structural divides between the principal and teachers. Thus the problem of the embedded hierarchical structures persists in transformative leadership discourse, weakening potential equalising of power and posing problems for a fully democratic community.¹⁶¹

¹⁶¹ The micro-political dynamics of school working relationships tend to be glossed over in Stewart and Prebble's presentation of school leadership as collaborative transformation of school cultures. Although it was acknowledged that conflict over decision making may occur, and that reaching consensus "implies that an issue and arguments for and against have been debated thoroughly and all are prepared to abide by the best solution possible" (p.70), there is an underlying implication in this text that management of school culture will result in consensus. Such a consensus was seen as transforming "a situation in which there is experienced obscurity, doubt, conflict - into a situation that is clear, coherent, settled, harmonious" (Dewey, 1933, pp.100-101, cited in Stewart and Prebble, p.120). It is implied that once this harmony was established, it would remain and teachers

It is this structural taken -for- granted hierarchy that Liz and Jane were challenging in their proposal.

Uneven processes of discursive dis-articulation and re-articulation

It is interesting to reflect on how these women produced a new understanding of and position for school leadership in the light of Hennessy's (1993) discussion of discursive dis-articulation/re-articulation processes. As noted earlier, Hennessy explained that in struggles over meaning making, ruling groups are able to incorporate other knowledges into their discursive formation through "sifting" those other discourses for elements that can be lifted out and re-forged in new configurations that no longer contradict, but support the prevailing regime of truth (Foucault, 1980). The commonsense and universal appeal of a regime of truth (or hegemonic formation) thus emerges as a consequence of the ways that elements from a wide range of discourses are appropriated and reshaped into a "coherent frame of intelligibility" (Hennessy, 1993, p.76). Liz and Jane can be seen to have engaged in these discursive processes of dis-articulation and re-articulation as they produced, from their positionings within both professional discourses of collaborative school leadership and what Foucault (1980) called "subjugated knowledges" (in this case feminist liberal, radical and collectivist discourses), a resistant discourse of co-principalship that in Jane's words, was "terribly obvious," obvious, that is, as a way of organising collaborative working relationships in a small primary school.

In this way the Hillcrest Avenue School proposal illustrates how power can be exercised not just in 'top down oppressions,' but also in a 'bottom up' direction. Foucault (1980) argued that wherever power is exercised by some over others, there also, will emerge resistance. It can be seen that at their local school level, Liz and Jane were resisting and challenging some elements of dominant bureaucratic and managerial forms of school leadership that can disempower teachers and principals. In the previous chapter, I linked Weedon's (1987) argument that it is through the conflict between discourses that we can become alerted to new ways of 'being,' to my analysis of Liz's stories. I suggested that it was her exposure to conflicting constructions of participatory decision making (different feminist collective versions and different professional versions) that opened up for her possibilities for the new co-principal collectivity. Liz's stories also suggest that her earlier experiences of unionist feminist collectivity enabled her to reflect critically on the hierarchy and elitism that was normalised within professional bureaucratic and transformative leadership discourses. We can read in her accounts evidence of her drawing on these areas of subjugated feminist

would be empowered to get on and be creative, working together collaboratively. Other factors can continue to impact however. For example, Weldon (1993) found that "out of respect for the principal's authority," staff members can be hesitant about proceeding too far with a group project without the principal's sanction. That is, the persistence of structural hierarchical authority can mitigate against attempts to build more democratic collaboration.

knowledge and practices in her initiation of a local, site-based resistance to dominant hierarchical discourses of school leadership. This analysis supports Hekman's advice that feminists should engage in both description and analysis of the categories of knowledge/power that oppress us so that we could "disturb, disrupt and explode" them (Hekman, 1990, p.182) and develop local solutions to particular regimes of repressive power (p.180). As I stated earlier, while I expected to find that the co-principalships were initiated as a resistance to the ways that principals were being increasingly constructed as managerialist chief executive officers, Liz's (and Brigid, Carrie and Kate's) resistances were expressed more in terms of critiques of hierarchy embedded in professional leadership discourse and practices.

Some of those discursive elements reappeared however, in other parts of Liz and Jane's proposal, illustrating that however much we may strive after neat and tidy, rationally coherent philosophies, or theories for organisational leadership and management, 'messiness' and contradictions are part of human experience.¹⁶² While Liz and Jane critiqued and deconstructed some elements of bureaucratic professional discourse in parts of their proposal, in other sections bureaucratic practices and connotations of hierarchy appear to be uncritically re-inscribed. For example, statements about "job descriptions, mission statement, goals, administrative tasks" and giving "priority to establishing systems of communication and decision making at both high and low levels," are redolent of the language of the Department of Education (1984) document, *Management and Administration*, which I showed in Chapter 6 to have been constructed predominantly within a bureaucratic team 'management by objectives' discourse. The statement about "establishing systems of communication and decision making at both high and low levels" could be read as indicating Liz and Jane's agreement with and compliance to the demands of the wider hierarchical system in which the school and their work were, of course, embedded.

The latter statement could be read also in a Foucauldian sense as strategic: that is, as Liz and Jane's tactical recognition of the need to meet demands from both the school board and the state agencies for clear systems and 'lines' of communication and accountability. Within the NPM emphasis at that time on instituting tighter accountability systems in education, for Liz and Jane to include that statement was both to be expected and sensible. They also stated that the shared leadership would "increase responsibility and accountability" and would include "regular review of management structures" and the "management of quality learning." Hennessy (1993) commented that the cultural power of discursive dis-articulation and re-articulation processes depends on how successfully the previous ways of understanding and 'doing things' are challenged and then incorporated into a new form of discourse. If these processes are successful, the new formulation will accrue some 'legitimacy' by acknowledging

¹⁶² Within an organisational culture approach, Meyerson (1991) has made a similar point, arguing that fragmentation and ambiguity within organisations has not been given enough attention. He suggested that accepting culture as being "dynamic and multivocal" would enable a recognition of and legitimation of "a diverse chorus of voices, interests and perspectives" that could enrich organisational life (1991, p.260).

and taking on board some of the claims of the opposition, or counter discourses. Liz and Jane certainly used the language of the prevailing discourses in the above statements. The case narrative stories show however, that in their practices, they reconstructed many of their meanings. In particular, the need for responsibility and accountability was a strongly held professional commitment for both of them, but their understandings of what this meant in practice was not the same as that promoted in the NPM discourse, as will be explained further in Chapter 14.

Extending intersubjective negotiations

In my discussions thus far, I have been exploring how intersubjectivity can be seen to have been an important component in Liz and Jane's development of their co-principal proposal. I have identified in the text, echoes of their slightly different feminist positionings to suggest that this proposal reflects the beginning development of their "new" collective identity. As Mouffe (1995) argued, this may form through a convergence of different privately negotiated subject positions around a shared commitment.

For the success of the co-principalship application that Liz and Jane negotiated between themselves and then proposed to the Hillcrest Avenue School board of trustees, it is also significant that some further inter-subjective links were made between their own discursive positionings and understandings of leadership and collectivity and those held by the board members who interviewed them. Naomi was a feminist, who spoke through a liberal feminist analysis of the under-representation of women in leadership positions, and a radical feminist criticism of "the male management model" in education, in support of Liz and Jane's proposal. She "wanted to change that whole (male dominated) approach" and was attracted particularly by the idea of a structural change to collectivity. Mary, while not committed to a feminist analysis, was an educational researcher committed to a professional discourse that placed the "best interests of the children first." She responded to Liz and Jane's clear commitment to a learning and teaching focus for the co-principalship. Phil was a union leader who had done academic study in the area of organisational analysis and workplace change. He was attracted to a collectivist approach that could challenge hierarchy and narrow views of accountability. This group were thus very supportive of the proposal and wanted it extended to include Karen, the third teacher in the school.

However, both Karen, and the agencies the board consulted during the principal selection process were constructing the co-principalship proposal within different discursive frameworks that made them critical of its arguments. Here, I want to explore how Karen, despite her initial skepticism, was drawn into the co-principalship collectivity through Liz and Jane's practices, particularly their initial focus on building "open, honest" communication and their approach to teamwork.

Building a collective identity through practices of open, honest communication

Liz, Jane and Karen were individually very personally reflective women, who each believed in open and frank communication and they agreed that this should be the base for their collective work. This does not mean, however, that all three women held exactly the same beliefs about what became a central value and practice in their co-principalship.

The phrase "open and honest communication" was first used with me when Jane was telling me about how she had reacted with self doubt when Liz suggested that she apply with her for a co-principalship. She was worried about whether she would "be up to" working with Liz. She said that she told herself to stop being "pathetic," to "say something about me," or about anything she was not happy with: "that was the appropriate way." Jane can be seen here to understand being "open and honest" within a liberal feminist view of the value of personal assertiveness and being direct.¹⁶³

Liz also equated honesty with being direct, not giving mixed messages and, as I showed in the previous chapter, she was also committed to valuing what she called "woman-ness" in a way that enabled individual "difference within women's styles of working." Her agreement with the importance for the co-principalship of open, honest communication can be seen to be stressing the need to express, listen to, debate and negotiate differences of opinion. For her, this was part of the heart of a co-principalship that she was constructing as a professional, woman-centred collectivity.

While Karen also valued assertive communication, she located the meanings of openness and honesty within her own understandings of, and commitment to, what she described as individual "personal integrity." The latter included being trustworthy by honouring promises and "being rigorous and meeting standards," values that she said had been developed within her family. Being open and honest was for Karen part of her personal commitment to Liz and Jane when she finally agreed to see if she could work with them in a co-principalship (that is, as part of a relational contract), as well as part of her commitment to the school parents, board and the state within her employment contract (that is, as part of a formal industrial contract). Karen can be seen then to be understanding open honesty within a liberal individualist discourse that constructs human interactions as contractual. She told me that she saw no inconsistencies between the construction of school leadership as like business contractual relationships and as ethical, interpersonal and professional practices.

¹⁶³ Early liberal feminist discourse argued that individual women needed to change their attitudes so that they could break out of socially constructed and constraining stereotypes of unassertive femininity and develop their individual potential for action in the public world (Friedan, 1963). This theme has become a liberal feminist regime of truth in Aotearoa/New Zealand, with the slogan "girls can do anything" becoming largely taken for granted. Although gender equity initiatives in education in this country have been built around this discourse, and currently women hold the top five political and judicial positions in the country, these factors have not yet impacted to any large extent in education, where women are still heavily under-represented in leadership positions (except in the very small and rural primary schools).

Although the three women did not explicitly talk with each other about their personal value commitments, they worked from these to build their agreement that open, honest communication should be a fundamental practice for their partnership. I refer the reader back to the Hillcrest Avenue School case narrative for descriptions of how they agreed on a set of “ground rules” for their own meeting processes (which reflect a common set of rules used in feminist collectivities) and talked about and enacted open processes of communication with the children, parents, the board and the board chairperson. These processes included both informal practices (such as talking together about their plans over a morning cup of tea), and formal communication and planning practices (such as writing a letter to the board communicating to them early on that they wanted time to work together before they decided whether they would develop a three-way co-principalship; weekly planning and problem solving meetings between themselves and with their board chairperson; regular professional development days when they focused on their longer term planning, budgeting and collective thinking about their teaching and learning programmes).

Their emphasis on reflection on their practice can be seen to be a combination of a professional approach advocated by Stewart and Prebble (1993), in their book, *The Reflective Principal*, and feminist organisational approaches. In the latter, as part of a commitment to establishing egalitarian working relationships, there has been a “constant scrutiny” of habits and established ways of doing things in groups (Frazer and Lacey, 1993, p.122).¹⁶⁴ While feminism was not overtly discussed during the co-principals’ deliberations, Liz, Jane and Karen certainly applied close scrutiny to their ways of working together. The case narrative provides many examples of how in their day-to-day discussions and in their professional development days in particular, they reviewed their shared leadership processes and thought together strategically about what effects their collaboration might be having on others. Mary Stevens (who was the board chairperson at the time that Liz and Jane were establishing their co-principalship) said she watched these women bringing into the school a shift in management and decision making styles that surprised her. She said, “I learnt from them the usefulness of making it open, making it fair by making things explicit and transparent.”

This transparency and emphasis on process went beyond the collegial practices described by some other theorists of teacher collaboration and team leadership (such as Cardno, 1990; Hargreaves, 1991; Prebble & Stewart, 1993; Wallace & Hall, 1994), though it

¹⁶⁴ As I reported in Chapter 7, Mary O’Regan who was the first CEO of the Ministry of Women’s Affairs in Aotearoa/New Zealand, followed this principle. During her term of office, all the staff became involved in “soul searching about what feminism meant in relation to organisational practices,” (O’Regan, 1992, p.205). These events and this model of feminist organisation and management was given a high profile among the women of Aotearoa/New Zealand in the mid-1980s, through the far reaching public forums which were held throughout the country to consult women about the issues concerning them. As well as aiming to establish a ministry that would “work for women to influence policies and legislation so that they were better for women,” O’Regan set out to “provide a model of a way of working to which women could relate”(ibid., p.98). Women were excited by the opportunities to have more direct input into decision-making at the highest level of governments, and the open, ‘flat’ management approach initiated by O’Regan was much talked about, even in the tiny rural town where I was then living.

echoes much of what Nias and her colleagues described in their studies of collaborative primary school cultures in the UK (Nias et al., 1992). The latter researchers found that such cultures developed within the interaction of shared beliefs in the value of each individual for their own sakes and for mutual enrichment, and in the value of interdependence between the members of the school community. These factors, within practices of professional openness, led to an acceptance of collective responsibility for what was done in the school (Nias et al., 1989). Yet even in these schools structural hierarchies in terms of the status and position splits between principals and teachers, had not been changed. Indeed, head teachers were described as the main "culture founders" in these schools, and through their position and their embodying of the beliefs of the collaborative culture, they had a "degree of personal authority that transcends that of other staff" (Nias et al., 1989, p.66). These structural and cultural forms of status and authority were broken down in the Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship.

Transparency, open communication and a change to school principal/teacher structures are characteristics that mark the Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship as different also from those initiated at St Mary's School and at Telford School. Although having "open and honest discussions" was noted as important in the Telford co-principalship proposal, in neither that school, nor at St Mary's was this talked about as much nor as consciously included in the setting up processes and continuing practices, as it was at Hillcrest Avenue School. This difference is possibly partly a consequence of the way that Liz and Jane set out to initiate a new leadership approach. They wanted it to be a successful change to school organisational structuring and management, and were focussing not just on how to get the tasks of leadership and management done collaboratively, but also on how to achieve most successfully, practices of democratic collaboration.

Shifting professional understandings and practices: teamwork

At the beginning of this chapter, I noted Fraser's (1997) suggestion that group formation could be understood as occurring through struggles over discourse, when previous strands of identity that may have been submerged in an individual's sense of 'self' can reappear "as the nub of new self-definitions and affiliations with others" (ibid, p.153). One of Jane's stories illustrate this point. She described how she had initially responded to Liz's invitation to join her in this co-principalship with doubt about whether she would be able to be an equal partner with Liz, but she re-thought her response and how she was thinking about her/self in relation to Liz and the parts she could play in a shared leadership. Her previous strand of a liberal feminist identity surfaced in her accounts and in parts of the co-principal proposal and practices.

An individual's previous strands of identity and understandings of 'self' can also shift, however, within the process of forming a new collectivity, as Benhabib pointed out in her argument that "a unity in difference comes through a process of self transformation and

collective action” (Benhabib,1986, p.348). Karen’s stories about teamwork provide an interesting illustration of this point, while also illuminating the nature of the shift to professional collaborative leadership discourse that was being enacted in this co-principalship.

Like Liz and Jane, Karen was committed to practising professional collaborative teamwork, but at the beginning of the co-principalship in Hillcrest Avenue School, her understandings of what this meant were not the same as those held by the other two women. While Liz and Jane had both been members of women’s collectives and were well versed in those egalitarian, ‘flat management’ practices, and both had studied academic theories about professional collaborative leadership, Karen had done neither of these things. As I explained in the previous chapter, when she first went to Hillcrest Avenue School, Karen was positioning herself within the dominant current discourses of teamwork, such as those propounded in Belbin’s (1993) analysis,¹⁶⁵ and also in a bureaucratic discourse, such as informed the Department of Education (1984) document, *Management and Administration*. I explained in Chapter 6 how this assumes that while the principal may work collaboratively with staff, s/he and staff have different tasks and responsibilities, with the principal holding overall responsibility at the head of a chain of authority and control.

These approaches are compatible with what has been described as a sports team approach to organisation (Ellis & Wheeler, 1991, p. 70). A team is understood here as a collection of individuals, each with their own position and prescribed function, working together under the direction of a captain or coach who “calls the game,” coordinates the action, keeps the side together and is the public spokesperson for the team.¹⁶⁶ While this is commonly understood as a collaborative approach, Karen’s description illustrates how this discourse can normalise the hierarchical split between principals and teachers in schools. She described herself, Felicity and Jim (her former colleagues) as a close team who had “complementary skills” and were “used to cooperative ways of working together.” However, while she, Felicity

¹⁶⁵ Belbin maintained that a team is best developed through the selection of people who have different and complementary roles, strengths and weaknesses. Team roles were defined by Belbin as a “tendency to behave, contribute and interrelate with others at work in certain distinctive ways” (p.24). He gave examples such as the resource investigator, the shaper, monitor evaluator, implementer, completer, specialist, teamworker and plant. In Belbin’s analysis workers were seen merely as pawns, or cardboard figures that a good team leader can select and bring into play, having to take account only of the “team role” characteristics that he/she has decided they possess.

¹⁶⁶ For example, Jenks stated “Just as a football coach puts together a game plan ... so does the manager organise the roles for each team member to play ” (Jenks, 1990, pp.34-35). This ‘sports team’ approach to organisational management is not only compatible with the traditional bureaucratic discourse, but also with the competitive market/entrepreneurial version of school leadership that I identified in my Chapter 6 discussion of the ERO report, *Professional Leadership in Primary Schools* (1996). In the latter, school managers, like their business counterparts, are depicted as strategic planners, team builders and public relations officers who need to ensure that the staff pull together to keep ahead of the competition, by improving the school’s image and educational product - “delivering high quality education.” The report stated, “The bottom line for a manager of a business is profit and staying in business. The bottom line for a principal is roll numbers and keeping the school viable... Just as the shareholders of a private company may withdraw their capital if the firm performs badly, so may parents withdraw their child if the school performs badly” (ERO, 1996, p.9).

and Jim did some planning of the school teaching programmes together, they each held different curriculum responsibilities and Jim, the principal, “wore the principal ‘badge’ ... he was the official welcomer, fareweller, the presenter of awards, the dealer of punishment. He did all the principal-type tasks, like the March returns and writing the annual reports, the mail, dealing with the Ministry, parents, going to board meetings.... he was the final point on the line of communication.”

Karen’s stories about how she came to join the co-principalship reveal how her understanding of herself as ‘a professional educational team member,’ as positioned in a ‘sports team’/bureaucratic version of professional collaborative leadership, shifted. This occurred as she observed and joined Liz and Jane’s enacting of a different discourse about team leadership, one in which they were each positioned as ‘team leaders,’ in the sense of being members of ‘a team of equals sharing leadership.’ Karen’s shift occurred as she came to recognise that the women were “restructuring” as she put it, hierarchical forms of leadership. A year after she had joined the co-principalship, she said, “While we were setting up some structures, we were pulling others down, so we were going through a restructuring weren’t we?” By that time, the three women were pleased about the ways they succeeded in removing in their school the single figurehead component of the traditional principalship and the structural gap between the principal and the other teaching staff. As Liz said, “We removed the gap physically. What is good about this school is that there’s only three full-time staff and we’re all equal.”

The Hillcrest Avenue School case narrative provides rich examples of how through doing leadership together, Liz, Jane and Karen were both constituting themselves individually as co-principals, and together as a co-principal collective. In their sharing of everyday management tasks and contributions to initiating ideas, the three women can be seen to be drawing constructively on their different abilities.¹⁶⁷ The Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship developed here some quite similar characteristics to those of the Western High School co-principalship studied by Dass (1995). That model was described as collaborative at its very core with no pre-determined set of roles for each co-principal; open, flexible and adaptive in terms of the leadership styles of each person and able to build on individual strengths; based

¹⁶⁷ For example, Karen enjoyed taking particular responsibilities that drew on her analytical abilities. She initiated the idea of identifying and writing up guidelines for the liaison roles the women undertook and she took responsibility for planning and facilitating the vision workshop professional development days. This drew on Senge’s (1993) ideas and followed a structured approach to thinking through the co-principalship’s philosophy and progress. For Karen, these techniques were a useful and logical way of ensuring that the women were keeping faith with their original aims and commitments to the board and parents. Jane’s commitment to building partnerships with parents resulted in several constructive initiatives, such as the emphasis the women placed on re-negotiating the school charter with the parents and the weekly communication books that each child took home to their parents: these were an on-going dialogue between teachers and parents about the learning programmes each child was engaged in. Liz’s “charisma” and musical abilities were appreciated by everyone and her frank, “straight forward ... no game playing” approach contributed a great deal to the women’s open communication practices. The women blended the philosophical with the pragmatic in the approaches they used in their professional shared leadership, resulting in simple processes for keeping track of day to day tasks (such as their Principals’ ‘To Do’ Book) and a “fluid” and flexible approach to long term strategic planning.

on shared values and goals, mutual trust and fellowship; opening up team strategies of administration and incorporating equal responsibility and accountability for decisional consequences in the school (Dass, 1995, pp.294-295). The Hillcrest Avenue School co-principalship can be seen also, to be exhibiting the characteristics of collaborative teacher cultures identified by Hargreaves (1991). He wrote that such cultures are spontaneous and voluntary, emerging from and largely sustained by the teachers themselves. They are pervasive across time and space, through brief, informal encounters such as “passing words and glances, praise and thanks, offers to exchange classes in tough times, suggestions about new ideas...new units, sharing problems, or meeting parents together.” They are development oriented, with teachers establishing the tasks and purposes for working together themselves, initiating change and “responding selectively to external mandates drawing on their professional confidence and discretionary judgement as a community” (Hargreaves,1991, pp.54-55)

There are some even closer similarities, however, between the Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship and that developed by the teachers at His School in Norway at the beginning of the 1970s (Bergersen & Tjeldvoll, 1982). In that school, all (six) teachers shared the tasks and responsibilities of the principal’s position. The Norwegian teachers agreed that all decisions would be made in meetings of the whole group and at the beginning of their initiative they allocated between them administrative duties and functions, such as timetabling, acquisitions of schools materials, representation on the school council, contact with parents. Liz, Jane and Karen did this in their first week together at Hillcrest Avenue School. Like the Norwegian teachers, their allocations also took individual strengths and wishes into account, and they also decided to rotate the responsibilities around the group to enable each person to gain experience and expertise. They agreed, as did the Norwegian teachers, that each of them would have a responsibility to initiate discussions and initiatives to ensure that everyone was fully involved. Thus both the Norwegian and the Hillcrest Avenue collectives combined some task specialisation with an integration of all members into the shared leadership and decision making.

In both of these schools, and that at Anzar High School in the US, which had a student roll of 450 (Barnett, McKowen & Bloom, 1998), it has been demonstrated that this approach is practicable and the shared leaderships in each school are still working successfully - after 30 years (His School) and 8 years (Anzar High School, Hillcrest Avenue School). To what extent, though, was the Hillcrest Avenue initiative impacting on dominant discourses about educational leadership?

Re-making dominant discourses?

At the beginning of this chapter, I cited Fraser's argument that in the building of new collective identities, there is a re-making of social discourse when previously established positions and perspectives of "cultural authority" (socio-cultural hegemonies) are contested and challenged (Fraser, 1997, p.154). This argument is related to one of the research questions that increasingly interested me in this study. That is, within the co-principalship initiatives could any shifts in the expression/representation of the dominant discourses of educational leadership and management be identified? I want to look at this question now, firstly, in terms of gendered assumptions in this field and, secondly, in relation to ideas about democratic forms of leadership.

Challenging, or maintaining gendered distinctions?

In Chapters 1, 3 and 7, I provided some extensive discussions of the nature of gendered discourses in education. I explained how hegemonic links between constructions of masculinity, authority and leadership (Connell, 1987; Blackmore, 1993) and femininity, nurturance and teaching (Grumet, 1988; Bullough & Knowles, 1991) vary and shift over time and place. Research has shown also, however, how new links can be forged between metamorphosing forms of hegemonic masculinity¹⁶⁸ and changing ideas about and practices of leadership and authority (Court, 1994b; Leonard, 1998; Blackmore, 1999).¹⁶⁹ It is interesting therefore, to reflect on how the case narratives illustrate how shifts in people's thinking about gender and leadership are occurring in sometimes contradictory ways.

Karen disavowed any form of gender analysis of the co-principalship, and she denied that gender had been an influence on her own life and career. As I indicated in the previous chapter, she did not see herself as a feminist, but rather as "a person, who happens to be female." (One of the women principals in Hall's (1996) study called herself "personist.") Karen's comments about the previous team at Hillcrest Avenue School provide some insights, however, into the ways that hegemonic gender difference discourses (or gendered regimes of truth, to use Foucauldian terminology), can be re-inscribed in the ways people think and talk.

Karen recognised that other people probably saw the previous teaching team as a very gendered, if not masculinist, approach, with herself and Felicity positioned as Jim's "ladies-in-

¹⁶⁸ Hegemonic masculinity refers to the ascendancy of a particular construction of masculinity over other forms of subordinated masculinities and all versions of femininity (Connell, 1987). In the field of educational administration, hegemonic forms of masculinity have been powerful, but not always recognised or analysed, components of 'normal' practices of leadership (Court, 1989; Blackmore, 1993).

¹⁶⁹ In the light of those analyses, the entrepreneurial market versions of a sports' team leadership in organisations, has been shown to be highly compatible with competitive, authoritative forms of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1987; Collinson & Hearn, 1994; Leonard, 1998).

waiting.” She felt that this was not the case though, because she saw Jim as a “very feminine sort of leader.” It was clear to me when she told me this, that Karen thought she was challenging a traditional discourse which naturalises gender differences and hierarchies. However, it is interesting to think further about how her choice of phrase, “we were Jim’s ladies-in-waiting,” invokes a pre-constructed Eurocentric and classed discourse of gender. Being ‘a lady,’ that is genteel and gentle, was the patriarchal ideal for women of the elite class. These notions of women as ladylike have strongly resonated in constructions of teaching as an ‘ideal’ occupation for women, where discursive links have been forged between characteristics of gentleness and nurturance and teaching, and between gentility/propriety/morality and teaching (Apple, 1986; Aspinwall & Drummond, 1989; Bullough & Knowles, 1991). Links have been constructed also between the notion of a lady as meek and unassertive and women’s roles as serving/supporting others. A ‘lady-in-waiting’ is the subject position of a subordinate woman of the aristocratic class whose role is to serve her superiors and to literally wait for their commands. Karen’s use of this phrase to describe perceptions of her’s and Felicity’s role in relation to the principal, Jim, neatly encapsulates the ways the preceding ideas and practices were embedded historically into educational gendered hierarchies where men led (as principals, inspectors, academic experts) and women followed and supported (as teachers, support staff, students) (Acker, 1983; Al Khalifa, 1989; Apple, 1986; Herbst, 1989). And even as late as 1969, it was stated by UK researchers in the sociology of education that “because they often share the common cultural norm that women should defer to men, women are more likely than men to accept the bureaucratic controls imposed upon them” (Simpson & Simpson, 1969, cited in Acker, 1983, p.125).

In countering the “ladies-in-waiting” perception with a description of Jim as a “very feminine sort of leader,” Karen seemed to think that she was deconstructing gendered assumptions about hierarchical leadership. However, the previous ideas about ‘ideal’ femininity are not deconstructed, but rather reinforced in that description. While a description of Jim as “a very feminine sort of leader” seems to challenge the regime of truth that leadership is ‘naturally’ masculine, Karen was speaking here through the cultural feminist ‘women’s ways of leading’ discourse. As I explained in Chapter 3, this discourse is built on the notion that ‘feminine leadership’ is essentially different from ‘masculine leadership.’ Thus, talking about Jim as a very feminine sort of leader constructs him as outside of the (masculine and masculinist) norm for leadership, and consequently does not overturn the ascendancy of that norm. This is because a ‘woman’s way of leading’ discourse is merely a reverse discourse that is constructed within the delimitations of the dominant leadership discourse’s masculinist categories.

Karen’s comments also illustrate Blackmore’s (1999) argument, however, that a cultural feminist discourse about feminine leadership has become a regime of truth, sinking into unconscious acceptance in many people’s minds. That is, despite her disclaiming of any feminist affiliation, Karen was using unconsciously, a cultural feminist logic and argument to

support her description of the nature of previous teaching/leadership team's working relationships. Although not everyone at Hillcrest Avenue School thought that gender was an influential factor in the women's sharing of leadership, there were many who, like Karen, thought about women in leadership within a cultural feminist discourse. The co-principalships at this school and at Telford and St Mary's schools, were described as using a model and strategies that were typical of 'a woman's way of leading.' While some may think that such an argument and reverse discourse is needed to bring about change, as I have been showing it merely runs parallel to the dominant discourse, depending on the terms of the existing framework to make its own meanings (Weedon, 1987). The dichotomy between women and men (which is the problem here) is not deconstructed and transformed.

