Women as Governors

Powerful leadership with a difference

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Educational Administration

Massey University

Kay Hawk
B.A. (Canterbury), Dip.Ed. (Massey)

1997

Ehara taku toa,
I te toa takitahi
engari
he toa takitini

My strength is not from
myself alone,
but
from the strength of the group

Abstract

This research project involved the Board of Trustee chairwomen of six Auckland secondary, co-educational state schools working together over an eighteen month period using an action research methodology. The group met monthly to discuss issues of importance to individuals or the whole group. A high level of trust developed early and the discussions became the focus for the sharing of ideas, strategies and resources as well as an opportunity for shared problem solving and support. The researcher, as a chairwoman, was a fully participating member of the group. The research was guided by a set of research questions. Data collection strategies included group discussions, interviews with each of the chairwomen and with their Principals and observations of Board of Trustee meetings. Data from these sources were brought back to the group who shared in the interpretation of it.

There is no research information on how chairpeople of school Boards of Trustees enact their positions and very little information on voluntary leadership. The voluntary and elected nature of this leadership is an important influence on the motives of the women and on their determination to lead from within and with the group.

The similarities in the motives and chosen styles of enacting the chairwoman's position were many and they corresponded closely to those described in the literature on women's leadership. On the other hand, there were also important differences which the current literature did not seem to explain. It appeared, therefore, to be too simplistic to explain the similarities by taking an essentialist view that could not explain the differences. This thesis looks to a feminist post-structuralist analysis to help understand both the similarities and the differences.

Being a woman was an influential factor in leadership style but not because of gender as such. It was important because of the many subject positions taken up and held concurrently by the women and the ways they had learned to reconcile the conflicting demands of those positions. Some of these positions, such as 'woman', 'mother', 'wife', 'neighbour' and 'community volunteer' are very much products of the discursive ways in which gender relations in our New Zealand society have been constructed. The influence of some, such as 'responsible person', 'victim' and 'nurse' were particular to the unique experience of the person when growing up in their childhood family and within their marriage. The inpact of others, such as 'career woman', 'leader', 'educator', 'change agent' and 'trustee' were a result of choices made by the women about how they wanted to construct their lives. The order in which they were taken up and the interrelationships between these various subject positions forced the women to make decisions and choices about how they would work within and between them.

Throughout their lives the six chairwomen had each occupied very similar subject positions and recounted very similar learnings resulting from the experiences. This similarity of experiences accounts, to a large extent for the similarity in motivation and in preferred ways of operating within the chairperson position. The differing orders

in which the various subject positions were taken up appears to explain many of the differences in their confidence levels and operating styles.

Acknowledgments

Although I have been the writer of this document, there have been many people who have contributed significantly and to whom I extend my written thanks.

- To the seven chairwomen who from the beginning have been supportive and enthusiastic. Giving hours of their time to be part of the project and contributing their knowledge, wisdom and humour, they were the source of the ideas and helped with the interpretation of them. They were valued colleagues and have become valued friends.

- The principals and trustees of the five schools that were visited, who welcomed my attendance at Board of Trustee meetings and granted me interviews.

- The principal and fellow trustees of my own school, who were willing to allow me to share our information and resources with the other schools.

- Marion Court and Wayne Edwards, my supervisors, who challenged me and gave me ongoing support and direction. Marion pushed me past my level of comfort and offered challenges as well as invaluable advice.

- Jan Hill and Norma Roberts, my work colleagues, who have supported me in a hundred and one practical ways.

- The staff of the Massey University libraries, who have searched and located books and articles and gone out of their way to be extremely helpful.

- Richard, who has always shared the parenting of our children and the social responsibilities that we believe go with that role. In practice this has sometimes meant doing my share of the tasks while I spent time doing trustee work and/or study.

- To Sarah, Mary and David, our children, who wrote in a card to me -
  "We appreciate so much everything you have done for us and the sacrifices you have made. Now that we are growing up we want to encourage and fully support you in your new job, future career and studies. Thankyou for putting these on hold for us."

Table of contents

CHAPTER FIVE: Methodologies in action

CHAPTER SIX: Issues faced by the chairwomen

CHAPTER SEVEN: Motivation

CHAPTER EIGHT: Leadership style, attitudes and practices

CHAPTER NINE: Conclusions

List of tables

Glossary

ASTA The Auckland branch of the School Trustees Association.

Audit An Assurance Audit is one of the review processes carried out by the ERO. It focuses on the governance role of the board of trustees.

BOT Board of Trustees. A group legally constituted as a body corporate under the Education Act that has the responsibility to govern the school.

CAPNA **Curriculum and Pastoral Needs Analysis.** This is the process by which individual teachers are identified for redeployment. If a school has a falling roll and has more teachers employed than it is entitled to for the number of students it has on the roll, the Board is required to use this process which is outlined in detail in the Teachers' Collective Agreement.

Charter Each school has a charter that its personnel have written, following Ministry guidelines, that is a signed contract between the school (through the BOT) and the Minister of Education (through the Ministry of Education) It outlines the school's mission statement, includes the National Education Guidelines, and the school's goals for the education of its students.

Decile All state schools in the country are given a decile rating which ranges from one to ten. It is calculated by assessing the socio-economic status of a sample of the students in the school. The closer the decile is to ten, the higher the socio-economic status of the school's families. Schools that are decile one, two, three or four receive calculated amounts of extra funding[1]. The funding is called **Targeted funding.**

EEO Report Boards of Trustees are required by legislation to be good employers and to have both an 'equal employment opportunities' policy and annual plan. They are required to report annually to the Ministry on their practice in this area and this is monitored by the Education Review Office.

ERO Education Review Office. An independent body that reports directly to the Minister of Education and to Parliament. It reviews the performance of early childhood centres and schools on a regular basis and makes the written reports public. There

[1] This has since been changed to include schools up to decile nine, but was as stated here at the time of the data collection.

are two types of reviews: an assurance audit and an effectiveness review.

Governance/Management These are the two terms that, in the discourse of Tomorrow's Schools, differentiate the respective roles of the Board of Trustees(Governance) and the Principal and teaching professionals(Management). A lack of understanding or crossing the boundaries of these subject positions will often be the cause of conflict in a school.

MOE (The Ministry) Ministry of Education. The government body that controls education for New Zealand. It is a signatory to the school charter as one of the partners in the contract.

NEGs National Education Guidelines. These were gazetted in 1993 and were deemed to be part of the charter of every school. They include the National Education Goals, National Administration Guidelines and the National Curriculum Statements. They are sometimes called "the NEGs and the NAGs."

NZSTA New Zealand School Trustees Association. The national body that represents boards of trustees of all state and integrated schools which pay their membership fee to belong. It is usually referred to as **STA** and pronounced 'star'.

School fees Although nearly all state schools charge annual "fees" for enrolled students, they are by law required to be a voluntary donation and must not be forced on parents. Nearly all schools agree that the state funding is inadequate and that schools could not operate without collecting fees. Over the years some elaborate systems have been devised (without breaking the law) to ensure these are paid.

Suspension hearings/discipline hearings The Education Act lays down very detailed procedures that a Principal and a Board is required to follow if a student is suspended. It is a complex process and, if the student is under 16 years of age when indefinitely suspended, it must be completed within seven calendar days. It requires extensive documentation and a hearing.

Trustees A secondary school Board comprises the following people-
The principal
An elected staff representative
An elected student representative(optional)
Between 3 and 7 elected trustees
Between 2 and 6 coopted trustees(optional)
Each of these individuals is a **trustee** and has equal voting rights.
A chairperson is elected annually and has extra responsibilities as well as a casting vote.

A Board could have a minimum of five **trustees** and a maximum of sixteen. There must always be more elected than coopted trustees. (Catholic integrated schools are an exception.)

INTRODUCTION

I initiated this leadership study because of my own experiences as a woman leader of a state secondary school Board of Trustees. My immersion in this subject position,[2] and the discourses that surround it, mean that, however carefully I attempt to validate my findings, they are still reflected through my own subjectivity or, as Lather describes it, the "foregrounding of one's own perspectivity" (Lather, 1991:91). It is, therefore, important for you, the reader, to know a little about me so you can locate the study in this context.

A personal story

I am a 50 year old pakeha woman, happily married for 25 years, and my husband and I have three children at university. I am at the same time a sociologist, an educational consultant to schools, a practitioner/director of my own research company, and a student. In summary I am a middle class, middle aged, educated, white woman.

In 1987 I was 'elected' to the Board of Governors of the secondary school which our eldest child had begun attending. It was typical of most secondary boards in the way it operated, in that it was chaired by a businessman, comprised mainly men, operated very formally, was hierarchically organised and rubberstamped almost everything the principal had organised prior to the meetings. The meeting tables were arranged in a long line with a 'head table' at the top end. Members arranged themselves in status order from the head table down to the far end. At the first meeting I attended I was nominated for the position of deputy chairperson by the female staff representative and was elected much to my surprise (since I had not been consulted beforehand) and everyone else's. I was asked to move to the top table, since my status had been elevated, and the group proceeded with the election of other officers. By tradition, all subcommittees comprised the principal, the chairman and one other person. I was secretly passed a note which said this was the way things were done and which asked me

[2] Subject position is defined in the context of feminist post structuralism in Chapter Two.

to nominate Mr.X for the staffing committee. I screwed the note up and did not make any nominations, because I did not know any of the members. The chairperson nominated Mr.X and the subcommittees were set up as they had always been. I was not aware at the time that my position as a person who would act independently was established by that action. I later found out that that was what the staff had hoped when they planned to get me elected to the deputy position. My time on the Board was a constant battle. Because I was confident enough to ask questions and challenge traditional ways of operating, I was often kept uninformed until after decisions had been made. I continued to challenge the things I was unhappy with and encouraged the other Trustees to express their opinions. This resulted in some changed ways of operating and in new systems being established. While the principal and chairperson were annoyed at the change in expectations, the rest of the Board members became more actively involved and some told me that they were pleased and felt empowered at being included.

In October 1989 the new system of Tomorrow's Schools was legislated for and implementation began in all schools. Its election system ensured that there was a majority of elected members and that these came from the parent/caregiver body. When the new Board of Trustees was elected at our High School, I was the top polling candidate and was elected chairperson at the first meeting which was informal and held only for that purpose. For the second meeting I had the tables arranged in a circle and this symbolically set the scene for the Board of Trustees to operate very differently from the old Board of Governors. For the first time I wondered about the impact of different leadership styles and whether the difference was related to gender. The newly elected trustees were keen to be involved, expected to be informed and were encouraged by me to take an active role in discussion and decision making. A committee of staff was nominated to attend board meetings to monitor the behaviour of the new Board. After the first two meetings it gave their blessing to the new Board and stopped attending the meetings. A month later the principal announced his early retirement, citing an unwillingness to adapt to a new system of education at his career stage.

My awareness of the relationship of gender issues to decision making increased over the next year. Boards were supposed to use coopted placements to ensure that the board reflected its community. We had many energetic discussions as to whether or not to coopt more women to achieve a gender balance. The two women were always

outvoted by the six men who insisted there was no difference between men and women (liberal meritocracy discourse) and that what we needed was the 'best person' for the job. This type of attitude was very difficult to challenge, because it was so unintentionally discriminatory. The Board of Trustees men did not consciously want to disadvantage women and they could not see that that would be the result of excluding them.

> The simple truth is that where women are not present, involved, and influential, our interests are overlooked and there is little empathy with our concerns. (Clark, 1994b)

Support for change came from our newly appointed (male) principal and the Board finally coopted a woman and a Maori representative nominated by the local Maori community.

I set up a support group of the three chairpersons from neighbouring secondary schools and we met regularly for two years. I was the only woman in the group but that was a situation I was used to from my years of working in the business community. Our differences seemed more a result of philosophies and values than anything I would have attributed to gender. On reflection, after working with a group of women, I think there were many important differences in the way the two groups worked and believe that many of these differences were strongly gender related.

In May of 1993, the Secretary for Education, Dr. Maris O'Rourke, called a meeting of the women leaders of secondary schools for the Auckland region. It is interesting that she included both chairpersons and principals as leaders. There were only four (including myself) women chairpersons of boards of trustees who attended and the meeting included the girls' state schools and the girls' private schools. A number of 'issues' relating to girls and women in education were discussed and suggestions made as to how things could be improved in the future. These ideas were included in a letter to the participants (Appendix A), passed on to the policy division of the Ministry of Education and incorporated in the briefing notes for the incoming government. We, the chairwomen, were interested in talking together but had very little time. I was amazed that there were so few chairwomen at the meeting and it prompted the ideas of researching the issue and of forming a network. This thesis was a way of combining both objectives.

The O'Rourke meeting and letter (Appendix A) acted as a catalyst in clarifying a number of ideas and needs and prompting me to bring them together in a research proposal for this study. The area of female governance in New Zealand has not been studied before and many of the issues raised during the meeting pointed to the relevance of such a study.

- "Girls and women still have difficulties in balancing the multiplicity of roles expected of them in society." and there is still a need for "further research and affirmative action."

- "There is a need for more women members of Boards of Trustees.....It is now evident that the slow progress of women to achieve equality in spite of a great deal of individual effort is also due to the structures and systems of society and that inequality must now be looked at from this perspective as well as from the perspective of personal achievement." (O'Rourke, 1993)

This thesis outlines the objectives and the process of the research study and analyses the findings in terms of a feminist post-structuralist perspective.

Organisation of the thesis

The discursive field of education is full of 'language' and jargon that is evolving and changing as well as playing a major role in determining educational philosophy and practice. The discourse of 'Tomorrow's Schools' brought with it new concepts, organisations, structures, systems and new language, descriptors and subject positions. A glossary of terms used in the thesis is included prior to chapter one.

The style of writing used in this thesis freely uses the first person pronoun "I" throughout the text. Alison Jones (1992:18) points out that "The personal voice has all but been silenced in mainstream academic writing in education." She also explains in her own work that we are not merely talking about the use of the personal pronoun inserted in the text (ibid:21), we are talking about the researcher as being a central figure in the process. In this research 'I' am a full participant and contributor. It would be artificial and misleading to attempt to distance myself through the use of distancing language in the text. There are two sources of quotations used in the text. There are the references made in the body of the text to other writings and writers, and to their words and data. These are acknowledged by the use of quotation marks, indented and referenced in the conventional way. The other quotes are from the chairwomen, the researcher, the

principals and the other trustees of their boards i.e. the participants in the study. These are indented and printed in *italics*.

If I am referring specifically to my acting in the role of the researcher, I have pointed this out. 'The group' refers to the times that the participants were operating together.

I gave each person and each school a code and all the transcribed documents are coded in this way (Appendix B). As the writing progressed it soon became obvious that because of the very small sample and highly specialised role i.e. the female chairperson of the Board of Trustees of an Auckland state secondary co-educational form 3-7 school, no amount of coding would protect the anonymity of the women, their principals, or the schools. Rather than use pseudonyms for the women, I decided to use a form of generalisation that would make clear the numbers of people involved but make it impossible to use codes to put together a whole case study picture of an individual or school. Another reason for not attempting to identify each individual utterance was that the action group transcriptions do not provide an accurate means of doing so. It was often not possible, months later, to recognise individual voices on the many hours of tapes.

The thesis is set out as follows.

Chapter One outlines the background to the study and describes the educational context in which the research took place. It includes data on female representation on Boards of Trustees.

Chapter Two deals with the conceptual foundations of the study. It begins with an overview of feminist theoretical approaches and follows on with a more in depth examination of feminist post-structuralism, which is the approach I have selected as the best means of understanding the research material and the issues.

Chapter Three is a review of the literature on the discourses of leadership and of women's leadership in particular. The writing style, in keeping with the rest of the script, is personalised, and describes my journey through the literature as I experienced

it. A turning point in the journey was when I realised the importance of the voluntary nature of the leadership and began to try to find literature in this area. The main problems were the total lack of research and writing on the leadership of New Zealand Boards of Trustees and a general lack of literature on voluntary leadership. The concept of 'leadership' seems, in the minds of researchers and writers alike, to assume career involvement. I argue then, that there is a need for the concept of leadership to be broadened to include voluntary and elected leadership, and that further research into these forms of leadership should be conducted.

Chapter Four begins with the research questions that guided this study and then explains some of the methodologies that have informed this research. The methodological issues of reliability and validity are discussed in relationship to these approaches. My own positionings in the research process and in the report are explained. This is complex, because I am at times the researcher, at times a full participant and at times both. I also contribute indirectly and directly to the script in the form of quotations. It is as much 'my story' and 'my reality' as it is for the other chairwomen.

Chapter Five outlines the project in action beginning with the selection of the participants and then taking the reader through the work of the action group and the practical and ethical issues that arose.. The limitations of the study are outlined so that the reader can interpret the findings with these in mind.

Chapter Six begins telling the story of the Chairwomen by outlining the main issues that they faced during the time of their leadership. Some of these issues relate specifically to acting in the subject position of 'chairperson'. Others relate to their feelings, to the impact on their personal lives of the inbuilt conflicts between the various subject positions being negotiated and to the responses of their husbands. In this chapter, and the two following, wherever possible I have used the women's own words to relay their understandings and constructions of their individual changing realities.

Chapter Seven outlines the women's motives for taking on the role of chairperson. These are important to our understanding in that they underpin various actions, behaviours and priorities. They are also very different from the motives of many career leaders.

Chapter Eight examines various aspects of the styles of leadership which evolved for each of the women as they enacted their position of chairperson. Changes over time and differences between the women are discussed, as are the many similarities.

Chapter Nine discusses the main outcomes of the research study. These include the benefits to the participants and their schools, the writer's insights into methodology and theory and the key findings on women's governance. Through examining the differences and similarities in the ways the women chose to take up the subject position of chairperson, this chapter comes to an understanding of the importance of the voluntary nature of the leadership and of the influence of competing subject positions on the lives and decision making of the women.

CHAPTER ONE

Background to the study

The education scene in Aotearoa/New Zealand

On the 1st October 1989, a new Act of Parliament came into force (The Education Act 1989) which legislated for the introduction of Tomorrow's Schools. This was a radically new approach to running an education system which was strongly rooted in the economic and political philosophy of the time. New Zealand had been jolted out of its comfortable welfare state mentality by the 'oil shocks' of the early 1970s and nudged towards the monetarist free market discourse of the new right. "-it was becoming increasingly apparent that the costs of the complex infrastructures of State-owned, State-funded, State-managed, State-provided, State-regulated institutions which intervened in almost every aspect of New Zealanders' lives, were substantially outstripping the broad benefits - especially the political gains" (Aitkin, 1991:1). The new goals were to be those of 'internationalisation', 'marketisation', 'deregulation', 'decentralisation', and 'privatisation'. New legislation, such as the Employment Contracts Act, supported the moves to deregulate the labour market and the new discourse used the rhetoric of devolution.