A cultural feminist discourse can be detected also in Ellis and Wheeler's argument that women have a different understanding of teamwork from men. They stated:

Ask a group of women what a team is, and they will usually suggest it means everybody co-operating to get a job done, everybody pitching in to help the others, everyone sharing responsibility for the team result, so team members cover for those who may slack off. They see it as an issue of complementary roles and ask themselves how they can help this other person do the job (Ellis & Wheeler, 1991, p.70).

There are certainly some similarities between this description and the approaches taken by Liz and Jane and Karen. However, that not all women educational team workers or leaders work in these ways. And while Ellis and Wheeler may have set out to critique masculinist versions of teamwork, their cultural feminist argument (like Karen's comments and those who described the co-principalship as a 'woman's way of leading') re-embeds the gendered dichotomy that their explanations seem to deconstruct. A feminist poststructuralist analysis such as I am developing in this thesis focusses instead on the nature of the different and often contradictory discourses that individuals can be seen to be negotiating as they form their understandings of themselves and take up different possibilities for action in the world. Davies (1997) argued that once we are alerted to the work being done by the various discourses we are invoking, then we can more effectively reflect on how limiting and dis-empowering discursive constructions can be challenged and changed.

If we think about how people were judging co-principalships as being a 'woman's way of leading' in the light of Fraser's (1997) comment that hegemony is Gramsci's term for the "discursive face of power," some links between the power of normalising discourse to subjugate other forms of knowledge and practice can be further illuminated. Although the people who were describing the co-principalship as a 'women's ways of leading' were intending to praise the co-principalship (they were pointing out that it was democratically open and collaborative), shared leadership can be discursively doubly discounted in this link between femininity and collaboration. Firstly, within the dominant masculinist discourses of leadership, leadership practised by women is not as valid, valued or authoritative as it might be if it was practised by men. Secondly, shared leadership does not fit what English has

described as the “popular mindscape of leadership” which views leadership as individualistic and heroic (English, 1994, p.154).

Were there any other ways then, that this co-principalship could be seen to be impacting on the prevailing discourses of educational leadership?

Re-making school leadership discourse

While I have been showing how dominant masculinist and feminist discourses about gender differences can prevail in rather hidden ways within people’s perceptions of resistant practices, I have been arguing in this thesis that it is in the conflict between opposing discourses that new ways of being and acting can be opened up (Weedon, 1987). I want to argue in this section that while dominant discourses in the field of educational leadership, such as bureaucratic hierarchy or market managerialism, may have become normalised “regimes of truth” (Foucault, 1980), these are nevertheless not impenetrable or impermeable. As I have been showing, Liz and Jane’s proposal and their shared leadership practices with Karen illustrate how elements of existing discourses can be dis-articulated and re-articulated into a new discursive configuration, such as here, an emerging discourse of collective co-principalship.

It could be argued that in retaining the term ‘co-principalship’ as a descriptor for their shared leadership, the Hillcrest Avenue initiative was opening itself up to being annexed back into the dominant discursive categories. I will look at this issue in some detail in Chapter 14, where I will examine the impact of juridical and normalising exercises of power within the NPM discursive regime. It must be recognised that within these regulatory processes the revolutionary potential of this fully ‘flat’ shared teacher leadership was being constrained.¹⁷⁰ This caveat aside, as I suggested earlier, within the Hillcrest Avenue School community, there did occur a significant discursive shift from the notion and practice of team leadership as meaning ‘a leader who builds a team,’ to meaning ‘a team of equals sharing leadership.’

In this shift the women can be seen to have impacted on the understandings of many people, and some children, in the school, shifting for them the dominant discursive understandings of what school leadership and management and principalship ‘is.’ As one of the children said, “Here there is no boss.” When I asked Beth (the third board chairperson with whom I had worked there) to describe the co-principalship, she said that it was “a conglomerate... The management is not split into categories. It’s not linear. And it’s not vertical. The structure is quite round.” She saw the co-principalship as “connected and whole ... like one organism.” She also saw it as crossing the governance/management divide to

¹⁷⁰ This is not surprising. As Hargreaves (1991, p.55) pointed out, as teacher collaborative cultures can be unpredictable (in that teachers have control and discretion over purposes and processes) they can be at odds with the administration of a centralised school system. The latter certainly happened at Hillcrest Avenue School, but the struggles between these teachers and their board with the state agencies were deliberately engaged as part of an attempt to change the regulations.

include board members and parents more fully in the professional work of educating children. (I will return to this point in Chapter 14.)

Cherie Clark, who came into the co-principalship after Karen was seconded into one of the education agencies, said, "This is definitely a team without a captain, where everyone is equal - it's a total team effort, where you can lead wherever your strength is, but you are still responsible as a team member." Others described this co-principalship as having a negotiated core vision, shared values and carefully worked through agreements that resulted in a high degree of interpersonal trust both within the co-principalship and from others towards them. The women's professional collegiality was seen also as very inclusive of other staff, parents, children and board members. A board member said, for example, "We can just feed in to any one of the three" and another board member added, "It's a bit like having terminals everywhere!"

The aim first articulated in Liz and Jane's proposal, to validate a collaborative culture through structural change to the principalship, was certainly achieved then, according to the people I interviewed during the time I was in the school. (This included all staff, student teachers, the large majority of the parents and a few children.) Liz described what had happened as a shift in the notion of the position of principal, from being synonymous with a single person, to an understanding that the position "helps to carry the ideas." Karen said, "It was almost as if you were the servant of the idea and there were three of you to carry it out." Jane described in this co-principalship approach as: "the philosophy is held in the institution. It's held in the people, the fabric of the school, the children and the community."

Looking again at power

A Foucauldian analysis of the spreading influence of internalised governmental forms of power can alert us, however, to some possible down-sides of the kind of intensely collaborative leadership that was established by Liz, Jane and Karen. Foucault argued that power and control is not merely exercised in top-down repressive ways, but produced in and through people's bodies and ever more invisible strategies of normalization, self introspection and surveillance, reporting on the self (Foucault, 1977; 1978; 1982; 1991).¹⁷¹ While I was interviewing parents in this school, two different people told me that they felt pressure to be more fully involved in the school. One said, "I feel terrible that I didn't go to the AGM ... I'm all for parent involvement, and I have served on a board of trustees, but I'm a single parent. I have a full time job. I can take a day off, but it will come off my annual leave. My job means

¹⁷¹ To illustrate his points, Foucault (1977) described Bentham's Panoptican, a design for an 'ideal' prison that placed an observation tower centrally within surrounding cells that had windows opening onto it and to the outside, meaning that prisoners in their cells would be clearly visible to a guard in the central tower. Bentham argued that there would not need to be a guard in the tower at all times, as prisoners would know that they could be watched at any time, and consequently would 'discipline' themselves.

I have less contact with the school than I'd hoped to be able to give, and I feel I'm letting the side down." Another woman said, "I feel I should be more involved, but I can't stand being in the classroom - I found it a nightmare. I feel some pressure from myself that I'm not there." This woman lived close to the school and she could watch what was happening there. In turn she felt herself to be observed and her absence in the classroom weighed upon her. While none of the teachers made these kinds of judgements to me, Foucault's analyses of self surveillance resonate with these examples which illustrate the encroaching nature of contemporary disciplinary power relations.

These two parent's feelings of guilt about their levels of personal involvement in the school, were not engendered just by the co-principals' enthusiastic encouragement of all parents to get involved in their children's education. As Foucault pointed out, individual and group exercising of power cannot occur without the evoking of particular discursive configurations of "truth," that shape what can and can't be said in particular situations, whose views are authorised, whose views are illegitimate. That is, social relations of power "cannot be established, consolidated, nor implemented without the production, accumulation and functioning of discourse" (Foucault, 1980, p.93). Underpinning these parents' self surveillance ("I feel some pressure from myself that I'm not there") and judging of themselves as inadequate ("I feel I'm letting the side down") was the *Tomorrow's Schools'* discursive construction of partnership as more parental involvement in their children's education. Despite the gaps between the rhetoric of that discourse's promises of parent's 'having a say in their children's education,' and the reality of the constraints on full involvement at the level of decision making, the huge amount of media and political promotion of increased parental involvement at the time of the reforms and at the following three yearly board elections, created expectations that 'a good parent' was one who contributed more than had been the case in the past. It is worth pointing out here, however, that the PPTA (1994) study on shared decision making found in fact, that many if not most parents did not want, or could not manage, more involvement in the day to day events of school life.

Karen illustrated other aspects of how very collaborative partnerships can have some down-sides. She told me that, "On the personal side I think it's been probably counterproductive, in that I have become quite dissatisfied with the amount of time I've got for myself to pursue my own interests, to develop friendships, and to actually still be a parent, a caring parent. My greatest difficulty has been trying to achieve a balance in my life." Some studies of co-principalships have suggested that one of the disadvantages is the increased time that is needed at the beginning, to develop shared understandings and to reach decisions with which everyone is comfortable (Green & Meadows, 1986; White, 1991; Bergersen & Tjeldvoll, 1982; Barnett, McKowen & Bloom, 1998). In their UK study of collaborative primary schools, Nias and her colleagues also found that a collaborative culture takes time to develop, needing the establishment of a shared belief in the value of each individual and of interdependence between the members of the school community (Nias et al., 1989). These

researchers argued, however, that it was those factors, along with the practice of professional openness, that led to an acceptance of collective responsibility for what was done in the school. I suggest that much of the success of the Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship can be traced to similar factors. My study also found that time spent establishing shared meanings at the beginning meant that later on decisions could be made quite quickly.

While Jane and Liz had a clear recognition of the significance of these points and both were reasonably happy with the time taken in collaborative discussions, Karen was less happy with the impact of these on her workload. It needs to be remembered here that she had had no management training before she joined the co-principalship, and she completed the Advanced Studies for Teachers papers on educational leadership during the first two years, as well as attending a reflective principal course. These studies certainly enriched her understandings and practice as a school leader, but they also took time. Thus, while Liz and Jane particularly enjoyed the philosophical debates the three of them often engaged in, Karen said that she had to "bite her tongue" at times, because she wanted to get on and make decisions more quickly. Although she felt that some of the collaborative processes the co-principals engaged in at the beginning could have been speeded up, she acknowledged that because of the difficulties around the initial appointment processes, the women were being "very cautious, very sensitive with each other and trying to be extremely professional and not let anything cloud the issues." Perhaps it was because of these factors that she did not tell Liz and Jane that, "There were times when I got impatient, and I thought, you know, we were perhaps agonising over things a bit too much."

It was not only time that was an issue for Karen, however. She thought that it was her personality that was a factor in her wanting quicker solutions. During the time I have been researching co-principalships I have had people say to me that some people are not suited to such collective approaches. Phillipa, the chairperson at Telford school was of this opinion. She was self-employed and really enjoyed being able to make her own decisions and get on with whatever tasks had to be done. To some extent, however, the Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship's highly collaborative collectivity had a negative impact on Karen's sense of her 'self.' We could read her laughing comment that the co-principalship was "a bit like a three-headed monster!" as a 'Freudian slip' perhaps. Although she quickly discounted the negative connotations of that comment, saying she meant merely that the co-principalship was "sort of like one organism," she did feel that she had lost some of her individual autonomy through becoming one part of the three-way co-principalship.

It has been pointed out that in integrated organisational cultures that exhibit high degrees of agreement and individual emotional investment in shared values and aims, there can be both pressure for conformity and some loss of individual autonomy (Carlson, 1996). Riger's (1994) analysis of feminist collectives found these factors were significant for some women who suffered a loss of their sense of 'self' and/or felt guilty about their own desire for recognition and personal initiative when these conflicted with the aims of the group. This

could be understood within a feminist poststructuralist analysis as a clash between an individual's emotional investment in a liberal individualist discourse of personal autonomy and success as opposed to her desire to be a collective member (Davies, 1993; MacNaughton, 2000). Within the early feminist collective discourse that I discussed in Chapter 7, approval was given to the submersion of individualism to enhance the building of a group identity. Karen's story of finding out after she had left the school to work in an educational agency, how much she enjoyed exercising her own autonomy in the sense of "sitting at my desk and working on my own task," is a useful reminder of the importance of Grimshaw's warning about the prioritising of integration in feminist theorising of inter-subjectivity and practices of collectivity. The latter theorising needs, in her view, to retain consideration of ethical "forms of autonomy and individuality and care for self without which ideals of commonality and mutuality can sometimes be as coercive and constraining as those forms of individuality they have wished to replace" (Grimshaw, 1993, p.69). Thus, while I have been critiquing the sometimes hidden oppressive elements in leadership and management discourses and practice in this chapter, I endorse the warning that those of us who are wanting to develop more democratic and empowering approaches to the ways the work of teaching and learning is organised, need to keep alert to how our own chosen theories and ideals can themselves be experienced as a regulatory regime.

Perhaps if Karen had felt more able to talk with Liz and Jane about her feelings about a certain loss of 'self' while she was in the co-principalship, some space could have been opened up for her to have some specific responsibilities and this may have enabled her to experience the kind of individual autonomy she felt she had to some degree, lost. Fraser's (1989) suggestion that autonomy could be usefully re-conceptualised within Habermas's understanding of the significance of dialogue in human interaction and formation of the 'self' is relevant here. She wrote that rather than autonomy being understood as a process of individual "will formation" and action, it could be understood as referring to a conversational process where individuals have equal right and power to "question prevailing norms" and to find out which of their apparently individual needs and interests are held in common (Fraser, 1989, p.47). If this understanding of the individual in community had been included in the co-principalship, perhaps Karen could have raised the issue with Liz and Jane - and she may have found that Jane and Liz also might have liked some more personal space within their collectivity.

To conclude

While the Hillcrest Avenue School co-principalship had some drawbacks for Karen, she agreed with Liz and Jane that their time together sharing the leadership at this school had been their most stimulating and enjoyable of their professional careers to that time and each woman considered that she had grown intellectually and personally. The case narrative details

the rich benefits that resulted also for the children and the school, although I included in the narrative three stories that show how the jury is still out on whether a co-principalship which has women sharing leadership is a "good role model" for children. Those stories illustrate how the wider socio-cultural hegemony around gender differences can maintain a strong hold on some children's imaginations and experiences of day to day realities, where many boys and men still engage in tactics of power that aim to establish/maintain their positions of authority and ascendancy in society. I have analysed in this chapter, some of the ways that traditional discourses about gender differences can be re-inscribed, unintentionally knitting up again the distinctions that have underpinned the ascendancy of particular masculinist regimes of truth. My analyses support arguments that a reverse discourse about women's so-called 'feminine leadership' may not be the panacea it first seemed, in that its potential to change gendered power relations in the field of educational leadership has not really been realised. Indeed, the cultural feminist discourse that valorises a 'woman's way of leading' may itself be introducing a new regulatory regime (Reay & Ball, 2000).

Despite these disquieting warning notes, overall in this chapter I have identified factors that have contributed to the successful establishment of a co-principalship collective identity and shared leadership practices at Hillcrest Avenue School. I have drawn on Davies' (1989; 1993) and other's arguments that a poststructuralist approach produces for feminism a way out of the impasse of seeing individuals as powerless within monolithic and deterministic structures. I have illustrated how power that is variously available and variously exercised within particular discursive formations (McNay, 1992), was being produced as Liz, Jane and Karen built from their different individual discursive positionings and understandings a resistant discourse of what school leadership can 'be.'

Foucault commented that "It is usually the case that a discursive practice assembles a number of diverse disciplines or sciences or crosses a certain number among them and regroups many of their individual characteristics into a new and occasionally unexpected unity" (Foucault, 1977b, p.200). Although it can be argued that he made this observation in relation to macro patterns of discursive practice, at the local level, Liz and Jane's proposal and the Hillcrest Avenue shared leadership practices can be seen to be enacting a similar dynamic. As such, I have argued that this co-principalship initiative shows us how individuals can indeed impact on dominant discourses and the re-making of cultural understandings (Davies, 1997; Fraser, 1997). This co-principalship built a feminist form of collective that challenged and, within their own school, changed, the hegemonic hierarchical structures of professional leadership through its challenges to the NPM discursive rules and regulations. In this example we can see that dominant categories of knowledge/power can indeed, as Hekman suggested, be disturbed and disrupted in local solutions to particular regimes of repressive power (Hekman, 1990, pp.182, 180).

It must be acknowledged again that governmental forms of constraining power were also present within this co-principalship's resistant practices, both at the level of the state and

at the level of the individual. Yet co-principalship has persisted as a collaborative and more fully inclusive, democratic way to organise and manage the educational work of teachers at Hillcrest Avenue School. Moreover, it was not only within their own school that this co-principalship disturbed and disrupted some of the dominant professional and managerial regimes of truth about school organisation and leadership. During the time that I was carrying out this research, other primary schools and teachers contacted these co-principals for information and help to set up their own co-principalships. Indeed, both St Mary's School and Telford School did this. The co-principalships initiated in these two schools did not become established as successfully as at Hillcrest Avenue School, however. In the next chapter I will explore the factors that contributed to the difficulties experienced by Kate and Ann at Telford School. In particular, I will look how social inequalities grounded in factors of ethnicity, race and class impacted on their attempt to build a shared leadership that could cross those socio-cultural divides.

CHAPTER 13

A 'COALITION ACROSS DIFFERENCE' AT TELFORD SCHOOL

Introduction

The Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship was more successful than the other two co-principalships, in the sense that it became widely accepted in the school and was formalised in its school charter as the preferred leadership approach. Arguably, though, the attempt at Telford to build a 'coalition' across the three educational strands in their school (the original state strand, the Montessori strand and the whānau full immersion Māori language strand) was a more ambitiously conceived project. In this chapter, I will focus on the nature of struggles around socio-cultural hegemonies organised around class and race/ethnicity relations, to show how these were constraining the attempts to build a more inclusive approach to leadership and management. I will argue also, that despite some successes, within the normalising of state discourses of education and educational management, both the Montessori and whānau strands' attempts to win more autonomy were contained, thus weakening the democratic potential of this shared leadership initiative.

To help illuminate my analyses, I will draw on the theoretical tools of a Foucauldian understanding of discursive power alongside of an understanding of hegemony as "not a monolithic, seamless, top-down control, but rather a contested set of discursive struggles over meaning," in which cultural power is negotiated and contested within the politics of everyday life (Fraser, 1997, p.154). My analysis is informed also by feminist critiques of liberal individualism, in that this regime of truth has firstly, ignored unequal distributions of social power that emerge out of individuals' embodiment in different material relations of gender, race and class (Fraser & Lacey, 1993, p.74), and secondly, ignored how within a now largely normalised split between the so-called 'public' and 'private' worlds, binary oppositions and social inequalities constructed along the lines of gender, 'race' and ethnicity, and class, have become embedded in masculinist and ethnocentric versions of citizenship, authority and leadership (Pateman, 1988; Young, 1990; Fraser, 1997). Such social inequalities and oppositions have been reflected in socially unjust divisions of labour, such as education's workforce splits and hierarchies between (masculine) administration and (feminine) teaching (Blackmore, 1999, p.50) and the under-representation of Māori and ethnic minority groups in the education profession (Slyfield, 1992).¹⁷²

¹⁷² Waitere-Ang (1999, p.241) described the difficulties for Māori women in education who challenge and expose the myth of egalitarianism: they can be "placed at odds with the system," having to find strategies to cope with multi-levelled "borderlands" and binaries that can constrain and delimit their agency.

Finding ways to develop more fully democratic forms of organisation and political action, where individuals can work together across embodied socio-cultural and political/economic differences, has become a focus of analysis for the feminist theorists whose work I draw on in this chapter (Young, 1990b; Mouffe, 1995; Fraser, 1997; Johnston, 1998; 1999). As I explained in Chapter 7, Young (1990) argued that collectivity should be developed within a "politics of difference," where individuals and groups could retain their own identities while negotiating with others to find common interests in issues that concerned them all. Mouffe thought, however, that this "rainbow coalition" approach, which involved "dealing with already-constituted sets of interests and identities," had limitations (1995, p.327). While it might enable dialogue across multiple interest groups, in her view it could be only a first step towards democratic equivalence (ibid). She argued that a more radical understanding of collectivity could be conceptualised as a convergence of different privately negotiated subject positions around a shared ethical and philosophical commitment to community. I drew out in the previous chapter, Fraser's argument that in the negotiation of new forms of identity, previously established positions and perspectives of "cultural authority" (in particular socio-cultural hegemonies of gender, race and class in particular) are contested and challenged (1997, p.154). This argument is also applicable to exploring how in the process of building new forms of organisational collectivity, people can become involved with each other in finding socially just ways of valuing differences between individuals and groups.

Working within these theoretical approaches, I will begin my exploration of what happened at Telford School with a brief examination of the similarities and differences between Kate's and Ann's proposal and that developed by Liz and Jane. Rather than there being some clear blendings of two individuals' sets of ideas and discursive positionings, the Telford co-principal proposal appears to reflect more of Kate's philosophies and aspirations than Ann's. This discussion will lead me into a discussion of factors that I see as significant in the breaking down of Kate's and Ann's partnership. I explore the wider socio-economic and political struggles between the three educational strands in the school, examining these as issues of ownership over educational philosophy, materials and staffing resources. I draw on the example of the negotiating of a new school charter to show how struggles over what should count as education in Telford School, were being played out within the normalising power of state discourse and regulatory practices. I end the chapter with a powerful example of how individuals can be seen to be the "vehicles for transmitting a wider power" within the politics and language practices of everyday life (Foucault, 1980, p.72).

The proposal

Kate and Ann modelled their proposal for a co-principalship at Telford School quite closely on that developed by Liz and Jane. Although it contained many of the same statements as the Hillcrest Avenue proposal, and reflected also the strong influence of a professional

collaborative discourse, it presented a different argument for shared leadership. Kate in particular, aimed to build an alliance at Telford School across multiple levels of difference that would include all of the staff, the board and the different parent communities.¹⁷³

Crossing principal/staff divides

Kate and Ann did not propose to formally include all five of the Telford teachers in their co-principalship. Although the teacher shared leaderships at the Norwegian His¹⁷⁴ School (Bergersen & Tjeldvoll, 1982) and US Anzar High School (Barnett et al., 1998), as well as at Hillcrest Avenue School, have shown that this kind of whole staff shared leadership is both possible and practicable, Kate and Ann could not set up this model. This is because both the kaiako (teacher of Māori) and the other Montessori teacher were not fully registered teachers, and the other state strand teacher was a reliever. Kate and Ann did want to develop an increased level of collaboration throughout the school, however. For Kate this emerged out of her deeply held professional values of collectivity, formed within her union affiliations and activities and within her opposition to authoritarian, hierarchical and masculinist forms of leadership. Her experiences with collaborative and “macho” principals had alerted her to differences in their approaches. After reading Sergiovanni’s (1991) and Stewart and Prebble’s (1993) books, she was attracted to the positioning of a principal as a collaborative, reflective and transformative leader, but she did not think that a model of singular leadership was appropriate for schools, especially small primary schools. For Ann, her ideas about collaboration were influenced by a cultural feminist discourse of ‘women’s ways of leading.’ She thought that a shared leadership that would dismantle hierarchy would enable “everyone to take a turn at leading and to feel they are of value,” and that this was a ‘natural’ way for women to work together.¹⁷⁵

In their proposal, they used Liz and Jane’s sentence about the co-principalship being “more focused on learning and teaching and less on the ideas and personality of a leader,” but they also added this statement: “To ensure that appraisal and professional development is shared among peers and monitored by colleagues from similar teaching environments.” Kate’s and Ann’s desire to treat all five teachers (the two in the Montessori strand, two in the state strand and one Māori teacher) as equals, is clear here, challenging the forms of hierarchy embedded in market NPM discourse and its associated practices of performance management

¹⁷³ The case narrative describes how these ideas had originated with Kate while she was working in the school during 1994 as a relieving principal.

¹⁷⁴ His is the name of a small town in Hisøy, Norway.

¹⁷⁵ Ann had been very frustrated by the previous (male) principal’s lack of information and power sharing with the teachers.

and appraisal. Rather than the principal having responsibility for the appraisal of teachers, they proposed to include teachers appraising them. (And indeed, this later happened.)¹⁷⁶

Crossing principal/board divides

In their aim "To develop a greater degree of consultation and collaboration with the school community and the parent communities," there is an echo of the theme of increasing parental involvement in schools that I discussed in my examinations in Chapter 6 of the document *Towards Partnership* (Department of Education, 1978) and the *Picot Report* (Department of Education, 1988a). This theme is extended in the Telford proposal, however, in the aim "To increase responsibility and accountability of all those involved" (my emphasis). This could be read as suggesting that all of the board, as well as the teachers, were to be responsible and accountable for what happened in the school. Kate's and Ann's determination to involve the board more fully in the administrative work of the school is made even more explicit in the later statement that there should be "active participation by the board" in the "shared administrative tasks of the co-principals."

In these parts of their proposal, the women were drawing on the job description that the Telford School board had written for the principal's position. This acknowledged that in a teaching principalship,

the ideal Governance/Management relationship between the Board of Trustees and the Principal is not always achievable. The board's priority is for teaching excellence and accordingly it is accepted that the principal will not be able to adequately fulfill all the administrative tasks that are required. It is the Principal's responsibility to identify all administrative tasks and to seek assistance from the Board of Trustees/parents as required (Telford School, G2 Principal's Job Description, 1994.)

Kate and Ann can be seen to be not only 'calling in' this promise of assistance: they were potentially formalising a board/co-principal collaboration that probably would have been vetoed by the Ministry of Education if an officer of that agency had read it. This is because both this part of the proposal, and the statement in the principal's job description, were potentially blurring distinctions between governance and management roles and functions and 'muddying' the single line accountability model of the NPM administrative reforms in education (Department of Education, 1988a). I will return to an analysis of these points in Chapter 14.

¹⁷⁶ They further aimed to involve all the staff in "the regular review of decisions affecting pupil welfare, property, spending in curriculum and staff development." To these ends they noted that "Invited 'consultants' will support an appraisal system that also encourages shared ideas within the school."

Crossing socio-cultural divides: a 'coalition across difference'

In this third area, it was proposed that as co-principals, Kate would represent both the whānau and the state strand and Ann would represent the Montessori strand in their work together and with everyone else in the school community to achieve two goals: “to acknowledge the differences within the school in a single school setting” and “to ensure that the school’s emphasis is on values reflected in the three strands.” They pointed out that what would be required here was a “Clear understanding of all the implications of a non-hierarchical structure that does not put any strand above another.” As their ideas about how this could be done are similar to those informing a political coalition that aims to negotiate agreed policies and practices while maintaining separate party differences, I am identifying these ideas and arguments in their co-principalship as a ‘coalition across difference’ discourse.

This discourse can be seen to be similar also to that developed within the feminist analyses of difference which I discussed in Chapter 3. I explained there how, after realising the limitations of universalising and essentialising notions of women as a homogeneous ‘sisterhood,’ emphasis was given to the recognition and valuing of individual and group differences, such as those grounded in factors of sexual orientation, class and ethnicity, and in complex interactions between individuals’ personal values and beliefs and the cultural values and practices in different school contexts (Weiner, 1995; Strachan, 1997; Smulyan, 1999). Neither Kate nor Ann mentioned having met these feminist ideas though. Rather, Ann’s understandings of difference can be seen to have been developed within her professional experiences as a Montessori teacher, and Kate’s within her exposure to what she called the “Māori renaissance”, through her viewing of the video *A New Dawn* while she was in Britain. On her return to Aotearoa/ New Zealand, she had decided to learn Māori and support Māori initiatives in education. Māori discourses of *tino rangatiratanga* and bi-culturalism both appear in this school’s narrative and the issues around Māori aspirations for full immersion education for their children were influential, as my later analyses will show.

Kate’s commitment to furthering the use of Te Reo in the school can be seen reflected in the use of one of Tawhaio’s (1858) sayings at the beginning of her’s and Ann’s proposal: “Kotahi te kohao o te ngari e kohuna te miro where, te miro ma, te miro pango. The needle has but one eye, but it can be threaded with red cotton, white cotton or black cotton.” Ann agreed that this saying captured the spirit of Telford school’s unique character. Ann supported the whānau also, but she was not as comfortable here as Kate - she put this down to her inability to speak Māori.

The proposal stated that to achieve this fully shared leadership, “open honest discussions” would be needed. There are echoes in this phrase of both women’s awareness of the struggles that had been experienced previously between the three strands in the school as a consequence of earlier inadequate communication and information sharing. It also reflects the learning about the value of this practice, and the priority being given to it, by the women

at Hillcrest Avenue School, with whom Kate and Ann had consulted. Unfortunately for their co-principalship however, as the case narrative illustrates, they had difficulty being open and honest with each other as they tried to establish their co-principal collectivity. This compounded the difficulties they had to contend with as they each tried to deal with conflicts and struggles over power between the three strands in their school.

Encountering difficulties in trying to build a partnership

While Dass (1995, p.309) argued that a good approach to appointing co-principals is to allow them “autonomy to assess and determine their mutual compatibility before and after the appointment, and authority to define their respective roles on the basis of their strengths,” significantly for the trajectory of this co-principalship, neither the Telford board nor Kate and Ann explored or discussed with each other the women’s compatibility, and/or different strengths and weaknesses.¹⁷⁷ Although the board had “a few qualms” about the co-principalship, as one of the board members later put it, they appointed the two women, largely on the strengths of Kate’s abilities, which they already knew well. Kate and Ann also assumed on the basis of their brief period of working together before Ann left the school at the end of the second term in 1994, that they knew each other sufficiently well enough for a partnership to work and after their initial discussions about the proposal, they did not fully discuss with each other how they could deal with the practicalities of building their collaboration. The difficulties these two women experienced demonstrate, ‘in absentia’ as it were, how important intersubjectivity is for the successful building of a collectivity.

I will illustrate this point, and how in this situation Kate can be seen to be negotiating different discursive possibilities for action, through the following story.

Negotiating different discursive possibilities and dilemmas

About a month into the co-principalship, some desperation was beginning to set in for Kate as administrative and organisational planning tasks piled up and she and Ann still had not sorted out how they could work on them together. The managerialist discursive construction of the principal’s accountability to the board, community and the state was by 1994 well established, with ERO by that time carrying out accountability audits on schools.

¹⁷⁷ In stark contrast to the appointment procedures at both Hillcrest Avenue School and at St Mary’s School, the Telford board did not interview Kate and Ann stringently, nor ask them very much about their co-principalship strategies. James Kent, the then board chairperson, said that the board accepted Kate’s idea that “a co-principalship would be a good way of merging the strands together.” The parents were not consulted, and a contract was never formally drawn up. These, in hindsight, were warning signs that not enough care was being taken by this board, and some issues around Ann’s level of experience and competence to step into a co-principalship that should have emerged and been dealt with at this early stage, were not considered. I will come back to this point in the last chapter, when I will consider a range of accountability issues that have impacted on the three primary school co-principalships.

Kate told me that she knew that the issues would 'come home to roost' for both her and Ann if nothing was done. During one weekend, therefore, she sat down at home, listed all the tasks that needed attention and began thinking about how to prioritise within this list. In her story, she can be seen to be positioning herself and taking action within the NPM discourse that constructs the principal as a chief executive officer accountable for all administration in the school. Within this discourse, beginning a strategic planning exercise was a 'natural' way to start to address the issues that she saw mounting up around her.

Rather than continuing to act within that discursive 'storyline' however, Kate shifted into a professional collaborative leadership discourse, thinking and telling herself that "Everything has to be discussed." There is no apparent trigger in her account for this thought, but her memories of working with collaborative women principals in the UK had been brought into focus through talking with me the week before about how she had come to the idea of co-principalship. She had drawn links herself in that conversation, between some of her UK experiences and her reading about collaborative reflective principalship (Sergiovanni, 1991; Stewart & Prebble, 1993). She had also not that long ago talked with Liz and Jane and their insistence on communication and talking about everything is a strong echo in her account of what she did that weekend. Her movement away from a positioning as an executive manager working in isolation from the staff, to the collaborative professional leader who will work alongside of the teachers to "discuss everything," was also consistent of course, with the proposal she and Ann had talked through together and presented when they initiated their co-principalship.

On the following Monday, Kate talked with Ann about what she had done. She suggested that Ann also might like to list what she saw as important things to do and directions they could take in planning for the rest of the year, so that they could then share and compare their ideas. When Ann did not immediately take up her suggestions, however, Kate, again on her own, took action. At the next staff meeting she suggested to the staff that she could arrange for everyone a new system for in-school shared planning. Here, she can be seen to be acting within the discourse of professional transformative leadership, taking up the subject position of a 'visionary leader' who aims to bring the staff 'on board' to share in the planning for the school (Sergiovanni, 1991; Stewart & Prebble, 1993). While at one level, this positioning offered her a way out of Ann's inaction, it was also a positioning that could be seen to be consistent with their original proposal to have all the staff involved in leading the school's direction. It was also consistent, of course, with the most commonly accepted understanding of professional collaborative leadership. At another level, however, Kate was compromising her own rejection of singular leadership: she was 'taking the helm,' leading from the front. She felt herself in a dilemma here and can be seen to be struggling with her own awareness of inconsistencies between her professed beliefs and her practices.

She was also discomfited by what was happening between herself and Ann. This is hinted at in her descriptions of her worries about being "too pushy" with Ann. Unlike Liz and

Jane, Kate had had no experience of negotiating conflicts over personal differences that can emerge within a women's collectivity. Her memories of conflict were linked to union struggles, and her image of her co-principal 'self' did not easily accommodate her memories of herself as a "stropky ... outspoken ... pushy" union activist, who wasn't afraid to "stir things up." For her this was a rather uncomfortable part of her subjectivity, sitting uneasily alongside her altruistic concerns for workers' welfare and rights and her social justice concerns to support Māori parents and children in the school. In her stories she seemed to want to leave that part of herself behind. She wanted Ann to tell her she was being "too bossy" and to "back off," but she was caught in the dilemma of what to do when Ann would not take action, either in regard to herself, or in regard to the tasks and processes that needed attention within the co-principalship. This dilemma continued for Kate, trapping her into taking on more and more of the work of the co-principalship herself, until she left on maternity leave for the third term of 1995, and then again when she returned to school in 1996.

Negotiating intersecting ethical concerns

The case narrative shows how both Kate and Ann found it difficult to be fully open with each other about such difficulties. Kate said she could not confront Ann over her inaction because she thought that Ann was not very confident and she did not want to undermine her. This could be interpreted as an issue that arose for Kate within her negotiating of some norms of teamwork, such as those described by Wallace and Hall as "somewhat contradictory," including expectations that people should "express a view frankly; listen to others' views; be willing to challenge where views differ; be sensitive to colleagues' feelings; refrain from making personal attacks" (Wallace & Hall, 1994, p.78). Knowing how to challenge one's colleague without hurting her can be a difficulty in a close partnership such as a co-principalship and as such, professional loyalty can be experienced as a complex issue. Kate resolved the problem of the partnership's professional accountability becoming possibly compromised, by taking on a higher workload to compensate for what Ann was not managing to achieve.

Kate could be read here also, though, as relating to Ann within a convergence of cultural feminist and traditional preconstructed discourse about appropriate and natural ways for women to behave, that is, as caring and nurturing of others. Positioning herself as a 'good woman leader' meant that taking a more challenging or "disciplinary" stance towards Ann would be inappropriate, as in both cultural feminist and traditional gender differences discourses, those approaches are linked to a 'macho' and/or authoritarian form of leadership. Instead of following that path, Kate engaged in working harder and in telling herself not to be "bossy" towards Ann.

Self surveillance prevails, limiting open communication

The effects of internalised forms of governmental power (Foucault, 1982), such as I discussed in the preceding chapter in relation to the two Hillcrest Avenue School parents and Karen, can be identified in both Kate's and Ann's stories about this time. Kate was carrying out some close surveillance on herself, monitoring her actions towards Ann and "disciplining" herself whenever she thought she was being too demanding. For her part, Ann (as she revealed to me much later) was suffering considerable personal stress as a consequence of the failure of her husband's business and the death of her father-in-law. She had been brought up not to talk about personal troubles however, and she bottled up all these worries while she tried to cope with the day to day business of 'teaching as usual.' This was also very stressful for her, as she was working under pressure from her lack of management experience and from the demands of her Montessori parents who were taking up most of her principal release time. Although she was carrying these loads, and a large caring load at home in supporting her husband, Ann too, "disciplined" and restrained herself, telling herself that it was inappropriate to talk about these things with Kate.

In both Kate's and Ann's stories then, we can see that care for others prevailed over care for the self,¹⁷⁸ and that internalised self surveillance and regulation was constraining the open communication between them that was needed to begin resolving their problems.¹⁷⁹

Feminist poststructuralists have argued that collective identities are built around communication and negotiation of different individual values, commitments and a convergence of different privately negotiated subject positionings. This study is showing that when dialogue about individual differences and difficulties does not occur, or when communication is not open and honest, shared meanings and understandings are difficult to develop and as a consequence, there may be little, or no, foundation on which to build a successful collaboration. Most of the international studies of co-principalship and shared teacher leaderships that I reviewed in Chapter 2 have stressed also the importance of open and on-going communication if these initiatives are to be successful. White's (1991) study of a Canadian co-principalship, for example, found that constant communication was the most

¹⁷⁸ Foucault argued that working on and transforming the self as a work of art was a possibility for individual resistance to the subjectivising forces of governmentality (Foucault, 1988). Grimshaw (1993, pp.65-6) pointed out the limitations of such an approach for women, arguing that Foucault was concerning himself only with the self as experienced by a few elite Greek men and in relation to the body and physical sensations, avoiding considerations of emotionality, intimacy and possibilities of mutual compassion. The issues for feminists are not just ones of care for the self, she argued, but of how to develop "practices of freedom" that can achieve the goals of equality and justice for all (p.69).

¹⁷⁹ Eventually, Phillipa, the board chairperson, who considered that Ann was incompetent, stepped in with an appraisal process that resulted in the dissolving of this co-principalship. While there may be some truth in Phillipa's opinion (indeed, the teachers at the school said that Ann was not suited to a leadership position), a judgement that the Telford co-principalship failed solely for that reason does not adequately take account of the complex dynamics that occur when interpersonal communication breaks down.

important factor in its success, and that “mutual responsibility for communication expands the possibility that good communication will take place” (1991, p.17). These Canadian co-principals stressed in particular the importance of reaching mutual agreements at the beginning of their initiative. They said that it was through learning to communicate well with each other then, that trust had been built between them, and this trust enabled them to support each other’s decisions when on some occasions these had to be made without discussion (p.28). Similar factors were clearly evident also in the successful Hillcrest Avenue School co-principalship. Liz, Jane and Karen not only identified their different skill and knowledge areas and their different individual family caregiving responsibilities. They negotiated with each other how they could use their differences most constructively in their professional work together and they discussed how they could collectively support one another in their home responsibilities when this was necessary.

At Telford School however, open, honest communication and high levels of mutual trust, such as were established between the co-principals at Hillcrest Avenue School, and has been reported as significant in the success of other co-principalships (Dass, 1995; Glenny et al., 1996; Gordon & Meadows, 1986; Groover, 1989; White, 1991) were not developed between Ann and Kate. This impacted on both women, increasing the stress levels of both as time went on and compounding the other difficulties they encountered in trying to build a partnership across their quite different personalities, different levels of professional knowledge, skill and experience, and different family difficulties.¹⁸⁰

An unequal partnership

Related, but different factors that may have counted against these two women being able to work out together a satisfactory partnership, have been raised in Strachan’s (1997) study of the co-principalship that was established at Penrose High School in Aotearoa/New Zealand. In that school there was also a change from a sole leadership to a shared one when Ann Dunphy, who was the principal, invited her deputy principal to join her in a co-principalship. Strachan reported that both Ann Dunphy and some staff initially found it hard to make the adjustment, because Ann was still seen as “the chief co-principal.” Moreover, despite Ann Dunphy’s “commitment to inclusivity and a flattened management structure,” she was described by staff as “strong” and “forceful,” and was even seen as “overpowering” by some (p.213). Strachan pointed out that although power sharing may be perceived by a feminist principal to be her approach, because of her own energy and passion, others may find at times that she is “somewhat scary to approach” (ibid).

One of the Telford staff commented that it would be very difficult to successfully set up a co-principalship “if one person was quite a lot stronger” than the other. While Kate was

¹⁸⁰ While Ann was coping with stresses emerging from her husband’s financial difficulties and father-in-law’s death, Kate was coping with pregnancy, the birth of her third child and consequent child care demands.

not described in the terms used to describe the Penrose High co-principal, (indeed staff at Telford School said they found Kate “approachable,” “easy to get on with” and “never making you feel anything but her equal”) she was praised as a “brilliant administrator” who had strength, vision and energy. In contrast, all of the staff saw that Ann was struggling. One staff member summed it up like this: “Ann was not actually doing anything in a principal’s role. She did not even lead an assembly. If Kate wasn’t there, one of the others of us would have to step in because she - I mean it’s just not in Ann’s nature really to take that kind of role. She’s such a gentle person - secure in her own classroom with younger children, but older kids and working with the whole school and stuff are just not her forte really.”

Up to this point, I have been focussing on the difficulties Kate and Ann were experiencing within their partnership. These difficulties were compounded significantly, however, by the problems they encountered over meeting the expectations of parents and staff in each strand and the high levels of energy required build a common core of agreed goals and values across these three very diverse groups of people. In the rest of this chapter, I want to explore how the Telford co-principalship became involved in struggles over meaning that were cut across by struggles over difference in terms of cultural, economic and political power (Hennessy, 1993; Fraser, 1997).

Negotiating struggles over wider socio-cultural hegemonies and inequalities of power

McNay argued that “Whilst feminists must remain alert to issues of difference and specificity, it is also necessary for them to retain theoretical tools capable of analysing general structural tendencies in order to understand how difference becomes inequality” (1992, p.155). Fraser has suggested that a pragmatic approach that “studies language at the level of discourses, as historically specific social practices of communication” can be used to help us determine how socio-cultural hegemonies that support stratifications along the lines of gender, race and class, impact on the formation of social groups (1997, p.155, 153). These understandings, she argued, would “allow us to recast the issues of social identity and social groups in the light of social inequality,” and to consider more effectively what is needed to oppose and change such inequality.

The project and trajectory of the Telford shared leadership initiative can be further illuminated through this kind of analysis. Kate and Ann’s proposal can be understood as attempting to build a coalition across cultural and political/economy divides and their associated intersecting social inequalities grounded in differences of ethnicity and class. The latter resulted in difficulties that dogged their aim to build a school-wide equal coalition.

The Montessori strand and issues of 'ownership' in terms of class

Issues of class emerged in relation to the Montessori strand and how they saw the other two strands at Telford School in relation to themselves. As Pākehā professionals, both cultural capital and economic resources were available to them in their negotiations with the co-principals, and the way that power can be exercised through links that are constituted between discourse and knowledge emerge in the following parent's comments.

Among our parents there has evolved a feeling that they are sort of guardians of the Montessori philosophy ... and we want to be sure that Montessori principles are being followed. We are not intimidated therefore, by teachers ... We offer suggestions and advice to our teachers ... We also have this idea, because of our involvement in the parents' co-operative in the Montessori pre-school, and because this whole 'Tomorrow's School' thing justified it, that the parents employ the teacher ... and the equipment our teachers use is paid for and owned by the parents, so there is a sort of much greater feeling of ownership (Interview with parent).

Although within educational professional discourses, a professional/lay divide has constituted teachers and principals as the 'experts' in education (Department of Education, 1978; 1984), the instituting of a market discourse of education, which positions teachers as workers, boards of trustees as their employers and parents as clients 'purchasing' education for their children, can be seen in Felicity's comments to have provided parents with some powerful new subject positions from which they can speak. We can see the Montessori parents as multi-levelled "owners" of their strand in the school. They owned (were committed to) its educational knowledge base; they owned (had bought) its educational materials; they owned (as employers) its teachers. These forms of ownership were embedded in their constituting of themselves as a "parents' co-operative," which gave them a further symbolic and material collective purchasing power in the 1990s educational market. Within that environment, the Montessori parents had been able, literally and figuratively, to 'buy' into the state education system.¹⁸¹

The whānau strand and issues of 'ownership' in terms of class and ethnicity

When we turn to the whānau strand, the case narrative illustrates how these parents, like the Montessori parents, were fully committed to their children's education. However, in comparison with the Montessori parents and most of the state strand parents, the whānau were disadvantaged at many levels in their attempts to win resources and support for their strand.

¹⁸¹ They had "grabbed the opportunity" as Ann put it, to set up a class at Telford School when the then principal invited them in because the school's roll was dropping. This 'school within a school' agreement had two way advantages of course. The principal won an increased roll and the advantage of materially well-resourced parents in the school. The Montessori parents won already established school buildings and resources (such as the playground and its equipment and the school library).

They had had to fight to get their immersion class established. One of the whānau saw racism as a factor here, with socio-economic factors also having played a part, however. The whānau were mainly working class people and the majority of the Māori families, who lived in a small enclave in the vicinity of the school, were noted by Kate in her application for fundings as being in a socio-economic decile of 2, whereas the school was classified overall as decile 7, meaning that the majority of the Pākehā families were in the top level. (The school was situated in a predominantly professional suburb.)

Many of the whānau did not have sufficient money to buy educational materials for their children; moreover, they had to make books and other educational materials because few Māori publications were available when they began. They had to help find a teacher because fluent and experienced Māori teachers were scarce in the country at that time. They were also disadvantaged in terms of knowledge resources. As a consequence of historical assimilatory policies and practices of forbidding the speaking of Te Reo in schools, most of the whānau could not speak Te Reo. Most did not know how the educational system 'worked.' Rawinia and Marg said they were constantly "on the back foot" as they tried to understand and deal with issues that arose in the school around such matters as how the state provided Māori funding should be used.¹⁸²

On the other hand, the whānau did have some other sources of power. Within the *Tomorrow's Schools* environment they too were positioned as 'partner clients' in relation to Mere, their own teacher, and the other teachers in the school. This gave them the power to demand certain things from Mere, such as requiring her to ensure that their children were equally skilled in the mainstream Pākehā curriculum and in tikanga Māori and Te Reo, (demands that caused considerable stress for Mere). The whānau also owned a cultural resource that the state and the Montessori strands coveted for their children: that is, tikanga Māori. The Montessori and state strand parents wanted their children to have opportunities they had not had as children, to develop a knowledge and comfort in tangata whenua culture.

When the co-principalship was initiated, however, the whānau could not have Mere as their representative in the shared leadership, as she was not fully registered (this was her first teaching position). Thus, they felt themselves to be positioned outside of the co-principal partnership, which they understandably saw as more likely to benefit the state and Montessori strands than theirs. Although Kate was respected by them, and they greatly appreciated her support and advocacy on their behalf, she was, after all, "wearing two hats," representing both the state and the whānau strands. She was, of course, also Pākehā.

Kate had a fairly good understanding of Te Reo though, and she attended whānau meetings as part of her commitment to supporting and representing of this strand within the co-principalship and her commitment to supporting Marg, who was the whānau representative

¹⁸² Some of the whānau objected to it being directed to the provision of tikanga Māori and kapa haka for all Māori children as opposed to going just to the immersion class, while others argued for a fuller involvement of all of the school in these activities.

on the board of trustees. Kate's approach to the issues confronting the whānau and around Māori education could be described as "Māori-friendly" (Johnston, 1999). Johnston has defined this approach as "concerned to involve Māori in culturally appropriate ways, which could include separate participation" (1999, p.78).

Kate was aware also of many of the problems and debates that were occurring within the whānau, as well as between them and the rest of the school. An example of the latter is that the Montessori parents, who could afford to pay for extra resources and wanted to pay for another teacher for their children, could not understand or accept why the board chairperson and the co-principals would not allow this. Phillipa, the board chairperson, said that the board was "not prepared to see one part of our school become very clearly better resourced than another." Some Montessori parents felt aggrieved about this and what they saw as unfair extra support from the state in its provision of a kaiārahi reo (a Māori language assistant teacher) for the immersion strand. They saw the distinctions being made between the funding of the immersion strand and their own willingness to contribute to the school (for example, in donating books to the library) as an issue about whether "the rich should subsidize the poor," and many resented this according to one parent. Negotiating these kinds of conflicts often took up Kate's and Ann's time and energy and contributed to the difficulties they were experiencing in their attempts to build their co-principal partnership. Ann commented, for example, on the difficulties in relation to Telford "being a small school - we can't afford to have parents sort of walking out en masse and it only takes one or two and they can go. So I didn't want to take too many principal release days, or put anybody non-Montessori in my class."

The social, political and economic inequalities and conflicts that I have been identifying are not a concern, however, within the NPM discursive construction of education as a market. As I explained in Chapter 6, within that discourse social relations are constructed as contractual negotiations between clients and providers. This renders irrelevant considerations of social power and/or inequality grounded in factors such as class, culture and/or gender. Indeed, questions about whether individuals are equally resourced to make decisions that will enable them to take advantage of what is on offer are seen as potentially infringing individual rights and freedom to exercise entrepreneurial skills in ways that will maximise individual potential.

The issues that I have been raising go right to the heart, however, of what Fraser (1997, p.196) has argued are the inadequacies of trying to build a collectivity that encourages cultural diversity (as the Telford School co-principalship proposal and the school Charter clearly do), while not adequately addressing the underlying political economy causes of inequality. Fraser pointed out that "cultural differences can be freely elaborated and democratically mediated only on the basis of ... economic social justice" (Fraser, 1997, pp. 182, 185). That is, while it is important to argue for the recognition and equal valuing of cultural and philosophical differences between groups to bring about improved cultural justice, there needs to be

equivalent identification, acknowledgement and an addressing of injustices and material inequalities that are grounded in the political-economic structure of society.¹⁸³ In Fraser's view, both women and racially differentiated minorities need the dual strategies of cultural recognition (to re-value their group characteristics) and political economy restructuring (to overcome the material realities of exploitation that have been suffered by many as a consequence of their 'difference' from the dominant group and their marginalising from areas of socially valued and well-paid work) (ibid, p.202).

Addressing these dual needs sounds like a big ask for school practitioners like Kate and Ann however. At the level of addressing and re-valuing cultural differences, their proposal stated that the co-principalship would "acknowledge differences within the school." They also wanted to put in place at Telford School a "non-hierarchical structure that does not put any strand above another." This could be read as meaning that both the Montessori and immersion strands would be given some autonomy in decision making, a fairly radical proposal for a state funded school. This was not really what Kate and Ann envisioned however: they wanted to establish collaboratively negotiated decisions that would result in a common core of shared beliefs and commitments across the school, while still enabling each strand to retain its own character and special aims. At the level of economic disadvantages, as teachers and co-principals there was not a great deal they could do to equalise the inequalities that divided many of those in the whānau strand from those in the Montessori and state school strands. Kate worked hard to secure every grant that was available (for example, within Māori language factor funding), but the Telford narrative illustrates how she and Ann were having to deal with issues around Māori/Pākehā relations that for a socially just resolution needed wide ranging social changes, in terms of both cultural revaluation and redistribution of resources.

Some people in their school recognised these kinds of problems more clearly than others. Phillipa, the board chairperson was acutely aware of the complexities, and committed to the need for the school to work on political issues, such as those around the Treaty of Waitangi.

¹⁸³ She described cultural injustices as grounded in "social patterns of representation, interpretation and communication ... such as, cultural domination (being subjected to pattern of interpretation and communication that are associated with another culture and are alien and/or hostile to one's own); non-recognition (being rendered invisible by means of the authoritative representational, communicative and in interpretative practices of one's culture) and disrespect (being routinely maligned or disparaged in stereotypic public cultural representation and/or everyday life interactions)." Political/economic injustices include: "exploitation (having the fruits of one's labour appropriated for the benefits of others); economic marginalization (being confined to undesirable or poorly paid work, or being denied access to income generating labour altogether) and deprivation (being denied an adequate material standard of living" (Fraser, 1997, pp.11-12).

What counts in education at Telford School? Negotiating or submerging cultural and political/economy divides?

Phillipa praised Kate for pushing her into facilitating the revising of the school's Charter because, she said, it was important that the school involved itself in "battering out of a statement that says we are more than just three cells sharing the same site." In the Charter that resulted, there is a note of hopeful pragmatism in the statement that records the parents' "vision for the school." It stated that: "We want a school that has three strands contributing equally to the school as a whole, and each meeting the particular needs of its community of children, parents and caregivers. We want these strands woven together by co-operation and tolerance to create a school in which diversity is valued and all children can develop to their full potential. We want a school that honours the Treaty of Waitangi." The Charter further stated that the school aimed to demonstrate its commitment to the Treaty by "ensuring that Māori children have their ethnic and cultural heritage affirmed" and that "the entire school community learns about and respects the diverse cultural heritage of New Zealand people by acknowledging the unique place of Māori, New Zealand's role in the Pacific, the value and diversity of other cultures in the world."

The general attitude in the school at that time is captured in these Charter statements about building tolerance, respect and care for others. These are important aims that point towards a democratic community that treats others as equals and values difference. The presence of discursive power relations can still be detected in the Charter's language however, which suggests the kinds of ambiguities and struggles that were negotiated during this document's development. While a radical discourse of re-valuing cultural differences along the lines of that suggested by Fraser (1997) is present, this is articulated alongside a liberal discourse of toleration of difference. A liberal egalitarian discourse of toleration¹⁸⁴ as constructed within western Anglo/European views of the world, identifies those who have culturally different views and practices as 'other,' marking them in ways that subordinate and de-value them in relation to its own perspectives and practices. The latter are treated as the norm or un-remarked as neutral (Johnston, 1998). Johnston (1999, p.78) has pointed out that while Māori-friendly approaches go some way towards improving educational practices for Māori, this approach is "unable to address the unequal power relations between Māori and Pākehā because Pākehā are effectively able to control the level and manner of Māori involvement." A Māori-centred approach, in comparison, "aims at addressing the unequal power relations ... by incorporating appropriate decision-making forums ... by Māori for Māori" (ibid).

¹⁸⁴ This discourse has been a dominant discourse or regime of truth (Foucault, 1980) in the egalitarian culture of Aotearoa/New Zealand. It has masked the cultural assimilation of Māori and ethnic minorities, and underpinned the hegemony of white, masculinist and middle class discourse and consequential racist, sexist and classist discrimination.

This point highlights the kinds of culturally unequal power relations that existed at Telford School. Although the whānau was able, equally with the other two strands, to identify and articulate their own educational philosophy, values and aims for their children, opportunities for realising these remained within the parameters of the state school system. The normalising of the latter can be seen in Telford's revised Charter. In comparatively neutral language the state strand is designated as the "original" strand offering a "typical" education: the immersion and Montessori strands are designated as "special character," offering their own special philosophy and approach. This use of language is interesting. The descriptions of the strands in these two categories can be interpreted as part of what Foucault (1980) called discursive "dividing practices," that here re-inscribe the state strand as the norm, against which the other two strands are differentiated. Language can also inscribe differentiations through the range of meanings that are associated with words. Here, for example, while the phrase "special character" is an official and neutral, if not positive, term, ("special" has a positive connotations and "character" can refer to a distinguishing quality), the word "character" also resonates colloquially with the idea of eccentricity or quirkiness, as in "she's a character." In this sense, then, both the Montessori and the immersion strands can be seen to be out of character within the normal state education system.

Foucault argued that it is within such normalising practices that classifications and rules are set up for distinguishing "true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what is true" (1980, p.131). And, within these political processes of creating and accepting particular types of discourse which are made to "function as true ... specific effects of power are attached to the true"(p.132). At Telford School, like all other state schools, truth was related to the national system's rules, regulations and categories.

Although I identified earlier the ways in which the Montessori strand could be judged as materially and culturally advantaged in relation to the immersion strand, in terms of having their educational philosophy equally valued alongside those of the whānau and the state strand, Montessori can be seen also to be the strand that was actually least valued in the school. Comments in the case narrative reveal a lack of sympathy for its approach in both the immersion and the state strands and there seem to be only reluctant acknowledgements of the contributions of both time and money by the Montessori parents to the wider work of the school. Foucault's argument that power is produced in social interactions in ways that are complex, fluid and dispersed (1980, p.145), illuminate these rather contradictory dynamics. On the one hand, the Montessori strand seems to be quite powerful and influential; on the other it is marked as 'outside' of the norm. Its attempts to exercise influence over resource decision making in the school (like the immersion strand's attempts to gain knowledge about and control over their special funding) were constrained within the day to day politics and practices of governing and managing in the school. The fact that governing power to "structure the possible field of actions of others" as Foucault (1982, p.221) put it, remained

ultimately with the state strand was succinctly indicated in Phillipa's comments about the Montessori complaints over not being able to employ another teacher for their strand. She said she told them, "You opted into a state system, so sorry guys, but you are basically running by the rules of a state system." Abbie Smith, the principal release teacher, also made the comment that finding a common core for the three strands to come together on some activities would amount to working within the original state strand structures, "with some Te Reo added."

It must be acknowledged here, that if alternative educational approaches are to win recognition and, more importantly, funding, within the state system, they must abide by the national state system laws and regulations governing curriculum, pedagogy and management such as those articulated in, the *Education Act, 1989*; *National Education Guidelines*; *National Administration Guidelines*. Foucault pointed out, however, that "techniques of power" do not work only at the level of the law, the state or institution. He emphasised the circulation and contestation of power within a broad network of social practices through which individuals are not just power's "inert or consenting target; they are always the elements of its articulation" (1980, p.72). While the state regulations mark out the rules and boundaries for what can and can't be done in schools, individuals can in various ways, exercise power on their own behalf and these rules are not always obeyed. For example, it is clear from the Telford School board's principal job description that 're-wrote' the legislated governance/management divisions between the board and the principal (and from other examples in all three co-principal narratives), that the authorising power and dominant meanings of state level rules and regulations can be challenged.