> In education this (change) is evident with the push towards school-based decision-making and devolution as the means to produce both a more efficient but also more equitable and responsive system of education. At the same time accountability is to be ensured by standardisation of measures to facilitate comparability between programmes and individuals (such as programme budgeting, performance appraisal and performance indicators). (Blackmore, 1993:42)

This was reflected in the discursive field of education as well as that of economics. Previously each secondary school had been governed by a Board of Governors which comprised some 'elected' parent representatives and a majority of appointed members. In reality the provision of education in New Zealand was heavily controlled through centralised agencies and it was often said that you could not even cough without having to get permission and/or funding from the Department of Education. Primary schools were totally controlled by the Department, and even

secondary schools, which had Boards of Governors, were dependent on the Department for most decisions. It was not unusual for principals to engineer the Board election process so that the prechosen people were 'elected unopposed'. As one of the chairwomen described, members tended to be shoulder tapped.

> *The school newsletter said there was a vacancy for a parent representative on the Board and that anyone who was interested needed to make an appointment to be interviewed by the principal. It was like a job interview and I was certain he would make sure I was not nominated or elected. He said he had made sure that there had never been an election in the past and it suited the school not to have one this time.*[3]

The discourse of the new right in education, as articulated in "Tomorrow's Schools" (Lange,1988) and "Governing Schools" (Ministry of Education, 1989) documents from the Implementation Unit of the Ministry of Education, and the draft charter guidelines talked of "local control" , "accountability", "buying in advice", "range of service providers", "setting local education goals", "partnership with parents", "consultation", "collaboration", and "greater decision making authority'(ibid). At the same time it borrowed from previous discourses in promising "social justice" and choice".

Two of the principal features of the reforms were that-

- The running of the institution will be a partnership between the professionals and the particular community in which it is located. The mechanism for such a partnership will be a board of trustees.

- Each institution will set its own objectives, within the overall national guidelines set by the state. These objectives will reflect the particular needs of the community in which the institution is located, and will be clearly set out in a "charter" drawn up by the institution. This charter will act as a contract between the community, and the institution and the state. (Lange, 1989:1)

The subject position of 'Governor' became 'Trustee' which, in the opinion of one commentator, " was meant to signal a particular relationship between community and the school where both worked in partnership" (Stewart,1996:17). The old managerial discourse was retained in the establishment of the new "Boards" and

---

[3] This is the first of the numerous verbatim quotations from the research transcripts. They will all, like this one, be in italics and indented. This quote was from one of the chairwomen.

although the word 'Governor' was not included in the new legislation, it emerged again immediately in the form of 'governance' which was to be the appropriate role of the new Boards. "These definitions of governance and management are ideas borrowed from a different world where the workers, in the main, have specified tasks to engage in and the results of their work are measurable and comparable with others" (Stewart, 1996:17). The words themselves are also borrowed, and we should not underestimate the ways in which such language influences the expectations of both the holders of governing and managing subject positions, and those in other subject positions who interact with them.

The Boards of Trustees (BOTs) are 'body corporates' under the Education Act 1989 and have legal responsibility for-

- the appointment of the principal and ongoing appraisal of her/his performance
- ensuring the implementation of the National Education Guidelines
- the governance of the school including the writing of the school charter and policies
- the approval and monitoring of the school budget
- managing the school finances within the laid down guidelines
- the employment of all staff (teaching and ancillary) and the monitoring of their employment conditions
- purchase of equipment and assets
- maintenance of assets and buildings
- discipline of students indefinitely suspended
- health and safety standards and procedures
- monitoring of the delivery of the curriculum
- consulting with and reporting to the parents and caregivers
- liaison with the Maori community and recognition of Treaty obligations
- liaison with contributing schools
- privacy procedures
- long term planning
- fundraising

Having these responsibilities handed to the Board represented a major change in role and status for principals. Absolum (1995:15) points out that

> "Boards and principals have had to cope with legislative and regulatory changes to their roles." and that "It has taken some time for it to be generally accepted that boards have a legitimate and statutory interest in all aspects of the operation of the school and certainly have an interest in the overriding purpose of the school- the delivery of the curriculum in a manner which meets the needs of the local community.....The staff are accountable to the board and the board is accountable to the local community and to the state".

All this is undertaken by the BOT under the leadership of the chairperson who is elected annually at the school's annual meeting. For the Auckland secondary schools involved in this thesis project, (including their adult community education programmes) this involves responsibility for approximately -

- $1,000,000 operations grant
- $4,000,000 plus in senior salaries
- 15-20 million dollars worth of buildings
- 70-100 full time staff
- 50-100 part time staff
- 700-1200 full time students
- 200-400 part time students
- special units of various types
- other assets/buildings that the school owns/shares

The chairperson's role, according to the Trustee Handbook (NZSTA, 1993:2502), includes

- providing leadership for the Board
- ensuring that the work of the Board is done (ie carrying out the National Education Guidelines)
- short-, medium- and long-term planning of Board activities
- ensuring that the Board sets goals and priorities and makes progress towards them
- chairing the meetings
- setting the agenda for the meeting
- ensuring that decisions taken at meetings are actioned and followed through
- signing the minutes of the previous meeting

- signing all official Board correspondence
- seeing all incoming correspondence and deciding what will happen to it
- evolving a meeting style acceptable to the chairperson and the other trustees
- determining the training needs of the Board
- fostering good interpersonal relationships between trustees
- being the spokesperson for the Board
- signing contractual and other key documents on behalf of the Board
- ensuring a harmonious relationship with the principal
- negotiating the principal's employment contract
- carrying out the principal's appraisal on an annual basis
- maintaining good communication between the Board and the wider community.

Since 1989 New Zealand has introduced a number of Acts of Parliament that have added significantly to the responsibilities of BOTs[4]. As well as these extra responsibilities, trustees may now be personally liable for fines and imprisonment under at least one Act[5].

Added to this are increasing parental expectations and often pressure from agencies[6] advocating for, and asserting the individual rights of, students without any mention of the individual responsibilities of the same students. Boards, and chairpersons in particular, find themselves spending a great deal of time defending actions and decisions taken in relation to the disciplining of students. Personnel and employment issues are major time consuming responsibilities and a not infrequent source of complaints and litigation.

Most trustees have their own jobs/careers. Their school commitments are voluntary and done in whatever time they can manage around their work, families and other community commitments. The Ministry recommended that BOTs pay each trustee $55 ($36.85 after tax) to attend each of ten monthly board meetings a year.

---

[4] These include The Children, Young Persons and their Families Act(1989), The Employment Contracts Act(1991),The Health and Safety in Employment Act(1992), The Human Rights Act(1993), The Copyright Bill(1994), The Privacy Act(1993).

[5] Under The Health and Safety in Employment Act (1992), individuals are liable to a fine and/or imprisonment.

[6] In Auckland the Youth Law Office provides legal advice free to students and their families and will act in an advocacy role for the student. Boards of Trustees have no such service available to them.

Chairpersons were to receive $70 ($46.90 after tax) for each meeting. Although it is not mandatory, most BOTs still follow these Ministry guidelines. It has been described by many trustees as "a pittance" (Francis, 1990). While it is not the reason that people put themselves forward as trustees, it is doubtful that it would even cover the cost of the trustees running their cars on school business and it clearly puts the work in the voluntary category.

Such responsibility is enormous for laypeople who receive very little training or support[7]. The Ministry of Education, which under Tomorrow's schools was supposed to be one of the 'partners' in the relationship, has until very recently taken the position of not interfering, not giving advice and not providing support for trustees or Boards[8]. Some of the "principal features" of Tomorrow's Schools that were set up to support parents and communities, such as "community education forums" and the "parent advocacy council no longer exist" (Lange, 1988:2). Positions that were established to support BOTs, such as the Ministry liaison officers, have been disestablished. The schools' operations grant from which Boards were to "purchase services" is at least 10% behind inflation[9]. At the same time that the responsibilities have increased, accountability remains, and these aspects are monitored and reported on publicly by the Education Review Office (ERO).

Yet, in spite of much media speculation prior to each election, few schools have had difficulty getting elected people for their BOT. (Minister of Education, 1994:22) Again contrary to the view that one may get from the media, there have been few schools that have not been governed well by their BOTs. There is provision for the Minister to disestablish a BOT that is not performing and to appoint a commissioner. This has been a rare occurrence. This study will explain many of the reasons that Trustees are prepared to give their time voluntarily in this way and give many examples of the dedication and competence of these volunteers. Even as early as the end of 1990, Middleton and Oliver reported that elected parent trustees felt "excited and positive

---

[7] Although the Ministry has provided funding to NZSTA to provide training for Boards, this has never been very satisfactory and it was not until 1995 that management contracts were provided that included intensive management support for Boards and schools.

[8] This changed in 1995 with the introduction of what is now called the School Support Programme. This is designed to provide a 'safety net' when a school is experiencing problems. It does not provide help for a school that is coping.

[9] In the May 1996 budget the operations grant was increased for the first time since 1989 except for a very small increase in 1993 tagged for technology.

about parents being more involved than previously" and they "approved highly of the principle of devolution and the greater autonomy of schools under the new system" (1990:11).

My impression from working with trustees (both as part of my job and as a trustee) over the seven years is that they feel the initial Tomorrow's Schools changes (as distinct from the changes made as a result of the policies of this current government)[10] have been positive. McQueen, an education consultant, says "On the whole trustees have worked well and (school) charters were a brilliant idea" (Jayne, 1992:42). I have not heard of anyone who would want things back the way they were, with the exception of one principal who was a participant in this study. The retiring President of the national Trustees' Association (NZSTA) made this point strongly at the association's annual conference, "There have been suggestions of changing legislation to reduce or change the role of trustees. My message to those people is 'forget it'" (Rae, 1994:3).

Female representation on Boards of Trustees

Catt (1993:1) states that "women are a significant group whose views and needs must be represented in any elected body". Indeed the provision in the Education Act for co-opted places on boards of trustees was designed with equity in mind. "Boards are required, as far as reasonably practicable, to reflect in their co-opted membership the ethnic and socioeconomic composition of the school's student body and the country's gender balance" (Ministry of Education, 1989:Ch.2,p1). The entire chapter 10 of the Governing Schools Handbook (MOE, 1989) deals with Gender Equity and gives Boards detailed information on gender equity issues, policy requirements in this area, the importance of role models and the Board's responsibilities as an equitable employer. It is interesting to note, however, that in the ten pages of guidelines, all the suggestions relate to students and staff in the school and not to the trustees. There is no mention of the importance of women trustees as role models or of their representation on the Board in leadership roles.

---

[10] Examples include the abolition of school zones, establishment of enrolment schemes and making registration of teachers optional.

There are two sets of information that are relevant to this thesis. First the number of women who are elected and co-opted to secondary boards of trustees and secondly the number of women who are elected to the position of chairperson. There is no definitive source for such data. As Sturrock and Parkin (1994:16) explain-

> The Ministry of Education holds three databases on boards of trustees. Two of these databases, one containing information on candidates for the positions of parent representatives, and the other with data on the results of the parent representative elections, are based on forms completed by the Returning Officers. The third is an active membership file made up of information obtained from questionnaires filled in by individual board of trustee members. Unfortunately, compatible data are not held on each of the three databases.

In 1990 the Department of Statistics (p117/118) said that

> As in other spheres of elected office, women have traditionally been under-represented on school boards of governors and school committees... While more men than women have been elected onto school boards, the majority of co-opted members have been women. Even so, the overall weighting of membership after co-option has continued to favour men.

This less than favourable picture becomes worse: they note that "In schools where women have been least well represented, **notably secondary co-educational schools**[11] and boys' schools, co-option has tended to perpetuate rather than reduce the male predominance." Up-to-date accurate figures are difficult to get because the Ministry relies on schools returning accurately completed questionnaires. In 1993 such publications give figures for secondary (form 3-7) schools where women occupied 41% of board places (Statistics NZ, 1993:178), but this includes the single-sex schools. They give figures for co-educational schools where 48% of trustees were women but this includes the primary schools which have a much higher proportion of women. It is impossible to get figures for state co-ed secondary schools which have the combination of variables that produce the worst scenario for women as trustees. They summarise by saying that in the three year period from 1990 until 1993, "In schools where women have been traditionally least well represented, notably secondary schools and single-sex boys schools, co-option has had virtually no effect in reducing the greater proportion of men" (ibid.). The reason for this has been given by the Report on the Compulsory

[11] My emphasis

Schools Sector as being that "There has been a tendency to shift the focus away from co-option aimed at ensuring good community representation towards co-option to ensure that boards acquire experts with necessary skills" (Minister of Education, 1994:23).

This thesis will argue that these so-called 'necessary skills' are those accepted by the powerbrokers of the 'self management' discourse as being relevant and that since these 'experts' have in the past been men, the skills they have seen as being relevant for effective leaders are those that they have been comfortable with. The thesis will demonstrate that women perceive as important some skills that have not traditionally been accepted as priorities for self-management and are not what the Minister had in mind when he made the statement. We see, then, the cycle of male dominance being perpetuated. It is worth noting here Anne Phillips' comment that "Women are called on to fit themselves into slots devised for the men, and their own needs are in the process ignored." She asked "Why should equality mean women shaping themselves to a world made for men? Why shouldn't the world be made to change its tune?" (Phillips, 1987:19)

It is even more difficult to get data on the gender of the chairpersons. A request to the Data Management Unit of the Ministry of Education resulted in some figures being made available but the Ministry noted in their facsimile that there were schools "missing from our data base"[12] and that it was difficult to separate the co-ed schools from the single sex schools. Keeping data on the gender of chairpersons would be difficult by definition because they are elected **after** the election results are published and are then re-elected each year by the Board. The Ministry relies on the schools voluntarily completing survey forms and they reported their records being incomplete.

[12] Written on a fax to Kay Hawk from the Data Management Unit of the Ministry of Education in a response to a request for data.

On the 3rd March 1994, the Data Management Unit of the Ministry of Education sent me the following data -

Table 1

Gender of Chairperson of Boards of Trustees

School Type	Male	Female	Total
Form 1-7	39	11 **(22%)**	50
Form 3-7(attached intermediate)	6	0	6
Composite/Area	26	10 **(28%)**	36
Form 3-7	115	43 **(27%)**	158

1993 data from the Department of Statistics again lacks the detail needed but concludes by saying "Women continue to be poorly represented in chairperson positions on the boards. Whereas almost half of all board members in July 1993 were women, just over one-quarter of chairpersons were women." These data include the primary schools in which more women are trustees than in the secondary schools.

A telephone survey was carried out in Auckland by the researcher, at the end of 1993, in order to identify women chairpersons for this study. It elicited the following data -

Table 2

Auckland secondary schools - Female Leadership

	Total	Female Principals	Female Chairpersons.
Coeducational Schools	63	7 **(11%)**	4 **(6%)**
Girls' schools	13	12 **(92%)**	2 **(15%)**
Boys' Schools	14	-	2 **(14%)**

If the Ministry's data were accurate, Auckland women were especially under represented as chairpersons in the girls' schools (15% compared to the national figure of 45%). The 6% of chairpersons (being female) in the Auckland co-ed secondary schools fits with these schools having lower numbers of women chairpersons than primaries, single-sex schools and rural schools. The changing sample of this study indicates how changeable the situation is and how difficult it would be to have accurate data at any point in time.

This chapter has provided explanations and data which help in understanding the educational context in which the women in the study were operating. The following chapter explains how I came to select feminist post-structuralism as the theoretical context through which to examine their leadership.

CHAPTER TWO

Conceptual foundations of the study

Introduction

The way the methodology was determined for this research came from my knowledge of the needs of a Board chairperson and my many years as a qualitative researcher. I had not studied feminist theories or read about feminist approaches to research methodology. Throughout 1995, as we (the chairpeople) met regularly, I studied feminist theory as part of a master's paper entitled "Women in Educational Organisations". At the same time my literature search exposed me to many writings on feminist research approaches. The outcome of the reading and the study was the selection of a feminist post-structuralist approach to the analysis of my work. This chapter discusses why feminist post-structuralism was selected and how it will be used to assist understanding.

Feminist theory

Bunch (1993:250) believes that "the initial tenets of feminism have already been established - the idea that power is based on gender differences and that men's illegitimate power over women taints all aspects of society". It is this problematisation of gender relations that in Flax's view is the "single most important advance in feminist theory" (Flax, 1990:43). My own views, and the way I am using the concept "feminist" in this paper, coincide with Bunch and I also accept her definition of feminist theory.

> Feminist theory, therefore, is not an unengaged study of women. It is an effort to bring insights from the movement and from various female experiences together with research and data gathering to produce new approaches to understanding and ending female oppression. (Bunch, 1993:250)

I became aware at a fairly early stage of our meetings that the chairwomen did not perceive themselves to be feminists. This does not mean that they were not aware of women's issues or the inequities and injustices faced by women as a collective. They were all aware of, and sympathetic towards, such issues. However, one of the women

had been put off the idea of feminism and 'being a feminist' by the actions of, and publicity afforded to, radical feminists. She felt very comfortable in a male world and was not aware of having been disadvantaged herself.

> *K - Do you consider yourself a feminist?*
> *# - I suppose it depends what you mean by a feminist. I am just a person. I enjoy women, but I would far rather be with men. I find that even in my work process there are always tiffs going on between ladies. If men have a problem with you they come out and say it and get it over with. I find that I have always tended to mix with general people and have never really been into women's organisations.*

Three had a philosophical position based on the need for fair and equal opportunities for all, regardless of gender, and did not see the need to take any particular actions to assert the rights of women unless they became aware of something they perceived as an injustice. At the same time they appreciated belonging to an exclusively women's group.

> *I have my own sort of group..... that is just women who have been brought together through their children's Kindys and primary schools.....It is a social thing..... It gives you support. It is a support group.*
>
> *I first belonged to La Leche league and then I got involved in playcentre. Those were both women's groups.*

Playcentre is not by definition a women's group although, at the time our generation was involved, it was in practice exclusively female. La Leche is by definition a women's group. What is interesting is that although the involvement in these groups began because of the purpose for which they were established (ie preschool education and breastfeeding) the contact with a group of women friends continued as a 'support' group.

Two others were quite keenly aware of women's issues and proactive advocates of women's rights but still stopped short of identifying themselves as feminists.

> *K - Do you consider yourself a feminist?*
> *# - I'm not sure really because I think that feminists that say that they are feminists look upon the act of being feminist as slightly different. I'm not quite sure because I don't really know what a feminist is. I think a person that considers themself a feminist really does know what they are.*

While it appeared to me that most of the women were more feminist in their actions than they seemed to acknowledge, I was aware that they might not be very comfortable with some feminist discourses as a means of analysing their situation. Therefore, since it is their story as much as mine that I am telling, I needed to find a theory that would allow me to reflect on our differences and our positions, as each of us saw these for ourselves.

As I progressed through a study of the theories it felt like a chronological journey and, although particular theories are not confined to finite time periods, for me the earlier positions gradually came to seem antiquated.

The emphasis that **traditional feminism** places on the nuclear family as the basis of society (Middleton, 1990:68) is a position that we could all identify strongly with but none of us, in recent years, have accepted male superiority or authority as normal. We all deliberately selected co-educational schools for our children because we do not believe girls and boys should receive a different education and we wanted our children of both genders to develop into adults with self confidence and with confidence in their interactions with people of any gender.

The reformist model of **liberal feminism** also has much that we could all identify with. We do see the inequality of men and women as unfair (Tong, 1989:28) and our experience as part of this group has highlighted the reality of men still holding most positions of power in education (secondary school principals and chairpersons of secondary boards). Affirmative action and equal opportunities (Middleton, 1990:83), even when legislated for and incorporated into school charters, have not achieved equal distribution of men and women throughout the educational professional or voluntary hierarchies (Armstrong, 1992:227). Liberal feminists could argue that the way that each of us individually overcame personal adversity to 'achieve' a high status position demonstrates their argument that, when women demand access, they can achieve equality through individual effort and merit (James and Saville-Smith, 1992:33). This thesis will show, however, that the trip each of us took was far more complex than this and cannot be generalised in this way. It could be argued by critics of a liberal approach, that we chairwomen, in being white and middle class, are an example of the token women who achieve while the structures of oppression survive (Acker, 1987:422).

Marxist feminist theories focus on class relations (Cox and James, 1987:8) and highlight the ways in which capitalism perpetuates the use of women as an unpaid workforce both in the home and other voluntary work situations (Eisenstein, 1984:41; Armstrong, 1992:231). While we all stayed home and parented our children, and contributed in many voluntary ways to our local communities, we also used this time with small children for university study and most of us continued our careers in an adapted form which took into account our children's needs. We were not, and did not feel, exploited. Rather, having made the choice to parent, we found ways to continue in the paid workforce. Marxist theory, then, was not going to easily explain our situations.

While it is difficult to discuss all the strands of **radical feminism** as one group (Roland and Klein, 1990:273), the concept of women as an oppressed group was not one that these women found they identified with. However, this thesis will discuss examples of patriarchy in the education system and the social construction of gender, as well as power relations between men and women (Armstrong, 1992:230), which are all issues about which radical feminists are raising consciousness. The women in this thesis do value women's ways of knowing and operating but they would never agree that women are superior to men, that revolution is an answer, that single sex education is an advantage or that the nuclear family is not a valuable institution (Weedon, 1987:17). While they would probably also argue against women separating themselves from men (James and Saville-Smith, 1992:42), they did feel very strongly that the fact that the action group comprised women only was one of the main factors in its success. Such apparent contradictions are not given credibility within radical ideas so I needed to keep searching.

Nga Wahine Maori, or **Mana Wahine** (Smith, 1992:33; Ministry of Women's Affairs, 1990:13) would rightly see the pakeha composition of our group as an example of the dominant culture in positions of power and the reproduction of existing race relations. The women in this study were at different places in their understanding, opinions, and commitment to biculturalism. At one end of the continuum was one chairwoman who supported the view of her Board that they did not want Maori people forming an active group in their school and would not allow a marae on their school. At the other end, I was instrumental in setting up a Komiti and having a marae kura built

in our school. Our diverse positions on Wahine Maori kaupapa are yet another example of the differences I am struggling to theorise.

My sociological training and way of viewing the world meant that there was much in **socialist feminism** that appealed to me. Its concepts could be helpful in understanding the experiences of these women: its acceptance of women not being a homogeneous group (Court, 1994b:14); its analysis of intersections of power struggles between family, school and the market place (Johnson, 1990:310); its wish to eliminate the sexual division of labour (Weedon, 1987:23) and have men participate fully in child rearing (ibid:26; Weedon, 1989:18); its assertion that reproductive freedom should belong to women (Jaggar, 1983:320); and its concepts of male hegemony (Arnot,1982) and hegemonic masculinity (Court, 1989b:14 drawing on Connell 1987). Even though socialist feminism is less universalist than some of the other theoretical positions, it is still a structural analysis however. I share McLennan's view that "the structure takes on a life of its own and is empowered with a theoretical certainty that it simply does not possess" (McLennan, 1992:410). The structuralist theories did not seem to me to allow my extraction of similarities and common threads while at the same time retaining the unique set of contradictory positions that each of the women was negotiating. Structuralist theories do not easily allow for the analysis of kinds of diversity and complexity that have become evident in the women's narratives, and do not focus on an analysis of some of the inbuilt contradictions.

While each of the feminist theories has at least one important thing to contribute to the understanding of the lives and work, both voluntary and paid, of the women, it was not until I began reading about post-structuralism that I felt I had found a way of thinking that allowed for, and helped to explain, the differences that my material and observations were showing. It seemed to be able "to contend with contradictions in women's experiences and the presence, for example, of desires and behaviour inconsistent with women's liberation" (Gavey, 1990:8).

Feminist post-structuralism

The terms postmodernism and post-structuralism are used interchangeably by many writers but not all think they are the same (Huyssen, 1984:258). Postmodernism[13] is a descriptor for an era/period in which the ideas are developed. Post-structuralism is more a range of theoretical positions that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s and developed in and from the works of structural theorists such as Levi-Strauss, Sassure, Benveniste, Derrida, Lacan, Kristeva, Althusser and Foucault (Weedon, 1987:13). **Post-structuralism** is still in the process of being articulated.

Weedon produced a "specific version of post-structuralism" called **"feminist post-structuralism"** (Weedon, 1987:20). With this theory she aimed to address the questions of how social power is exercised and how social relations of gender, class and race might be transformed. Weedon's use of post-structuralist theory has a number of underpinning concepts that need to be discussed. These are discourse, positioning, subjectivity and language.

Discourse is a concept pivotal to feminist post-structuralist thought, especially as it has been used by Foucault and has been adapted and extended by Weedon. Discourses are common sets of meanings and values that "exist both in written and oral forms and in the social practices of everyday life" (Weedon, 1987:112). They occur within wider **discursive fields** such as education, medicine, employment, religion, the family and the law; and they are created and expressed through speech, writings, behaviours, apparel, rituals and symbols. Weedon makes it clear that discourses include psychic and emotional dimensions and the memories of these (ibid). Discourses may compete, and the most powerful will be perceived as the norm, natural or common sense.

> Within a discursive field, for instance, that of the law or the family, not all discourses will carry equal weight or power. Some will account for and justify the appropriateness of the status quo. Others will give rise to

[13] **Postmodern** thinking is a reaction against enlightenment beliefs, still prevalent in Western culture, which include concepts of rationality, reason, objectivity, universal truth and the ability of scientific methods to give us evidence of such concepts (Flax, 1990). As Flax argues, "Postmodern discourses are all in that they seek to distance us from and make us sceptical about beliefs concerning truth, knowledge, power, the self, and language that are often taken for granted within and serve as legitimation for contemporary Western culture." (Flax, 1990:41)

> existing practices from within or will contest the very basis of current organisation and the selective interest which it represents. Such discourses are likely to be marginal to existing practice and dismissed by the hegemonic system of meanings and practices as irrelevant or bad. (Weedon, 1987:35)

Within the discursive field of education in New Zealand, for example, the recent pressure from the Treasury through Government was for schools to adopt 'bulk funding' or 'direct resourcing' as their means of having staff salaries funded. This is an example of a clash between the discourse of self management and the more generally accepted discourse of schools as collegial learning communities. The Ministry of Education have, in recent years, presented schools with a 'trial' and optional inclusion into the scheme as ways of trying to entice schools to join and hence swing the balance in favour of direct resourcing becoming the accepted norm.

Discourses may contain contradictions within themselves as well as with other discourses (Heald, 1991:139). The discourse of self management, for instance, is one with inbuilt contradictions. Most schools have accepted the concept of self management as preferable to the centralised management that previously existed because of the restrictions that the centralised bureaucracy had imposed on their autonomy and decision making. They have gone ahead with enthusiasm and set up the necessary policies and systems to implement a self managing system. The discourse of self management is one that is borrowed from the discursive field of business where one of the main self management goals is to make a profit. Since schools are government funded and are not in a position to make a profit, there is an inbuilt contradiction which manifests itself in teachers' reactions to many of the practices of businesses which were designed to help produce the profit and are now being imposed on schools. Performance appraisal, accreditation, and direct resourcing are three examples of such practices. Many teachers believe that they will not be any more self managing simply by administering the payment of teachers salaries, when good performance by teachers does not produce extra dollars which can be added to the salaries.

One of the arguments at the heart of post-structuralism is that a discourse is time and context specific (McLennan, 1992:410). This sometimes leads to the approach being criticised as being relativist and of little use because of the inability to generalise from its findings. Yeatman, however, points out that rather than relativism being a

criticism of a post-structuralist approach, it is also its strength in that it highlights difference and enables a relevant analysis of how power is operating (Yeatman, 1990:292). This in turn makes planning for change possible (Davies, 1989:1) (Yeatman, 1990:294). The findings of this study will not be able to be generalised to apply to all women leaders, to all board chairpersons, or even to all board chairwomen because, as the material will demonstrate, there are differences among the women. This study will, however, still be directly relevant to other chairpersons of secondary school boards and probably primary school boards also. It will have understandings that are useful for other populations such as school trustees and school principals as well as for those studying women's leadership and voluntary leadership.

Discourses offer various **subject positions** for individuals to occupy. The new discourse of Tomorrow's Schools produced the new subject position of 'school trustee' and new guidelines within which the "chairperson" of the school board of trustees was required to operate. These were borrowed from the discursive field of business, as was the concept of governance. Heald nominates education as one field in which women are demanding new subject positions or "new ways to be in educational settings" (ibid:140). Two examples in this research are the job shared positions of student and staff representatives on the board of trustees. The new legally defined subject positions of student representative and of staff representative on the board of trustees have been reconfigured, and to an extent redefined, by both the individuals involved and by the groups they are elected to represent. Another example is that of co-principalship which is a recent innovation in a few schools. The Education Act (1989) defines the subject position of principal and the role that is expected to be enacted by the individual holding this position. It only allows for one principal for each school. Some schools, however, which want to have the position shared, have found ways to work around the law so that it is not broken, but in practice the scenario of a shared position is achieved. Heald (1991:137) says that discourses *define* identities by "setting the limits of what can be done within the subject position by whatever incumbent". This research will show that, while there were legal limits to what the women could and could not do within the subject position of chairperson, they were able to, and did, negotiate their own ways of operating within the position.

Subjectivity is described by Jones (1993) as "our sense of self" and by Heald (1991) as our "selfhood" or "identity". It includes "the way we think, the ways we feel and the ways we act" (Jones, 1993) and is defined by Weedon (1987:32) as "the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding their relation to the world". A feminist post-structuralist understanding of subjectivity highlights the way we experience ourselves as contradictory and changing people who are actively constructing our own ways of being within a range of discourses and as we relate to and interact with others (Treleaven, 1993:2). It does not hold the humanist view of a whole, static and unified way of being. Subjectivity, one's sense of oneself or one's identity, is constructed as an individual is moving in and out of (or occupying[14]) various subject positions made available within discourses (Weedon, 1987). Several subject positions may be being negotiated as individuals construct, in an ongoing way, their subjectivities. Each woman in this study, when she filled the subject position of chairperson of the board of trustees, worked within it as well as within her other subject positions (mother, wife, friend, pakeha, professional, business manager etc) in order to negotiate her own changing subjectivity. McLennan (1992:42) suggests that "the 'real me' is 'essentially' neither one nor all of these 'readings'" and that "We may at times inhabit only some, at times all, and at times feel we evade any such interpellation". This research will show how these processes can be detected in the women's accounts of their negotiations of each aspect of the chairperson's role depending on the predominant source of power in any given situation.

The existence of multiple subject positions invites an analysis of **power.** I am using the word 'power' in the sense of the ability to achieve action/outcomes. This use allows for the group to have power and for individuals to have power **with** others rather than **over** others. Some subject positions may offer a more powerful way to 'be' in a particular context than others. At a Board meeting, for instance, it may be the subject position of 'chairperson' rather than that of 'woman' or 'mother' that will have the greatest influence. The same individual, however, at a student discipline hearing may find that working within the subject position of 'parent' will be more appropriate in relating to the student's parents and therefore more helpful in achieving a desirable

[14] This is my inclusion to clarify that one can occupy more than one position at a time.

outcome than, for example, working within the subject position of chairperson. The chairperson may find herself in the conflicting position of wanting, for the sakes of the parents and the student, to relate 'parent to parent' (power with) but being constrained by the legal discourse of 'student suspension hearings' which dictates how she will behave (power over) in order not to endanger her Board by possible litigation. Even a chairwoman who has critically reflected on the various subject positions, and usually tries to allow the 'parent' positioning to predominate over the 'chairperson' positioning, will find herself having to adapt her stance to each individual situation. She will also find that her various subjectivities will play a role depending on what has recently happened in her own life and on recent experiences. If, for example, she has just come from a fight with her own teenager, she may find it unhelpful at that point in time, in dealing with another student discipline issue, for her 'sense of mother' to be the predominant part of her subjectivity and may fall back on her chairperson positioning. Treleaven, using a very similar methodology to that of our action group, described how the women in her group experienced this shifting of positions.

> We looked at how we found ourselves positioned within competing and contradictory discourses, and could identify how individuals take up one rather than another position according to the relative power available in a particular position at a particular time. (Treleaven, 1993:23)

Language is a central concept to both structuralist and post-structuralist theory. Saussure's theory talked of language as a "chain of signs" and differentiated the written or spoken word (the signifier) from its meaning (the signified). Language is more than merely words and vocabulary. It is a system of meanings and it is more than just a reflection of cultural meaning; it contributes to or produces meanings (McLennan, 1992:37) and generates positive or negative connotations. Jones (1991:86) says that "our realities are constructed by language". Weedon reminds us that "we need to view language as a system always existing in historically specific discourses" but is not fixed (Weedon, 1987:24). This means that as researchers we need to analyse historically specific discourses in order to deconstruct particular constructions that have become dominant and seen as "normal" or unproblematic. "Dominant positions are embedded in sets of meaning which define what is 'ordinary' or what we might take for granted" (Jones, 1993). In this research one of the most striking examples is the word

'chairperson' or 'chairman'. This word, which is in common usage as the formal descriptor for the leadership position that we held, is used throughout the New Zealand School Trustees Association "Trustee Handbook" that guides the way Boards are set up and run. This handbook includes a formidable list of responsibilities for this subject position of chairperson. The word does not appear at all in the legislation from which these guidelines are taken. The Education Act 1989 [15] requires only that "one Trustee to **preside** at meetings" is elected. The words "board of trustees", however, do form part of the legislation and as a result, the trappings and procedures (including having a chairperson) have become the norm. Our reality has been constructed by the discourse of board governance that people associate with the word "board" rather than by the requirements as expressed through the legislation. This is an example of language producing meaning rather than merely reflecting it. An analysis of both the legal and educational contexts of this time period (discourses) as well as the backgrounds and current subjectivities for each of the women is required in order to understand their acceptance or rejection of the label. An example of language reflecting subjectivity was cited earlier in the quotation from the chairwoman who regarded women who belonged to women's groups as not being 'general' people.

As I said earlier, one of the main appeals of feminist post-structuralism is that its concepts enable the researcher to focus on an analysis of difference. Jones (1991) discusses the difference of women 'from men' and difference 'among women' and points to the complexity that a concept such as 'difference' highlights. Code warns that such dichotomies are "especially problematic in that they posit exclusionary constructs, not complementary ones that could shade into one another or function as 'mixed modes' rather than absolutes" (Code, 1992:299). Jones (1991) also discusses difference 'within' a woman. There were numerous examples in the women's narratives of their ability, deliberate efforts and/or inability to feel and behave differently according to the situation. One of the most dramatic examples was the willingness of one of the women to allow herself to be 'dominated' by her husband within her marriage and home, but not allowing herself or other women to be dominated in the school environment in which she had a leadership responsibility. The fact that such differences and apparent

[15] Sixth Schedule, No.7.

contradictions exist is an important part of a reality (Weedon, 1987:33) that we may not be able to explain and should not even feel that it is essential to try to do so. Women are negotiating contradictions all the times as they pioneer subject positions traditionally held by men (Jones, 1991:84). All of the types of difference mentioned by Jones and the 'mixed modes' described by Code are a reality in this study. "The strategy is one of 'both/and' (Lather, 1991) taking contradictory notions of difference and laying them over each other/ using them all" (Jones, 1991:91). Else (1992) explains that feminists have "tended to universalise their own experiences, trying to find a totalising theory of feminism". The need to account for difference arose from the inability of other feminist theories to explain individual and contextual differences. Fraser and Nicholson (1990:34) believe a useful post-structuralist theory would be "- explicitly historical, attuned to that of different groups within societies and periods". They use words such as 'temporality', 'non-universalistic', 'transepochal' and 'comparativist' to describe the acknowledgment of difference. While there is a danger of an analysis becoming anecdotal and lacking any validity if it is so unique as to be unusable beyond its own context, it is "the recognition of the ongoing nature of the constitution of self and the recognition of the non-unitary nature of the self that makes post-structuralist theory different from social construction theory" (Davies, 1989). This does not mean that other theories have nothing to contribute, but rather that no one theory is sufficient.

Post-structuralism is a complex approach because it deals in complexities and differences. Its strength is that it does acknowledge them and provide a framework within which they can be discussed. Nancy Hartsock says that in order to develop our understanding of difference, we need to create situations in which previously marginalised groups can participate in defining the terms of interaction and that in such a situation we can "construct an understanding of the world that is sensitive to difference" (Hartsock, 1990:158). Women Board of Trustee chairpersons were so marginalised that they, to the best of our knowledge, have never formed a group before. When we formed the group, it highlighted the differences between us.

I found that post-structuralism has given me the courage that Patti Lather described as the "courage to think and act within an uncertain framework" (Lather, 1991:13) and to place the emphasis on practice and on my research as "the context for experimental action" (Jones, 1993:24). It also gave me a framework within which to

operate as both researcher and participant, subject positions that have historically been viewed as conflicting, and then to articulate my own subjectivity as an integral part of the written document.

> These shifts, labelled postmodern, have opened a gap for authors to reveal them*selves* legitimately in their work, to include our explicit subjective presence in our writing. (Jones, 1992:25)

Conclusion

This research is similar in design to that of other feminist research and my role in it resembles that of other feminist researchers. Fonow and Cook (1991:2) argue that feminism has incorporated several underlying assumptions that, in their view, have become mandatory for all feminist projects. They include reflexivity, an action orientation; attention to the affective components of the research; and the use of the situation at hand. By these criteria, this thesis research is certainly a feminist project. I had never identified myself as a feminist researcher and I initially saw the sorts of decisions that I was making as merely being practical and appropriate to my participants, my own mode of operating and to evolving qualitative and transformative methodologies. My reading of the literature, which I discuss in the enxt chapter, my acting in the subject position of a feminist researcher and my increasing understanding of a post-structuralist approach have resulted in my subjectivity changing to include an acceptance of a feminist stance.

CHAPTER THREE

Literature review

Introduction

My reading on the topic of leadership came **after** my own personal experiences of being in a number of leadership roles. For me the experience of being in a leadership position began during my school days when I was a youth leader in our local church. It changed into a formal status employed position as my career developed as both a manager and a director of a growing national company, and then moved into the voluntary realm as our children progressed through kindergarten and school. In recent times it has involved the voluntary position of chairing the Board of Trustees at the local secondary school and, in my professional life, working with school principals to explore and develop their leadership role. These experiences have each contributed to my personal views on leadership and no doubt impacted on the way I have viewed and interpreted what I have read.