It has been pointed out that challenges to a dominant discourse can occur within language practices of re-naming that draw on hitherto subjugated areas of knowledge. In Chapter 3 I discussed some examples of this occurring in the work of Māori women educators and academics who have focused on "creating our own spaces, our own ways of knowing and representation, creating and crafting our own differences" (Johnston, 1998, p.35). As Weedon noted, such challenges are part of an on-going "battle for the signified," that is manifested in struggles over attempts "to fix meaning temporarily on behalf of particular power relations and social interests" (Weedon, 1987, p.98). The school did achieve recording in its Charter some quite strong statements recognising Treaty of Waitangi issues, and these were placed alongside aims of recognising the cultures of the children and parents in the school. The fact that these aims were articulated within persisting wider political struggles over redistribution of social wealth, knowledge and power, however, is evidenced in the accounts of conflicts that arose around the full immersion Māori strand. While many, if not most of the original (state education) and the Montessori strand parents saw it as an advantage to their children to have the immersion strand in the school, not all were comfortable with making concessions to the wishes of some of the whānau to focus their efforts on their own children's education. The Telford School Charter indicated that equality between the three strands meant everyone making equal contributions to the school. A representative of the Montessori parents said that

this meant treating everyone equally in terms of making donations of both time and money to the school. Any attempt to argue for different levels of contribution according to different incomes or demands of time would not have been readily accepted by these parents. In Phillipa's opinion, not many of the Montessori parents understood this as an issue of social justice, nor that "the Treaty gives us, both individually and as a board, a different relationship with the immersion strand to what we have with them."

Foucault (1980, p.93) argued that by going to the extremities of where power is exercised we will be able to identify how social relations of power "cannot be established, consolidated, nor implemented without the production, accumulation and functioning of discourse." That is, individual and group exercising of power cannot occur without the evoking of particular discursive configurations of "truth", which shape what can and can't be said in particular situations, who is authorised to speak and who is excluded. The struggles and disagreements between the three strands over what should count in the educational practices in the school were compounded for some people by the struggles that were occurring within their own strands. Mere's story is a particularly illuminating one here.

The case narrative describes the pain felt by Mere when she was trying to teach her class "all about whānau and how we need to have all the Māori values and it wasn't happening in front of them at home - only at school, nine till three - that was like a big knife in my heart." As part of her strategies for coping with these difficulties and those she was facing as she learned her craft, Mere said she focused on her class and she withdrew from the rest of the school. She saw herself as "just keeping on doing what I was employed to do - teach Māori." Kate and some other teachers and parents (both some Māori and some Pākehā) saw her, however, as becoming politically separatist. This judgement was reinforced by their reading of Mere's actions in covering the windows of her classroom with black paper. She did this so that her children could create on the paper kowhaiwhai patterns for the interior of the room, creating it as a meeting house within a marae space. From within Mere's cultural world-view, this was exciting, empowering for the children and sacred. Within one teacher's Pākehā world-view however, different interpretations were being made. She tentatively told me, "It was black paper, you know."

Pecheux's (1975) concepts of preconstructed discourse and intradiscourse are again useful tools for analysis here. The teacher's comment can be seen to be functioning as preconstructed discourse, hooking the listener into what Hennessy (1993, pp.77) has described as the "always already there 'obvious' set of oppositions that we all 'know' about. These oppositions indicate a socio-cultural hegemony and the social judgements and hierarchies associated with that hegemony. In this case what is being called up is a racial black/white opposition, with the tagged on phrase of "you know" acting as an intradiscursive "reminder." This language mechanism that "crosses and links together preconstructed discursive elements"(ibid), constructs here unspoken symbolic links between black (paper), separatism and apartheid that evoke particular discursive configurations of race relations. What is being

implied, but unspoken, is that Mere was instigating black separatist supremacy as a form of reverse racism.

Within a Foucauldian understanding, this (Pākehā) teacher can be seen to be speaking within dominant Pākehā cultural perceptions and constructions of race relations. Her comment, and the naming of Mere's actions by Kate and others, as politically separatist, link Mere into radical Maori revolutionary aspirations and practices and mark her as different in ways that were being judged negatively. While the Pākehā teachers in this school appeared supportive of Māori aspirations, as Johnston (1999) has pointed out, Pākehā "Māori-friendly" attitudes and practices are focused more on biculturalism as a way of reducing prejudice than on changing dominant power relations.¹⁸⁵ Some of the Pākehā teachers and parents can be seen as a "vehicle for transmitting a wider power" (Foucault, 1980, p.72), in that in their everyday language practices they were re-constructing and transmitting the values, beliefs, categories and meanings of the dominant group and re-inscribing its power to name the world.

The meanings that Mere was constructing around her actions went largely unheard in this environment, if, indeed, they were even spoken to other teachers in the school. Her stories in the case narrative illustrate the points made by Waitere-Ang (1999) in her study of some Māori women educators. She wrote that they found that they were not only "placed at odds with a system," but also having to find strategies to cope with multi-levelled "borderlands" and binaries that could constrain and delimit their agency. Waitere-Ang reported that the women used "a mix of holding silence and breaking silence" as a strategy of resistance and change (p.235). "By being silent, safe spaces were created in which contrary views and their oppositional forms of social critique could be safely held without evoking the antagonism of those in influential positions of power" (p.242). Mere's strategy of withdrawing from the staff room, and focussing on her work in her own classroom is illuminated by this analysis. It is ironic, and sad, that this was still necessary for her in the co-principalship which, of all three I studied, was making most effort to be inclusive of Māori aspirations.

Highlighting a need for cultural revaluation and political/economic re-distribution

The Telford School initiative's coalition approach to widening and deepening a democratic and inclusive shared leadership can be illuminated by Mouffe's and Fraser's discussions of Young's (1990) feminist theorising of a new form of democratic citizenship. Young saw this as based on a "politics of difference" within a heterogeneous public that was open to "unassimilated otherness" (Young, 1990, p.320). She theorised democratic collectivity

¹⁸⁵ In contrast, the more genuinely empowering Māori-centered (Durie, 1997) and Kaupapa Māori (Smith, 1997) approaches address political claims for self determination and autonomy through structural changes that enable Māori participation in decision making on their own terms. That is, decision making by Māori for Māori.

as emerging out of alliances among strangers who come together to negotiate their differences in ways that could enable them to work together on projects that concern them all.

While this conceptualising seems to be a neat fit for what was happening at Telford, Mouffe (1995) argued that there was a problem in Young's understanding of groups as cohering around already formed, static and essentialised collective identities. She argued that critique and deconstruction of all forms of essentialism were the necessary tools for a feminist democratic project. Fraser (1997) agreed that the achievement of a fully democratic collectivity would require individuals and groups to form together a new kind of identity that could encompass their common interests through making shifts in their previously held affiliations. In Fraser's view, however, both a pluralist multiculturalism (such as Young's) and a radical democracy (such as Mouffe's) remain largely tied to a cultural politics analysis. She pointed out that both of these approaches fail to fully appreciate that "cultural differences can be freely elaborated and democratically mediated only on the basis of social equality" (p.182). The latter requires a redistribution of political and material resources (*ibid*).

I have tried to show in the last parts of this chapter how Fraser's argument applies particularly to an analysis of the situations of the whānau and the immersion strand at Telford School. I am suggesting that for a more fully democratic sharing of leadership in this school, what was needed were the kinds of cultural recognition and political/economic redistribution that are discussed by Fraser. For the Māori teachers and parents at Telford to be able to be involved in the school in the ways they wanted to be, it seems to me that a combination of three factors would be important: a tino rangitiratanga (cultural self determination) that included a redistribution of political power (through a more transparent sharing of institutional knowledge and information and a greater autonomy over decision making), and a more transparent redistribution of material resources (funding, educational resources, staff). Undoubtedly, achieving these three things is not easy in any kind of social environment. It has been made particularly difficult though, within the neo-liberal normalising of an individualist, competitive market society and discourses that define rights and justice in terms of economic rationalism and managerial accountability.

Kate's and Ann's attempt to build a coalition within this environment and across the kinds of cultural and political/economy divides that I have been describing and analysing, was indeed an ambitious project. Given the individual and partnership difficulties that I discussed in the first part of this chapter, it is not surprising that their co-principalship did not succeed. Ironically, in the year after their partnership was dissolved, with the appointment of two new teachers in the immersion and Montessori strands, one set of problems that took up much of their time, disappeared. As the case narrative shows, although the struggles across the strands continued, there emerged a certain "maturity in the discussions," as Kate put it, and there was new energy and hope in the school's attempts to work in a productive coalition across difference.

Conclusion

My discussions in this chapter have identified factors that contributed to the dis-establishment of the Telford co-principalship partnership. Kate and Ann did not succeed in overcoming inequalities between them of knowledge, skill and experience in educational leadership and management and they did not succeed in developing open on-going communication. This study is showing how these are all basic requirements for a shared leadership to work.

There is some evidence of success in Kate's and Ann's attempts to resist and change oppressive forms of power such as those that can be exercised in hierarchical, authoritarian and 'macho' forms of singular leadership. I went beyond a gender analysis though, to tease out how social inequalities grounded in material realities of lack of financial resources, were intertwined in this school with exclusionary practices enabled by discursive constructions of what counts as knowledge, who is authorised to 'know' and who is authorised to speak, and as Blackmore (1999, p.218) put it, "the distribution of resources that makes some voices louder than others." I have argued that it was this "symbiotic relationship" of discursive and material power relations (McNay, 1994), that that weakened this potential coalition across difference.

In the latter analyses, I set out to identify factors that contributed to the beginning of a coalition across the three different strands in this school, and factors that made the successful achieving of an equal coalition difficult. The levels of combined collaborative energy and skill required in day-by-day engagement in the socio-cultural, political and economic resource struggles evident in Telford School, were beyond Kate's and Ann's capabilities.

Further, while the Telford narrative illustrates Meyerson's (1991) argument that an organisational culture developed within an acceptance of some ambiguity and fragmentation "as a part of life" may be "more likely to recognize and potentially legitimate a diverse chorus of voices, interests and perspective" (1991, p.290), I have shown how hegemonic discourses and practices of inequality related to ethnicity and class can be difficult to dislodge and change within some individuals' understandings of what they see as "commonsense." The attempt in this school to develop school wide practices of collaboration were dogged by some inter-group misunderstandings and struggles that can be seen to be grounded in past and continuing socio/cultural and political/economic injustices.

The inequalities that have resulted from such injustices are not able to be addressed within a market view of education which sees all parents as able to choose the kind of education they want for their children. Such a view obscures the reality that some people have more and better choices and opportunities than others. The struggles being experienced at Telford School during the time of this research echo the struggles that have been documented by researchers of the growing gap between rich schools and poor schools in the years after the educational restructuring that introduced an educational market in this country (Gordon, 1994;

Lauder et al., 1999). In comparison with Telford School, Hillcrest Avenue School can be described as rich in terms of its socio-economic decile rating of 10: its teachers' cultural capital (white professional middle class) echoed that of their board and parent community. The Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship initiative was not constrained by the kinds of difficulties and conflicts that occurred at Telford. The teachers at Hillcrest Avenue School did not have to struggle for material resources of money and parental time and involvement, and issues around Māori education were not as conflictual, if indeed they impacted at all on that initiative. Arguably, though, neither was Hillcrest Avenue School enriched by tangata whenua culture and the school-wide debates that occurred at Telford School as people there grappled with how to practically recognise, re-value and enact cultural and educational philosophical differences.

It is these kinds of issues and difficulties that the NPM single line accountability model of school management, which ties responsibility to the executing of specific tasks, cannot deal with. Yet it is these issues that teachers and their boards have to confront all the time within the increasingly unequal social environment of the education marketplace. In the next chapter, therefore, I will focus on analysing the NPM models of accountability and the ways in which they have been variously challenged and re-inscribed in the primary school co-principalships.

CHAPTER 14

WHO GOVERNS? WHO MANAGES? WHO 'CARRIES THE CAN?'

ISSUES OF GOVERNMENTALITY

Introduction

In the previous chapters I have been following a bottom up analysis to show how the co-principalships were being constituted, firstly within individual, and secondly, within individual and group negotiations of conflicting discourses about educational organisation and leadership. I have looked also at how these negotiations can be seen to be cut through by socio-cultural hegemonies constructed along the “lines” of gender, class and ethnicity (Fraser, 1997). In my discussion of the Telford initiative I began to show how these intersecting dynamics have been bound up during the 1990s in Aotearoa/New Zealand, with issues of accountability and questions around what Foucault called governmentality. These are questions such as, “How to govern oneself, how to be governed, how to govern others, by whom the people will accept being governed, how to become the best possible governor” (Foucault, 1991, p.87). In this final chapter, I focus on the negotiations and struggles that occurred (across the levels of individuals, groups, the institutional system and the state in education) around how school governance, management and accountability should be understood and practised within the co-principalships.

Foucault’s interpretations of what it means “to govern” challenged the idea that power is located merely, or even primarily, in the state. While acknowledging that power relations have become progressively elaborated, rationalised and centralised within state institutions, (1982, p.224), he argued that all individuals are “always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising power” (1980, p. 72). He described exercises of power as occurring within discursively shaped social interactions that are “at the same time reciprocal incitation and struggle; less of a face-to-face confrontation which paralyses both sides than a permanent provocation” (1982, pp. 221). That is, in social relations that are not “determined” or “saturated” by violent, physically constraining power (such as in slavery), free individuals can refuse the imposition of another’s will and attempts to direct their action (ibid). They can be “active players” within available fields of discourse and contribute to the making of discourse, knowledge and culture (Fraser, 1997; MacNaughton, 2000). Thus, Foucault argued, there are “no relations of power without resistances; and the latter are all the more real and effective because they are formed right at the point where relations of power are being exercised” (1980, p.142).

Following Foucault and feminist poststructuralist theorists who have taken up aspects of his approach (Hekman, 1990; Davies, 1997; Fraser, 1997), I have been arguing throughout this thesis that a focus on identifying, analysing and understanding local resistances to potentially oppressive exercises of managerial authority and power, could contribute to the building of tactical knowledge about administrative regimes of truth. Such knowledge could be deployed strategically in the construction of counter discourses. A significant argument for my purposes in this chapter, however, is that no discourse is ever innocent (Foucault, 1984). Further, different contexts will shape and impact differently on a set of resistant practices. Thus, what may be liberating for a particular group in one context may become constraining for a similar group in a different context.

In this chapter therefore, I set out to explore the value of these Foucauldian arguments about governmentality and different local resistant practices by examining what happened when a collectivist shared leadership was proposed and introduced at Hillcrest Avenue School, in relation to what happened at St Mary's School. I analyse how two groups of people negotiated the discursive terrains of NPM and professional regimes of truth in very different ways, within very different kinds of board/co-principal relationships, with very different consequences for these two co-principalships.

In the first part of the chapter, I draw mainly on the Hillcrest Avenue School narrative to explore how these co-principals and their board 'talked back' to the State Services Commission (SSC) and the Ministry of Education, when state officials in these agencies told them that they must comply with the NPM regulations and interpretations of accountability, governance and management. I look at how NPM managerial, market and community governance versions of accountability were challenged as this co-principalship developed a counter discourse and set of practices that emphasised shared responsibilities, mutual accountabilities and ethical, trusting relationships between teachers, the board and parents.

In the second part of the chapter I focus on the St Mary's co-principalship to examine the different strategies that were used in its shared leadership proposal, in the board's initial responses to SSC and in the evolving board/co-principal interactions. I argue that the latter were characterised by "reciprocal incitation and struggle(s)" (Foucault, 1980) that can be seen to have been provoked partly by wider discursive ambiguities and contradictions around governance and management, and partly by varying levels of individual and group board/co-principal mistrust. I suggest that in the resulting 'agonisings' over what should count as school leadership and accountability, the NPM regime of truth prevailed, resulting in the dis-establishment of this co-principalship.

Issues of accountability, governance and management were also present at Telford School of course, but as I have discussed the impact on that co-principalship of some of those issues, I will restrict further analysis of their experiences to relevant points of comparison/contrast with the other two schools.

Challenging, deconstructing and re-constructing versions of accountability

As has been shown already, Liz and Jane's main aim for their co-principalship was to validate shared leadership through a local school level structural change to the established professional and managerial hierarchy of control and responsibility. At the beginning of their initiative, they did not spell out in detail exactly how their collaboration would work, nor the specifics of how they would involve other people. Recognising that time is needed to develop collegial trusting relationships (Nias et al, 1992), they wanted shared leadership practices and collective responsibility to evolve in ways that would best use people's strengths. As the case narrative details, however, when the board consulted the State Services Commission (then the state employing agency for education) and the Ministry of Education, legalities around accountability became a major issue.

The following analyses aim to demonstrate the pertinence of Foucault's (1980) argument that power is produced and exercised within an interplay of discourse and knowledge. I want to show how those who have knowledge of and facility in the dominant discursive categories, rules, regulations and practices, can ignore, challenge and/or co-opt these in strategies and tactics that produce (or enhance) a counter discourse and set of practices. That is, "(a)pparatuses of power are always liable to forms of re-appropriation, reversability and re-utilisation, not only in tactical realignments from 'above,' but also in counter-offensives from 'below'" (Gordon, 1980, p.256).

Managerial 'single line' accountability

When the Hillcrest Avenue negotiators consulted the SSC about how to establish a co-principalship, they were well equipped, it seemed, to engage in debate around the ways that school leadership and accountability was being constituted in educational regulations. Liz, Jane and their board members were endowed with middle class cultural capital and very knowledgeable about NPM and professional discourses of school governance and management. Liz and Jane were skilled also in an area of feminist "subjugated knowledge"(Foucault, 1980) about collectivity and mutual responsibility, and Phil Cody, their board chairperson, was skilled in industrial union politics and public policy analysis.

Phil argued that "The principal is a position - it's structural, and if we take the rhetoric of *Tomorrow's Schools* at its face value, then schools have the power to fill that position any way they like ... like three people in the position, each a third of the principal and two thirds of a teacher." The SSC was adamant, however, that the Education Act 1989 defined a school principal as one person and this meant that a co-principalship was essentially illegal. The board could not persuade SSC to allow them to construct a different kind of collective principal contract. Legitimising power was thus retained here by the state.

Phil commented later that within a bureaucracy, "Collective leadership is seen as dangerous." While Phil tends to present a view of power as held or owned by the state (specifically in the "departmental secretary"), his comments also indicate an understanding of the discursive foundations of management control. He said:

Shared leadership is such a significant change for the way we understand management structures to work. Within the education bureaucracy at a state level there is a very fixed idea of the way in which labour relations and industrial matters work and are resolved. It's very hierarchical - about the departmental secretary who gets to play God basically - and concerned about authority, about responsibility, about accountability within the schools and the ways in which a collectivised model of leadership subverts those lines, particularly of accountability (Interview with Phil).

Phil realised that the difficulties the board encountered in their negotiations with the SSC, other agencies, and even parents in their own school community, were grounded partly in the nature of common understandings (dominant discourses) about management authority. He was not therefore, surprised when the Hillcrest Avenue School arguments for a collectivist approach to school leadership were 'blocked' by the SSC negotiators. Foucault's (1977; 1980; 1982) analyses illuminate how the governing power of politicians and state agents is exercised within discursive "dividing practices" that construct "scientific" forms of knowledge which categorise topics, people and things in ways that shape what can and can't be said in particular situations, who is authorised to speak and who is excluded (1982, p.208). In these "regimes of truth," the knowledges of marginalised groups are subjugated, disqualified as:

inadequate to their task, or insufficiently elaborated ... illegitimate ... beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity (of) a unitary body of theory that would filter, hierarchise and order them in the name of some true knowledge and some arbitrary idea of what constitutes a science and its objects (Foucault, 1980, pp.82, 131).

Thus, within the dominant NPM constructions of educational employer/employee and governor/manager working relationships, a collective approach could be subjugated as inappropriate and inadequate for the task of fully accountable, efficient school leadership. Indeed, as Phil suggested, such a collectivist approach could be deemed "dangerous." As I explained in Chapter 5, proponents of the NPM discourse and practices argue that holding multiple responsibilities can open up opportunities for individuals to collude with others to promote their own interests. This argument emerges out of a theoretical view of society as made up of individuals who are primarily opportunistic, "self-interest seeking, with guile" (Williamson, 1985, p.45). To control this self interest and its potential consolidation within group "provider capture," tightly specified contracts that enable the delineation of individual accountabilities and management control over these, were introduced in the public sector during the restructuring of the state (Boston et al., 1996, p.22). The *Picot Report* recommended that in education there should be:

a separating of particular activities to avoid overlapping and conflicts in responsibility... Those who are accountable must know who they are accountable to: the lines of

accountability must be clear. On occasion accountability can be split, with a particular individual or agency being responsible to more than one other individual/agency for different aspects of the same task. When this happens, the different accountabilities should be clearly delineated and there should be no conflict between them (Department of Education, 1988a, p.43).¹⁸⁶

The *Tomorrow's Schools* policy embedded a Taylorist (so-called 'scientific') approach to management, which breaks work down into specific tasks and responsibilities that can be delegated to individuals, who can then be held accountable for completing or achieving them satisfactorily. The Education Act 1989 legislated a split between local school governance as the role of parent boards of trustees and day to day management as the role of the principal, as part of the mechanisms for holding each institution accountable (through ERO audit and review) for meeting the objectives set out in its charter. This policy and legislation was informed by the Treasury's use of market theory for "the establishment of schools as a series of enterprise units funded contractually from government by price," and the SSC's promotions of the management model of the board of directors and CEO of the capitalist firm, to bring schools into line with the private sector approach already established across other state enterprises (Jesson, 1999, p. 134, following Walsh, 1992). The *Today's Schools* review of the reforms restated that greater clarification of role definitions and responsibilities, along with key performance indicators developed for all areas, would lead "to greater accountability, which in turn, improves administrative effectiveness" (Lough, 1990, p.20).

Thus, when the Hillcrest Avenue School negotiators consulted SSC officials and made their arguments for a co-principalship 'collective,' these suggestions were refused as not only inadequate, but also illegal. The SSC officials focused on the NPM requirements for task specific, single line, individual accountability. As an SSC spokesperson said later:

There has to be someone who eventually carries the can and takes the ultimate decisions if there's a disagreement... that's accountability, the one who is clearly responsible ... The Education Act talks about the Chief Executive of a state school, so that indicates to us an individual, and there are responsibilities ... and tasks that are given to the principal and we don't see that the law really allows there to be more than one principal to actually legally effect the duties and responsibilities that the Act lays down (Interview with SSC spokesperson, 1995).

This person added that accountability meant that "somebody is responsible for something in particular" and if this splitting of responsibilities and tasks does not occur, and these are shared, then there will be 'no particular responsibility for anything.' It is clear that the co-principalship proposal was being read by the state officials as potentially opening up

¹⁸⁶ Although this review of educational administration described schools as "partnerships between the teaching staff (the professionals) and the community (p.xi), and the successful principal as "a professional and instructional leader" whose collaborative relationship with staff "must be protected and enhanced" (p.51), contractual and hierarchical managerial proposals dominated its recommendations.

opportunities for individuals to shirk their responsibilities, and even more worrying, there would be no way "to sheet accountability home," as a Ministry of Education lawyer later told me (Phone conversation, Ministry of Education, October 1998).

The underlying state agenda of maintaining some control at the centre within the shifting winds of market relationships and potential vagaries of devolved local governance, emerges in this nautical metaphor of sheeting home accountability: a sheet is a rope or chain that secures the lower corner of a sail to control it.¹⁸⁷

Versions of accountability within economic rationalism

Neither Phil, nor the other members of the Hillcrest Avenue board and Liz and Jane, were put off by the SSC's refusal to let them develop a new kind of principal collectivity. As the case narrative documents, the women were appointed and they developed their shared leadership practices while the negotiations with the state agencies continued. From the beginning, however, it was clear that this co-principalship was 'setting sail' in what Wylie (1995) described as the "contrary currents" of a centralised decentralisation (Blackmore, 1993). The NPM discursive regime was not only instituting a stronger form of centralised and hierarchical managerial control, but also prioritising economic rationalism and market versions of accountability (Codd, 1993). Contradictory messages were rife.

On the one hand the Hillcrest Avenue School board were told by the SSC that they had to stay within the law (and not appoint co-principals); on the other, they were told by the Ministry of Education that if it was not going to cost more, what they did in their school was their own concern. The Ministry acknowledged that there were some advantages in sharing positions below that of the principal and acknowledged also that "in primary schools, there is a genuine wish to share the principal's position." While these officials remained adamant that their agency had to be "strict on what the law says," they also said that as long as the co-principalship remained "fiscally neutral," the internal organisation in a school was a matter of devolved authority."

Threaded through these mixed messages is the influence of transaction cost management, an economic theoretical strand of NPM discourse that focusses on "comparative costs of planning, adapting and monitoring task completion" (Boston et al., 1996, p.22). This approach was adopted in state sector reform as part of the mechanisms for institutional and system financial accountability. Consequently, as one Ministry spokesperson put it, "We are obliged to support self-management and we are committed to flexibility ... but when a school

¹⁸⁷ The aim to locate control of what counts as teacher professionalism within the central agencies was signalled once again in the 1997 review of teacher education which noted in its discussion of the nature of a new teaching professional body, that "the government's interests in the outcomes of education mean the state will play a key leadership role" (read standard setting and policing roles?) "in the professional body" (Ministry of Education, 1997b, p.26).

over spends then the Ministry has a problem - we're here to look after the taxpayers' money." While it may have seemed, then, that the restructuring of educational administration had opened up opportunities for innovative self management approaches in local schools, such as the co-principalships, overall control of the resource decisions and of administrative arrangements was being retained in the state agencies through the constraint of "fiscal neutrality"(and other regulatory mechanisms, of course, such as the National Administration Guidelines).

The other economic 'arm' of the NPM accountability mechanisms had emerged clearly in the *Picot Report* (Department of Education, 1988a, p.43), where good communication was specified as necessary between "consumers and providers" (students/parents and teachers). This form of market accountability was intended to provide "consumers with a way of checking on the exercise of power and responsibility within the system," (read, a way to control professional self-interested provider capture). Good information flows were advocated to provide consumers with "a basis for choice" (that is, between 'good' schools and 'failing' schools in a competitive education market) and this, it was argued, would ensure that teachers' performance was driven up.

Few researchers in education, or educational practitioners, would disagree that teachers and principals need to be accountable in the efficient use of public funds. Educational commentators have criticised, however, the effects of these neo-liberal, versions of individual rights and accountabilities and the control mechanism of contractual forms of market relations (Scott, 1989; Pascal, 1989; Edwards, 1991; Codd, 1993; Gordon, 1994; Timperley and Robinson, 1996).¹⁸⁸ Scott (1989) has summarised some of the problems in trying to make schools accountable in a market environment where client choices regulate supply and quality. Firstly, there are the ambiguities around who is the client (students or their parents?) and the difficulties around how to interpret their interests and questions about who should do this. Secondly, education is a managed, rather than a free market: lifting all regulating constraints to make it a free market raises equity problems that can not be fixed without "rigging the market." And thirdly, education is both a private experience and a public good that accrues wider benefits to society. Scott concluded that both political and market accountability can only be made to work in education "by drastically simplifying the process and indeed the essence of education"(p.19).

It is clear that the NPM market versions of accountability do not take adequate account of social inequalities and associated ethical issues that impact differently on different school

¹⁸⁸ Pascal (1989) analysed the difficulties experienced by school governing bodies in the UK in reconciling the diverse and conflicting demands of support for staff and accountability to external auditors. The distinctions between accountability and autonomy have been discussed by Edwards (1991) and the educational impact of a formative appraisal/summative accountability dichotomy has been critiqued by Timperley and Robinson (1996). Codd (1999) has picked up Boston et al's (1996) points about low trust versus high trust forms of contractual accountability in his analyses of the educational administration reforms as policies of distrust.

communities. For example, it has been pointed out that within the 1990s educational market environment in Aotearoa/New Zealand, the removal of zoning has advantaged middle class Pākehā students over working class Māori and Polynesian students, and “rich” schools over “poor” ones (Lauder et al., 1999; Gordon, 1994b). I showed in the previous chapter how issues around class and cultural inequalities were compounding the difficulties being experienced at Telford School, which, like many other lower socio-economic decile schools, was struggling within the 1990s reduced funding regime (Wylie, 1997b). Critics have insisted that these issues, and professional forms of ethical and collegial accountability for the quality of the teaching and learning should not be discounted as they have been in the NPM official discourses and practices of audit and review. As Kate put it, “Tomorrow’s Schools put an emphasis on control and the stressing of clear boundaries as to where the responsibilities lie, but I don’t like the view of accountability where you’ve got to be seen to be running a tight ship and management doesn’t have to be connected to an educational philosophy - that what counts is your administrative ability.”