The reading has been a journey that has taken place throughout my university study in the papers that have contributed to this post graduate degree in educational administration. The pathway began by taking me back into a historical world of trait and contingency theories before it headed into the more recent territories of women's leadership and shared leadership. Reading in the area of feminist theory and, in particular, feminist post-structuralism, helped me to decide on this approach as a means of understanding and explaining the data because of its willingness to accept and deal with difference. At the same time it challenges the essentialist nature of much of the writing on women's leadership and it provided an ongoing tension as I made decisions about what was and was not helpful.

I felt a breakthrough in my understanding occurred when I found some research on voluntary leadership but the findings were in such stark contrast to our experiences in the group that my search for relevant writings in this area intensified. The discovery that much of the research and writings on voluntary leadership was in fact describing voluntary **career** leadership brought frustration in terms of the search for literature, but very valuable insights in terms of the differences and highlighted the need to interpret

our findings in the context of **non-career** leadership. I searched in vain for a literary pathway to this territory, women's voluntary leadership, that exists in reality but is unresearched and undocumented.

At other times many of the paths coalesced and either crossed each other or merged. Examples were the areas of shared leadership, communities of leaders, and women's leadership. Each of the pathways added to my knowledge and helped me set my own research 'scene' in a wider context.

Ways of viewing leadership

Hoy and Miskel (1991:252) point out that "definitions of leadership are almost as numerous as the researchers engaged in its study" and they demonstrate this with a list of typical examples. Rather than 'define' leadership as such, I will discuss the ways in which the views of writers have developed and changed in relationship to leadership.

Early leadership research focussed on the analysis of **traits** (Kanter, 1977:167) or the "great man theory" of leadership (ibid:253; Haller and Strike, 1986:25) which was based on the assumption that the individual is more important than the situation (Handy, 1993:99) and that people who become leaders are different from those who remain followers (Chemers, 1984:93). Stogdill (1948) reviewed 120 trait studies that took place between 1904 and 1947 and concluded that this approach had yielded "negligible and confusing results" (Hoy and Miskel, 1991:253). Mann(1959) reviewed 125 studies, drawing similar conclusions, and Stogdill reviewed a further 163 new studies in 1970. Although there was some evidence that certain traits or personality characteristics are often associated with leaders, there are problems with attributing causality and ignoring the situational context. Early leadership research did include some studies of school administrators (Hoy and Miskel, 1991:265) but most had similar samples to those of the Harvard studies which "primarily dealt with business and industrial organisations such as insurance companies, manufacturing concerns, and banks. Some investigations were conducted in hospitals, governmental agencies and public utilities (Likert, 1961, 1967)" (ibid:268). It is noteworthy that writers such as Hoy and Miskel(1991) and Handy (1993) do not comment on the gender of the leaders who were studied. It may be that women leaders were so rare that the researchers and writers did not think it necessary to

point this out. What ever the reason, it should alert us to the fact that the 'traits' identified are those of male leaders who were probably studied by male researchers.

> The failure of the trait approach and the growing emphasis on behaviourism in psychology moved leadership researchers in the direction of the study of leadership behaviour. (Chemers, 1984:94)

These **behaviour** or **style** theories are separated out as a group for discussion by Handy (1993:100) who illustrates, by means of a table, that most of the classifications of leadership style range from *autocratic to democratic* styles. Research findings (ibid:102) suggest that while some leadership styles can be important in achieving ownership with a group, they are sufficient in themselves for achieving effectiveness.

Fiedler (Hoy and Miskel, 1991:274) distinguishes between leadership 'behaviour' and leadership 'style'. Mintzberg (1986) undertook what he called the 'diary studies' in which he analysed the activities of five managers. He "provided the description of what a manager did - a male manager, though at the time this qualification went unnoted" (Helgesen, 1990:10). Fiedler (Hoy and Miskel, 1991:274) believed that the most effective leadership style would be one which took into account the leader's personal needs as well as the organisational goals (Fiedler and Chemmers, 1974:73). This is one of the approaches that have become known as the **contingency theories** (Haller and Strike, 1986:32). House's "path-goal" theory (Hoy and Miskel, 1991:270), Vroom's "decision tree model" (Handy, 1993) and Fiedler and Garcia's "cognitive resource theory" (Hoy and Miskel, 1991:282) are others.

Transactional or **exchange** theories of leadership consider the relationships between the leader and the group. Taking us this step further, Chemers reminds us that-

> The theories above might all be regarded as "leader oriented" approaches. They tend to focus most of their attention on the leaders actions and attitudes. Although followers make their appearance in features related to leader-subordinate relationships, the leader is clearly the central figure and prime actor. (Chemers, 1984:100)

For the first time in my reading I began to have a glimmer of hope that I might have found something that would be helpful, but the studies still seemed to assume that the leader was separate from the followers and was working *on* or *over* them,

rather than *with* them. They were still psychological models and limited by a positivist approach.

At the end of his review of the research on leadership, Chemers discusses **cross-cultural** approaches in which he cites Berry (ibid:103) who argues that most of our research evidence is from European or American samples and is 'culture bound' and 'culture blind'. Unfortunately, this important insight of Berry's is not matched by the awareness that the research is also 'gender bound' and 'gender blind'. One of the best known writers on organisational structures who takes a cultural perspective, Charles Handy, says that people do not change but that organisational fashions and paradigms do. One of the past assumptions that he believes is losing its value is that "hierarchy is natural" (Handy, 1993:370). It was clear from our earliest action group meetings that, although each of the chairwomen had different ways of working with their board, we all strove to avoid power and organisational hierarchies. It is clear from the action group transcripts that, up until this point, there was little in the literature that our group would feel comfortable with.

In recent years the approach to leadership in general and to leadership in schools has changed from emphasis on an hierarchical and autocratic model to one that emphasises collaboration, collegiality and shared leadership. Recent writings in the general field of leadership, such as those in Hesselbein, Goldsmith and Beckhard's collection of essays entitled "The leader of the future" (1996), support this shift in philosophy as described by Hesselbein-

> This leader long ago banned the hierarchy and, involving many heads and hands, built a new kind of structure. The new design took people out of the boxes of the old hierarchy and moved them into a more circular, flexible and fluid management system that spelled liberation of human spirit and endeavour. (Hesselbein, 1996:122)

The essay writers also emphasise a wide range of skills, attitudes, issues and 'lessons' that leaders of the future will need to address. None of them focussed specifically on women as leaders, and none of them discussed perceived differences between men and women, but many of them outlined attitudes and ways of operating that were very close to those observed and noted by the women in this study. In particular, Covey

(1996:158) recommends an attitude of humility and the motivation of service as being important dimensions of leadership.

Educational leadership

In 1987 Stephen Ball wrote that there were few British research studies on "headship in schools" and that what British and American studies there were failed to contribute much because they "failed to come to grips with the 'street realities' of headship" (Ball, 1987:80). His own work was based on case studies using an ethnographic approach and he described four styles of leadership and their impact on shaping school culture (ibid). Early studies, such as this one, on educational leadership followed the general literature on leadership in discussing only career leadership (ie the principal) and relied on the leaders of the time (i.e. men) for their insights and conclusions.

Educational writers such as Barth (1990) and Sergiovanni (1991) have stressed the effectiveness of communities of learners and leaders. Neither, however, until recently (Brandt, 1992) discussed gender as an issue. The assumption is that anybody, man or woman, can and should organise a school this way. This recent emphasis on shared power and affiliative leadership seems potentially to be in conflict with the rise of bureaucratic forms of organisations which have "reinforced the idea that school leadership requires hierarchical structures through which the principal is able to maintain an independent overview from a position at the head of various lines of command" (Blackmore, 1989). It also conflicts with the business, management or market model of schooling in which "a school principal is now required to be a chief executive who will rationalise management procedures to make the school more efficient, effective and competitive" (Court, 1994:13). Both of these types of leadership are perceived to require logical, technical, systems and numeracy skills and are associated with attitudes that reflect strength, decisiveness, rationality, competitiveness, and independence. These are skills and attitudes that have been more associated with men and masculinity than with women and femininity (ibid:13). Court articulates the dilemma that women principals may find themselves in.

> Those women who wish to lead within collegial relationships can meet resistance in schools where structures encourage a management model that

> requires the exercise of power over others: 'You make the decisions. That is what you are paid to do'. (Court, 1992:184)

Chairwomen also find themselves working within this model of education which surrounds them with legal and organisational guidelines, within which they have to negotiate ways of operating that they can be comfortable with. These insights have been helpful in working with the data.

So also are the writings of Grob (1984:269), Codd (1989:158), and Sergiovanni (1992:15) who differentiate between educational leadership and education management by attributing a moral dimension to the role of an 'educational leader', (ie the principal), which prompts leaders into facilitating the growth and development of others (Restine, 1993:20). Even though they were referring to the educational career leader only, the concept of moral leadership is relevant to governance as the women in this study talked of it. Caldwell and Spinks (1992:192) aid our understanding of this potential when they outline four scenarios of "the self governing school" in which they differentiate "the market model" from "the charter model". They describe the New Zealand system as being the latter, which is what gives us the freedom to organise our schools around the ways the local community thinks are appropriate. There are major implications in this for the boards of trustees and their leaders. It would be nice to think this model allows us to have the benefits of accountability and self management without losing the values and moral approach to education.

The structural model alone, however, did not seem adequate as an explanation of how the chairwomen chose to operate and some valuable insights were gained from literature on women's ways of knowing and being.

Women's ways of knowing

> Claims that there are specifically female or feminine ways of knowing often find support in the contention that women's significantly different experiences (different, that is, from men's experiences) lead them to know 'the world' differently (ie., from the ways men do). (Code, 1992:13)

The insights of Carol Gilligan (1982) into gender differences, though not specifically related to leadership, made a great impact on me. In particular, I could relate to her opposition to the image of hierarchy and preference for the "web of

connection" as a way of describing what women see as valuable (ibid:62). Unlike many previous researchers, she worked with both male and female samples, and concluded that masculine and feminine ways of ethical reasoning were *different* (Middleton and Jones, 1992:15). The work of Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule in "Women's ways of Knowing" (1986) had a similar effect on me. The validation, in writing, of experiences such as "just knowing" (ibid:68), of "inward watching and listening" (ibid:83), "refusing to judge" (ibid:116), "leaving the system" (ibid:127), "real talk" (ibid:145), and, "commitment and action" (ibid:151) was, for me, what the rest of the literature so far had failed to produce. These were ideas that I could immediately relate to both in terms of my own subjectivity, and in my enactment of the position of board chairperson. I also knew from many of the narratives of the other chairwomen, that these were ways of 'being' that they experienced. To an extent, it prepared me for reading "The Female Advantage" written by Sally Helgesen. Her study of women leaders emphasised the importance to them of organising ambience, listening and collaborative negotiation (Helgesen, 1990). In this part of the journey through the literature, I was beginning to feel as though the territory was more familiar and that it was taking me somewhere that would aid my understanding. At the same time it was already apparent that there were many differences in the ways each of the chairwomen felt, thought and chose to operate. How could these differences be, if women were all so alike in the ways described?

Code analysed the available literature both for and against such differences being attributable to gender and concluded

> Perhaps there are some essential female or male characteristics, but claims that there are always need to be evaluated and analysed. The burden of proof falls on theorists who appeal to essences, rather than on those who resist them. (Code, 1992:18)

She also warns against the trap of considering knowledge in terms of dichotomies such as masculine/feminine because, as feminist theorists have warned (Jay, 1981:48), this is "peculiarly characteristic of malestream thought" (ibid:28). My research does not attempt to compare men and women but the types of attitudes, feelings and behaviours that this body of literature identifies women as having seem very relevant. The study will, however, describe both the values, attributes and ways of leading that the

chairwomen have in common, as well as the differences between them, and the changes over time for individuals.

Women's leadership

Early literature in the field of women's leadership, in a wide range of organisations, tended to focus on surveying the proportion of women in managerial or executive positions and on the way in which the existence of sex role stereotypes has blocked access for women. Schein (1973) cites writings in this area " by Anastasi & Foley, 1949; Maccoby, 1966; Wylie, 1961" as well as Rosenkrantz, Vogel, Bee, Broverman, and Broverman (1968); Koontz,1971; Orth and Jacobs, 1971; and Bowman, Worthy, and Greyser, 1965. She points out, however, that there had been no empirical studies and that her study of 300 male managers concluded "This association between sex role stereotypes and perceptions of requisite management characteristics seems to account, in part, for the limited number of women in management positions" (Schein, 1973:99). In 1975, Schein noted that although "the number of studies pertaining to women in management has been gradually increasing" their samples were composed of males, so she replicated her 1973 study with a sample of 167 female managers. The results indicated that "female managers are as likely as male managers to make selection, promotion, and placement decisions in favour of men" (Schein, 1975:343). Kanter (1976) suggested that when there is minority group membership of any kind the "token" members are expected to conform and that "The critical factor for women may not be their gender but their number" (Kanter, 1976, cited in Riger and Galligan, 1980:905). Marshall (1984) studied sixteen women business managers, and their lives, and discussed their awareness of themselves as women in a 'man's world'. In the same year, a national survey of New Zealand class structure showed "men to be over-represented in positions of economic power and control. They are more than twice as likely to be managers as women (James and Saville-Smith, 1989:81). American research on women's leadership of the unions demonstrates the same outcomes. "Women continue to be seriously under-represented at top levels of union leadership, despite an increase in the female population of unionised members" (Melcher *et al,* 1992:267). As well as the overall under-representation, women are less well represented at the national level than the local level, and more commonly found in

relatively marginal positions[16] than influential positions (ibid:277). Research on the leadership of the Canadian unions had consistent findings (Chaison and Andiappan, 1987). Australian Census data show that while the number of women in management positions is increasing, there are still few at senior management level (Vilkinas, 1991:17). While it is clear that the issue of women's under-representation on secondary school boards, and as leaders of them, is relevant to my study, this literature was not helpful in understanding the reasons.

There is a growing body of literature on women's leadership (Court, 1994b:12) that tends to have arisen out of the need to explain why women are so under-represented in top leadership positions. It must be noted however that, almost without exception, it is based on research on career leadership achieved through appointments. The subjects of Still's Australian research are a not untypical example (Still, 1990). They comprised 25 organisational managers, 25 entrepreneurs (or proprietors), 3 social reformers (government sector) and 1 politician. Blackmore (1989) asks the question, "how has the under representation of women in formal leadership positions been explained in the conventional literature on leadership? She answers -

> Women have been cast in organisational theory as being deficient in terms of leadership skills and attributes.....The behaviours, traits and characteristics displayed by men in formal positions of authority have become the 'givens' of leadership..... This 'masculinist' characterisational theory of leadership is common across the main approaches to leadership in organisational theory, whether they be the trait model, the charismatic/behavioural model or the situational/contingency models of leadership central to educational administration. (Blackmore, 1989:100)

Shakeshaft elaborates by pointing out that the whole approach to the research methodology determines misleading outcomes.

> All of the 'no difference' literature looks at the way men manage and then asks, 'Do women do these things too?'. (Shakeshaft, 1987:166)

She continues to explain that the interpretation and writing up the research findings also gives an unhelpful and misleading picture to the extent that -

---

[16] Melcher *et al* cite the examples of secretary, or chair of the education committee rather than president, or chair of the negotiating committee.

> If one looks at the literature on the experiences of men in administration versus the literature of women, one might easily conclude that the two work at different occupations in dissimilar settings. (ibid)

The result of such research is that administration and leadership have become associated with masculinity and, in particular, with heterosexual, white, rational and technically capable men (Blackmore and Kenway, 1993:30).

Still reviewed fifty three Australian and international research studies on 'enterprising women' and concluded that recent studies have adopted a wider focus and included examining attitudes, sex role stereotypes, and opportunities and barriers to managerial attainment for women (Still, 1990:59). One of the main reasons identified as a barrier to progress for women (Coe cited in Tomlinson, 1994:35) is the existence of "the men's club network". Another is the difficulty of combining career demands with children, home and family (Shakeshaft, 1987:61,84; Frisby and Brown, 1991:314) to the extent that "many women have elected for a career rather than having children" (ibid:297; Tomlinson,1994:35). This is challenged however by Morrison *et al* (1982:10) who studied 76 American women executives and-

> were surprised by the large percentage who were married and had children. Given the difficulties often cited of balancing career and family life, the number of family women in the group was higher than we would have predicted.

In spite of their surprise, however, there were 1 in 4 who were not married and only half of the married women had any children. Court cites Malcolm (1978) and Neville (1988) as examples of writers who have argued that women's need for affiliation may have hindered their promotional progress but points to her own work and the evidence from Shakeshaft's analysis of over 200 dissertations and 600 research articles as demonstrating that women leaders define excellence and fulfilment in terms of relationships rather than individual autonomy (Court, 1994c:36).

A study of intercollegiate and interscholastic sports in the United States (Stangl and Kane, 1991) indicated that in terms of the total frequency and percentages, there were very few women in leadership positions at the level of athletic director. In seeking to explain a decline in the number of women coaches being appointed, they discovered that there was a direct relationship between "the sex of dominant and sex of subordinate

in terms of employment practice", in other words "these findings suggest an empirical validation of Kanter's (1977) model of homologous reproduction[17] (ibid:55). While the former reasons, such as having to balance work, family and other commitments, might have some validity in this study, the latter (homologous reproduction) clearly does not, as the trustees are elected by equal numbers of women and men.

On the other hand, literature that urges women to understand men's ways of operating in order to be able to play their game by the current (masculine) rules (Still, 1985[18]; Wyatt, 1992:4[19]) may have more to offer. Helgesen (1990) discusses this literature and then says -

> Once I realised that the days of women trying to fit into the corporate mould were over, I saw the need for a new kind of book. Not a book that would tell women what they need to learn about business, but a book about what business can learn from women; a book that would show successful women in action, and demonstrate the effect their leadership is already having on how business is done; a book that would define and reaffirm the values that women recognise as a source of their strength- values that have too long been dismissed as signs of weakness. (Helgesen, 1990:xx)

Her extension of Gilligan's "web of connection" into the "web of inclusion" in relationship to women's ways of leading was a helpful introduction to literature on gender difference in leadership style.

In 1990 Rosener surveyed, by means of a questionnaire, men and women leaders and concluded that although men and women leaders made the same amount of money, they describe their leadership differently. Women tend to adopt an "interactive style" which includes encouraging participation, enhancing people's sense of self-worth, consulting on decisions, sharing power and information and refraining from asserting their own superiority. Rosener was criticised for relying on what leaders said about themselves as being a reality (Epstein, 1990). Bass (1990), however, reports on research carried out at the Centre for Leadership Studies (State University, New York) which supports much of what Rosener found and she adds that their data "also found

---

[17] The process of choosing and promoting the "right kind of person" is referred to as homosocial or "homologous reproduction," in which the dominant group systematically reproduces itself in its own image (Kanter,1997) cited in Strangl and Kane, 1991:50.