There are many examples in the Hillcrest Avenue narrative of how ethical professional practices, which place educational purposes at the centre, challenge managerial accountability as conceived within economic rationalism. For example, in contrast to the *Picot Report* account of communication, within the Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship open and honest communication was stressed as essential for the building of shared understandings about educational purposes and for the building of mutual responsibility and accountability for teaching and learning processes. While the market version of accountability relies on exploiting teachers’ self-interest in ensuring that their schools remain competitive (assuming that they will lift their performance to protect their own careers) and the managerialist mechanisms build in surveillance over individual’s work and responsibilities, the women co-principals were working within deeper forms of personal accountability and collective responsibility, such as those defined in the NZEI code of professional ethical practice. This binds teachers by moral considerations such as:

Personal service to others through a concern for, and responsible promotion of, the education and welfare of children, students and teachers ... Respect for the professional integrity of their colleagues ... An obligation to help all members maintain the best possible standards of professional competence ... Commitment to a set of values which are fundamental to worthwhile social living (NZEI, 1986).

There is plenty of evidence in each of the case narratives that the co-principals cared for one another, their support staff and the children in their schools. Although it can be acknowledged that some professionals’ conservatism can constrain change (Scott, 1989), none of the co-principals ‘bucked’ the demands of the many rapid changes that were occurring throughout the education system. The Hillcrest Avenue case narrative stories in particular, illustrate how these co-principals were each individually and collectively committed to maintaining high personal standards of integrity, keeping promises, being honest and being

critically reflective about their own professional practices. Their commitments and practices certainly challenge the validity of the NPM discursive constructions of individual motivation as only ever self-interested and opportunistic.

A governance/management version of community accountability

Issues around school/community partnerships and accountability have been confronted also within the co-principal initiatives. Robertson's (1999) analyses of education's restructured regulatory frameworks for teachers are relevant here. She argued that these are built not only on a view of teachers as opportunistically self interested, but also on a view that "teachers' professional interests are anti-community and therefore anti-democratic"(1999, p.124). I discussed in Chapter 6 an earlier review of the nature of secondary school professional/community relationships that reported exclusions of parents and people in the community from any substantive involvement in school decision making (Department of Education, 1976).¹⁸⁹ These concerns were taken up in the *Picot Report*, and its recommendations for the introduction of parent elected boards of trustees as a form of community governance in local schools. Robertson commented that an underpinning assumption was that removing the management of teacher professional interests from the unions to local community governance, would expose teachers "more directly to (assumed) democratic community interests" and ensure that they would respond to those interests (1999, p.124).

The co-principalship initiatives demonstrate some of the inadequacies in these assumptions. Firstly, the NPM constructions of individual teachers as primarily self-interested, denigrate the motivations of teachers such as Jane. She was committed to creating partnerships between herself as a teacher and the parents of her pupils, because, she said, "It is critical that we work together... I genuinely believe that we're all equal. I just happen to be trained in a specific area." All of the co-principal case narratives give vivid examples of how these educational professionals were trying to break down professional/lay people divides.¹⁹⁰ For example, at Hillcrest Avenue School, individual communication books between teachers and parents were initiated; parents were encouraged to attend the children's weekly hui and other school activities and were involved in projects based on home and family relationships. The co-principals at St Mary's School held parent education evenings, where they discussed what they were doing in different school programmes and invited parents' suggestions and involvement. They attended their Samoan community special events and encouraged their

¹⁸⁹ While there is some justification for claims that parents had been insufficiently involved in secondary school practices, in New Zealand primary schools parents have for many years been involved in day-to-day classroom practices.

¹⁹⁰ I will look later at how issues in this area became problematic at St Mary's School.

board to hold meetings in the latter community. At Telford School, parents became involved in activities such as a marae sleep over and were constantly discussing with teachers, issues about their strand's educational philosophy and resources and their children's progress. Indeed, this happened to an extent that was described by one parent as "hands-on involvement," and by some teachers as "demanding" large amounts of time and energy.

Secondly, while it must be acknowledged that there are elements of self interest in people's motivations and actions, and there is wisdom therefore, in taking this into consideration in developing work structures and processes in public organisations, including schools, an over emphasis on this characteristic discounts the existence of individuals' moral commitments to democratically decided organisational goals. The co-principals' commitments to building a wider democratic involvement of all members of the school community in the school's decision making and educational endeavours were particularly evident at Hillcrest Avenue and Telford schools. There, charter revisions were prioritised in full collaboration with all parents, as a way of ensuring that the teachers were taking sufficient account of what parents wanted for their children's education and for the school. I will look later at how Brigid and Carrie's energies in this area were depleted as a consequence of their struggles with their board over governance and management issues.

There is a third limitation in the constructions of community governance in the *Picot Report* and *Tomorrow's Schools*. These combine conflicting assumptions that a community lives in a common geographical locale and has shared, common interests, yet is also an "aggregate ... of selective consumers" who have chosen a particular school (Robertson, 1999, p.127). The case narratives do illustrate the latter point: that is, parental desires for their children and individual lifestyle and employment exigencies were interacting factors in their choice of schools for their children. There was also at Hillcrest Avenue School some homogeneity among the parents (the large majority of whom were white professionals who wanted their children to be well educated to ensure their later employment opportunities and success). However, the families did not live in close proximity to the school: most lived in reasonably far flung suburbs and had enrolled their children in this school because it was conveniently close to their own places of work. A similar scattering of families across far-flung suburbs existed at Telford School. In this case, these parents had chosen the school for educational reasons and as I have already shown, this school was riven by contested class and cultural values, different educational philosophies and aspirations for children. At St Mary's School there was also a geographical and cultural divide between the white, professional families who lived in one suburb and the Samoan working class families who lived further away. Choice here was being shaped by the special religious character of the school.

Thus, while the co-principals in each school held fairly common understandings of education as primarily for the public good and aiming to build a democratic citizenry, it is clear that some diverse individual and group interests existed within their school communities. In these ways, the NPM approach to theorising community and its version of community

governance and accountability (with its conflicting underpinning discourses of market individualism versus consensus citizenry),¹⁹¹ is flawed.

I suggest that a more valid approach is a view of professional educational accountability to different children and parents that is informed by feminist poststructuralist understandings of community, such as are being developed in the field of educational multi-cultural studies (Shields & Seltzer, 1997; Furman, 1998; Beck, 1999). Recent educational theorising that employs this approach is deconstructing previous understandings of community (that incorporate notions of consensus and homogeneity, based on assumed links of kinship and geographical locale and common political and cultural values) and reconstructing more adequate recognitions of the complexities of social fragmentation, differences, disparities and conflicts of interest. I suggest that we can see the beginnings of just such an attempt to build a more carefully distinguished recognition and re-valuing of difference in the co-principalship at Telford School, particularly in the efforts of Kate and her board chairperson to facilitate and negotiate with individuals and groups in their school, a new school charter. While these attempts were limited in the ways that I discussed in the previous chapter, they were efforts that aimed to build a common core of shared values while still enabling and valuing the retaining of different group values and philosophies.

Recognising that any group of people is likely to be divided along multiple axes of difference alerts us to another limitation in the NPM proponents' advocating of singular and market forms of accountability and their associated distrust of collective models of responsibility. Viewing the latter as potential 'cartels' that could provide opportunities for "provider capture" and promotion of sectional interests that could disadvantage individuals, does not adequately recognise how within the everyday events and politics of school life, accountability can be, and is monitored inter-subjectively. As one of the board chairpersons in this study said, people in the school and outside of it "are keeping an eye on what others are doing."

In the next section, I want to give some illustrations of how the factors I have discussed thus far, can be seen to be interacting in the politics of everyday life as the co-principalship was being established at Hillcrest Avenue School and in the other two co-principalships.

Strategic negotiations of individual and shared interests

The Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship case narrative illustrates how intersecting sets of dual dynamics of self-interest and altruism, of individual accountability and mutual responsibilities, of contractual and moral, ethical considerations were being negotiated by

¹⁹¹ Wylie described the board of trustees community governance model as combining "the 'citizen' model ... with more parental involvement in schools through partnership, and the public sector reform model, with its emphasis on hierarchical accountability and contractual relations" (Wylie, 1997b, p. 177).

people in the school community. During the initiation of the co-principalship, many people were keeping an eye on what other people were doing, with parents in particular, exercising their right to “audit the board,” as Mary put it. There were elements of self-interest here, because, as one parent said, “Many of the parents had faith in Karen as their children’s teacher and wanted her as the new principal.” There was also a concern for Karen, however, and a concern to keep the board accountable to her as the teacher who was already in the school. For their part, the board recognised these issues and they wanted Karen “to have equal status and feel comfortable with the whole process.”

Karen herself was challenging both the board and Liz and Jane about how each group was going to manage the shared leadership. Some justifiable self-interest was evident in her asking the board to explain how they could be held accountable by the teachers, and not just exploit the situation to get more work for less pay. She also had ethical professional concerns though, about how the shared leadership was going to work; she was worried that “it could be a disaster” for the school in terms of breaking down established professional working relationships and adversely affecting the children’s education. Although Liz and Jane were convinced about the professional value of their proposal and they wanted the opportunity to try their new model for the principalship, they were concerned also to protect Karen’s interests. They said to her before the decision was made, “Karen, we realise that you are in a very difficult position, but you must say exactly what it is you feel and you must do what is important for you.” They in turn recognised that they had a responsibility to the parents to ensure that they understood what would be entailed in the shared principalship. Liz, Karen and Jane’s views of accountability also went beyond their individual commitments and concerns though. Their commitment to developing practices of mutual responsibility and accountability can be seen in practices such as reminding another person that she was meant to be out on duty or keeping an eye on each other’s teaching. As Jane said, “If someone said I was running a useless social studies programme, Liz and Karen are accountable for that as much as me.” Liz added, “This puts pressure on me, because I don’t want Jane and Karen to be accountable for my slackness!”

The co-principals in each school also showed that they were prepared to try to keep their school communities accountable, in the sense that they were challenging particular sets of values and practices that they saw as inimicable to social justice and respect for other people. (For example, the co-principals at Hillcrest Avenue School challenged the “nanny culture” brought from home into the school, because they saw this inculcating attitudes of personal irresponsibility among the children, along with a disrespect for people who could be employed to ‘do the dirty work’ at home. Brigid, and other teachers at St Mary’s, challenged in various ways the racism and sexism in their school community. Kate and her board chairperson in particular championed the cause of education in tikanga Māori for all of the Māori children in their school, even when this went against the wishes of some of the whānau parents.)

In each of the case narratives, the boards of trustees can be seen also as the 'meat' in the middle of a multi-layered accountability sandwich. They were strongly aware of their accountability to the children in their schools, to find for them the best teachers and educational leader/managers possible. At Telford School finding good teachers was an ongoing and acute problem, because of its two special character strands. The religious special character of St Mary's School meant that the board there also had a limited pool of teachers from which to choose. In the making of staffing decisions, there were, of course, elements of a self-interested concern for the board members' own children, but there is also evidence in the case narratives of their moral concerns to provide quality education for all the children in their schools.

Within the education market environment, the boards had also a 'business' accountability to their communities for keeping their school's reputation and student roll buoyant. However, while the appointing of the co-principals was seen by some of the Hillcrest Avenue board as an astute entrepreneurial move that could give their school a favourable 'market edge' as an innovative school, the St Mary's board members worried that a co-principalship might dissipate management efficiencies. The boards of both these schools were only too aware that they were not only answerable to their communities, but also to the SSC and the Ministry for meeting the legal requirements for the school's management structures and practices. Fiscal accountability for the prudent use of public funds was a demand none of the boards could avoid, and one that as elected trustees they felt responsible about. There were also some moral dilemmas here though. The SSC and the Ministry's insistence that they could not exceed the expected salary pool for the usual staffing arrangements for schools of their sizes, raised the problem of how the boards could adequately recompense the women for the increased responsibilities they were taking on, while also ensuring that taxpayers and the school, of course, got 'value for their money.'¹⁹² The boards can be seen to be caught here in the 'pincer' demands of moral and fiscal responsibilities. It is significant though, that both Hillcrest Avenue School and St Mary's School recognised that in the co-principalships they got very good value for their money - "two for the price of one," as the board chairperson at St Mary's put it.

All of the women co-principals knew, of course, that there was an equity issue here. At Hillcrest Avenue School, the co-principal contractual arrangement meant that each of the

¹⁹² For example, in their letters of appointment, the Hillcrest Avenue School board stated that: "We feel under some pressure in regard to the overall financial implications of the scheme. We are required by virtue of the trusteeship to ensure that public money is used in the most effective manner within the school. This becomes important when we recognise that this arrangement results in three staff in a school with a teaching load of 3.2 being paid on the principals' scale once the system enters its third year. As a result of this requirement embodied in trusteeship, we feel obliged to note that we expect more effective school management by three Co-Principals than we would expect if there were only one principal. At the time of writing, we feel that this is most likely to be confronted as an issue in labour relations during the performance review process, although it may not be restricted to that, and we may from time to time place demands on the three Co-Principals that we would not place on a single Principal" (Preamble to Letter of Appointment 1994).

women became eligible for a salary increase only once every three years, rather than every year, as she would if she was in a single principal position. At St Mary's and Telford, this was once in every two years. In light of the NPM arguments about the need to protect the education system against self-interested opportunism, it is significant that the co-principals all said that they were not in this job primarily for the money. Each of the women was also very aware of the associated industrial issues raised by NZEI: that is the potential for harm to their colleagues' career conditions if the co-principalship had the effect of breaking down hard won teacher career structures. They were consequently all adamant that they must remain within the NZEI collective contract arrangements. None of them would contemplate an individual contract, even though this may have expedited the negotiations around establishing the shared principalships, and perhaps have advantaged them individually. (Their boards could have increased their salaries, for example, without having to stay within the regulations for moving through a set range of rates.) The women's altruistic sense of responsibility towards their colleagues is worth noting here.¹⁹³

These examples illustrate some of the multi-faceted accountabilities and responsibilities and the associated moral dilemmas that were being negotiated by the boards, the teachers and the parents as the co-principalships were being initiated.

Re-writing professional accountability as practices of mutual responsibility

Not surprisingly, given the complexity of the issues that had been raised and divergent views about appropriate forms of accountability in education, the negotiations over the co-principals' contract between the Hillcrest Avenue School board and the SSC took over 12 months before a resolution was achieved. To satisfy SSC's requirements, the board drew on the Selwyn College model for a co-principalship that used rotation, with one person named as principal each year (Glenny et al., 1996). SSC understood this as managing the school "in a way where you share responsibilities, but in each year there is one definite person who is exercising the role and responsibility of Principal and is accountable for everything that is done in the name of the principal" (SSC spokesperson, Interview 1995). However, in practice, all principal activities and responsibilities were shared. Further, the naming of a designated principal was not made public. The women admitted that they were "not transparent" here, but both they and their board agreed that if people knew this detail, the shift to a flat structure of equal authority and leadership responsibility could be jeopardised. Their action here was a

¹⁹³ Despite its limitations, the Hillcrest Avenue School Co-Principals' Contract negotiated between them, their board of trustees and the SSC, enabled the school to have a "protected" salary arrangement. That is, the board could pay each of the co-principals at a principal's salary after they had been the designated principal for a year (given the proviso that the total amount did not exceed the top of the possible pool for a school of its size). Since this arrangement was agreed to, any other school that wanted to enter such an arrangement was required to become a bulk funded school. Bulk funding was later abolished under the Labour coalition government.

strategic one then, and one that both the board and co-principals felt was justified, given the SSC's unwillingness to allow an 'official' shared contract.

The reasons for the school's incorporating of individual liaison roles into the contractual defining of the way the co-principalship would work are also worth some discussion. In accepting liaison roles for particular responsibilities the women could be read as conceding to the SSC's insistence on establishing a division of tasks that could enable "clear lines of accountability" to be established. However, the Hillcrest Avenue co-principal contract also effectively re-wrote this requirement. It stated that the co-principals were required, "to satisfactorily perform, between them, the customary duties and responsibilities of principal and senior teachers within the school and to be held jointly accountable for this performance," being "assessed jointly" in a shared appraisal interview with a review panel. (Hillcrest Avenue School Co-principal Contract, 1993, my emphases).¹⁹⁴ Thus the board and co-principals agreed contractually that the co-principalship was a shared position and its responsibilities and accountabilities were not traceable to just the one person who was in a given year designated as 'the principal,' but as mutually held by all three women.

The co-principals did accept however, that identifying some specific responsibility areas for each of them would make it easier for the board or someone else to have someone to contact about particular matters. Thus they saw that introducing liaison role responsibilities could help to facilitate their shared leadership. Once again, they re-constructed here too, the NPM Taylorist approach to splitting up tasks and responsibilities. While the latter has been advocated and used in some overseas co-principalships (Groover, 1989; Korba, 1982; Thurman, 1969; West, 1978) and is compatible with the sports team model of team leadership that I discussed in Chapter 12, the Hillcrest Avenue co-principals took a more fluid, flexible and inclusive approach. They wanted to emphasise that in their shared leadership, each co-principal would involve the others in decisions that had to be made in the various areas, so they emphasised the communication, information and facilitation aspects of their liaison roles, rather than exercising them as roles of expertise or sole control and accountability. As well as rotating the roles so that each co-principal would have opportunities to develop in each area, they also crossed over and into each other's areas, helping when one person was overloaded, or not well, or when they realised that three heads would be better than one to complete a particular task. They were not averse to using good management strategies though, such as writing up some guidelines, rather like an informal job description, for the roles they were currently working in, so that the useful procedures they developed as they worked in their roles

¹⁹⁴ In Phil's opinion, the performance indicators that his board developed with the co-principals were comprehensive. It was noted that, "With the agreement of the review panel, the co-principals will nominate a person who will assess educational and professional leadership within the school and provide information on this for the appraisal. The review panel's recommendations for action could include, a review of objectives, specification of the process and date for the next performance appraisal, areas of development on which the following appraisal would focus and a statement relating to the satisfactory or otherwise nature of the performance."

could be recorded in their Management Systems folder for the next person who took over. In these ways then, the women can be seen to have been working both within and against the grain of the NPM discursive regime and practices.

The board had to satisfy SSC, however, that if a situation arose where one of the co-principals wasn't doing her job properly, this would be able to be dealt with. The contract included a provision for the disciplining of an individual and for mediation in the case of conflict or a Personal Grievance. The case narrative shows how much care was taken in the writing of these and other parts of the contract, but as I have been arguing, there are ethical dilemmas that are not easily captured in such contractual statements.

Re-inscribing ethical, trusting relations within mutual accountability

Arguably, the most significant of the critiques of the NPM versions of accountability have been mounted in analyses of the insufficient attention given to ethical issues and questions of morality and human worth. Within professional educational discourse and practice, the notion of accountability has been linked closely to that of responsibility. In current common usage, responsibility includes the ideas of "authority; managerial freedom (such as a job with more responsibility); duty and commitment; capacity for rational conduct," and also the notion of being "of good credit, position or repute; respectable, evidently trustworthy - and liable to be called to account, to a person or for a thing" (Thompson, 1993, p.774). The meaning of accountability is subsumed then, within that of responsibility. In the Oxford's definition of accountability, however, the ideas of morality, duty, commitment and trust are not specified. Rather, being accountable is about giving a description, narration, explanation or a record of something that has been done, particularly in regard to financial transactions (ibid, p.6). An accountant is, of course, the "professional keeper or verifier of (money) accounts," and to "turn something to one's account" is to "turn it to one's advantage"(ibid). Each of these elements of accountability are pervading themes in the new public management discourse.

Codd has distinguished between the external (low trust) accountability of line management and internal (high trust) professional responsibility (1999, p.51). The former relies on hierarchically maintained, impersonal processes of control through formal recording and reporting of information. Unthinking obedience and contractual compliance is all that is required in this form of accountability. In contrast, the latter relies on:

commitment, loyalty and a sense of duty... (T)he practitioner has the moral obligation to render an account to several different constituencies, which may have different, or even conflicting interests. This will involve judgement and sometimes the resolution of an ethical dilemma through a process of reflection or deliberation. This may be a collective process, shared with one's peers ... but in this form of accountability, the educational practitioner cannot avoid the exercise of professional discretion, where this may even require refusal to conform with managerial expectations or directives (Codd, 1999, pp.51-2).

It is this kind of ethical high trust responsibility, developed through individual and collective reflection on professional and ethical issues and processes, that informed the shared leadership developed at Hillcrest Avenue School. The case narrative gives extended examples of the kinds of discussions and deliberations the co-principals and the board engaged in about the viability of mutual responsibilities. At one of their professional development days, for example, the co-principals critically explored the meanings of their own professional legal accountabilities (for providing learning situations, support and sometimes hard-nosed evaluations) in relation to what they saw as their shared responsibility with parents and students, for students' constructive learning. The women professionals and their board of trustees partners, refused to conform to the NPM directives about single line accountabilities. They questioned the limitations of a governance/management split as part of ensuring management accountability through control and reporting hierarchies. Indeed, Beth Lawson (the board chairperson in 1996) pointed out that the legislated splits between board and principals' accountabilities are in practice "very blurred ... If we talk about a governance/management split, what is trying to be established here is a form of accountability hierarchy. But the objective is the same for both - to provide quality education for children, and here we are all involved - the board, the principals, and the parents too." Another of the board members saw a "widening of the responsibility net" as one of the particular strengths of the co-principalship. He said:

I think socially we tend to sort of try and pass the buck up or down, rather than collectively saying yes we're all responsible. One of the features about this school that I like, and that I know other parents like, is the whole area of social responsibility - doing things cooperatively and taking responsibility, not only for yourself and your own stuff but also for the welfare of others. The co-principal model and the way it works here is reinforcing that shared responsibility and shared accountability and I think that it's a really valid model (Interview with Bruce).

The Hillcrest Avenue School case narrative shows then, how this co-principalship proposal and set of practices problematised the nature of largely taken for granted hierarchies in education, deconstructed task specific and single line forms of accountability and re-constructed parent/professional partnerships in education as mutual responsibility for children's learning. In this school, the issues around the questions of who governs, who manages and who "carries the can" (SSC spokesperson, 1995) were explored within generally supportive and trusting relationships between the co-principals, their board members and school community. Although there were some early painful battles between the Hillcrest Avenue School parents and the board over what parents saw as their exclusion from the appointment processes, those conflicts quickly subsided. Issues around the board's accountability to both the community and to Karen were resolved quickly also. Some substantive challenges to the NPM narrow economically rationalist understandings of

accountability were mounted in this co-principalship, and after three years it was successfully formalised within the revised school charter which affirmed the shared leadership approach.

Negotiating governance/management divides: the St Mary's School co-principalship

Wylie's research has shown that four main types of board exist currently in this country, with most falling into the first two categories. These are supportive; supporting "from the heart" (but not practically); reactive (looking to the principal for guidance on both large and small matters); and mistrustful (Wylie, 1997a, p.24). While the Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship had the benefit of a very supportive board, at St Mary's, the board were quite mistrustful of their co-principals and some very different dynamics of governance and management resulted. From the beginning, relationships between this board and their co-principals were more conflictual. Misunderstandings of the nature of governance and management roles and board responsibilities for professional accountability persisted and some personality clashes also emerged in ways that impacted negatively on this co-principalship.

Before I begin my analyses of these dynamics, I need to examine briefly Brigid and Carrie's approach to proposing their co-principalship and how they developed their shared leadership practices.

The co-principalship proposal: a senior management team

While Brigid was committed to shared collaborative approaches, her reason for initiating a shared leadership was mainly to ease the high workload and associated stress of the teaching principalship. For Carrie, who wanted ultimately to be a sole principal, working in the co-principalship with Brigid was a career opportunity, potentially providing good experience and professional development. These motivations are reflected in both Brigid's and Carrie's stories and their proposal, where they stated that they were dedicated to their careers and to "the benefit of a shared load."

Their proposal began within a transformative leadership discursive argument that together they would "work towards creating a school community shared vision." It proceeded though, as a more traditional kind of application for a principal's position than either of the other two co-principal proposals. Brigid and Carrie focused on presenting their combined strengths for the job. They included their professional skills in school development, appraisal models, innovative teaching and counselling and ability to uphold the special character of the school and the Treaty of Waitangi. They listed their management abilities "to motivate, set goals, delegate and provide strong leadership" and to meet deadlines, prioritise, delegate, work under pressure, write policy and budget. Overall, they presented themselves as professional

team workers. What is noticeable in this proposal, however, is that the language of collaborative leadership and of collectivity is minimised. It really only appears in the phrase, "We believe that shared input leads to shared ownership and commitment." Rather than expanding on this notion of sharing as fundamental for their professional collaboration, (as was done at some length in both of the other co-principalship proposals), Brigid and Carrie linked this statement to a quality management argument - that shared input would "maximise the quality of decisions made at the management level." Their understanding of what their co-principalship would offer is clear in their summing up statement that they would be "a management team with broad vision, dual accountability and wide-ranging expertise."

Brigid and Carrie's conception of co-principalship echoes a common approach to team leadership in schools where the principal and the deputy principal work together as a senior management team. This approach was modified into a dual leadership, as in the co-principalship at Stantonbury Campus in the UK and in some of the co-principalship models in the US. Brigid and Carrie did not envision, however, the clear division of "business administration management" and instructional/curriculum leadership as was proposed in the US by Thurman (1969) and Korba (1982) and practised in the US schools studied by West (1978) and Groover (1989). Rather than setting up a division of roles, they wanted to share leadership and administration roles. Their aims then, were more like the US model studied by Dass (1995), where each co-principal had equal authority in all areas of instruction and administration. Dass argued that this approach enabled a greater sharing of ideas and building of mutual trust and team strategies.

Developing an integrative approach to team leadership

Although the St Mary's co-principalship proposal did seem to embody some of the usual hierarchical splits between principal and teacher, management and teaching, once Brigid and Carrie started working together, they developed a very collaborative approach. In practice, they used very similar strategies to those used by the Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship, and to those reported in the US job-shared elementary school co-principalships of Gordon and Meadows (1986) and the Canadian Henry Hudson School co-principalship (White, 1991).¹⁹⁵ They also extended their collaboration to include all the other staff in a wide range of

¹⁹⁵ Although in the latter two schools, the co-principals worked alternatively in the leadership position, each set of co-principals talked together about all aspects of their work and shared all important decision making. They shared all the management tasks, though they worked on some aspects separately during their principal release times. A difference between Brigid and Carrie's co-principalship and others I have read about, is that they were quite close friends at the beginning of their initiative, and they enjoyed socialising together out of school. They would combine a café lunch with planning for a school event or task such as the staff appraisals. While other people thought that this was what made their co-principalship work so well, the case narrative reveals how these two women assumed a number of things that were more carefully negotiated, planned and reviewed in the successful Hillcrest Avenue School co-principalship. This could have been a contributing factor in the breaking down of their beginning very close relationship.

leadership activities, such as setting the agendas for school wide planning, sharing knowledge and resources and working together to solve teaching and learning problems. They devolved budget decisions to the teachers who held particular curriculum responsibilities and developed a collaborative approach to staff appraisals, although they did not 'flatten' this aspect of their management as much as Kate and Ann did at Telford School. The latter introduced peer appraisals where they were themselves appraised in their teaching by other staff.

Like Kate and Ann, though, Brigid and Carrie saw themselves as responsible for developing a vision for the school with other people, that is, talking to other people about their ideas. Southworth has criticised principals who remain in charge, in the sense of being "sovereign" in the school, arguing that in this situation, consultation can be perceived as "only developing teacher interaction as a vehicle for the implementation of his or her wishes" (Southworth, 1993, p.75). He approved of the three collaborative principals in his study, whom he described as "infecting" others with their clear and enthusiastic articulations of their own educational beliefs and philosophies, acting as role models for others (*ibid*). In contrast to the underlying elitism that is evident in this approach and in some other accounts of transformative collaborative leadership (such as that described by Stewart and Prebble, 1993), Brigid and Carrie believed that if a leader had to inspire others to "come on board," then the vision would not be owned by all. Instead of "inspiring others to get the ball rolling" as Carrie put it, they used a structured approach where they "sat down with the whole staff, and said to them, 'What is your vision for the school?'" They workshopped together with all the staff, discussing everybody's ideas until they reached a consensus for their educational purposes and plans. As a consequence, the staff said they felt "a part of it all - it was so shared." Brigid and Carrie's approach was consistent then, with the collegial approaches I discussed in Chapter 12 (Nias et al, 1989; Hargreaves, 1991).

It is worth noting here the irony that within the restructuring of educational administration in Aotearoa/New Zealand, the NPM reformers targeted professional collaboration as having led to a "provider capture" that had "weakened" educational outcomes. In the US however, teacher collegiality has been valorised as "the key to change" within the shifts there to school site-based management (Hargreaves, 1991, p. 48). Indeed, US researchers have argued that collegiality is the "bridge" between effective professional development and continuous school improvement (Lieberman, 1990; Rosenholtz, 1991; Lee et al., 1993), as well as the way towards an effective implementation of curriculum reform (Miles & Huberman, 1984). These factors appeared to be happening at St Mary's School, according to the Education Review Office report at the end of 1995, which noted how the school teaching and learning programmes were developing and flourishing. A professional appraisal of the co-principalship at the end of that year also noted many achievements in both educational and management areas.

Given these facts, it seems puzzling that this co-principalship did not endure. In the rest of this chapter I want to explore what happened in the light of Foucault's arguments about the nature of social power relations.

“Reciprocal incitation and struggle”

At the beginning of this chapter I noted Foucault's argument that while power has become progressively elaborated, rationalised and centralised within state institutions, all individuals undergo and exercise power in social interactions that are “at the same time reciprocal incitation and struggle” (1982, pp. 221, 224). Foucault also argued that these social relations of power “cannot be established consolidated, nor implemented without the production, accumulation and functioning of discourse” (1980, p.93). That is, individual and group exercising of power cannot occur without the evoking of particular discursive configurations of ‘truth’ which shape what can and can't be said in particular situations, who is authorised to speak and who is excluded. In the following sections, I want to explore how factors such as the political rhetoric about parental involvement in the early days of educational restructuring and the new positionings for parents that were introduced in the NPM discourse, can be seen to have empowered some of the St Mary's board members to issue challenges to the state and increasingly, to their co-principals.

I will show too, how ambiguities within the discursive constructions of governance and management, particularly in the legislation for board and principal management responsibilities, contributed to misunderstandings and struggles over these roles. Some of the interpersonal disagreements that eventuated were exacerbated by the ways individuals took up positions in either, or both, professional and NPM discourses. They can be seen to have been sometimes empowered and sometimes dis-empowered within these shifting discursive dynamics. In the last part of my discussions, I will examine how these struggles proved to be somewhat painful and destructive, not only for Brigid and Carrie, but also for some board members such as Fay, who ‘agonised’ about the nature of her personal involvement in challenging the co-principals. Throughout my analyses in this second part of the chapter, the questions of how to govern oneself and others, how to be governed and how to be a good governor (Foucault, 1991) are particularly significant.

I begin by looking at how Wayne Anderson, the board chairperson at St Mary's, challenged the State Services commission and advocated for this co-principalship.

The board chairperson challenges the state

When Wayne initially consulted SSC and was told by those officials that a co-principalship was illegal, rather than negotiating to try and win a concession for a co-principal collective contract, as had been done at Hillcrest Avenue School, or just ignoring these legalities altogether, as happened at Telford School, Wayne told SSC that the board were the people who were “in charge” at St Mary’s School. He asked the SSC officials, “Who’s running this ship?” and challenged them to “sack us” if they didn’t like what the board did. Frustrated by the restrictions being put in the way of the board’s “attempts to do something good” for their children and their school,¹⁹⁶ he decided to go ahead and introduce the idea of a co-principalship to the board.

Wayne’s reaction can be understood as part of a wider resistance to the administration reforms that emerged in the early 1990s. As I explained in Chapter 6, there was a huge protest from both parents and professional members of school communities, when alterations were made to the original clauses in *Tomorrow’s Schools* about the contractual agreement, or charter, between school boards and the state. These changes effectively removed the requirement on the state to provide adequate funding for the implementation of each school’s goals (Codd & Gordon, 1991).¹⁹⁷ Consequently, government passed legislation that made boards a body corporate, limiting the individual responsibility of each school trustee. This change can be seen to have empowered some board members, such as Wayne, to take action in ways that trod fine lines between challenging and ignoring the authority of state agents and complying with the ‘rules’ for governance and management accountabilities.

It is interesting to note here, that while Wayne issued SSC with an ultimatum (“sack us if you like”), the Telford School board of trustees explicitly deconstructed the NPM requirements in education for a split between school governance and management roles and responsibilities. In the job description that the Telford school board developed for their principal’s position they stated:

¹⁹⁶ He continued to feel this way about the *Tomorrow’s Schools* model. He told me, “Although the board of trustees model was sold to us as a way of having some input into your child’s education, it didn’t do anything for my children. We tried to have some input through going the co-principalship way and doing a few things we wanted to do, but they (the agencies) certainly didn’t help us.” His stories in the case narrative also describe his frustrations about poor training opportunities as well as the huge expectations and responsibilities placed on boards with little recognition being given in return, either by the state agencies in terms of financial recompense, or their own school community in terms of gratitude.

¹⁹⁷ In the Picot Report (1988) the Charter was to be “a contract between the state and the institution” as well as “between the institution and its community” (p.4). In 1990 Ministry of Education personnel realised that this bound the government to provide the necessary resources for the school to meet its goals. The wording of the charter “agreement” was changed to an “undertaking” by the school boards to the Minister of Education and reference to the Ministerial commitment to fund schools was removed. This effectively left the boards carrying responsibility for poor achievement that might actually be the consequence of inadequate funding from the state (Codd & Gordon, 1991).

In a school with a teaching principal it is acknowledged that the ideal Governance/Management relationship between the Board of Trustees and the Principal is not always achievable. The board's priority is for teaching excellence and accordingly it is accepted that the principal will not be able to adequately fulfill all the administrative tasks that are required. It is the Principal's responsibility to identify all administrative tasks and to seek assistance from the Board of Trustees/parents as required (Telford School, G2 Principal's Job Description, 1994.)

Both Wayne's and the Telford board's actions demonstrate Wylie's point that school boards have an independence from the government because, unlike government employees, they are "not bound to reflect in public only government views" (Wylie, 1995, p.157). They are part of civil society rather than the state. Wayne's rather 'stropy' reaction to the SSC reflects this positioning and the ways that board members have some leverage in their relations with the state, in that they work for a pittance (they are essentially volunteers) and there is not a queue of people lining up to take their jobs. Wylie drew on her NZCER surveys (carried out in 1990 and 1993) to show that boards of trustees do their voluntary work because they are motivated to do things for children and because they enjoy being involved, as part of a team, in their school's decision making.¹⁹⁸

Trying to build a parent/professional partnership?

As a consequence of what he saw as an unhelpful exchange with the state agents, Wayne Anderson decided that rather than trying to work in a so-called "partnership with government,"¹⁹⁹ he would concentrate his efforts on supporting a co-principal partnership. He was worried though, by the way that the Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship contract had stepped outside of the legal definitions for the principalship. Concerned to protect Brigid and Carrie's positions and careers, he argued for introducing the co-principalship at St Mary's within "a legal agreement" that would keep it "quite clean," as he put it.²⁰⁰ Thus Carrie was named as principal and Brigid as deputy principal (though this was not made public for similar reasons to those given at Hillcrest Avenue School). Wayne saw this as a strategic agreement that would mean a future board could not unilaterally dis-establish the co-principalship,

¹⁹⁸ This last point illuminates the frustration felt by some of the St Mary's board members about what they saw as the co-principals' exclusion of them in some areas of the school's work. I will return to this point again later, in relation to Fay's story.

¹⁹⁹ This was the title that the Ministry of Education later gave to its booklet on "essential information for new school trustees" (Ministry of Education, 1998).

²⁰⁰ The *Letter of understanding between St Mary's School board and co-principals* (dated 5 /1/1995) agreed that both the board and the co-principals would "work towards the smooth introduction of role sharing within the industrial and legislative frameworks."

without “going through a fair process.” From his comments, it seemed clear to me that Wayne was almost expecting some kind of trouble to emerge within his school community.

Or flexing ‘client’ and ‘employer’ muscle to challenge the professional/lay divide?

Within the educational market/NPM discursive environment, both parents and board members were becoming increasingly empowered in education at this time. As clients, parents could choose a school for their children. Several threats to take children out of the school were reported to me during the time I was researching the co-principalships. As partners in their children’s education, they could become more involved in both the teachers’ and the board’s work. Some of the parents in each of the three schools persistently challenged what the teachers were doing in their classrooms and the case narratives describe the challenges that parents issued to their boards. When this happened at St Mary’s School, Wayne Anderson’s response was to “draw a line in the sand and quite forcibly point out to them that the board had been elected to run the school.”

Last but not least, however, parent trustees had been empowered in the educational administration reforms as employers of all the teaching staff. Wylie's research reported that “the relationship between a school principal and a board was more likely to reflect the ethos of ‘partnership’ which was emphasised in the initiation of the reforms, than the hierarchical control which is the hallmark of NPM” (Wylie, 1995, p.157). Although Wylie reported in 1997 that the official role of employer that was emphasised most for boards “barely features” in surveys of board members carried out up to that time (Wylie, 1997b, p.129), at St Mary’s School some board members seemed to revel in what they saw as their employer power to control the co-principals’ work.

There are many examples in the case narrative of this, such as, when the board interviewed Brigid and Carrie, the women felt that they were given “a grilling” because the board were concerned to “have someone to nail to the wall” if things went wrong. A board member told Brigid and Carrie at their first board meeting, “You’d better behave yourselves girlies, because we’re your employers now.” David Sullivan (who followed Wayne as board chairperson at St Mary’s School in May, 1995), commented that as the co-principals’ employer he could demand that they do certain things. From the earliest stages of this co-principalship some of the St Mary’s board members emphasised that it was their right to maintain a close surveillance over what the co-principals were doing, and they continually sought explanations and documentation from the co-principals about a wide range of topics and events.

These challenges had been partially enabled by the NPM discursive characterising of professionalism as “provider capture.” While few parents had been able to impact previously on school decision making, especially about matters to do with the curriculum and teaching and learning (Department of Education, 1976), the rhetoric that accompanied the publication

of *Tomorrow's Schools* opened up expectations that the educational professional/lay divides, which I described in Chapter 6, were about to be broken down. Ironically though, given the educational administration reformers' concern about professional provider capture, some parents and board trustees at St Mary's tried to co-opt the NPM discourse to their own advantage, exhibiting some vested self interest themselves, in their participation in the school's affairs.²⁰¹

Significantly also for the later trajectory of the St Mary's co-principalship, some parents misjudged the extent of the power of their positions as board trustees and some enacted their 'partnership responsibilities' in rather adversarial ways. The co-principals' feeling of being "bullied" at times by some members of the board is not surprising given the kinds of interactions described in the case narrative. Carrie called it all "a bit of a power game" and unsurprisingly, at times the co-principals retaliated. Within a developing climate in the school of "reciprocal incitation and struggle" (Foucault, 1982, p.222) they used a tactical manoeuvre that wasn't completely open, when they took some extra release time on the agreement of one of the board members rather than clearing this before the event with the whole board.

Ambiguities and tensions around board and principal management roles

It is interesting that tensions in the area of governance and management roles and responsibilities had existed in this school prior to the time when the board were considering introducing a co-principalship. Wayne Anderson, who was the board chairperson between 1992-1995, said that there had been some disagreements between the previous board and principal. According to Wayne, this had arisen out of the board's wish to take more control over the school's finances. In his view, the board were "trying to be forceful" while also being supportive of the staff, whom they saw as carrying huge workloads as the educational system was restructuring. These rather contradictory motivations and ambivalent attitudes seem to have carried over into the co-principalship.

The origins of the tensions can be located in ambiguities around the board's role in management in the *Education Act, 1989*.²⁰² In this legislation it was stated that while the principal has "day to day" management discretion and control, the board has "overall management control." The Hillcrest Avenue board and co-principals interpreted these ambiguities as an opportunity to build partnerships, in which accountabilities were held

²⁰¹ For example, one of the parent board members tried to influence the development of the school's suspension policy in ways that would benefit her own child.

²⁰² Section 75 stated that, "A school's Board has complete discretion to control the management of the school as it thinks fit," and Section 76 stated that, "The school's principal is the Board's chief executive in relation to the school's control and management ... and shall comply with the Board's policy direction." Section 76 also stated however, that the principal "has complete discretion to manage as the principal thinks fit the day to day administration."

mutually by board members/parents and co-principals. At St Mary's school, however, ambiguities around the boundaries between the board's and the principals' spheres of influence and control became a problem early on in the relationships between some of the St Mary's board members and Brigid and Carrie.

Persisting provocations: discourse, knowledge and power

Foucault's description of governing power as a relationship that is "less of a face-to-face confrontation which paralyses both sides, than a permanent provocation" (1982, p.222), is a particularly apt way of looking at the nature of many of the board/co-principal interactions at different times during the three years that Brigid and Carrie worked together. Struggles persisted within shifting links between discourse, knowledge and power. While the co-principals felt that the board kept interfering in their professional management areas, some board members felt that Brigid and Carrie were not giving them enough information about these areas and they wanted to have more input. The co-principals were frustrated that there was not enough adequate information available from the Ministry of Education about what boards could and should be doing, and they remained concerned that the board did not have sufficient training for their responsibilities. Some of the board agreed, but were frustrated that the school had to pay for advice from the School Trustees Association and what they experienced as poor training offered by consultants and they refused to do more.²⁰³ The co-principals felt they should not be telling the board what to do, but found themselves often having to supply missing information and advice to David when ^{he} became the board chairperson. Carrie said, "It would be just so nice if there were a little piece of paper somewhere that said, right - here's what the board should do, these are your roles."²⁰⁴

Some board members' misunderstandings about how the board governance/principal management roles were intended to be enacted were compounded by wider gaps in their knowledge about educational policy, management and teaching and learning practices. Unlike the Hillcrest Avenue School board, who along with their co-principals, had an impressive array of skills and knowledge in relation to educational policy, governance and management, the St Mary's board of 1995-7, was described by Wayne as like many other school boards of trustees, made up of "good people who are interested, but who don't have the skills or

²⁰³ Wayne said, "I think there are insufficient support mechanisms for school boards. If you pick up the phone you know, you are paying per minute for the advice you are getting and as a board chair you are forever conscious of the fact that you are spending the schools' money. Most of the educational courses I went to were a complete waste of time. They struck me as an ego trip for the presenter rather than good, informative information. So as a board we stopped spending money on board education."

²⁰⁴ This was in July 1996, before the Ministry of Education published in 1997, *Governing and Managing in New Zealand Schools: A Guide for Boards of Trustees*.

qualifications.”²⁰⁵ As the parish priest commented, “There are great pressures. After all, we are not professionals - we are people from the community who are trying to do our best.” The dis-empowering impact on the board of the long-standing professional knowledge/control divides in education, which legitimated the constituting of teachers as experts in education and parents as ‘lay’ people, can be identified in the board members’ comments.

For their part, although they had each been co-principals and briefly acting principals, neither Brigid nor Carrie had attended any leadership or management professional development courses before they became co-principals. Thus, while the board had inadequate understandings of the distinctions between governance and management, Brigid and Carrie did not have an in-depth knowledge of theories of professional collaborative leadership. They said there was no guidance from the Principals’ Federation about how to deal with particular situations, and so they had to learn on the job. Thus they, too, can be seen to have been somewhat dis-empowered in their struggles with the board, in that they were not able to draw on professional management discourses to counter some board members’ challenges to their practices.

Thus different discursive links between knowledge and power can be seen to have been forged and re-forged at St Mary’s in ways that sometimes advantaged the board in their attempts to gain control over what the co-principals were doing, and sometimes advantaged the co-principals in their attempts to exercise their authority as professional educational leaders. Board members could exercise power and control over the co-principals by speaking through NPM discourse, which authorised them as the legal employers, governors and controllers of overall management, and the co-principals could retaliate from their positioning in that discourse as the day-to-day managers, as well as from within a professional discourse, which authorised them as having ‘expert’ educational knowledge and hence decision making power in curriculum and teaching areas. Both groups can be seen to have engaged at times in strategies and tactics that sadly, contributed to building a climate of mistrust between them.

During these struggles, the board/co-principal interactions became at different times confrontational and/or anxious, as challenges were issued and/or moderated, revelled in and/or worried about. I want to explore these dynamics now.

²⁰⁵ Although he himself had knowledge of and experience in private sector industrial relations, Wayne had had no experience of state sector employment requirements before he became a school trustee. And David Sullivan, who became the St Mary’s board chairperson in the second year of the co-principalship, said, “Even though I was a teacher years ago, I don’t know how a school is run. Alistair, our treasurer, doesn’t know how the finances work, though he knows what money we’ve got and won’t let us commit ourselves to something we haven’t got the money for.” Fay Reilly, another board member, said that she had “no idea what the co-principals are supposed to do as principals, so how am I supposed to know if they are accountable or not?”

“Agonistic” power struggles

The contestations over what was to count as leadership, governance/management and accountability, were being played out at St Mary’s within what Foucault called the “agonistic” relationships of governmentality (1982, p.222). In coining the word “agonistic” to describe such struggles, Foucault was playing on a Greek word that meant “a combat.” Hence, his translator noted, “the term would imply a physical contest in which the opponents develop a strategy of reaction and mutual taunting, as in a wrestling match” (Translator’s note, Foucault, 1982, p.222). While there was not a physically combative character to the board/co-principals relationships, there certainly was evidence of provocation, taunting and reaction.

The case narrative illustrates how on several occasions these exchanges were coloured by feminist challenges towards ‘macho’ posturings. For example, the sexism of some fathers in the cricket match incident provoked amazement and retaliation among the female school staff. David’s behaviour towards the co-principals was described as sexist by one teacher and flippant by another. Struggles that were being enacted over gendered divides and inflected by pre-constructed traditional ‘gender difference’ discourses, were more evident to me in this school than in either Hillcrest Avenue School or Telford School. The women were described by many as having “a woman’s way of leading,” which was characterised as a gentle and patient style of leadership, “talking quietly” as one said, rather than taking a more authoritative, up-front approach, which this person thought would advantage their position with the board. David was described by another board member (who was his friend) as enjoying “a good fight on the board, a strong disagreement, something that gets the adrenalin going.” David saw this as men’s ways of working together, and he wished that the co-principals would “argue and fight” rather than withdrawing and “clamming up” as he saw it, in situations of disagreement.²⁰⁶ Ball (1987, p.107) has described this approach as an adversarial leadership style which uses “rows, battles, challenges.”

Not all of the board/co-principal interactions were like this, of course. Wayne’s relationship with the co-principals was characterised by mutual respect (as were those between the male board of trustees members and the women co-principals at Hillcrest Avenue School). These male/female working relationships were not constructed within traditional gendered oppositions or hierarchies, but as more equal partnerships.

Within people’s accounts of some of the governance/management challenges and power struggles in St Mary’s school, there was also evidence however, of the personal pain some felt as a consequence. There is a link, of course, in the word “agonistic,” to the meanings of pain and suffering. Brigid, for example, articulated the hurt she felt as a consequence of the

²⁰⁶ The teacher representative on the board disagreed with that description, saying the women took care to explain or if they did not have the information to hand, they would say they would bring it to the next meeting.

“impersonal and overly formal nature” of the final review that was carried out on the co-principalship.

A further play on the word “agonistic” is possible though. Colloquially, to ‘agonise’ over something is to worry about it, and I want to look at this dynamic some more now.

Worrying about accountability

Despite my characterising of the St Mary’s governance/management relationships as rather combative, even at times, antagonistic, board members felt a considerable amount of anxiety about the responsibility and accountability for education that *Tomorrow’s Schools* had devolved onto them. Individually and collectively, they ‘agonised’ over a range of questions raised by the co-principalship, such as the questions they explored in their early meeting with Phil Cody (whom they brought in to advise them about issues that might be of concern in the appointing of co-principals). Wayne felt worried about the legality of the shared leadership and the welfare of the co-principals. David worried about the parents and whether they were getting a “fair deal.” Some board members worried whether people would know who to go to and others were concerned about what they could do if one principal was not competent.

The SSC, the Ministry, the School Trustees’ Association and NZEI, the teachers’ union, had all identified the last concern about equivalent competency as potentially one of the more significant problems of co-principalship. Their concerns were about tracing accountability and about the perceived inequity of one principal “carrying” another. The Hillcrest Avenue case narrative shows, however, that the women in that school saw supporting one another in times of difficulty (such as poor health, family crises and so on) as part of the job, and they also, as a matter of course, took responsibility for keeping each other accountable. Further, their board had put in place procedures to deal with individual incompetency, should this arise. This situation did occur at Telford School, but its able board chairperson showed how this problem could be dealt with appropriately in ways that did not destroy trust, either between the staff, or between staff, board and parents. She undertook a survey of parents and other people to identify any concerns and carried out individual appraisals that were worked through supportively with both co-principals.

At St Mary’s School however, Fay Reilly, one of the board members, continued to worry about the board’s accountability for the co-principals’ performance, as well as about broader matters of staff employment and what should be constituted as good teaching and management. Concerns about her lack of knowledge in each of these areas were particularly acute for her. She admitted that she could be a “bolshy bitch” when she became concerned about an issue (her confrontational manner, particularly when she “joined forces” with David,

caused some stress and annoyance for the co-principals).²⁰⁷ Her stories show, however, how even “bolshy” board members can feel very anxious about the moral and ethical dimensions of their responsibilities. They can end up not only ‘agonising’ over these worries but also, in Foucauldian terms, “disciplining” themselves in forms of discursive self-regulation.

Governmentality as disciplining the self: Fay’s story

Fay’s story provides some valuable insights into how governmental power and control is not merely exercised in top down state control and reciprocal struggles with others, but produced also in ever more invisible strategies of normalization, self introspection and reporting on the self (Foucault, 1982). Foucault argued that this is to do with the delimiting of possibilities for action, through the power of the norm to shape individual ways of thinking and being and a constraining of possible action through internalised ‘self’ regulation. How were these dual dynamics evident in Fay’s case?

Fay was trying to take action as a parent board trustee within the delimiting boundaries of the NPM rules, regulations and procedures for school governance and management, and those constructed in a professional discourse that has divided teacher ‘experts’ from parent ‘lay people.’ Her persistent questioning of the co-principals can be seen to be part of her attempts to gain knowledge and information that would satisfy her that both the co-principals and she herself were doing their respective jobs properly, that is, within NPM requirements. Her attempts to be ‘a good board trustee’ in the latter’s terms were constrained though, by her positioning as a parent/lay person within professional discourse. Teachers are positioned as experts in this discourse and authorised to speak about educational matters. Positioned as lay people, parents are excluded from authority as educational experts and their questions can be silenced in rather invisible ways, such as Fay identifies in the following comments. She said:

I do feel a bit disappointed in myself that I haven’t got the information I need. I don’t feel I’m doing a particularly good job and I know by asking questions I’m just going to add to their workloads and their stress levels. Not only because they will feel they are being criticised, but also because it means they are put in a position of ‘Gosh, how are we going to explain to lay people what we as teachers automatically know because we’ve done it so long all these years it’s just second nature to us.’ (Interview with Fay)

Thus, while Fay’s challenges to the co-principals can be read as part of an attempt to cross the professional/lay divide, her comments illustrate how almost simultaneously she was

²⁰⁷ She said, for example, that when she was worrying about her lack of knowledge about an area, she would say to David Sullivan, “‘Gee it cheeses me off!’ and he’s very good, but he’s very naughty. He says, ‘Go for it!’ He knows I’m a right bolshy bitch and I’m quite happy to argue something because he’s asked me to or because I feel strongly about it. So he would quite often prod me, or raise an eyebrow and I’d wade in with another question.”

re-inscribing herself within the dividing categories and practices of this discourse. She can be seen to have internalised the categories and terms of professional discourse and to have taken up for herself the position of a 'lay person.' In this process, she was "subjectivizing" herself within this discourse (McNay, 1994), accepting its exclusion of her own knowledge and expertise. Within professional discourse, parent's knowledge can be read as not sufficiently "scientific" or "elaborated" to enable them to judge what is appropriate in schooling.

In the case narrative there is some evidence of the 'truth' of this last point in Fay's case, as well as evidence of the extra work the co-principals had to take on as a consequence of board members' lack of knowledge and/or skills. The impact on Fay of her exclusions from the knowledge bases that she saw as necessary for her role as a trustee was clearly substantial, however. She berated herself that she had not acquired the knowledge she needed and judged herself as failing in her responsibility and role as a trustee. In these self-regulating practices, she can be seen to be blaming herself for what was, to some extent, the effects of the state's devolution of responsibility for school governance and management down to local school level. This illuminates the nature of another aspect of governmentality, the discursive 'reach' of state policy makers and auditors down to the local level, where individuals who have not been adequately resourced with funding, information or knowledge, now have to "carry the can" if things go wrong in their own school communities.

Fay was frustrated by what seemed to her to be the futility of her situation as a non-professional who was being expected, within the *Tomorrow's Schools* model, to be accountable for the school's provision of education for their children. She acknowledged that she had not sought out enough training, but she pointed out that "It would be very difficult to train parents adequately in these areas, or even to give them any guidance in what a teacher should be doing or how they should be doing it. You have to be a fairly senior teacher to be able to judge whether a teacher is doing a good job or not." This, of course, is one of the fallacies of the governance/management split that requires parents to be responsible for performance management appraisals on their school professionals.

Frustration emerged also in relation to another dynamic in Fay's experience as a board trustee. She said that sometimes, when what she wanted was to be given information such as another teacher would get in answer to a question, she felt that she was being treated by the co-principals "as 'just a mother' while they were the professionals." The subject position of a 'a mother,' as I have explained in my earlier discussions of masculinist discourse in Chapters 1, 3 and 7, is one that traditionally has linked women to socially under-valued positions in caring domesticity, as opposed to the highly valued positionings of men in public positions of authority, 'scientific' knowledge and power. As a mother, Fay was expected to be caring, nurturing and supportive, not authoritative, assertive and challenging. In comparison with Fay, David can be seen to have been building his authority in the board chairperson position on macho masculine approaches to meeting procedures and male networks that linked him into "the captains of industry" as he put it. This gave him a certain amount of leverage in his

relationships with the co-principals that was not available for Fay when she wanted to try 'facing down' Brigid and Carrie. In her engagements with the co-principals, the professional women seemed to Fay to be winning and she felt "cheesed off" sometimes about what she saw as their unwillingness to give enough evidence that they were doing their jobs properly. I suggest that both Fay's and David's frustrations fed into the new board's decision in 1998 to review and disestablish the co-principalship after Brigid had been out of the school for a year on study leave.

A return to "clear lines of accountability"

The case narrative describes how, when Brigid was preparing to return after her year's study leave, she found that the majority of this new board ("hard-nosed business types, captains of industry" as David described the group of male "lawyers, company secretaries, accountants" who were elected in 1997), did not "favour the concept of shared leadership." During a review that David saw as "neutral and fair ... procedurally correct," the co-principals were told that the board was "looking for direct lines of accountability and responsibility - there are not sharp enough lines of leadership." In what seems to be a complete about face from his earlier opinion that the agreement Wayne's board had completed with the co-principals, David reported that "The board looked at the rules and regulations around the principalship and this co-principalship doesn't follow the rules. It has no legal standing." Wayne's effort to protect the co-principalship by "making it legal" to "keep it clean," had been re-interpreted and re-written. The discourse of NPM was being cited now as the 'truth' about this co-principalship and being used to dismantle it.

To be fair to the board, Carrie's desire to be a sole principal also impacted on this decision and she later felt guilty that she had not stopped what was happening. In the end then, the NPM discourse seems to have 'won' on two fronts, both in the reinstating at St Mary's of its rules, regulations and procedures for the principalship and in its arguments about individual motivation being self-interested.

Constraining resistance

What happened at St Mary's school is a salutary illustration of Foucault's argument that within struggles over discourse and knowledge, "techniques and procedures of power enter into play at the most basic levels," through a closely linked grid of procedures that can be deployed in ways that annex power in "ever more general mechanisms and forms of global domination" (Foucault, 1980, pp.99, 101). His observation that the establishing of a discursive regime^{of} truth is "as much as for economic production as for political power" (1980, p.133) is a reminder that the NPM discourse was promoted by corporate business interests, economists and politicians intent on transforming this country into an entrepreneurial state that could be

competitive in an increasingly global market. The new board at St Mary's was dominated by men of these persuasions and their positions of authority and status in the wider society clearly impressed David and gave their opinions weight, it seemed, when the final decision was made about whether to continue the co-principalship or not.

While my research has shown how the NPM regime and its supporters were being challenged at the local school level through the initiation of a set of counter discursive practices, what happened at St Mary's is a salutary illustration of how individuals' ability to resist hierarchical power relations and "ever more general ... forms of global domination," as Foucault put it, can be constrained. During the time of this research, within a worldwide "widening and deepening of capitalist relations" and a resurgence of neo-liberal assumptions about human behaviour and individual interests, educational purposes, practices and regulatory mechanisms have been "more closely aligned with the requirements for a competitive economy within the global marketplace" (Robertson, 1999, p. 122). Aligning themselves within these assumptions, arguments and associated regulations, the new board at St Mary's School judged the co-principalship as illegal and inappropriate. The board member who carried out the review interviews told me later that, "The board felt that they needed to take the school back to the usual model of principal and deputy principal, with clear lines of accountability. The co-principalship had the capacity to blur these lines. There was not enough documentation."