[18] Cited in Pringle,1987:111

[19] Wyatt goes as far as to suggest that women seeking a secondary principalship should "be involved in activities (and) may want to brush up on your golf game"

women were somewhat more likely to be described as charismatic leaders.....and came out higher on this transformational factor than their male counterparts". Work on the difference in style of men and women leaders has not been without its complications and its critics (Powell 1990; Sonnenfeld 1991; Epstein 1991 cited in Court 1994c:33). Describing the motives behind the ways of operating, and describing the styles in which each of the chairwomen chose, and/or was pressured, to enact her leadership role will be an important feature of this thesis, these areas are reflected in the research questions. Similarities with other research findings will be noted, but there will be no attempt to generalise these styles to apply to other women, nor to assume that they are unique to, or characterise, 'women'.

Women's leadership in education

The world of schools is a "world of women" (Acker, 1983) both overseas and in New Zealand. Literature in this field largely mirrors the general literature on women's leadership. In spite of the numerical predominance of women in schools, for instance, they are as under-represented in educational positions of authority and leadership as they are in other areas of work (ibid:123; Shakeshaft, 1987; Neville 1988:4; Watson 1988:29; Chase and Bell, 1990:163; Wyatt, 1992:1; AASA, 1992; Restine, 1993:15; Green and Manera 1995:11).

New Zealand dissertations on women in educational administration are rare. Court's DDOC search by New Zealand Centre for Educational Research in 1989 produced only three (Court, 1989b:27)[20].

As with general studies of women leaders, research on educational leaders has focussed on career leadership. School principals form the sample for most research studies but even studies which have looked wider than this, such as Wilson's 1986 study of university academic staff[21] and Neville's work with women educational leaders from a range of organisations (Neville 1988), still focus exclusively on career leadership.

The issue of the numbers of women represented in senior positions in New Zealand primary and secondary school management has been commented on by a number of

---

[20] These were Malcolm (1977), Steele (1981) and Neville (1988).

[21] Cited in Court, 1989b

writers over the years (Malcolm, 1978; Whitcombe, 1979,1980; Sheehan, Court, 1989). Research that played a vital role in drawing attention to this issue came about as a result of a request from the National Advisory Committee on Women in Education. The **Teacher Career and Promotion Study** (often referred to as **TEACAPS),** developed into a major research study and was published in 1982. Its aim was to find out why women were so under-represented in senior positions and it concluded that no one factor was responsible (Whitcombe and Fenwick, 1982). Rather it was the result of many complex and inter-related variables.

Some writers have focussed on the small numbers of women *applying* for positions of responsibility (Sotheran, 1993; Slyfield, 1993). Much of the literature blames women's lack of advancement on this factor, which is seen as linked to women's attitudes, such as their attitudes towards themselves (Malcolm, 1978:3). Some studies have discussed ways that talented women can be encouraged and supported. For example, Neville (1998:152) promotes the idea of women needing to create networks or find sponsors. Mentorship is discussed in relationship to encouraging women to apply for promotion (Sotheran, 1993) and some research has highlighted the importance of other women acting as mentors and/or role models (Sarros, 1984:15; Vilkinas, 1991:20).

Exploring these ideas made me aware of the difference between elected and appointed leadership. Aspirants for a principal's position have to put themselves forward and declare that they want the job. On a board of trustees, the group elects a leader that they will be happy to work with and there were no instances in our group of any of the women promoting themselves, in fact the evidence pointed to the contrary.

Many writers have highlighted the competing subject positions of 'career woman' or 'principal' with those of 'wife' and 'mother' (Whitcombe and Fenwick, 1982:59; Neville, 1987:8, 1988:151; Court, 1989:155,161). New Zealand research demonstrates that marriage, and more particularly having children, does interfere with and interrupt educational career leadership for women. The TEACAPS data indicate that having children had not prevented men from applying for promotion but that "few women in senior administrative positions in either service had any children living at home" (Whitcombe and Fenwick, 1982:54). Malcolm describes marriage as a career *asset* for a man, in contrast to being a career *deterrent* for a woman (Malcolm, 1978).

Sampson (1984) reached similar conclusions and suggested that women would need to improve their position by sharing more of the family responsibilities. Some writers suggest that increased childcare facilities and double income or dual career families may be changing this situation (Chapman, 1986). Court, however, points out that there is a continuing assumption that it is the woman in the partnership who should make a 'choice' between career or family (Court, 1992). There are many examples in the literature of significant numbers of career leaders in education who have chosen either not to get married, or to be in lesbian relationships, or, if married, not to have children (Green and Maners 1995:14). The underlying assumptions about this situation in many studies, which have produced conceptual confusions and deficit models of women, have been analysed and challenged by some writers (Shakeshaft, 1987; Neville 1988:9; Acker, 1983:128).

> Components include a tendency to 'blame the victim' (and thus distract attention from structural obstacles) and to take the male experience as the norm to which women are then (unfavourably) compared. These tendencies are apparent in the literature under consideration. Women are frequently blamed for the low status of the profession and for their own low status within it. (Acker, 1983:128)

Court's survey (1989:161) of 30 women middle managers supports Neville's contention (1987:8) that the barriers and blocks to women's promotion in education can be traced to their having the primary responsibility for child rearing, but Court points out that the physical constraints alone are not the problem. Recent writers (Connell *et al* 1982; Connell 1987; Shakeshaft 1989; Blackmore 1989: cited in Court 1994c) have looked beyond the men and women themselves to society as a whole in order to understand that "male domination of school leadership reflects male hegemony in society as a whole" (Court, 1994c:35). This "dominant male hegemony" will need to be challenged if current inequalities are to be addressed. One place this can begin is in educational administration studies and theories (Court, 1992:182). Chase and Bell warn that as well as the structural, cultural and interactional barriers that confront women, there are "gatekeepers" who contribute to the persistence of these barriers: "men in positions of power control the formal and informal sites of hiring, decision making, power-brokering, and sponsorship" (Chase and Bell, 1990:164). In Aotearoa/New Zealand, with our current move towards increasing school-based decision making, devolution and

accountability, we are wise to heed Blackmore's warning of "a new form of hegemonic masculinity associated with the notion of the multiskilled manager.....(who) is expected to possess a package of generic skills and competencies which allow him or her to 'manage' *any* field of administrative activity" (Blackmore, 1993:43) because women will be judged against an organisational culture in which male models of 'success' dominate. Tom Sergiovanni, a highly respected writer on educational leadership, has recently rethought some of his ideas on gender issues.

> ...when I first began to read feminist literature, I thought "Who are these arrogant people?" But it turns out they were right. Management literature was written by men for men, and its values - individualism, competition - define success in a masculine way..... Well, as a group, women tend not to define success and achievement that way. They are more concerned with community and sharing. (Brandt, 1992:47)

People who have written on the motives, styles and techniques of women leaders tend to have compared and contrasted women and men. This makes the essentialist assumption that 'women' can be defined as being different from 'men'. Neville (1988) cites and discusses twelve such examples (ibid;28) and concludes that "there is a recognisable women's leadership style" (ibid:133). Orr (1989:3) cited American research studies which compared female and male principals and identified "either no difference of behaviour or better performance by women. However, in 1992, Eagly, Karau and Johnson undertook a meta analysis of fifty studies on the leadership styles of public school principals. Their findings substantiated, to some extent, those of reviewers such as Shakeshaft (1987) in finding that men and women do have "somewhat different styles" (Eagly et al, 1992:92). Women, they found, are more democratic and participative, and less autocratic than men. They are also more task orientated.

As I read the literature on women leader's motives, values and styles I found myself increasingly aware of differences that seemed irreconcilable with my knowledge of the chairwomen I was studying. At first I put this down to the fact that we, by definition, had teenage children. Unlike so many of the women leaders described, we had not chosen to remain unmarried, or not to have children, nor had we been divorced. That was the trigger to my understanding that *career leadership* was quite a different subject positioning from that of *voluntary leadership.* We each had our careers, and our

families *as well as* this leadership role. I turned therefore to the literature exploring women's voluntary leadership.

Women's voluntary work

Having identified for myself an important difference between career leadership and voluntary leadership, I began to explore the literature on women's voluntary work. At first it looked promising, if for no other reason than the sheer number of references. Some examples of the titles are as follows -

- "Women and Household Labour" (Berk, 1980)
- "The Clubwoman as Feminist" (Blair, 1980)
- "Benevolent Beginnings: Volunteer Traditions among American Women" (Brumberg, 1980)
- "Women Trustees, or 'Would You Not Be More Comfortable on the Sofa?'" (Chamberlain, 1986)
- "Good Times and Good Work: The Place of Sociability in the Work of Women Volunteers" (Daniels, 1985)
- "A Nation of Volunteers: Participatory Democracy or Administrative Manipulation" (Eriksson-Joslyn, 1973-74)
- "Women Volunteering" (Kaminer, 1984)
- "The Trouble With Rich Women" (Steinem, 1986)

The titles looked promising, and there were many more, but in reading through the abstracts on the data base, the same themes emerged. They related to women who had spare time on their hands, either because they were the active parents and therefore not working in a job or career, or because they were the wives of wealthy husbands who stayed home and did "good works" for the community. James and Saville-Smith emphasise the point that because community work has always had limited funding, there has been an expectation from the community that women will provide the necessary labour.

> Apart from looking after family members, women have also been expected to care directly for the community. The backbone of voluntary work, women have been the innovators in fields such as the provision of support

> for sexually abused and beaten women, early childhood education and care, and community health initiatives. (James and Saville-Smith, 1989:100)

These women, however, were not **leading** their local group or, if they were, it was not written about. They were active community workers at the grass roots level and they were not combining careers with their voluntary work.

Another avenue that at first looked promising was that of 'career volunteerism' by women. However, as Daniels (1988:10) points out, these women did not have paid employment of any kind and they had made an area of voluntary work their **substitute career**. In this voluntary work they were looking to find all the rewards and status, except financial rewards, that people look for in a career and this voluntary work was afforded the priority normally afforded to a paid career. This was so different from the situation of the women in this study that there was little point in continuing along these lines, and again this brought me to a dead end in my attempts to find studies of women working in voluntary positions of leadership.

Women's voluntary leadership

From the beginning it was clear that it was not going to be easy to find relevant writings or research in this area. Searches of Index NZ[22], Social Sciences Index and ABI Inform produced thousands of entries on 'women' and 'woman', several hundred entries on 'voluntary or volunteer', and hundreds of entries on 'leader' and 'leadership'. Efforts to combine these, and similar key words[23], resulted in no references. Combinations of any two words produced between one and ten entries and I began to work with these. There is a considerable amount of literature on work in voluntary associations and organisations and much of this talks about the huge contribution women have played in these areas. Typical titles included phrases such as "Women, work and volunteering", "Women's participation in voluntary associations", and "Women as volunteers". When it comes to a leadership role, however, the only

---

[22] The entries included 'management'(11858), 'leadership'(371), 'women'(7721) and 'voluntary(372).
[23] For women I tried 'female'; for leadership I tried 'management', 'governance'; and as well as 'voluntary' and volunteer' I searched voluntary associations and organisations.

references I could find were to men's leadership roles in organisations such as Jaycees (Power, 1973).

One initially promising area was that of 'Trusteeship' and 'Boards'. I explored books with titles such as -

- "The Last Word" *Association of Governing Boards Reports* (Capec, 1984)
- "The Effective Voluntary Board Of Directors" (Conrad, 1983)
- "How to Be a Board or Committee Member" (Sorenson, 1962)

These turned out to be instruction manuals on strategies for, and models of operating Boards. This is demonstrated in the "Introduction" to Conrad's Book.

> This is a book about boards. It describes what they are and how they work. It is not a book with quick answers and short cuts. Effective boards do not just happen. They are the result of hard work by board members and staff. However there must be ground rules so that the hard work will be productive. This is the purpose of this book - to provide basic ground rules for effective boards. (Conrad, 1983:xiiv)

They were written about and for large corporations and had very small, if any, sections on leadership. There was no reference to gender in relationship to either members or leaders. Even the book "Effective Leadership in Voluntary Organisations" (O'Connell, 1976), which had a chapter entitled "The Role of the President", was merely a manual on how to operate rather than an analysis of leadership styles. I could not find a single reference to gender in the entire book.

Hall, Cullen and Slack (1989:32) searched the literature on "voluntary participation and associations" and found it-

> extensive, eclectic and scattered throughout the discourses of several disciplines (but) that it tells us very little about the organisational processes and dynamics that structure voluntary organisations. In terms of gender it tells us even less. (ibid)

As far back as 1960 though, Babchuck, Marsey, and Gordon had studied power and prestige among women and men in community agencies (ibid) and found that -

> Men dominated the boards of most agencies, especially those that had large budgets and performed instrumental functions (for example, provided a service or produced a product). Women, on the other hand, were more active in so-called expressive associations whose activities were immediately gratifying to the participants as an end in themselves rather than a means to a specific end or valued goal. (ibid)

The only literature I could locate about women's **leadership** in voluntary organisations was related to women's leadership in sporting organisations. These studies set out to investigate the extent to which women are represented in positions of power (Therberge, 1984; Whitson and MacIntosh, 1989), and to try to understand why they are under-represented. These studies, however, did not investigate the few women who **did** hold management positions. Some work in Canadian sports organisations pointed to a lack of qualifications and family responsibilities as the two most widely perceived reasons that "women are under-represented in senior technical, administrative and volunteer positions" (Whitson and MacIntosh, 1989:137). I had certainly got the message by now that women are under-represented in leadership positions in all areas, both career and voluntary, but I had found little else. Like many other studies, in the Whitson and MacIntosh study the focus was on why women *were not* there, rather than work with the few women leaders who *were* there in order to understand their ways of leading. Similarly, Ellis and Wheeler (1991:29) gave data for two large New Zealand non-profit organisations, the IHC and Presbyterian Support Services, which showed a disproportionately low number of women presidents, executives, directors and managers but again gave no information about the few women in those positions.

The one study I found that did explore women's experiences as voluntary leaders was conducted in New Zealand by Jan Cameron, who interviewed 39 volunteer national administrators (Cameron, 1991). Like most other studies, it also demonstrates that women are under-represented at the upper level of administration (ibid:7) and it concludes that "both formal and informal networks are particularly powerful in reproducing and reinforcing the culture of the organisation and in ensuring homologous reproduction" (ibid:78). The experiences of the women leaders that are described in Cameron's research vary greatly and many of them are so fully occupied with their leadership position that it is clearly in the nature of a substitute career. As already pointed out, this is a very different situation from that of the women in this study. At

the same time there are some insights into issues that the women leaders had to contend with such as preferential treatment, discrimination and harassment (ibid:53-57) and a chapter on how the participants thought "women had ways of doing sport administration that were different from male ways" (ibid:61). The data in these sections highlighted the autonomy of these leaders and alerted me to another important variable in my study of leadership, that of the role of a trustee.

School Trustee leadership

Governance, or Trustee leadership, is different in many ways from career leadership and schools are one of many organisations that have a dual-leadership structure. Boards usually have a combination of appointed and elected members and women are not generally well represented on boards.

In 1986 a New Zealand survey (Ellis and Wheeler, 1991:29) found there were 15 female directors on the boards of public companies out of a total of 1,057 directors. In May 1990 there were fewer listed companies, but the ratio of male to female directors was the same. Again the information available relates to how the women are, or are not, selected rather than how they operate when they hold the position.

At the beginning of Tomorrow's Schools, Helen Watson pointed out that men dominate positions of power in education, including school boards and she challenged the ability of the new legislation to ensure equal gender representation.

> Since equal representation of men and women is not the norm on decision-making bodies in New Zealand, I doubt if boards of trustees will equate fair with equal. It would be easy to ensure that boards were equally male and female. It could be written into the legislation or within the national guidelines which all schools will be obliged to adhere to. (Watson, 1988:29)

Even equal gender representation on the boards, however, would not necessarily translate into equal numbers of women being elected to a leadership position. This is probably even less likely to be the case on secondary school boards.

Trustee leadership is quite different from most other forms of leadership in that there are two 'leaders' in the organisation. In a school, the school principal is the day-

to-day leader of the school and s/he is a full time, professionally trained, career leader[24]. The Board chairperson leads a statutory body which has the responsibility to develop policy and to employ, monitor, appraise and, if necessary, fire the principal[25]. This leader is a voluntary, part-time, educational lay person. The principal is, of right, a full member of the Board. The potential for difficulties over power issues is obvious (Marshall and Heller, 1983:32) and heightened if the principal was appointed before Tomorrow's Schools ie. before Boards of Trustees, with their new powers and responsibilities, existed.

Writers such as Sexton (1976;55 cited in Neville 1988:27) have drawn our attention to "the domination of males throughout the educational structure, the education boards, teachers colleges, school boards, in city councils, state legislatures, and mayors and governors". Although there is little literature on school boards themselves, the literature on women's leadership often refers to the negative impact that male-dominated boards have on the selection of women as leaders. This literature discusses 'old boys' networks' and the ways that men in power work to exclude women from similar positions (Blackmore and Kenway, 1993:35). Shakeshaft (1987:96) lists 34 studies which have demonstrated overt sex-discrimination by school boards and administrators. An American survey of 311 school board members, however, indicates that "Women board members ..... are part of a low-key, yet important and powerful, informal network composed almost exclusively of women". Blackmore and Kenway (1993:32), in writing up this study, conclude that "The women on school boards give every indication that they have the motivation and the ability to change the balance of power". Although that study is entitled "A female leadership style could revolutionise school governance", it talks about **all** the women board members as bringing "female leadership qualities to their board". In other words, it is not a study of women who have formal responsibility for leadership but of all women trustees and their potential to exercise leadership as part of their general trustee role.

---

[24] This is the management role. The Principal is the equivalent of the business world's 'Chief Executive Officer' who implements the policies.

[25] This is the governance role.

Conclusion

The number of subheadings in this chapter demonstrate the complex inter-relationship of the variables I found myself trying to understand. While many studies and readings appeared initially to be of interest and relevant, my own experience in the role of chairperson and my involvement in this study enhanced my understanding of the differences and the inappropriateness of making comparisons with some of the leadership subject positions. The subject position of 'chairperson of a secondary school board of trustees' is unlike any other that I came across in the leadership literature. It uniquely combines the variables of statutory leadership[26], elected leadership, voluntary leadership, co-leadership[27] and governance. While there is literature on each of these elements, studies seldom focus on more than one of them. When we add the variable of gender and look at women's leadership, there is no literature.

Each of the subsets of leadership literature has information and insights that have some relevance to this study, and each will be drawn on in the discussion. However, researching the subject position of the Board Chairperson in itself is pioneering work and researching it in relationship to women has validated the use of a methodology that generates its own data, interpretations, and realities. An action research programme seemed ideally suited to achieving these goals and has provided most of the insights for this study, along with other qualitative methods. A detailed description of this process both in theory and in practice is the focus of the next two chapters.

---

[26] Under the Education Act, 1989

[27] With the school principal as the day to day school manager

CHAPTER FOUR

Methodological approaches

Introduction

The aim of this research was to investigate women's leadership through working with all the women who chaired Auckland, state, co-educational, secondary school boards of trustees. There was no intention to compare these leaders with those in other types of schools or with their male counterparts. The particular blending of methodologies employed in this thesis project grew out of my personal curiosity to follow up on a meeting (Appendix A), my personal involvement as a board chairperson, my years of experience as a qualitative researcher, and my determination that the other chairwomen would directly benefit from their involvement in the project. I had previously been actively involved in educational ethnographic research (Ramsay et al, 1990) that had begun with a set of research questions and worked on the assumption, articulated by Trow(1957), that "the design of research and the techniques used would relate very closely to the research questions" (Ramsay et al, 1990:80). I believed in the appropriateness of the context dictating the methodology (Elliot, 1992; Altrichter et al, 1993; Poskitt, 1994).

My original research questions clearly called for qualitative interviews both with the women and somebody else closely involved with them in their leadership role, such as the school principal. Observation of them acting in their leadership role was another option. These techniques would gather material to answer my thesis questions but what they would not address was my wish for the women participating to directly benefit from the process and to be an active part of the decision making. My recent personal involvement in, and supervision of, a number of action research projects provided an answer to this need. We could work in an action group to directly improve our practice as leaders and at the same time the group discussions would generate material that could be used for the thesis.

The whole study is in the realm of naturalistic inquiry and all the techniques used are qualitative. There are two distinct and overlapping levels to this research. The first

"level" was the ongoing work of the group of chairwomen who used an action research approach to work together, in order to make positive changes in each school, as well as to help each woman gain a better understanding of her own ways of operating as a leader and give her the opportunity to reflect in order to improve her practice. This process involved most of the activities usually associated with action research cycles and the group worked with the observations and data they each collected as individuals, as well as with the material that I collected in my role as primary researcher. The second 'level' was my own work as the primary researcher collecting material in order to study women's leadership and to write a thesis. I used the qualitative techniques of interactive interviews, observation, and participant observation as a full member of the group in the group discussions. The analysis of the material involved reflexivity and was based on the underlying principles of grounded theory. In practice the two processes took place alongside and within each other and were inseparable other than for the purpose in this chapter of discussing aspects of the methodologies.

Research questions

These questions were developed for the research proposal and were intended to act as a **guide** to the research process rather than a controlling mechanism. This is how they were used in practice. Interview questions were based on them but they were a minimal guide only.

- What is the history of each Board of Trustees?
  How many women/men were elected?
  How many women/men have been coopted?
  Has gender been an issue that has been discussed?
- How was the leadership decision made?
- How does this particular Board view the role of its leader?
- What backgrounds do the chairwomen have?
- How does each woman view her role as leader?
- What leadership qualities and style does each demonstrate? What does each perceive that she demonstrates?

- What difficulties has each experienced in the role?
  Has there been any role conflict?
  Are there parts of the role she feels uncomfortable with?
  Have the expectations of others been a problem?
  Has she experienced male hegemony?

- What positive experiences have they had?
  What are the joys?
  What have been the successes?
  What support have they had?

- What kind of relationship do they have with their principal?

- What did they set out to achieve? Have they achieved it?

- What would they do differently if they had the opportunity again?

- What does each think of the issues outlined in the O'Rourke letter?

Qualitative methodologies

Tesch (1990) describes and cognitively maps twenty-six different types of qualitative research. She also describes a way of seeing qualitative research using the metaphor of a painter's palette.

> Think of a painter's palette. There are certain basic colours. They can be mixed to form an unending variety of shades. Every individual researcher could do a study of a unique 'shade'. Just because someone has given his/her shade a name and written about it or even defined how it differs from other shades, does not mean that it is an established type of research that now has to be used exactly that way by other researchers, keeping each of its tenets intact. To be sure, some types of research and some labels catch on more strongly than others or already have a stronger tradition than others. But basically there is only one requirement for research: that you can persuade others that you have indeed made a credible discovery worth paying attention to. (ibid:71)

Material from a number of types of research methods, or 'shades', have informed this particular piece of research (or painting). These are action research, case study, reflection and reflexivity, grounded theory, naturalistic inquiry, feminist approaches, and transformative and emancipatory approaches.

Action research

The phrase "action research" was coined by Kurt Lewin in the early 1940s. Action research is an evolving methodology which is increasingly being used in the education world in particular. Its popularity is largely due to "the quest to narrow the gap between theory and practice, and in its capacity to empower participants" (Poskitt, 1994:50). Lewin described a process which began with examining a general idea and then required planning, fact finding and execution (Carr and Kemmis, 1986:162). In his view, it was critical that it was participatory and democratic and that the people most affected by decisions were themselves actively involved in making them (Poskitt, 1994; Kemmis and McTaggart, 1982) and that their own situation is improved as a result (Sagor, 1992:7). The research site, therefore, is where the action and the change is taking place. In this research process, each of the schools was a research site and the action group meetings of the chairwomen was another site.

Stephen Corey in the early 1950s was one of the first action researchers to work in an educational setting. He took a very pragmatic approach which placed the action research in the classroom setting and he acknowledged school constraints for teacher observation (Poskitt, 1994:51; Oja and Smulyan, 1989:5). Time pressures experienced by the chairwomen imposed similar constraints. The combination of career demands, family demands, social life, community responsibilities, school demands and the BOT work resulted in our often being fully occupied over a 12 - 18 hour day. Although it was usually our personal time that was sacrificed, it sometimes meant that the attractive ideas we would like to have implemented for the school, and/or the tasks we planned to do, had to be postponed, took longer, or were even forgotten.

Many recent writings and action research projects focus on *teachers* working together to improve their own practice and the teaching and learning in their school (Elliot, 1993 & 1993b; McTaggart, 1991; Johnston, 1994:40; Poskitt, 1995). These involve either a group of teachers working together or working with an outside facilitator. Rarely, if ever, do they involve people from *different* schools working together, which is the case in this study.

Key characteristics of most action research studies, including this one, are as follows-

Collaboration The process is carried out by a group (McTaggart, 1991; Carr and Kemmis, 1983). The participants are the researchers (Elliot, 1994) who control the process (Somekh, 1988:9).

Systematic process This usually includes cycles of planning, action, observation or data collection, reflection and then replanning (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988; Johnson, 1994; Poskitt, 1995).

Action and knowledge result Elliot (1994:133) stresses that action researchers are knowledge *generators* rather than knowledge *appliers*. Action research is a process and has a variety of kinds of outcomes (Somekh, 1988:12). There are the tangible outcomes such as detailed plans and procedures, research data, and measurable change and improvements. It may also result in increased research skills, improved communication and group skills, increased knowledge, improved thinking skills and the generation of creative and innovative ideas and strategies.

Emancipation Habitual ways of acting are challenged (Robertson, 1994:15; Carr & Kemmis, 1986:180) and the participants are empowered to improve their practice.

No two approaches to action research are exactly alike (Sagor, 1992:75) and the definition that best describes our process is that provided by McTaggart.

> The common project of action research has several aspects. Each participant, academic, system administrator, teacher, parent and student, must undertake:
>
> - to improve his or her own work;
>
> - to collaborate with others engaged in the project to help them improve their work through collective planning and reflection on the concrete results of efforts to change discourses, practice and power relations; and
>
> - to collaborate with others in their own separate institutions and cultural contexts to create the possibility of more broadly informing the common

> project, as well as to create the material and political conditions necessary to sustain the common project and its work.
>
> That is, action research is concerned simultaneously with changing individuals on one hand, and, on the other, the culture and groups, institutions and societies to which they belong. (McTaggart, 1991:5)

Poskitt (1994:78) stresses the importance of action research practitioners working on an issue that is important to them. She says that "The likelihood of all teachers within a school being highly interested in the same problem is remote". Our group members frequently worked on issues that were important in someone else's school. It is interesting to note that the majority of these were relevant to us all, at least in the sense that they were very likely to be relevant in the future, if they had not already been so in the past. This high measure of common relevance is linked to the role of the chairperson and the issues that arise from that specific role.

Case studies

Case studies, or "life-histories" (Middleton, 1988:130) were a small part of the method of this research. Although these have not been written up in this final document in a case study format, they played an important role in guiding my understanding. During the first interviews, each of the women told her story. This included details of her family, schooling, qualifications, first job experiences, marriage, children, involvement in schools, leadership experience and anything else that she felt was an important aspect of her life. Each woman also outlined the history and composition of her own school's Board of Trustees. As well as relating the experiences, it was the interpretations and future implications of the events and the feelings that the women expressed that became important (Middleton, 1988:130). Although I was the only person who had access to the 'full' life story of each of the women, they shared major parts of their lives with the others in the action group meetings. This sharing was done in relationship to an issue being discussed at that time rather than as an exercise in its own right.

Reflection and Reflexivity

As early as 1986 Patti Lather discussed reflexivity as a technique which was so seldom used that finding ways to use it was like "a journey into uncharted territory" (1986:263). Since those early days it has been used increasingly by qualitative researchers. Ramsay (1990:83) discusses the essence of reflexive sociology and of ethnomethodology and reflexivity. He described the difference between these approaches as follows -

> Through disruptive techniques Garfinkel and his followers (for example Mehan and Wood, 1975) create conditions which cause people to reflect on their social world. This is an extremely important point. Reflection is a pre-requisite to a consideration and adoption of practices which may turn out to be more appropriate than the ones currently being followed. Reflection is a precondition of action and precedes reflexivity. In our[28] view reflexivity occurs when people reflect on their practices, consider fresh ideas and then act on them. This reflection and action involves the researcher as much as the researched. The point we would emphasise, though, is that reflectivity is not reflexivity. The latter goes beyond thought and entails action." (Ramsay et al, 1990:84)

Reflection is one of the key phases of the action research cycle and was a regular activity undertaken by each of us as individuals during and after our activities in the school and by all of us together during the action group discussions. This was sometimes voluntarily initiated by the participant herself. Other times it was initiated by group members as part of the 'group debriefing' of a particular topic. Yet other times it was initiated by me as the researcher, when I took issues to the group for discussion or interpretation. Reflexivity was the outcome of the reflection on numerous occasions as we each took back ideas to implement in our schools or in our own practice.

Grounded theory

In 1967 Glaser and Strauss described a research approach that they called "grounded theory". It is summed up in their words as " the discovery of theory from data" (ibid, 1967:1).

---

[28] I was one of the members of the CRRISP research team. These views evolved as we observed ourselves using these techniques.

My process of categorisation did not follow exactly that described by Glaser and Strauss although the underlying philosophy of extracting the theory from the data, rather than the other way around, certainly applied. Their processes of data collection and data analysis ran parallel to each other and were informed by each other and this was very much part of my process also and is outlined in the following chapter. Likewise their process of making "constant comparisons" (ibid:45) in order to clarify the categories was something I applied. There were differences however. Much of what Glaser and Strauss outlined is more fitting to an ethnography than to an action research approach. Their suggestion of going back out into the field to collect more data in order to know whether or not propositions are saturated or not implies using observation or at least the researcher being 'on site'. I did go 'on site' when I observed the various school Board meetings. For my research though, rather than doing all of the analysis of the observation data myself, when I thought I was seeing something important, I took it back to the action group or to the women individually for interpretation and possible verification. This approach ensured that the group members were kept informed about the collected material and involved the collective wisdom of the group in the interpretation. It also enabled triangulation of data both from a number of sites and from a number of sources.

Having previously used a grounded theory approach with an ethnographic research study (CRRISP, 1990), I had no difficulty adapting it to this action research approach. I found using the group to interpret issues retained the value of the grounded approach as outlined by Glaser and Strauss, while at the same time bringing the extra strength to the methodology of being able to validate ideas directly with the participants rather than relying on one researcher going back out to seek verification.

Naturalistic Inquiry

Naturalistic inquiry is a post-positivist paradigm (Neville, 1987:22) which acknowledges the reality and strengths of research that accepts the researcher's values as being part of the process. It also accepts the notion that there is no single reality for a group, or groups, of people and we need to find qualitative ways of working with data that allow for this complexity and difference.

Although leadership is not a new area of study, and women's leadership is not unstudied, I was unable to find any research on trustee leadership. It seemed essential therefore to begin with an open mind and a naturalistic approach such as that described by Tesch (1990:90) who states that :

> Naturalistic inquirers, holistic ethnographers and educational ethnographers speak of their analysis as 'inductive', 'generative', and 'constructive' (Goetz and LeCompte, 1981). Inductive analysis begins with empirical observations and builds theoretical categories, instead of sorting data pieces deductively into pre-established classes. The units of analysis or data segments are not predetermined, but are carved out from the data according to their meaning. Rather than verifying given notions or hypotheses, the work of these scholars is 'generative', i.e., it seeks to discover constructs and propositions.

As one member of a group of participants, I was able to share with them in the interpretation of our own experiences and actions and did not have to be reliant on either my own observations or judgement (Bruyn, 1966:12). We moved fully into shared data interpretation, a situation that Kushner and Norris (1980:35) described as an "attractive aspiration". At the time of their writing, they could see the benefits of reciprocity (Lather, 1991:60) and feeding back data to participants, and could envisage the positive outcomes for the primary researcher and the quality of the research analysis, but they had not experienced such a process themselves and were not aware of such a methodology having occurred.

Feminist approaches to methodology

One of the first decisions I had to make when deciding on the methodology was whether or not to work with a group of chairmen as well. I could clearly not have replicated the current methodology with a group of men because I could not have controlled for the variable of my gender. It may have inhibited a group of chairmen to have had a female as a member and as a researcher. This was not, however, the reason I chose not to study men as well.

Males have dominated the world of 'Boards' and the positions of 'Chairmen' to the extent that the guidelines, laws and language surrounding that subject position have been developed by males for themselves. Carol Gilligan argued that it is "illegitimate" to

evaluate women's ways of being and knowing "by reference to a standard drawn exclusively from the experience of men and boys" (Fraser and Nicholson, 1990:32). When masculine ways of operating, or male-constructed knowledge are perpetuated as the norm and women are judged against this norm, the result is often negative (Yates, 1994; Marshall, 1984; Burton, 1991; Treleaven, 1993). Acker (1983), Shakeshaft (1987), Neville (1988) and Blackmore (1989) have all argued that there are few theories or attempts to explain women's ways of working in educational education that analyse them within their own terms of reference. Like Gilligan, I decided that I wanted to examine women's (leadership) discourse "on its own terms in order to uncover its immanent standards of adequacy"(Gilligan, 1982). However, because I had never considered myself a feminist and because I had used similar methodologies in a wide range of research situations, it took me some time to come to terms with whether or not I was doing 'feminist research'.

Writers on feminist methodology, such as Renata Duelli Klein, give clear guidelines as to what constitutes feminist methodology.

> 'Feminist' for me implies assuming a perspective in which women's experiences, ideas and needs (different and differing as they may be) are valid, and androcentricity - man-as-the-norm - stops being the only recognised frame of reference for human beings. (Klein, 1993:89)

She also gives the following as criteria -

- The research aims at improving women's lives in one way or another[29]
- It is research 'for' women rather than 'on' women
- It allows for an interactive process without the object/subject split between researcher and researched
- Women are at the centre of the study and are neither compared to nor measured against (male) standards
- Honesty between researcher and researched is maintained

---

[29] "Feminists are not the only group that proposes to work for change. Male thinkers, eg., the members of the Frankfurt Schule and philosopher Paul Feyerabend, have been claiming to do this too. However, theirs is a wish to transform the society of 'man' without changing the paradigm that 'man-is-the-norm'. A feminist approach to knowledge, however, defines as an indispensable prerequisite women's right to a place among those who create and transmit knowledge on our terms and meeting our needs. Such an approach, I think, makes feminist research directly different from research undertaken by so-called progressive male thinkers who continue to operate from an androcentric frame of reference" (Klein,1983:101)

- Methods are flexible enough to adapt to the needs of each individual research situation
- Women should work towards *their own* paradigms rather than working backwards and justifying their work
- It avoids creating a 'supermethodology'
- The researcher should write and speak in plain and comprehensible language and avoid excesses of feminist esoteric jargon
- Women work in groups and should not be discouraged if their emerging methodology does not work as well as they imagined it would

By these criteria my research is definitely feminist. We were a group of women by definition and, rather than being research *on* or *for* women, it was research *for and with* women. The research did not set out to compare women against men, or male standards, and this occurred only when the women spontaneously made such a comparison. Its main aim was to 'improve women's lives' by empowering them as leaders and so we were all to benefit directly from our involvement (Hall & Stevens, 1991:69; Fonow & Cook, 1991:11). We were researching an area of concern to us all (Hall & Stevens, 1991:17). The research process was set up to ensure that the women participants had control over the process and the issues discussed. The women were involved from the beginning in the selection of issues to be discussed and in the exploration and interpretation of them (Sandelowski, 1986:30). The rationale of the action group was one of self-determination and empowerment (Flemming, 1991:69). We were all to benefit directly from our involvement. I was a full participating member of the action group as well as the researcher, because of my ascribed status as chairwoman, (Klein, 1983:95) and I had power *with* my colleagues rather than holding power by being **the** researcher (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982:43). It was not just an issue of *"like study like"* (Fonow & Cook, 1991:69) but rather ***like studying each other together.***

We knew, because of our exceptionally heavy commitments, that we would have to be flexible (Poskitt, 1994:75), use already-given situations (Fonow & Cook, 1991:11), and adapt the process to fit our needs as we worked through it (Klein,

1983:100). I also had to accept that the final process was not as 'tidy' as I had planned it to be.

The recommendations that Klein raises about feminist research involving "women working towards their own paradigms rather than working backwards and justifying their work", and that "the researcher should write and speak in plain and comprehensible language and avoid excesses of feminist esoteric jargon" are quite difficult ones to find a compromise on. In writing a thesis for an academic qualification, I find myself doing both these latter things that Klein warns against in order that the work should be taken seriously and fulfil the academic expectations. In all the other criteria she outlines (ibid:89), this research clearly is identifiable as feminist.

Klein also said, however, that "if what we want is research that will contribute to women's liberation, we have to scrutinise our methods more carefully to see if they are in fact congruent with our feminist principles" (ibid:91). It was never an articulated intention that this research should contribute to women's liberation and it was not one of the goals that the group set for itself. There were, however, important empowering outcomes for each of the women as individuals. Weedon articulates one of the personal benefits we each gained from the action group.

> The collective discussion of personal problems and conflicts, often previously understood as the result of personal inadequacies and neuroses, leads to a recognition that what have been experienced as personal failings are socially produced conflicts and contributions shared by many women in similar social positions. This process of discovery can lead to a rewriting of personal experience in terms which give it social, changeable causes. Weedon, 1987:33)

Unlike a *view from above*, which is how Mies (1983:123) describes conventional research, or *a view from below,* which is how she describes the stance of feminist researchers, I believe that in this research I have ***a view from within.*** Maybe this research should be described as 'participant feminist action research'.