While in the first half of this chapter, I presented the Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship as successfully challenging the NPM discourses of accountability, governance and management at their school, that narrative also illustrates how the state agencies' have formidable techniques and strategies of power that can be used to contain the revolutionary potential of shared school leadership. When I interviewed SSC and Ministry of Education officials in 1995, I was told that schools could have SSC permission for a shared principalship only on SSC terms. These required either rotating individuals through the role of principal so that there was always one person legally named as the principal (as at Hillcrest Avenue School), or operating what SSC and the Ministry of Education called "an informal model" where the board appointed a principal and a deputy principal who would work together as co-principals (as at St Mary's School). Thus, in both situations, while the school communities understood that co-principals had been appointed, and people treated each co-principal in a team as equally authoritative, on paper a principal was named. The effect of the SSC requirements was that both the revolutionary Hillcrest Avenue model and the informal model of shared leadership disappeared from the official records. Education agencies could deny any knowledge that they existed. Indeed, this was the initial response when I first contacted the Ministry in 1995. I was also told then, that schools enquiring about the possibility of setting up a co-principalship were being informed by SSC that co-principalships were "not within the law." The Ministry spokesperson also told me that when the legal difficulties and "worst case

scenarios of things that can go wrong” were spelled out, most schools (unsurprisingly) lost interest.

One of my interests as I began this study was to see if I could illuminate any of the ways that a hegemonic bloc can accrue and maintain power. A Foucauldian analysis of the co-principal initiatives has shown how power can be exercised by a dominant group through claiming a meta-narrative position which can speak for others, presenting its interests, values, beliefs as identical with theirs. (For example, the SSC and Ministry officials talked about their version of accountability as being necessary for the “best interests of the children,” which was the primary interest also of the co-principals and boards.)

The narratives also illustrate how power can be exercised by a dominant group through subsuming “subalterns or subjugated groups by allowing them the freedom to operate, but only within their narrowly corporate economic interest ... Resistance, is in these ways, confined” (Foster, 1990, p.27). The co-principalships could be defined by SSC and the Ministry as illegal, yet also be ‘allowed’ to operate as long as they remained within the narrow terms of the law; that is, by naming an individual as principal. In these ways the revolutionary potential of the co-principalships and the emerging counter discourse of shared leadership and mutual responsibility and accountability, was being annexed back into the dominant discursive regime of the NPM. In Aotearoa/New Zealand, the latter hierarchical and individualist model of management, bolstered by single line accountabilities for task completion and reporting, remained throughout the period of this research, the legal ‘reality’ of school leadership.

To conclude

In this chapter, I have highlighted the ways in which the co-principals and board at Hillcrest Avenue started out with a set of understandings about the viability of a shared leadership that were different from those held by the co-principals and many of the board members at St Mary’s School. At Hillcrest Avenue School, a collaborative board/co-principal partnership, characterised by harmonious, collegial and trusting relationships, was developed. This kind of partnership was envisioned by Wayne Anderson, Brigid and Carrie at the beginning of the St Mary’s co-principalship, but relationships between this board and co-principals deteriorated within the board’s worries about accountability. While the Hillcrest Avenue School board viewed mutual responsibility and accountability as a potential strength of co-principalship and were willing to share in this responsibility and accountability, the St Mary’s board treated these areas with distrust. It is ironical that according to an Education Review Report and their principal appraisals, Brigid and Carrie were achieving outstandingly in terms of both educational leadership and the establishment of the kind of clear, well documented management systems required within the NPM reforms. Sadly, as a consequence largely of personality clashes and struggles over governance and management roles and responsibilities, the St Mary’s co-principalship did not survive.

The complex nature of the multiple and at times conflicting accountabilities and responsibilities that are experienced as part of the everyday work of principals and teachers did not seem to be fully understood by all members of the St Mary's School board while Brigid and Carrie worked there as co-principals. It seems clear to me that these complexities were also not fully understood by some education agency officials, such as the SSC spokesperson I interviewed for this study. In particular, moral and ethical dilemmas that emerge for professionals when market forms of accountability are applied to education have been ignored by the reformers of educational administration in this country. These complexities confound narrowly instrumental attempts to devise contractual systems that will enable the state to "sheet accountability home" to particular teachers, principals and school boards. The state agencies in education are persisting, though, with transactional, contractual forms of performance management.

Yet, as Hargreaves (1994) has argued, in times of a frenetic pace of change, schools need to be "characterised by networks, alliances, tasks and projects rather than by relatively stable roles and responsibilities which are assigned by function and department and regulated through hierarchical supervision." Hargreaves has advocated a "moving mosaic" model for schools, that would allow for flexibility and enable teachers to lead in different ways according to their particular strengths. In their study of roles and responsibilities in restructured English primary schools, Webb and Vulliamy (1996) found some of this kind of structure in small schools that had non-hierarchical staffing structures. My study of primary school co-principalships has demonstrated how in small primary schools, co-principalships can be used as a form of democratic organisation that can empower teachers to contribute more fully and with more personal satisfaction, to the work of their schools.

My study has shown also how a shared leadership such as that at Hillcrest Avenue School, can build in mutual accountabilities and responsibilities that go beyond relying on tying people down to task specific, linear and contractual legalities.²⁰⁸ Considerations of ethical, moral and caring responsibilities (for employees, colleagues, children) and jointly shared multiple accountabilities are significant elements of teacher collaboration and shared leadership. While heightened forms of personal and professional accountability were evident in these primary school co-principalships,²⁰⁹ to attempt to regulate them through external monitoring and control would be likely to undermine the trust and collegiality on which they depend. Indeed, Webb and Vulliamy's (1996) study provides a timely warning, that the

²⁰⁸ Throughout the four years I had contact with Hillcrest Avenue school (1994-1998) the board remained comfortable with their original decision to treat issues of accountability as related to the position of the principal. They were satisfied that joint appraisal procedure for assessing the work carried out within that position (rather than undertaking individual appraisals of each co-principal) was appropriate.

²⁰⁹ Each school had different, but effective systems for appraising the work of the position of principal and the work of the teachers.

collegial trusting relationships that are considered by many to be central within positive educational processes, may be lost within the imposition of surveillance forms of managerialism.²¹⁰

Let me end, though, on a more positive note. While it may seem from my preceding analyses that a dominant discourse will 'win out in the end,' I do not believe that this is always the case. Regimes of truth are not impermeable, as this study shows. Although hierarchical forms of managerialism may have been in the ascendance during the last few years, resistance continues. In the case of co-principalships, since the time that those I have studied, and their secondary school forerunner at Selwyn College, were initiated, other co-principalships have sprung up around the country. I know of six other primary school co-principalships, two in Kura Kaupapa Māori, and two more secondary school co-principalships. Interestingly, when the most recent was initiated at Manawatu College, the Ministry sent those co-principals a letter wishing them well. Hopefully, another discursive shift, this time towards more inclusive and democratic school leadership practices, is underway.

²¹⁰ These researchers reported that because of the increased demands being made on schools and in particular on principals, in UK schools, decisions are increasingly: "emanating from the hierarchy... with heads and senior management maintaining control through mechanisms for the management of quality - eg school initiated contracts linking allowances to objectives within the school development plan to be completed within set criteria within specified timescales" (Webb & Vulliamy, 1996, p.160). Such strategies, these researchers acknowledge, may increase efficiency, but they can also be demotivating and can "work against the development of a school ethos of mutual trust and commitment where teachers work together without coercion" (p.160).

CONCLUSION: REFLECTING, AND LOOKING FORWARD

This thesis has explored a seeming paradox. Within the 1990s context of extensive state and educational administration reforms in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and despite the dominance of economic rationalism and the imposition of a neo-liberal and hierarchical form of managerialism across all of the public sector (including schools), proposals for shared leaderships emerged in both secondary and primary schools. My research has investigated this phenomenon through a longitudinal qualitative study of three primary school co-principalship initiatives.

A review of the sparse international literature about co-principalships found that this consists mainly of participant reports and small scale external evaluations of different approaches in particular schools. This literature provides insights into interpersonal and school factors that are likely to lead to a successful collaboration and those which have constrained the development of effective partnerships. I could find no studies, however, that tracked the progress of an initiative over time to identify factors that led to either a long term establishment, or reversion to a sole principalship. My study set out to explore this dimension and the questions of: Why did the New Zealand shared leaderships emerge as they did, going against the grain of commonsense understandings of leadership and dominant theories and regulations for efficient school management? How did they evolve? What issues emerged? What part, if any, did gender play in influencing their initiation and trajectories?

To investigate these questions in each school, I carried out interviews and conversations over periods of between three and five years, with the principals, board chairpersons, board members, teaching and support staff and parents, and in one school, students. Personnel in the State Services Commission, the Ministry of Education, NZEI (the primary teachers' union), STA (the School Trustees Association) and NZPF (the New Zealand Principals' Federation) were also interviewed. Information was gathered from school documents (including Education Review Office school review reports) and from observations of school meetings, class lessons and wider activities. From this research material the three case narratives which are presented in Part II, were developed.

The three co-principalship case narratives provide richly detailed pictures of day-to-day interactions and of people's engagements in the joys, difficulties and dilemmas of primary school shared leaderships. They offer teachers, aspiring principals and school boards of trustees in particular, stories and practical insights about some of the ways that co-principalships can be initiated. There are examples of pitfalls to avoid at this stage and during the work of developing shared leadership practices. Illustrations are given of successful strategies for collaborative leadership and management within a co-principal partnership, and

for the development of more fully democratic partnerships between principals and staff, principals and board members, professionals and parents.

In this final part of the thesis, I want to draw out firstly, some theoretical insights that emerge from my discourse analyses of the case narratives, and secondly, practical insights that may be useful for those who are considering initiating a shared leadership in their schools. Suggestions for further research are woven into the latter discussions.

Reflecting on theoretical insights from the discourse analyses

In Chapters 1, 2 and 3 I explained why I developed an interest in understanding the emergence and practice of co-principalship in relation to issues of “power, conflicts, values and moral dilemmas ... and the changing role of language and discourse in creating new administrative ‘realities’ ” (Grace, 1997, p.61, citing Greenfield, 1993). Blackmore (1999, p.49) has commented that educational administration is a “disciplinary technology” that has remained “still largely quarantined from the more critical impulses of new social movements.” This observation applies to many of the studies I discussed in Chapter 2's review of the international literature about co-principalships. I found that this literature did not theorise satisfactorily how co-principalships, as forms of collaborative leadership, have been developed within wider contexts of socio-cultural hegemonies and discursive exercises of power. To assist this kind of interpretation, I have drawn on the combination of Gramscian, Foucauldian and feminist poststructuralist theoretical tools that I discussed in Chapter 4. My aim has been to use this toolkit to build understandings of how individuals live their lives and take action within a range of competing and often contradictory discourses that are both constitutive of and constituted by individual subjectivity, group identities and wider socio-cultural hegemonies that shape practices in historically specific institutional sites.

The study has attempted, through a combination of narrative and discourse analyses, to provide a (partial) genealogy of the emergence of co-principalships in Aotearoa/New Zealand, a genealogy which takes account of, questions and criticises “the effects of power associated with the ‘hierachization’ of knowledge” (Smart, 1986, p.55) and with the constituting of subjects in the field of educational administration. The theoretical analyses presented in Part III of the thesis, have been closely focused on questions that became increasingly significant for me as this study evolved. That is: How did these women come to understand and construct their own individual subjectivities as ‘a co-principal’? How did they develop, inter-subjectively within each of the three schools, their different collective co-principalship identities? What impact did these processes and understandings have on the different trajectories and outcomes of the three co-principalship initiatives? In what ways did the different school contexts and wider socio-cultural processes impact on all of the above? Within the co-principalship initiatives, could any shifts be identified in the expression and representation of the dominant discourses of educational leadership and management?

Micro/macro discursive dynamics

The thesis explores how micro and macro discursive dynamics (Luke, 1995) can be seen to be ‘working’ in the formation of different individuals’ own understandings of what it meant for them to ‘be a co-principal,’ as well as in different groups’ developments of their collective co-principalship identity and shared leadership practices. It also attempts to illuminate how these discursive practices at local levels might be impacting on macro level discursive developments at the levels of the state and policy formation.

While no definitive answers can be given in relation to individual psychology (this was not my aim), the study found that three discursive formations appeared to be significant for most of these women co-principals (albeit it in different ways and to different degrees). These distinct discursive formations are derived from the discourses of social democracy, neoliberalism and feminism. The discourse analyses presented in Chapter 6 provide some historicised analyses of how *social democratic discourses* of professional educational collaborative leadership have been embedded, to the extent of being accepted as commonsense, in state reviews and reports and in academic theorising in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Countering this previously hegemonic discursive formation, in the 1980s and 90s *neo-liberal discourses* of economic rationalism and managerialism have been articulated in law, educational policy and regulations for all sectors of education. The thesis argues, however, that the pre-dominance of both commonsense and legislated rules and regulations can blind us to the ways that institutions are sites of discursive contest and struggles over meaning. The study illuminates some of the ways that the “dominant discourses governing the organisation and practices of social institutions are under constant challenge” (Weedon, 1987, p.109). In Chapter 7, and in some of the discussions in Chapter 3, I have shown how a range of feminist discourses about gender in relation to women’s ‘place’ in the world, educational leadership and feminist collectivity, have co-existed alongside, albeit largely in the shadow of, the dominant discourses, as have Māori discourses of bi-culturalism and tino rangitiratanga (cultural sovereignty and self determination) until very recent years. The case narratives and discourse analyses explore how these previously subjugated discourses have been a source of inspiration for resistance and struggle for some of the participants in the co-principalship initiatives.

Some echoes of the predominance of professional discourse, the introduction of managerial discourses and the existence of resistant feminist discourses have appeared in the international studies of co-principalship and shared teacher leadership (reviewed in Chapter 2). For example, elements of a business management discourse have been called on to justify some proposals for rather technicist and task specialised proposals for dual principalships (in the US mainly), while a professional collaborative discourse has been the predominant shaping influence on co-principalships initiated in Canada, Norway and Aotearoa/New Zealand. A ‘hybridised’ form of professional/feminist shared leadership discourse has emerged when

women have been the protagonists, or reporters, of co-principalship. Generally, though, these discursive dynamics have not been critically examined for the impact they may have been having on the ways in which shared leadership was being conceived and practised.²¹¹

This situation reinforced my decision to provide, in Chapters 6 and 7, analyses of professional, managerial and feminist discourses that would link with the earlier discussions in Chapters 1 and 3, to ‘paint in’ the contours of the discursive terrain in which the New Zealand co-principalships emerged. The discourse analyses in Chapters 6 and 7 identify also some “ruptures, cracks and discontinuities” in particular discursive systems of power (Sawicki 1991, p.14), cracks that this thesis argues were opening up opportunities for the resistant strategies and development of a counter discourse (Weedon, 1987) of co-principalship and shared leadership.

Agency

Following Fraser’s (1997, p.154) suggestion, the thesis has employed the concepts of discourse and hegemony to develop an analysis that moves beyond a top down, domination view of power, towards understandings of how women can and do participate in organisational change. Overall, the thesis demonstrates and supports Davies’ (1997, p. 272) claim that it is within the “constitutive force of discourse that agency lies.” It explains how ‘official’ discourses of leadership and management may shape the ways that schools are organised (and what is done in the teaching, learning and managing that takes place within them). It argues though, that individuals’ views of themselves and their practices as teachers and managers are not ‘walled in’ or determined by these discourses. Other discourses in circulation, such as feminist and Māori discourses, can offer different ways of being and acting. The analyses in Chapters 11-14 show that when an individual recognises the existence of a range of possibilities in a particular situation or social context, she can enact strategies that resist and/or challenge elements of dominant discourses. In particular, these chapters show how the women primary school co-principals were “active players” (MacNaughton, 2000) in the discursive field of educational leadership. They variously resisted, challenged and/or co-opted elements of previously hegemonic versions of hierarchical professional leadership and the intentions of the NPM policy and law makers, as they constructed their own versions of a shared leadership “new administrative reality” (Greenfield, 1993).

In constructing their different versions of collaborative leadership, the three New Zealand primary school co-principalships drew (unsurprisingly) on elements of all three of the professional, managerial and feminist discursive formations of leadership and organisation

²¹¹ Strachan’s (1997) study of feminist school leadership in a new right context in Aotearoa/New Zealand, is an exception. This study also considered the impact of ethnicity on constructions and practices of educational leadership.

currently in circulation in this country. I say unsurprisingly because, as my study has shown, the formation of individual co-principal subjectivities and of collective co-principalship identities, both incorporate and contest elements of the discursive contexts in which they develop. As Gordon put it, "Where the terrain of strategy is the social, there is always the likelihood that the outcome of two competing or conflicting strategy-programmes will be the composition of a third one (Gordon, 1980, p.252), which in this case, is a hybrid.

Thus, while my study reveals how both NPM and previously accepted forms of professional leadership can limit/constrain more fully democratic and potentially productive forms of shared leadership and decision making, it also shows that these discourses are not impermeable or immutable. They are open to transformation.

Managerialism and accountability

For state policy and law makers, an important message from this study is that no single model of leadership and management can be successfully imposed on schools, regardless of the amount of legislation and regulation that may be introduced to bolster it. My analyses of three local articulations and practices of shared school leadership, show how these have mounted different kinds of resistance to hierarchical exercises of power. In the process, the women co-principals developed different sets of practices, which had some quite different effects in their different schools. Furthermore, their co-principalships changed over time. This demonstrates the theoretical point that collective identities, like individual subjectivities, are fluid, shifting and changing, in response to inter-subjective interactions and to changes in the socio-cultural, political and economic environments in which they develop. For all of these reasons therefore, to assume that a generic model of 'efficient, effective management' can be imposed uniformly on schools, and/or that adherence to such a management system can somehow automatically lead to improving schooling outcomes, is at best naive or short-sighted, and at worst, oppressive. Longitudinal, large scale studies of school effects in this country, such as those of Nash and Harker (1997) and the Smithfield Project (Lauder & et al, 1994) have demonstrated, of course, the impact on educational achievement of factors such as different family resources that are mediated by socio-economic distinctions. Such studies make a nonsense of 'truth' claims for school improvement by the proponents of the new managerialism in education.

This thesis further suggests that an individualistic, split task, single line version of accountability is not likely to gain the commitment of educational professionals whose values and practices have been shaped within a different discourse of collaborative collegiality, which emphasises the importance of multi-faceted ethical accountabilities to children, parents, board members and colleagues, as well as to the state. Accountability was taken seriously by the co-principals in this study, but within more far reaching commitments to personal integrity and collective responsibility than those emphasised in NPM versions of accountability that rely on

managerialism and economic rationalism. Despite the arguments of state agents from the SSC that an NPM model of individual, single line accountability is the only way to ensure professional accountability, the Hillcrest Avenue School co-principalship case narrative in particular demonstrates how *shared responsibilities* and *mutual forms of accountability* can be developed and practised in ways that meet the requirements for professional accountability to students, parents, the school board of trustees and the state. The Telford School case narrative also demonstrates that if an individual co-principal is not fully competent, a co-principalship can be disestablished in a way that does not damage either the individuals concerned or the school. On the other hand, the St Mary's co-principalship narrative illustrates how a board's mistrustful kinds of governance and attempts at control through the use of constant surveillance and questioning of principals' practices can be counter-productive, whittling away at motivation and depleting creative energy and time for the primary work of educational professionals - the learning of children.

All of the case narratives offer insights into how educational professionals understand and practice leadership, management and accountability in terms of their commitments to children's learning. These findings support Wylie's research over seven years, which found that the "new forms of accountability, derived from a model for large central government agencies" do not fit principals and their:

sense of responsibility which is directed towards students and learning. The linking of budget sums against goals seems to them to squeeze the nature of learning into a tight, and inappropriate frame ... There is a disparity between the current public sector model of management, based on contractual hierarchical relationships, and what actually works at the school level in terms of a partnership between professional and trustees, and in terms of the dominance of administration in principals' workloads at what may be the expense of the core work of the school, children's learning (Wylie, 1997b, p.131, 137).

Issues of cultural re-valuation and economic re-distribution

In his critique of market forms of educational accountability, Scott (1989) identified what he called the "first and last responsibility of all those engaged in education... cultural responsibility." He called here for professional educators' "allegiance to rationality, truth and knowledge ... to the good, the true and the beautiful as understood by the ancient Greeks" (Scott, 1989, p.20). While I showed in Chapter 14 how parts of Scott's analyses of different forms of accountability are useful, there are some limiting contradictions in this part of his account of what is necessary to bring about a more accountable education service. The Telford School narrative illustrates how cultural constructions of "the good, the true and the beautiful" can be captured by elite groups, with their understandings and values being embedded into

commonsense assumptions that discriminate against other world views and practices.²¹² This part of my study demonstrates that educational professional cultural responsibility and accountability needs to be open to testing particular moral standards and ethical commitments against different understandings of knowledge, truth and reality. As feminist critics of neo-liberal theorists of community have pointed out, it is the “substance of participation” that needs re-consideration, as abstract, disembodied individualism is “ill equipped to focus constructively and critically on the nature of social institutions and relations such as gender, class or race” (Fraser & Lacey, 1993, p.98).

A comparison of the trajectories and ‘fortunes’ of the co-principalships at Hillcrest Avenue School and Telford School also illuminates how a lack of material resources, in terms of funding, trained staff and educational materials, can constrain the accomplishing of equitable and democratic forms of organisation and educational provision. Fraser’s (1997, p.202) argument that racially differentiated minorities need the dual strategies of cultural recognition and political economy restructuring, is relevant here. My analysis of the Telford School co-principalship in its unique three-stranded school (which included state, Montessori and full immersion Māori language classes) identified the importance of both of those factors if a more fully democratic participation in the school was to be achieved.

This study’s examinations of these issues have been largely exploratory, however. Like all of the international studies that I reviewed in Chapter 2, my research investigated initiatives in Anglo-European, middle class school contexts. Research into the nature of shared leaderships in different class and cultural contexts is sorely needed. Foucault’s (Foucault, 1984, p.343) argument that every discourse is “dangerous” in its potentially oppressive effects, could guide such studies. That is, what may be liberating for some individuals and groups in one context, may be constraining for others, and what may open up opportunities for increased democratic involvement in one socio-cultural context may not do this in another. The Telford School case narrative showed that while this school was aiming to build a coalition of equal partners in a whole school shared leadership, the dominant discourse of the state educational system prevailed over the two special character strands’ aspirations for the resourcing and staffing of their classes. In prevailing over what counted as schooling, the state (neo-liberal, individualist and still largely Anglo/European middle class) discourse also marked out the boundaries of what was admissible in terms of participation in and influence over decision making.

Smith (1999, p.156) has argued that, “(d)emocratizing in indigenous terms is a process of extending participation outwards through re-instating indigenous principles of collectivity and public debate,” and through challenging the “economic underpinnings of cultural

²¹² An ancient Greek view has been critiqued as both a Eurocentric and masculinist version of what Scott calls “rationality, truth and knowledge.” For example, feminist critiques of Greek philosophical assumptions and cultural practices show these as misogynist (for an example, see Cox & James 1989).

imperialism” (p.88). Kaupapa Māori schools “incorporate Māori preferred ways of operating, embracing Māori values” (Mead, 1996, p.201) and there are, to my knowledge, at least two of these schools in Aotearoa/New Zealand which have co-principalships. A study of their leadership approaches and experiences would be particularly valuable, both for the advancement of Māori aspirations for tino rangitiratanga in education and more equitable Māori - centred (Durie, 1997) and Kaupapa Māori (Smith,1997) approaches in school leadership, as well as for building Pākehā understandings of Te Ao Māori and how this has been excluded in decisions about how schools are organised and managed. If more democratic school leaderships are to be developed across significant cultural divides in Aotearoa/New Zealand, as Dewey noted in 1939, “those who are affected by social institutions must have a share in producing and managing them” (Dewey, 1987, p. 218).

Gender and shared leadership

Women have been identified also in feminist research as a marginalised group which needs cultural recognition (to re-value their group characteristics) and political economy restructuring (to overcome the material realities of exploitation that have been suffered by many) (Fraser, 1997). While this thesis has argued that women in educational leadership are relatively privileged in comparison with many other women, it has maintained that the continuing under-representation of women in educational leadership positions in schools is an issue that still warrants attention and redress. One of the particular interests of this research, therefore, was to investigate whether and how gendered factors were impacting on the emergence and practice of co-principalship.

Men’s long standing and taken-for-granted ascendancy in educational leadership was challenged during the 1980s by research findings that women, more than men, were employing instructional and team leadership styles identified as contributing to the development of effective schools (Shakeshaft, 1987). Research carried out during the late 70s and through the 1980s, on women in educational leadership found that they often emphasised the importance of building collaborative, supportive teaching and learning environments through shared decision making and co-operative approaches to management (Charters & Jovick, 1981; Neville, 1988; Shakeshaft, 1987). This was often found to be in contrast to men’s approaches which were described as focused more on systems management, desk work, buildings and finances (Pitner, 1981). Studies developed within a cultural feminist analysis (such as those of Loden, 1985, and Helgeson, 1990) also argued that women are more likely to be collaborative and power sharing (as a consequence of their biology and/or socialisation). Owens thus formed links between women’s so-called nurturance and their suitability, therefore, to the leadership of schools for young children, stated that “women may be better suited to the elementary school principalship than men” (Owens, 1991, p.98).

This thesis has demonstrated, however, the limitations of these studies and theoretical approaches. It has argued and shown that women, like men, have different leadership aspirations and approaches that have been influenced by their different family background and values (Weiner, 1995; Hall, 1996), political persuasions (Strachan, 1999), personalities (Court, 1994b) and ethnicity (Waitere-Ang, 1999). It has further shown how women's leadership approaches and subjectivities are influenced by the ways that they take up different positionings in the discourses that are available to them. The women co-principals in this study were drawing on parts of a professional discourse of collaborative leadership, alongside some feminist discourses of collectivity and democratic organisation, as they constructed their different approaches to shared leadership. In these approaches, they were also critiquing the persisting hierarchy and inherent elitism embedded in various versions of professional collaborative leadership, and constructing a 'flatter,' more fluid, relational, and process oriented 'team of equals' approach.

The study makes no claims that all primary principals who are women would enjoy, or prefer, working in this kind of a shared leadership model, however. Nor does it claim that the co-principalships are typical of a 'woman's way of leading.' It has found though, that a cultural feminist discourse about 'feminine leadership' has become commonly accepted by many people. This supports Blackmore's (1999) similar finding and her suggestion that this discourse may be becoming a feminist "regime of truth."

A cultural feminist discourse could have been used in this study to highlight the fact that co-principalships in primary schools in Aotearoa/New Zealand have been taken up thus far by women educators, rather than by men. Links could have been drawn out between this finding and research into innovative schools by Ramsay and his colleagues (Ramsay et al., 1990), which found that the women principals were more likely than the male principals to be open to change and innovation, especially in developments around participatory and shared management models. This thesis has argued however, that this kind of valorising of a so-called 'woman's approach' and a dichotomising of women's and men's experiences and styles is not ultimately helpful, as it may merely replace one set of discriminatory discursive practices with another. As such, researchers studying women's practices in educational leadership need to be alert to the ways that new forms of exclusion and/or disciplinary practices, such as those suggested by Reay and Ball (2000), may be entering this field.

Furthermore, it is inaccurate to argue that most men in educational leadership are not interested in sharing leadership. This study of co-principalships has found, for example, that in two secondary schools (and most recently, in two Kura Kaupapa Māori), male principals have become involved in mixed gender co-principalships. It has also found that male board chairpersons played a significant part in the establishment of the co-principalships at both Hillcrest Avenue School and St Mary's School. In the mutually supportive partnerships that were developed between these men and the women co-principals, a shift in traditional gender relations could also be seen to be occurring, along with part of the 'ideal' parent/professional

partnership that was advocated in the *Picot Report* (Department of Education, 1988a). These men (and many others in this study) were openly admiring of the women co-principals' skills, professionalism and commitment, and they described their role as board chairpersons as working to support them. The gendered dynamics within each of these kinds of male/female partnerships and collaborative practices are worth investigating further. Future studies that aim to find similarities and areas of agreement between women and men could contribute productively to the development and theorising of more inclusive and democratic educational organisations.

In my analyses of the women co-principals' ideas, aspirations and practices in interactions with other people in their schools, I have made a small beginning in this work. I have tried to follow here Code's (1991, p.28) suggestion that feminists seek out "reciprocal interactions between and among ... constructs." Rather than drawing out dichotomised analyses of differences, such as those that have been the focus of past research into men's versus women's styles of leadership, I have sought to examine the connections and contradictions between factors such as gender/ethnicity/class, subjectivity/ inter-subjectivity, local initiative/state policy, micro/macro discursive practices, and the ways that these complexities were being negotiated by the women and other people in their school communities. The study found, of course, that there is no one way to build a co-principalship.