Transformative and emancipatory research

The research descriptors 'transformative', 'emancipatory', 'empowering' belong to what Patti Lather calls "new paradigm research"(1986:258). She explains her own research approach with the use of the terms-

> My exploration of postpositivist, praxis-oriented research draws on three research programmes-- feminist research, neo-Marxist critical ethnography (Masemann, 1982; Ogbu, 1981), and Freirian "empowering" or participatory research (Hall, 1975,1981). Each of these research programmes opposes prevailing scientific norms as inherently supportive of the status quo; each is premised on a 'transformative agenda' with respect to both social structure and methodological norms; each is, in other words, concerned with research as praxis. (Rose, 1979, p.279)

As outlined in detailed in the following chapter, this thesis involved two levels of research. The first, and most important, was the action research which Tesch (1990:66) points out involves " 'practitioners' involved in research processes that concern their own affairs." We chairwomen were engaged in collaborative inquiry through forming a "community of inquiry" in order to "increase personal or institutional effectiveness" (Torbert, 1983:276). It will be argued that we increased **both** our personal effectiveness **and** that of our institutions/schools through the work in the action group. A measure of the value we placed on working with each other is the number of occasions on which one of us contacted another between the group sessions (Robertson, 1994:15). We sought each other's advice, knowledge, listening ear, resources and support. It was the active nature of this part of the research process that made the research a "transformative activity" (Tesch, 1990:66). For the confidentiality reasons outlined earlier, most of this activity is not described in the thesis. The importance of the outcomes, however, is not diminished even though they are not the focus of this document.

Where am I in the project and the script?

My role and the extent of my involvement change in both the methodology and the report. As a chairperson myself, I am a full participant in the action research group meetings (Denzin, 1989:111). This was the way the group members wanted my

involvement. I turned a tape recorder on at the beginning of the meetings and changed the tapes during the meeting. During the discussion, however, I talked, laughed, asked questions and listened as I would have had I not been doing a thesis. At times I forgot to turn the tape over because I was so involved in the interaction. My voice, my school, my experiences and my topics are part of the transcripts as are everyone else's. Not having to be the group leader or facilitator made it easy to avoid the trap of my over-influencing the group regarding the issues they wished to discuss and their reflection on the data (Carr and Kemmis, 1986:205; Oja and Smulyan:161).

During the initial face to face interviews with the chairwomen, I was in the researcher role but the interviews were 'interactive'. The focus was on the interviewee and her experiences but there were times when we relaxed those formal roles and shared experiences and feelings (Bogdon and Biklen, 1982:135). It was very important to me that I was prepared to give of myself and my experiences as well as be privileged enough to hear those of my interviewee. These interviews were conducted early in the research programme and contributed greatly to building the rapport, trust and empathy between myself and each of the women. Again then, I am in the transcripts from these tapes both as a questioner and as a participant.

When I attended the BOT meetings to observe each of the women, I was there as an observer rather than as a contributor. At all the meetings, except the first one I attended, there was at least one instance when I was asked for information or my advice, or both. I was known to have six years' experience as a chairperson as well as being a recognised trainer of BOTs. I was happy to contribute in any way that the BOT thought was helpful, although I wanted the meetings to proceed as 'normally' as possible and, for most of the time, I was in the comparatively 'neutral' position of taking notes. My notes include reference to the times I was asked to have input. It was nearly always a response to a request for accurate information or knowledge. I did not see it as my place to offer an opinion on an issue and I was relieved that I was seldom asked to do so. In the two instances that I was asked for my opinion, I outlined a number of options with clarification and made it clear that it should be a board decision.

The interviews with the principals were set up in advance over the telephone and, in all but one instance, were tape recorded. My role in these was a more conventional one of a qualitative interviewer with a set of open-ended guideline

questions that had been designed by the chairwomen (Appendix C). The principals were relaxed and I contributed to the extent of being friendly and showing understanding, but not to input my own ideas or experiences.

In the final telephone interviews with the chairwomen, my relationship with them was well established and, while I gave priority to asking the questions and to hearing their responses, I felt free to input and to share the exploration of issues by adding examples.

As I have already outlined, the women played a key role as individuals, and together as a group, in the interpretation of the data. It was always clear to me that I was the only person who had access to **all** the data and that this placed me in an unique position to identify issues as they arose. Sometimes an issue was obvious to the group to the extent that they took it for granted. Other times they were surprised at my suggestion and needed to think it through and discuss it at length before deciding on its validity, relevance, and/or importance.

From the outset it was clear that although we were very different people, had some differing values and often operated in different ways, we had few areas of disagreement. While there were many articulated differences of opinion, there was not a single argument or articulated disagreement. Our group experienced the same learning that Lesley Treleaven's women's collaborative action research group experienced:

> Our engagement in the group has been with respect and an ethic of care for the well-being of those present(Gilligan, 1982) ....we could dialogue through differences in ways that were productive even while they challenged our values profoundly. (Treleaven, 1993:19)

At no time, however, was I in any doubt that each of us would say what we really thought and felt. I do not minimise my influence on the content of this document, but I feel very secure in the knowledge that the basic interpretation of the issues is that of the group. Since I was a fully participating member of the group this included my input, which in turn included my reading of the literature and my increasing understanding of feminist theory and women's ways of thinking. I have incorporated this extra knowledge into the discussion chapter.

At the beginning of the project, I was especially aware that if the group participants were to feel that the group belonged to them rather than to me, I would

need to encourage them to take ownership of it. I felt that I needed to participate but not to dominate or be perceived as some kind of 'expert'. Some writers warn of the dangers of 'outsiders', such as university researchers, having a higher status which can lead to "intimidation and resentment"(Oja and Smulyan, 1989:161). Even though I was not an outsider, because I also held the status of board chairperson, my background and experiences both on the Board and as an educational consultant and trainer of boards meant that I did have more knowledge and experience than the others. There were times that I decided to keep my own ideas until last, or not to contribute them as early as I might have, had somebody else initiated the group.

Reliability and Validity

Together these concepts help us to measure how dependable and trustworthy a piece of research is. In the not too distant past, all research was subjected to assessment which reflected "the reductionism and objectivism embraced by positivist-empiricism" (Hall & Stevens, 1991:16). Feminist researchers have challenged such ways of 'assessing' research and have also challenged the 'linear'(Treleaven, 1993:4) ways of proceeding through a research process and have pointed out that such systematic methodological processes have been designed by men. More divergent ways of conducting research (Stevens, 1970:118; Treleaven, 1993:4) have only in recent times been given status and accepted as valid. Hall and Stevens claim that using the known standards of scientific rigour is not only <u>not</u> helpful in verifying the adequacy of feminist research but also a positivist philosophical stance "denigrates" subjective experience (Hall and Stevens, 1991:18; Lather, 1986:78).

Reliability of action research projects, as with ethnographies (Ramsay et al 1990:84; Edwards 1986:165; Harold 1994:16), is always problematic in that they cannot be replicated. Hall and Stevens (ibid) suggest that rather we look at the dependability of the process by examining what Sandelowski(1986:34) calls the "decision trails" and Guba (1981:87) calls "audit trails" created by the researcher during the research. The ways they suggest this can be done are-

> Auditing the inquiry ie, determining whether decisions made are congruent with their circumstances and assessing whether interpretations and recommendations are generally supported by the data) ..... Systematically documenting the rationale, outcome, and evaluation of all actions related to

> data collection, sampling, analysis and dissemination of results ..... Prolonged engagement, persistent observation, use of multiple observers, comparison of multiple data sources, and comparison of individual versus group accounts and spontaneous versus elicited data ..... The degree of stability of participants' themes over time (diachronic reliability) and the degree of similarity of responses in a single period (synchronic reliability).(Hall and Stevens, 1991:19)

With the exception of the use of multiple observers, although it could be argued that the chairwomen filled this function in the group, this research process stands up well when assessed against the listed processes. The 'engagement' was over an eighteen month period during which we met regularly. Data were gathered from the women individually during interviews, the women collectively during the action groups and from the two independent sources of the principals and the board meetings. In addition there were numerous informal contacts between meetings, some with me which were documented and some between the other women participants which were included in the data through the telling of them in the interviews and the group discussions. Diachronic reliability was tested through the endurance of themes through to the final interviews where they were checked out with each participant. Synchronic reliability was put to the test in the action groups where similarities and differences were discussed. The 'evidence' can be audited through the notes and transcriptions. The coding system used allows each individual note and verbatim to be traced back to the original and intact document (Appendix B).

Guba (1981) discusses "four trustworthiness questions" that can be asked of naturalistic inquiry. These are credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. He says they can be achieved through the following research processes -

- prolonged engagement
- persistent observation
- peer (and in our case group) debriefing
- triangulation
- collection of referential adequacy materials
- member checks
- establishing structural corroboration
- collecting and developing 'thick' descriptive data

- establishing an audit trail
- practising reflexivity

All of these processes took place during this inquiry and are discussed in the methodology chapters under other headings. One which needs further explanation is that of triangulation. Many researchers (Denzin, 1978; Cowman, 1993; Jick, 1979; Mathison, 1988; Guba, 1981; Patton, 1980; Lather, 1986:67) promote the value of triangulation as a means of validating qualitative work. Most refer back to Denzin who suggested three types of triangulation (Denzin, 1978; Mathison, 1988; Cowman, 1993).

- Data triangulation ie. using several individuals as data sources. (In this research the chairwomen contributed most of the 'data' but these data were triangulated by data from the principals and fellow trustees).
- Investigator triangulation ie. involving more than one investigator in the research process. (In this research, the involvement of all the participants as co-researchers has been outlined).
- Methodological triangulation ie. using multiple methods. (In this research these methods are interviews, group discussions, journal reflections and observations).

Triangulation is not without its problems (Cowman, 1993:791) and is not a magical answer (Patton, 1980:330) to the vexed issue of validating qualitative work. Its usefulness is articulated well by Jick-

> The effectiveness of triangulation rests on the premise that the weakness in each single method will be compensated by the counter-balancing strengths of another. That is, it is assumed that multiple and independent measures do not share the same weaknesses or potential for bias (Rohner, 1977:134). Although it has always been observed that each method has assets and liabilities, triangulation purports to exploit the assets and neutralise, rather than compound, the liabilities. (Jick, 1979:604)

Tesch (1990:95) identifies ten principles and procedures which offer generalised guidelines for qualitative researchers against which a piece of qualitative work can be assessed and she claims that "if a researcher adheres to these principles (which mind you, include the injunction to be creative) and commits no logical or ethical errors,

her/his work will qualify as scholarly qualitative data analysis as it is defined today". The ten principles and practices are as follows -

- **Analysis is not the last phase in the research process; it is concurrent with data collection or cyclic.** In this research the data were discussed and interpreted by the action group as they met over the eighteen months.
- **The analysis process is systematic and comprehensive, but not rigid.** These data were analysed both systematically and comprehensively to the extent that the process exhausted the data (ibid:95).
- **Attending to the data includes a reflective activity that results in a set of analytical notes that guide the process.** In my research, these 'notes' include the transcripts of the action groups as well as my own documentation of the process itself in the form of my research diary. In addition, the notes I made before and after the action groups, the interviews and the Board meetings were both the instrument and the product of my reflection. This is what I have called the research journal. Tesch says that this helps the analyst to move from the data to the conceptual level (Miles and Huberman, 1994:71) as well as providing accountability through the record of the reflective and the concrete process (Tesch, 1990:95).
- **Data are 'segmented', ie., divided into relevant and meaningful 'units', yet the connection to the whole is maintained.** These data were sorted into 'topics' and mapped into a framework. In this thesis the topics are discussed under subheadings but their connection to the 'whole' is maintained.
- **The data segments are categorised according to an organising system that is predominantly derived from the data themselves.** The process of establishing the topic categories was inductive and came totally from an 'interrogation' of the data. The concepts described by the categories were those that seemed to "fit the data" (Glaser & Strauss, 1987:28).
- **The main intellectual tool is comparison.** Categories were formed, data were assigned to the categories and sorted into a logical order, data within the categories and the categories themselves were compared and contrasted and negative evidence was noted. The negative evidence usually took the form of

differences between the actions and views of the chairwomen and between the research data and the literature.

- **Categories for sorting segments are tentative and preliminary in the beginning; they remain flexible.** The topics and categories were modified at several stages. As topics appeared to emerge, I took them to the group for discussion. Some of these issues were important and have 'survived' the journey although often in a modified form. Others have not. An example of this is the issue of how men and women leaders organise their time in the role. This arose in my reading of the literature and I took it to one of the action groups for discussion. The chairwomen simply did not think this was an important issue and they did not think, in their own experience of being leaders and their experiences of working with men in leadership positions, that there were differences between men and women in the use of their time in a leadership role that were in any way significant. It did not survive as a topic. The first attempt at categorisation occurred with the highlighting of key information in the notes and transcripts (Appendix B). This was followed by the writing of key words in the margin. Using these key words and ideas, an attempt to 'map' them (Tesch, 1990:91), in order to see where they fitted into the whole picture, resulted in several modifications to the topics. Going back to the data helped to clarify these and a modified map was produced. Then the verbatims and notes were cut into small bits, and sorted under the topic headings. Again, modifications were made; this time to the topic headings. Even as the draft was being written and I checked various things out with the women, there were adjustments made. Nor are the categories totally discrete. Some overlap occurs. They have, therefore, remained flexible throughout and demonstrate that "no one order fits perfectly" (Lofland, 1971:123).
- **Manipulating qualitative data during analysis is an eclectic activity; there is no 'right' way.** I did find my "own process" of dealing with the data (Patton, 1980:299). No doubt there are many researchers who have done similar things, but it is probable that had another researcher worked alongside, she may have done it differently. What is important to me is that the outcome of the data

manipulation is a product that I feel confident with and one that the chairwomen feel is an accurate reflection of their situation.

- **The procedures are neither 'scientific' nor 'mechanistic; qualitative analysis is 'intellectual craftsmanship'(Mills, 1959).** Tesch says that such analysis requires methodological knowledge and intellectual competence. While it is not for me to comment on the latter attribute, as a research practitioner of thirty years and as a teacher of research methodology, I feel confident in laying claim to a high level of the former.
- **The result of the analysis is some type of higher-level synthesis.** It is my hope that I have produced the "larger consolidated picture" that Tesch describes.

So also are feminist ways of conceptualising validity helpful.

> Once we recognise that just as there is no neutral education there is no neutral research, we no longer need to apologise for unabashedly ideological research and its open commitment to using research to change the status quo. The development of data credibility checks to protect our research and theory construction from our enthusiasms, however, is essential in our efforts to create a self-reflexive human science. (Lather, 1986b;67)

Ultimately the test was to obtain "validation from the subjects themselves" (Sandelowski, 1986:35).

As well as seeking collaborative analysis of the data in an ongoing way, the women were sent a draft of my findings chapters. Their comments back made it very clear that they were pleased with the way I had written up the findings.

> *Reading this has been an amazing experience. I could see straight away that all the things you were saying applied to the others but I couldn't see myself like that. Then I remembered that that is what we all felt about ourselves and I re-read it and remembered the things I had said and done. You have put your finger on the button each time. I'm amazed at how well you have made some sort of order and meaning out of all our hours of talk. Thank you for telling our story so well.*

Conclusion

Fonow and Cook (1991:95) warn that -

> It is too easy to forget that most women researchers (including feminist researchers) are primarily trained and socialised as traditional methodologists and, despite any interest in alternative procedures, it is far more likely than not that they will carry out their research largely using traditional methods and methodologies. (Lykes and Stewart, 1986)

Although this was not the methodological reality in this study, because of my positivist research training and in spite of my thirty years as a qualitative researcher, I occasionally found myself questioning whether or not it was 'real' action research we were doing, whether our reflection process was based on 'data' that would stand up to scrutiny or whether I should even be thinking about 'data' in a feminist setting. What I did feel confident about was that what was happening was empowering us all. In my view as an experienced researcher, the material we were working with was both producing important insights for me as the primary researcher and providing all the participants with information, concepts and options that were challenging us to think about the ways we operated as leaders and to make changes that benefited our schools. This is the catalytic validity described by Lather as "the capacity of the research process to impact on participants knowing of their reality and energise them towards self-determined action" (Lather, 1986). Qualitative researchers acknowledge the complexities of this kind of involvement with subjects but view the benefits of it as "far outweighing the liabilities" (Sandelowski, 1986:34).

At the writing stage, when it becomes important to articulate and justify the methodological decisions and process, the Tesch metaphor is apt. It depicts each of the methodological approaches as a shade that adds to my overall artistic methodological depiction, and has been a very helpful way to conceptualise the blending of elements in this piece of feminist research. The next chapter transforms the methodological theory into the reality of methodology in action.

CHAPTER FIVE

Methodologies in action

Introduction

The process began late in 1993 when I phoned the Ministry and asked if I could have access to the list of women in Auckland who chaired secondary school boards of trustees. The Ministry personnel said that such a data base did not exist and they had no idea how people like myself had been identified for the O'Rourke meeting. My secretary phoned every secondary school in the greater Auckland area and asked for information regarding-

- the status of the school (state, private, integrated)
- form levels provided
- gender of students
- gender of the principal
- gender of the chairperson of the Board of Trustees

This exercise identified five state secondary co-ed (forms 3-7) schools, out of a total of sixty three, that had a women as their chairperson, one of those being the writer. This number was close to the number that had attended the O'Rourke meeting so at face value the data appeared to be accurate.

Selection of participants

I phoned each of the women, introduced myself, and briefly explained my proposed research. At this stage I was only asking if they would be interested in meeting once to consider taking part and to see if we could put together a process that would benefit us all. I had an overwhelmingly positive response from them all and, because they knew I was in the same position myself, they did not feel the need to explain to me how difficult it would be for them to find the time to participate.

> *It's a fantastic idea to meet. I can think of lots of things I would like to discuss with a group who are in the same boat as me. I won't have to explain to you or them how frantic my life is because everyone will*

> *understand from their own experience. Count me in. Just give me enough warning to be able to diary a date.*

Very shortly after our first meeting and after my interview with her, one of the women resigned as chairperson. She was replaced as chairperson by another woman and requested that she withdraw from the group and be 'replaced' by the new chairwoman. I was happy with both of these suggestions and I agreed to approach the new chairperson. Since I had already interviewed the original chairperson and since she was included in the transcripts of the first group meeting, I decided to include these data in the analysis. My research diary records

> *The process is not as 'tidy' as originally envisaged but it is the reality and some fascinating data has emerged in this changeover.*

At the second action group meeting, one of the women said she had heard that there was another chairwoman in an Auckland school and the group members asked me how I would feel about including her. I was very happy to do whatever the group wished and they decided that I should invite her to the next meeting. She was very keen to join the group and came to the third meeting. This made us a group of six who formed the 'core group'. At the fourth meeting we heard of another woman who had just been elected to a chairperson's position and again the group wanted her to have the opportunity to join. Because, when I contacted her, she was unable to come to the next meeting. I decided to welcome her to join in as part of the group at the meetings but, at this late stage, I would not do the interviews with her and her principal or the visit to the Board meeting. In this way she could benefit from the group meetings but would not be part of my full data collection process. We were all happy with this compromise. It made things a little less 'tidy' for me in writing up this document, but in practice the ongoing changes to the group not only reflected the reality of what was happening for Boards but it met the needs of the group members to include others with similar needs and to each benefit from the collective work of the group. Participation is detailed and summarised in Appendix D.