Nevertheless, some similar characteristics have emerged in each of the co-principalships I studied, however. To varying degrees these women protagonists were aiming to break down dichotomies between management and teaching, teaching and learning, leadership and management. I have explained in this thesis how such splits have in the past fed into the maintenance of gendered hierarchies and unequal power dynamics. In Chapter 7, I also looked at how an antipathy in some feminist collectives towards hierarchical organisational structure equated this not only with male domination, but also with bureaucracy, which was criticised as instrumentally rationalist and controlling (Fergusson, 1984). Indeed, some American scholars have seen the rise of all kinds of collectives as driven by an anti-bureaucratic movement. Rothschild (1994) wrote that while bureaucratic authority is held by an individual as a consequence of rank or expertise, in the ideal collectivist-democratic organisation, authority resides in a consensus of the collectivity as a whole and is based in shared substantive values (such as equality). This consensus is treated as fluid and open to negotiation, with decisions being made in relation to particular cases. These characteristics were evident to varying degrees in each of the co-principalships. The case narratives also show, however, that as they constructed their own approaches to shared leadership, the women co-principals were drawing on some elements of bureaucratic discourse as well as on the discourses of professional collaboration and feminist collectivity. At Hillcrest Avenue School for example, liaison role guidelines were developed to record useful practices for the next person who would undertake this role.

Highlighting some practical insights from the case narratives

In drawing out some of the other practical insights and suggestions that emerge in the case narratives, the following discussion aims to draw attention to some points that may be helpful for teachers and board members who are wanting to introduce a co-principalship in their school.

Factors that contribute to a successful shared leadership

It is clear that a board needs to carefully screen potential co-principal partners, to ensure that they are both experienced and knowledgeable enough to be competent in a school leadership and management role. Board and parent on-going support for a collaborative approach is also crucial for a co-principalship, so some understanding of how shared leaderships have been introduced and practised in other schools will be very helpful. At Hillcrest Avenue School, the conflict between the board and parents that resulted from the board's lack of consultation with parents about the introduction of a co-principalship, highlights the importance of early, open and full consultation and communication about these matters with the whole school community.

Establishing open and honest communication (both within the co-principal collective and between them and other staff, children, parents and board members) emerges from this study as a very significant factor in a successful shared leadership. Related practices include transparent decision making processes and the use of delegated liaison responsibilities for the collection and dissemination of information. The Hillcrest Avenue narrative in particular illustrates how difficulties and dilemmas can be addressed as these arise when critically reflective professional dialogue is established as part of daily practice. This co-principalship was able to engage collaboratively in early problem identification, strategising for action and analysis of the effects of their actions. The women's shared commitment to debate and open discussion enabled these co-principals to negotiate their individual differences (of personality and some beliefs about leadership for example) and to reach agreements about their educational philosophy and aims. They built between them, and with other people in the school, a set of shared meanings about what was needed in this community for the children's learning. These aims and values became the foundation for a high degree of interpersonal trust, both within the co-principalship and between them, board members, parents, student teachers and other staff and the children.

The benefits of the successful co-principalship at Hillcrest Avenue School are identified in its case narrative as:

- a widening of participatory leadership to include other staff, board members and parents;

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- hence an enlarged pool of talent on which to draw when deciding and implementing school wide goals;
 - enhanced teacher commitment to mutually decided teaching and learning goals;
 - reduced principal isolation and stress;
 - increased professional stimulation and development;
 - enhanced achievement of both educational and management goals.

The large majority of teachers, board members and parents interviewed in this school agreed that this co-principalship approach was an excellent model, particularly for small primary schools. While increased meeting time for decision making was acknowledged as a downside at the beginning, in the long term this was recognised as having a beneficial effect, through increased ownership of decisions and the establishment of shared understandings and trusting relationships. These factors meant that time taken for decision making reduced significantly and people took action independently, confident that their decisions would be supported.

At Hillcrest Avenue School the co-principals' on-going professional dialogue included also critical reflection on the philosophy, the processes and the educational effects of sharing leadership. The latter were considered in terms of possible effects on both the children's learning and on parents', board members' and other professional colleagues' attitudes to shared leadership/management approaches. This co-principalship was conceived and practised as a change strategy in both of these arenas. Blase and Anderson (1995, p.146) have argued that most of the existing constructions of leadership are "dysfunctional for teachers, students and their communities" in that they create dominant and subordinate groups. The Hillcrest Avenue and the Telford co-principalships attempted (in different ways and with varying success) to transform the idea and practices of team leadership from being 'a leader who builds a team,' to meaning 'a team of equals sharing leadership.' My research suggests that the Hillcrest Avenue initiative impacted here on many people in the school, including some children, opening up for them a different way of thinking about and organising leadership. As one of the children said, "Here there is no boss."

While my observations of the Hillcrest Avenue School co-principalship suggest that some children may have been learning that leadership is not necessarily hierarchical, this women's co-principalship did not seem to impact significantly on children's perceptions about a long established gendered discourse that 'men lead, women follow and support.' Some participants in other co-principalships have claimed that co-principalships can enhance understandings about both democracy and gender equity, through providing children with day-to-day examples of democratic approaches to organisation and management role models of women in leadership (Bergersen & Tjeldvoll, 1982; Dass, 1995; Glenny et al., 1996). The PPTA (1994, p.5) study of participatory decision making also noted that "students learn large curricular lessons from their experience of how a school is managed. How adults treat each other at school is taken by many as a model for what adult interaction is like overall."

Although my study did not focus on these important areas of analysis, it did emerge that none of the three primary school co-principalships were extending participatory decision making in any significant ways to include students, as has been attempted in some other co-principalships and schools (Glenny et al., 1996; Dass, 1995; Apple & Beane, 1999). All of these areas warrant examination in future studies of shared leaderships.

Dilemmas and difficulties

Dilemmas that arose in each of the three schools are described in the narratives and stories that are told about how some were successfully negotiated and resolved and some were not. In the latter situation, the resulting tensions escalated in both Telford and St Mary's Schools to the point that these co-principalships were disestablished. The majority of teachers in these schools and some parents were disappointed about this as they thought the idea of shared leadership was an excellent one.

Factors that counted against success at Telford School included:

- inadequate care taken by the board during initial selection, to ensure that the potential partners were each sufficiently competent to carry leadership and management responsibilities;
- insufficient attention given by the co-principals to an early establishing of day-to-day practical strategies for collaborative management;
- a related break down in communication between the co-principals;
- demands from parents and/or board members and pressure of dealing with on-going funding issues and staffing crises, all of which encroached on the co-principals' time for on the job interpersonal communication and day-to-day management tasks.

At St Mary's School, a successful co-principal collaboration was established during the first two years. However, the board's confusing of governance and management roles contributed to an escalating climate of distrust and break down in communication between some board members and the co-principals. These factors, along with Carrie's career aspiration to be a sole principal, resulted in the dissolving of this school's co-principal partnership.

Future research could include more in-depth investigations of board/principal relationships to determine how a co-principalship can best avoid/resolve the kinds of difficulties that developed at Telford School and the governance/management misunderstandings and conflicts that developed in St Mary's School. Finding ways to resolve the salary equity issue that results from the requirement for co-principal schools to be 'fiscally neutral' is another area that needs more investigation.

As I carried out this research, some people told me that a shared leadership which includes all staff in leadership and management responsibilities, would not be viable in a

school with more than three teachers. Future research in any larger primary schools which initiate this kind of teacher shared leadership, would be very valuable to test this opinion. As my review of international studies noted, reports from Norway and from Anzar High School in the US suggest that this approach *is* both a practicable and useful way to organise the work of teaching and learning. In relation to this point, one of the co-principals told me early on in my research that what she wanted to know was “whether it was the people or the model that was important.” The case narratives demonstrate the points that *people* make shared leadership models, and that different people in different contexts will share leadership in different ways. This study investigated a group of women who seemed to be broadly similar in terms of their ages, ethnicity, professional backgrounds and leadership aspirations. It has shown though, that different individual motivations for sharing leadership and different resources of confidence, competence, knowledge and communication ability impact on the trajectory and development of a collaborative collectivity. The study has shown how such individual differences need to be understood as shaped by contextual factors, such as personal family values and past experiences, specific school and community sites and wider socio-political and economic struggles and material realities. The case narrative stories reveal how different co-principalship collective identities and practices are developed, and change, through their members’ on-going interpersonal negotiations of such factors.

Towards democratic school organisation

Parts of this thesis have explored how hierarchical splits between principal/managers and teacher/workers have been perpetuated and deepened in education in ways that have obscured understandings about the interdependencies between these people, and between the work of leadership/management and teaching/learning. The study has documented how in the Hillcrest Avenue School initiative, the strategy of co-principalship was used to completely dismantle the established and largely taken-for-granted hierarchy of principal, senior teacher, teacher. In this school, an equal sharing of the work and responsibilities of teaching, management and leadership was established and formalised in the school’s charter statement as the preferred management ‘model’ for the school. Shared responsibility and mutual accountability was also validated and formally recorded as part of the women co-principals’ employment contracts.

Although it is tempting to stop here, on a fanfare as it were, it needs to be noted that highly integrative collectivities such as the Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship can be experienced as constraining by some people. Other writers have pointed out that in school cultures which exhibit high degrees of agreement and individual emotional investment in shared values and aims, there can be both pressure for conformity and some loss of individual autonomy (Anderson & Grinberg, 1998; Carlson, 1996; Weiss, 1992). In the literature on the early feminist collectives, it was reported also that some individuals suffered a loss of their

sense of 'self' and/or felt guilty about their own desire for recognition and personal initiative when these conflicted with the aims of the group (Riger, 1994). Karen's experience in the Hillcrest Avenue co-principalship, and Carrie's in the St Mary's co-principalship, have illustrated these dynamics. I have drawn on feminist poststructuralist understandings of subjectivity as formed within contradictory discourses, to help explain their situations as an individual confronting a clash between her emotional investment in a liberal individualist discourse of personal autonomy and success as opposed to her desire to be a collective member.

While the neo-liberal NPM discourse has ignored knowledge about and practices of altruism and care for others, feminist discourses of educational leadership and collective responsibility have fore-grounded the worth of these values in the organisation and management of schools (Noddings, 1992; Beck, 1994). In my study of co-principalships, these values have been shown to be part of the development of trusting forms of interdependence that are important foundations for democratic organisation. Kate's story in the Telford case narrative also illustrated, however, how in her concern not to damage her co-principal's self esteem, Kate took on more and more work herself, avoiding the honest confrontation that was needed if an equal partnership was to be established. Timperley and Robinson (1998) have warned that a professional ethos of caring for colleagues can be problematic if inaction occurs "when an individual fails to fulfill their responsibility to other individuals or the school as a whole."

Noddings (Noddings, 1996) has acknowledged also, how within highly developed caring communities, there can occur a silencing and marginalising of those who do not 'fit' or agree with all of the approved set of values. I have pointed out already the ways that this study shows how the broader socio-cultural hegemonies constructed around the lines of ethnicity, class and gender can marginalise particular groups and individuals. Shields and Seltzer suggest that future theorising of the school as a caring and moral community (Barth, 1991; Noddings, 1992; Sergiovanni, 1994), should include understandings of a community of difference and a community of dialogue (1997, pp.428 - 432).

This study has demonstrated the significance of open and on-going dialogue for the successful establishment of shared school leadership practices. In doing so it raises some new questions for accountability in such models, such as: Can different individual meanings, values and aspirations about and for the work of teaching and learning in this school, be explored within open and trusting dialogues? Are different groups' views and practices considered, debated and valued? If not, what are the constraints that are preventing this? What strategies, tactics and exercises of power may be justified and what re-distributions of political and material resources are needed to build a more fully democratic participation of all the members of this school community?

A hopeful note on which to conclude my discussions, is that there have been some moves recently in Aotearoa/New Zealand away from neoliberalism in education. An increased

interest in democratic citizenship and values was evidenced by the large attendance at a QPEC (the Quality Public Education Forum) national conference on values in education held in Palmerston North, New Zealand in July, 2000. Recent changes to zoning regulations (that had been developed under the previous government's marketising agenda for education), have meant that families once again have priority access to their neighbourhood school. Universities are being exhorted now to build collaborative relationships and to focus on building their particular areas of strength rather than expending energy on competing for students. And the latest of a series of reviews of the national Education Review Office has recommended that this agency "adopts an 'assess and assist' model" rather than focussing on compliance and accountability auditing (Rodger et al., 2000, p.2). Literature cited in this review report points to the "importance of collaboration between the evaluator and the evaluated, leading to the development of mutual trust and respect" as part of improving a school's enhancement of student learning (p.53). The Education Minister has just reported, in August 2001, that ERO has consequently developed proposals for changes to the school review process and that it is currently consulting schools about these changes. Significantly the proposals include "a more participatory and flexible approach" that includes discussion of the school's own priorities for review (Mallard, 2001, p.3).

When we consider the wider political and business spheres in Aotearoa/New Zealand, it seems that the competitive corporate management model is also beginning to change. Although some might snigger at what could be judged as just another political game, the Labour/Alliance coalition government has shown that it can negotiate across their differences and take into consideration the voice of minority parties in a way that was not required in earlier governing processes. In some businesses, such as that of Dick Hubbard's (which manufactures breakfast food) there seems too, to be a recognition of the value of interpersonal collaborations across socio-cultural divides, in some employer practices that take account of some social justice and ethical issues. In the wake of what many call the brutal social consequences of New Right monetarism, a reformulated kind of social democratic discourse of collaboration and participation may be gaining support. If so, the time has come for a wider consideration of and experimentation in the kinds of collaborative shared leaderships in schools that this thesis has investigated.

RESEARCH PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET..... **SCHOOL****BOARD OF TRUSTEES***Team Leadership:**Sharing the Principalship in a Primary School*

My name is Marian Court and I am a Senior Lecturer in Education in the Department of Policy Studies at Massey University. I am conducting PhD research into educational leadership and I am requesting board of trustees permission to undertake a case study of the team leadership currently being practised in your school.

Background to the research

At present little is known about shared leadership approaches. There are very few schools that have flattened their management hierarchies in the way your principals have done. Even less is known about the influence of gender on leadership, or the 'lessons' girls and boys are learning from their observation and experience of particular administrative and leadership practices in schools. This study is designed to go some way toward investigating these areas.

I have already met with the principals to discuss their willingness to be involved in a case study of their shared leadership. This initial information sheet for the board of trustees has been prepared in response to their request. If permission to proceed is granted, I will attend a full board meeting to answer any questions about the points outlined below.

What the research study in your school will entail

1. The proposed focus of the research would be on:
 - * the processes involved in setting up and working in the shared principalship;
 - * the benefits and difficulties of this model;
 - * participants' and observers' perceptions about these leadership practices and possibilities;
 - * gender as a factor impacting on leadership.
2. I would like to carry out the research over the period of one year, during which time I hope to make regular visits to the school.
3. The research methodology I wish to use (an ethnographic/case study approach) would involve me in gathering information through:
 - * observing and talking with staff and students during school hours;

-
- * attending relevant meetings such as principals' meetings, board or staff meetings;
 - * carrying out interviews with staff, parents, children and others such as past board members and Ministry of Education staff, to explore specific issues related to the shared leadership;
 - * reading and analysing documents such as meeting minutes, school charter, strategic plan, teaching units.
4. Interviewing would be undertaken at times and in venues convenient for participants.
 5. During the field work I would ensure that my presence causes as little disruption as possible to normal school teaching and learning processes. (My past experience as a teacher and Education Review Officer will assist me here). Care will be taken to request permission from staff well in advance of any visit.
 6. Regular contact and feedback would be maintained with the study's key participants, the principals and the board of trustees chairperson.

Ethical considerations

As I wish to use the information gathered in this study for the PhD project, for conference presentations and written publications, procedures to meet ethical considerations are important. An application to the Massey University Human Ethics Committee has been approved. This details procedures to address the following issues:

- * right to decline to take part in this study and right to withdraw at any stage;
- * the collection and use of the information;
- * confidentiality (agreed procedures are particularly important for the principals and staff, as your school could be identifiable in New Zealand);
- * arrangements for participants to receive information.

I have included some parent information sheets and written consent forms for you to look at and comment on.

I hope that the Board of Trustees will grant me permission to proceed with this study. I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely

Marian Court, BA, MEdAdmin
Lecturer, Department of Policy Studies in Education, Massey University

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Team Leadership:

Sharing the Principalship in a Primary School

My name is Marian Court and I am a Senior Lecturer in Education in the Department of Policy Studies at Massey University. I am presently involved in PhD research into educational leadership. I would like to request your participation in a study of the team leadership currently being practised by the women principals in _____ School.

There has been very little research into team leadership in New Zealand and I am hoping that the study of what is happening in _____ School will make a useful contribution to knowledge in this area.

I am particularly interested in finding out about:

- * the processes involved in setting up and working in the shared principalship;
- * the benefits and difficulties of this model;
- * children's perceptions about what it means to be a leader and about leadership possibilities for themselves;
- * whether gender is significant in any of these aspects.

I would like to interview you about the processes involved in the setting up of the shared principalship. If you are happy to talk to me the procedures which will be followed are:

1. You will tell me when it is convenient to see me.
2. You will be given a choice about whether the interview will be taped or not.
3. Your confidentiality will be kept through the following measures:
 - All names and special characteristics that could lead to your identification will be changed.
 - Interview tapes will only be listened to by myself and an assistant who will transcribe the tapes. The assistant will sign an agreement that s/he will treat the tapes as confidential and will not discuss them with anyone else but me.
 - The interview tapes will not be released to anyone.
 - Because of the nature of the shared leadership, absolute confidentiality, in the sense of anonymity of the school, cannot be guaranteed.
4. You will be shown the transcripts from your interview and will be given the opportunity to indicate any material you do not wish to be used, or information that can be used but not connected with the pseudonym you will be given. You will be given a typed transcript of this material to keep.

- 5. You will be given an opportunity to be informed about the results of the study when it is completed.
- 6. If you request access to publications from the research these will be supplied.
- 7. You are free to withdraw from the research project at any time.
- 8. At any time during the research, you are free to renegotiate this agreement.

Supervision

The research project is being jointly supervised by Associate Professor John Codd, Acting Head of Department of Policy Studies in Education, Associate Professor Richard Harker, Department of Policy Studies in Education and Dr Lynne Alice, Director, Women's Studies, Massey University.

Should you have any further questions at this point, I will be very happy to answer these. Please use the stamped addressed envelope to contact me, or phone me at:

Home: 06 358 7774 Work: 06 350 4562

If you are willing to be interviewed, please fill in the following form and return to me in the stamped, addressed envelope. I will contact you later to arrange an interview time and place suitable to you. I look forward to your participation.

Yours sincerely

Marian Court BA, MEdAdmin (Hons)
Department of Policy Studies in Education

Please cut and return to me in the accompanying envelope

I am willing to be interviewed for the *Team Leadership: Sharing the Principalship in a Primary School* research.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone (Hme) _____
(Work) _____

PARENT PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Team Leadership:

Sharing the Principalship in a Primary School

This sheet was the same as the preceding Participant Information Sheet, with the addition of the following material and initial consent form.

Children's Participation

I would also like to talk with your child about these issues. This may involve participation in individual/group discussions with me during my time in the school, a taped individual interview, a taped group interview. If you are happy for your child to participate, I will ensure that s/he understands that the same procedures detailed for you apply to them also.

In particular, I will make sure that the children know:

- why I am in their classroom;
- they do not have to talk with me if they do not want to;
- they do not have to agree to having any conversation taped.

A separate information sheet has been written for the children. I would be very happy for you to talk with them at home about the research project and what I am doing.

Please cut and return to the box at school in the accompanying envelope

I am willing to be interviewed for the *Team Leadership: Sharing the Principalship in a Primary School* research.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (Home) _____

(Work) _____

I am willing / do not wish for my child,

(name) _____, to participate in the research project.

LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR CHILD INTERVIEWEES



MASSEY
UNIVERSITY

Private Bag
Palmerston North
New Zealand
Telephone 0-6-356 9099
Facsimile 0-6-350 5635

FACULTY OF
EDUCATION



DEAN'S OFFICE

TEAM LEADERSHIP:
SHARING THE PRINCIPALSHIP
IN A PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dear

My name is Marian Court. I work in a university in Palmerston North.

I am studying how school principals share being school principals.

During the year, I will be visiting your school to watch how they work together. I will be talking to them and other people (like your parents perhaps) to find out what they think about this.

I also want to find out what it is like for children who have three principals in their school instead of just one. So your ideas are very important. I hope that you will be happy to talk to me and to let me watch and listen as you work in school.

I may want to tape record our talk. You do not have to do this, if you don't want to. If we do tape record our talk, you will be able to hear it afterwards if you want to. You can tell me about any things you want to change.

A letter has been sent to to your parents or caregivers, telling them about what I am doing. You could talk to them about this.

When my study is finished, I will come back to tell you what I have found out.

Yours sincerely

Marian Court

**TEAM LEADERSHIP:
SHARING THE PRINCIPALSHIP IN A PRIMARY SCHOOL**

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I,....., consent to participate in the research project, *Team Leadership: Sharing the Principalship in a Primary School*.

I understand and accept the reassurances detailed in the Participant Information Sheet concerning:

- the protection of my confidentiality
- my right to withdraw at any time from participating in the research
- * my right to not answer all the questions
- access to a typed/audio copy of my interviews with the opportunity to make corrections.

I agree / do not agree to the interview being taped.

I give my permission for Marian Court to use the information gained during the research, in her PhD thesis, and in any other published and unpublished papers.

Signed: _____ (Participant)

Date: _____

Signed: _____ (Researcher)

Date: _____

Telford consequently became a three strand school. Ann remembered that as she was establishing her Montessori class, working from scratch with parents who set up a trust to buy equipment for their classroom, Mere Katene, a young teacher in her first job, was working alongside the Māori parents who had formed themselves into a whānau support and management group, to establish a bilingual class.

From Ann's perspective, the two groups encountered similar problems. She saw both groups as *having a vision of where we were going, but meeting difficulties as well as advantages in being separate units in a state school. We in Montessori had seen the opportunity and thought - let's grab it. We couldn't expect the state to pay for everything, but we had the opportunity to be within the system and to mix with the whānau. That was quite a big drawcard - so the parents were prepared to put money in to be able to do it. For some parents that was a struggle, but they believed in it* (Ann 1:3).

Make strong power/knowledge (class reasoning)
no ethnicity reasoning

The Māori parents also believed in their bilingual class, and Rawinia said that she found Ann helpful when she spoke with her sometimes about what was happening in each of their strands. However, she also pointed out that *when we got our bilingual unit established we were almost isolated. We didn't have the skill level or the knowledge level to do what we wanted to do in the class or to understand the whole system* (Rawinia, M&R:2). Neither did the whānau have the financial resources of the mainly better off Montessori parents. These differences persisted, causing some tensions between the three strands in the school. Kate Walker said later, there was little unity on the board when she came to the school, with each strand being a very tight knit group.

main knowledge material

3rd strand present as Whānau (norm) - not marked/ integrated

Introducing Kate Walker

Kate Walker was appointed to Telford as a relieving principal, halfway through 1994, after Peter MacDonald resigned and moved to another school. Kate's teaching background was a wide one. After graduating from teachers' college with a Diploma of Teaching, she had taught for 20 years across the range of Std 1- F2 classes. For six of these years, she taught in England, working in three different primary schools, each with a woman principal. When she returned to New Zealand, Kate was shocked at how under-represented women were in school leadership positions and she was surprised that a hierarchical management model was still strong in New Zealand primary schools. She said, *In 1989 it was predominantly male principals and male deputy principals. But I just kind of rebelled against the style that was commonly used, the style of what I used to call the classic male primary teacher who created a sort of image in the school ... They were always doing the PE sheet and they were the disciplinarians and the kids had to be sent to them - the school couldn't possibly function without them, sort of thing. I worked in Brixton at the time of the riots in London and we had not one single man in our school, and it made no difference. But back here, there was a sort of controlling by fear* (2:6). Kate was disappointed to find that even the few women principals she knew then were also tending to work in hierarchical ways.

professional

collaborative in terms of gender

constructed in opposition to male norms

Kate's subordination

professional

against male norms

collaborative in education not like other female family

In the early 1990s, when she was appointed to a new school, she was delighted to find herself working with a male principal who was really interested in education and didn't have the image that a lot of other 'male-type' principals had. He wasn't 'one of the boys' at all. He had been influenced by another man, an inspector who had quite advanced ideas on management and schools ... He had some vision and worked very collaboratively with staff. I learned a lot from him (2:10). She said that this man encouraged her to sort of go for promotion, a career decision that coincided with a decision to also have a family. I was determined that I could do both. So I became a senior teacher around the same time as I had

collaborative

female career

Collective identity
 Co-principalship
 33 Partnership
 across 3 strands
 to straddle difference
 diversity /
 difference
 merge
 Kent

A way of 'merging the strands'
 transformative leader / vision

Kate's thinking about a collaborative approach to school leadership and management at Telford School extended beyond involving just the teaching staff in more decision making however. She thought that at this school, the staff and the board needed to work more closely together to find ways to straddle the differences between the three strands and to develop a management and leadership model that would reflect and enhance the value of diversity in the school - the different backgrounds, aspirations and approaches to learning. Kate thought that a co-principalship could make a good contribution to this work. James Kent remembered later that she suggested to the board that a co-principalship would be a good way of merging the strands together, and she gave us the idea that she wanted to do a co-principalship with Ann (1).

? check

During the third term of 1994, Kate had been keeping in touch with Ann and she had talked with her about the possibility of sharing the principal's position. She suggested that if Ann agreed, she could represent the Montessori strand, while Kate could represent both the state strand and, because of her familiarity with te reo Māori, the immersion strand. Kate was hoping that Mere could later join herself and Ann in a three way co-principalship. Although she said that she talked about this with Mere, Mere did not remember this conversation. In any case, at that stage it was not appropriate as Mere had not yet completed the work required for her to be certificated as a fully registered primary teacher. Mere also had some doubts about being so fully involved in the wider issues of the school when as a beginning teacher, she needed to be putting a lot of time into her class teaching. There was no reading material and we had to fight to get back our Māori language factor funding in my first year (Mere:3)

practices
 rules
 veg 15

no resource
 Maori

Although a three way share was not possible, Ann was attracted by the idea of a two way co-principalship. She said later, I don't know how much I did want to apply though! Being honest about it, I had never thought of being a principal. It was not something I was interested in. Philosophically I didn't like that hierarchical aspect and I could never see myself fitting into that. And also being a working mother, I wasn't prepared to work those long hours at the expense of my family ... But I'm the sort of person who likes a challenge ... and I knew I could work with Kate. I had had a term with her as a relieving principal (Ann 1:3). Ann said that she remained a little apprehensive about what she would be taking on though, and Kate remembered that she, too, felt quite nervous that it would continue to be quite difficult - like, winning the job is a bit like winning the booby prize! (Laughs) We knew all the issues, though, which was good, and thought that if we could get through it would be great (Kate 2:3)

Ann gender
 don't like hierarchy
 family from
 - p.a challenge
 (career?)

agency

Co-p. at Hillcrest

Kate suggested to Ann that they could contact the teachers at Hillcrest Avenue school, and see how they had gone through the process and what they were doing. Ann decided that she either had to leap in and do it now or not at all (Ann 1:1); so together they visited Liz and Jane. After hearing how the Hillcrest Avenue women were working together and their views about the advantages of their shared model, Kate and Ann decided to go ahead with applying for a co-principalship at Telford.

Kate and Ann develop a joint application for a co-principalship

The two women met at Kate's house to work out their shared application, aiming to develop a model of shared leadership that suited them and their school. Ann said that Kate had a clearer idea about how the shared principalship would work than she did. I had been out of the system for a while, teaching in a Montessori pre-school, and she was in the

out of system

Knowledge
 Gap

Single Principal

Traditional Model

- **structure: a pyramid**
the principal is an individual holding key responsibilities at top of a chain of control
- **principal, as an individual, responsible for developing the philosophy, vision**
tendency for vision to be 'held' by, or identified with a person, though s/he may be successful in 'bringing others on board'
- **communication linear**
principal > < senior management > middle management > rest of staff; dialogue, debate more likely to be fractured; more difficult to reach shared understandings and agreements; consultative decision making, but can be exclusionary
- **limits on openness and transparency**
may exist between principal and senior management, but how much are rest of staff kept fully 'in the know'?
- **trust - guarded?**
- **responsibility individual, structured hierarchically**
teachers held responsible by HODs, senior management, principal
- **accountability held in the principal**
the principal, as individual and chief executive, finally accountable - to board, parents, state; therefore, principal has veto power over all decision making
- **weakened participation and commitment to decisions**

Co-Principalship

Hillcrest Avenue School Model

- **structural change from pyramid to circle**
"the principal is not a person, it is a position that carries the ideas"
- **the position = the philosophy**
shared vision developed together, with aim for "the philosophy to be held in the institution - in the people, in the fabric of the school, the children and the community"
- **communication 'the heart'**
on-going dialogue and debate in processes of reaching shared understandings and agreements on core values and aims, with acknowledgement and valuing of difference: inclusive participation in decision making
- **expanded openness and transparency**
stressed in both communication and procedures, between 3 co-principals, between people in the position and board and community
- **building of trust**
- **shared responsibility, flat structure**
teachers responsible for self and each others leadership and practices
- **shared accountability**
to each other, to board, children, parents, state ie, increased accountability, and increased responsibility to participate fully in decision making
- **enhanced commitment through equal ownership**

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