The women participants

The six women who comprised the 'core' action group were all in their mid-to-late 40s, pakeha, mothers of teenage children, in their first marriage and all participating in their chosen careers . Most had been in the top stream at school and had attended a single sex school, but this was usually not from choice. In most cases it was all that was available. All had some tertiary qualification and four had university degrees. All but one were married by the time they were 21 years old. All had at least one child at the senior level of the secondary school for which they chaired the board. Two of the women were self-employed in their own business. Three had careers in education and worked in schools in various capacities. All had some flexibility in their working situation that enabled them to go to the school during school hours. Two had been on the school's board of governors prior to boards of trustees. All had previous leadership experience (Neville, 1988:71) though the levels of responsibility involved varied greatly. These included chairing the Kindergarten committee, captain of the badminton club, Play centre leader, NZ Playcentre executive, Auckland Kindergarten Association, local Community Trust, chair of primary school committee, chair of electorate for N.Z. National Party, chair tennis club, and chair of church committee. Two of the women had had senior leadership positions in their work. Many other examples were given of community involvement and the women said on numerous occasions that they felt they had a duty to be active in their local community. All had been active in their children's primary schools.

It is fascinating to compare this to what Marshall and Heller (1983:31) describe as their "prototypical woman board member".

> She's between 30 and 49 years old, has a relatively high level of formal education (30 percent had at least a bachelor's degree), is married (89 percent), is relatively affluent (60 percent had a total family income of US$40,000 or more), is employed part time or holds no job outside the home (78 percent), is a parent (97 percent), has lived in the district 12 years, and was elected rather than appointed to her board.

The only aspect in which the New Zealand chairwomen differ totally from the American women is that the "no job outside the home" descriptor does not apply. A lesser difference is the proportion who are married and are parents. In our group this

percentage was 100%. Even the percentages in the American study are in marked contrast to those of women **career** leaders who have a higher incidence of remaining single and/or childless (Neville, 1988:56).

Action research in action

Because of my own experience as a chairperson trying to manage the enormous time commitment to the Board and trying to balance this with the competing requirements of the subject positions of wife, mother, researcher, education consultant, housekeeper, friend etc., I felt strongly that if I was to involve other women with similar commitments I would want them to benefit significantly from that involvement. This meant that the project had to be designed around meeting their needs and adapting to their commitments. I knew from my experience with the previous support group that meeting to share relevant information, problem solve and provide a support network would be beneficial to everybody. Recent experience of working within an action research framework added the idea of the research dimension and the ability to make this a transformative activity.

Oja and Smulyan describe four action research models (1989:24). The model they call "collaborative action research" is descriptive of this research except, as articulated in most writings (Carr and Kemmis, 1986; Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988; Somekh, 1988), it involves a group working together to effect change **within** an organisation. Our situation was different. These women each worked within a different school. The magnet that drew us together was the subject position we held in common, namely that of the chairperson of the board of trustees. If the group meetings were to meet everyone's needs, then the members had to be able to share in setting the agenda and to accept that the issues for each individual might be different, although some we would have in common.

At the first group meeting, these issues and the nature of the action research process were discussed. I was aware of the need to give as full an insight as possible into the type of process we would be involved in.

> The reflexive nature of this kind of research provides the conditions in which the participants are able to see their actions and situations differently and to action that knowledge. Therefore as well as giving their informed

> consent, participants will be expected to comprehend the nature of the study being undertaken. (Burge, 1991:20)

I outlined in detail the action research model and how it might work in our situation, and we discussed the ethical issues of informed consent, confidentiality and the final report. We did not discuss feminist theory, because I was not familiar with it myself at that time. It was agreed that the topics to be discussed at each meeting would be decided and prioritised at the beginning of each meeting by all the group members working together (Fonow & Cook, 1991:139).

In practice, the action research cycle would be as follows -

- The group would prioritise areas for discussion.
- The individuals in the group, following a discussion with the group and with the help of the group, would decide on their next course of action.
- The individual, with the involvement of the people in her own school, would carry out the action(s).
- The individual would undertake to organise monitoring of the process and to collect any relevant data. The logistics of carrying out the data collection phase of the action research cycle were to be a challenge because of the multi foci and the already overcommitted participants.
- Any data and documentation would be brought to the next group meeting. The group would help each individual to reflect on the data and what had happened and then to plan for the next phase.

The researcher would have space at each meeting to raise and deal with thesis-specific discussion and the researcher would be a fully participating member of the group at all times. The main data collection role related to the thesis topic would be the task of the researcher. This included the taping and transcribing of the group discussions, the interviews and the documentation of the Board meetings attended. When data were to be collected on other issues, it would be the role of the individual concerned or shared by the group members. It was agreed that key issues arising from any part of the research would be brought to the group and all group members would be actively involved in reflection and discussion on the issues and, in particular, on any

leadership issues raised. The process of interpretation was, therefore, ongoing and shared. At the same time, it added to the knowledge and awareness of the participants as the study progressed, so they were able to use what was relevant to them as part of their ongoing decision making.

The meetings were held in the lounge of my home, which is located in central Auckland and close to several motorway on and off ramps. Even so, most of the women travelled a significant distance to attend. It is a comfortable room and I made sure there was tea and coffee ready when people arrived, as well as during the evening.

Seven group meetings were held. Each lasted at least four hours. On several occasions members turned up with their evening meal, which was a reflection of the pace of our lives. An informal social evening was held early in 1996 so we could all "catch up" with each other again. We had become friends as well as colleagues (Fonow & Cook, 1991:401). There was a core group of six of us and with the exception of one member who had an emergency on one evening, there was full attendance at the meetings. (Appendix D)

Writing about this aspect of the thesis work does not feel as though it does justice to eighteen months of work and support. At a recent NZ Action Research Network retreat, the guest speaker differentiated between 'action **research**' and '**action** research' (Dick, 1996). This project definitely had the emphasis on the **action** component of the action/research partnership. The work we did together as a group, and then independently in our schools, was a highly valued part of the project. A major difficulty for me is that most of the issues that were discussed and worked on cannot be documented because of their sensitive and confidential nature. Nor would documenting the details of the issues give us insights into women's leadership. In themselves, they are merely the vehicles through which I was able to gain insights into the ways in which the women enacted their leadership roles.

I will document a list of the topics and issues that were covered in the action groups to give the reader an idea of the breadth of topics covered. They are not 'categorised' by me in any organised way but rather listed to reflect the reality of our discussions where whatever was important at the time was given space during the evening. Although listed only once here, the reality was that many were revisited frequently. They included --

⇒ School uniform; options, enforcement and how the decisions on these things should be made.

⇒ Formats for running meetings; formality vs informality; how /who to include in discussions; when to exclude.

⇒ Organisation of sub-committees; sharing the role of chair; liaison with the Board; delegating responsibilities.

⇒ Our lack of confidence(for some) in running meeting; facilitation skills and techniques; keeping control; saving time.

⇒ Electing student trustee(s); alternative processes; one vs two students; how to support them; cooption not an option.

⇒ Job sharing trustee roles; eg, staff representative; chairperson's role.

⇒ How to get funding from community bodies; sources of information.

⇒ Use of Taskforce Green funding.

⇒ Rent/hirage of buildings and facilities; rates; policies; monitoring.

⇒ Vandalism; strategies to deal with; budgeting.

⇒ Deferred maintenance; Ministry liaison; property consultants; health and safety issues.

⇒ Employment structure of non-teaching staff roles; executive officers; accountants; salaries; accountability structures; appraisal.

⇒ How to get rid of an ineffective member of the ancillary staff; dealing with the union; redundancy arrangements; restructuring.

⇒ Annual meeting requirements and organisation; election requirements; reporting requirements.

⇒ ERO reviews; how to prepare for them; what the school can require; dealing with the draft report; media publicity.

⇒ Insurance policies; public liability; using brokers; minimum requirements.

⇒ Crisis policies and practice; student suicide; death of a staff member.

⇒ Technology implementation; planning; curriculum; asset replacement.

⇒ Annual report; contents; distribution; auditors' requirements; crossover with principal's report.

⇒ Media releases; how to handle questions; who should have the right?

⇒ School camps; problems and safety policies.

⇒ School fees; activity fees; material fees; refunds; how to calculate; strategies to get payment.

⇒ Procedures for interviewing students; rules of natural justice; privacy requirements; rights of the students; rights to search.

⇒ The Privacy Act; implications for our schools; the role of the privacy officer.

⇒ When to involve the police in discipline issues; double jeopardy.

⇒ School ball; Board responsibilities; strategies to inform parents about after ball parties; venues; using security guards.

⇒ Policy production; legislatory requirements; consultation strategies; how to link them to the charter; review process; layout.

⇒ Alarm systems for fire and burglary; ministry responsibility?

⇒ Dealing with parent/student complaints.

⇒ Cooption of Pacific Island people to the Board.

- ⇒ Standing orders for meetings; adoption; where to find them; how to use them.
- ⇒ Using contract cleaners; how to make the change.
- ⇒ Payment of water rates; pan tax.
- ⇒ Methods of consulting with and informing parents.
- ⇒ Overseas fee paying students.
- ⇒ CAPNA process; level of Board involvement; redeployment; dealing with the PPTA.
- ⇒ Bulk funding/ direct resourcing.
- ⇒ Maori language funding/targeted funding
- ⇒ Preparation for handing over to a new Board and/or chairperson.
- ⇒ Membership of STA; benefits; do they represent the views of their members?; how to get the schools' money's worth?
- ⇒ BOT and school self review; strategies; frequency.
- ⇒ Charter review and redraft; incorporating the NEGs and NAGs; Making it user friendly; establishing local goals; using it for committee and school self review; Ministry approval.
- ⇒ EEO reports and practice; what to include in the annual plan; ERO annual report to the Minister; who to be EEO officer.
- ⇒ Women on the Board; cooption; resistance; discrimination.
- ⇒ Principal's contract; contents; extra incentives; rights to claim mileage/fares etc.
- ⇒ Anti violence, sexism, racism programmes and practices in the school; peer support; mediation.
- ⇒ Use of technology by us for communicating eg. fax, modem, cell phone - and how important it has been.
- ⇒ The distribution of PR's (positions of responsibility), restrictions and how to restructure the management.
- ⇒ The organisation of curriculum departments to meet the curriculum framework model.
- ⇒ Production of the annual budget. What is the process and what should happen before it gets to the Board.
- ⇒ Licensing procedures for Kohanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Maori.
- ⇒ Using property consultants. Acceptable rates and best use of their time.
- ⇒ Legal responsibilities and training for Boards. Should the school have a lawyer?, requirements of new Acts.
- ⇒ Personal grievances, grounds for a grievance, notifying the insurance company.

With the above topics we shared information, policies and strategies. We shared our experiences and those of our schools and what we knew of other schools. We discussed options for dealing with difficulties, and practices that work well. Documents and resources that were shared included Charters and review documents, policies and procedures, annual reports, school self review kit, appraisal forms and questionnaires,

review questionnaires, BOT newsletters, legal reports on court decisions, budget formats, and selection criteria for appointments.

There were some issues and problems that were specific to individual members of the group. While these cannot be outlined in detail they involved -

- The appraisal of a principal who did not want to be appraised
- The handling of a competency process for an incompetent teacher who was the source of many parent and student complaints
- An ombudsman's investigation
- A High Court challenge to the school
- Trying to improve relationships on a Board which had established factions
- Ending the employment of the school's cleaners and changing to contract cleaners
- How to communicate with a principal who is defensive and blocking communication.
- Discipline hearing issues and processes.

Because of the complexity of these issues, the group worked with the particular chairperson involved over a number of meetings. Sometimes between meetings, individuals would phone other group members to talk through things that arose. At the group meetings the members would 'debrief' the chairperson on what had happened and how she felt about it. This shared debriefing would help the chairperson to reflect on her own actions as well as the outcomes to date.

As well as the shared problem solving, there were other very important things that happened in the process. Members 'unloaded' their feelings, worries, anger, frustrations and achievements.

> *It gave you a sense of relief to know you could go somewhere and discuss things and vent your ideas or anger, knowing that you had support and people that could give you input that you could go away with. At the beginning we established that you (as the chairperson) are a bit of a loner and you didn't have anybody to offload problems on to because you were it.*

This active listening role was a very important role for the group, as it was often impossible, because of the obligation to keep information confidential, for these issues to be discussed with anyone else.

> *The boundaries were set and the confidentiality was set and people started to relax. You can't do it anywhere else (Talk about board matters).*

Members also used the group, and other individual members, as a sounding board for new ideas and initiatives.

> *There was that willingness to let other people influence what you did. Not having to have all the answers yourself, but allowing others to have input into how you make decisions or what decisions you reached or how you did things.*

Individuals were both affirmed and challenged by the group. The transcripts are full of words of praise, thanks, support and encouragement.

- *You are doing really well. In two months I can't believe what you have done.*
- *maybe I will feel better when he accepts it.*
- *Well, I think you should do, you are saving his bacon.*

There were several instances where members felt that it was the support of the group that had helped them through a very difficult stage and in one instance had prevented the person from resigning from the Board.

> *I think women are very supportive of one another because we do find ourselves isolated. I have to say that, without the group, I would not have lasted as long as I have. I would have been long gone.*

At an early stage of our meeting, a very high level of trust and respect developed among members.

> *We were all so different but almost immediately - we didn't have to talk about it, it just happened. I found it refreshingly rare, it is so rare to find other women doing the same kinds of things. We didn't have to talk about it, we just understood without saying things because we were all in that same position.*

> *The mere fact that we didn't know each other until we got there and yet after one or two sessions we could say that I have been separated and ****'s husband is an alcoholic. I think, for me anyway, that was a real indicator of the comfortableness that prevailed in the group. It was about honesty and confidentiality.*

As individuals we were all known by the people we work with in our schools to be 'up front' and 'honest' and prepared to speak our minds on difficult issues. In the group this happened very early and very naturally.

> *****, you have to make a decision really. You have to decide whether to ....., or you are going to have to go to him and say .....*
>
> *You have to do something about it. What is it that is stopping you taking action? Maybe you need to think about what it is that you are nervous about.*
>
> *Now that it has happened a couple of times, maybe next time you have to say 'Every time I front something with you, you give me a hard time. Pull your head in'.*

There was a ready acceptance that we had different and preferred ways of operating, and that we each knew our own school situation better than any one else did. This led to an unspoken acceptance that there was no one right way to handle something and that, if we discussed options, the person responsible for taking the action should select what suited her and make her own judgements on things.

> *You would just sit there and think, "Would that happen at our College?" It was good to know that there are other ideas and styles around. You obviously all met your area's needs and requirements. I would think that maybe, if I should need it, there was an idea that I could uplift and use in my own area.*

There were times that the maintenance of the group relationships was more important than the group tasks. Oja and Smulyan list some of the interpersonal concerns that may dominate a group as " trust, leadership, group boundaries and individual commitment" (1989:94). In our group, these were not the types of concerns that the group addressed. Rather we took time to care for, and about, each other (Fonow & Cook, 1991:8).

> *The group helped me more than any other single thing, or every other thing put together. We seemed to help each other.*

Because rapport and trust was established so easily and so early, however, most of the group energy was spent on the task functions. Some major developments occurred and quite profound progress was made in a number of the situations. In others the change was less obvious.

> *Practical things like that (sharing policies and procedures) and like the remodelling of the Charter. The sharing of information so that we aren't all recreating the wheel.*
>
> *The procedural things, some things we had not come up against. It meant that they went very quickly without doing anything wrong.*

There were understandings achieved for individuals through the group reflection and discussion, because the meaning of the social situation was changed through the discussion and this assisted them to make decisions in a new context (Poskitt,1994:63).

> Group discussions, particularly at repeated intervals, are not only a means of getting more diversified information, but they also assist participants to overcome structural isolation and understand their individual oppressions, fears, and constraints as collective phenomena that have social, political, and economic origins. (Stevens,1989:66)
>
> *I think that for me it (the group) has taught me a lot about myself. I never really envisaged being chairman of the BOT when I set out.....It made me realise that I did have something to offer even though I do things differently to the previous chairman, whom I have the utmost respect for,.....I still do things my own way and things are different. Gaining the confidence to do that is good. I felt comfortable. It taught me a lot about myself and how I am coping.*

Interviews

After the first meeting we had together, I began conducting interviews with each of the women. At this stage we did not know each other well so I made an appointment at the home of the woman being interviewed. The research questions were used as a 'guide' only and the interviews were fully interactive. The interviewee was able to get to know me as a person as well as my being able to get to know her. They were what

Patti Lather(1986) calls 'dialogic interviews', and what I thought of as 'interactive interviews'. Rather than conventional 'one way' interviews they were more like discussions and the relationship between the participants was a non-hierarchical one (Oakley, 1984:41; Burgess, 1989:83; Fonow & Cook, 1991:90).

Oakley described her experience of interviewing participants in a childbirth project -

> I found that interviewees very often took the initiative in defining the interviewer-interviewee relationship as something which existed beyond the limits of question-asking and answering. For example, they did not only offer the minimum hospitality of accommodating me in their homes for the duration of the interview: at 92 per cent of the interviews I was offered tea, coffee or some other drink; 14 per cent offered me a meal on at least one occasion....There was also a certain amount of interest in my own situation. What sort of person was I and how did I come to be interested in this subject? (Oakley, 1984:45)

My own experience was the same, or even more so. Some very personal information was shared and experiences and feelings that were deep and intimate were included (Finch, 1984). I felt very humble that the women were prepared to be so open and were so trusting. I later learned that this was to be the norm in all our interactions. In retrospect I believe that this was largely a result of my own active involvement and my status as a chairperson ie. one of the team. Fonow and Cook described their similar experience as follows -

> In qualitative work, the accuracy of listening and hearing may be as important as the openness of telling. The fact that we, the interviewers, were women who had been married, divorced and had children- increased the validity of our data. We did not have to go through the process of getting to know the special perspectives and nuances of meaning of those we were studying - a process that is often identified if the qualitative researcher wants to avoid errors that simply come from ignorance. (Fonow & Cook, 1991:146)

Bridges (1989:144) learned from his own experiences that honesty, openness and trust demand, and are a result of, a reciprocal relationship and the exchange of information. This "context of reciprocity" (Connors, 1988:39) enables the researcher to

be operate within their own subjectivity as a whole person (Webb, 1988:255) rather than separate out the role of researcher.

I taped the interviews and sent a copy of the transcript back to the interviewee for her own information, reflection and any changes or additions she wished to make. In Jan Robertson's research, one of the participants reported that the return of the transcript "formed the most valuable prompt to reflection on his actions" (Robertson, 1994:17). While none of my colleagues made such a direct reference to the returned transcripts, on several occasions they were referred to, during the group discussions, in ways which indicated that they had been a catalyst for reflection. In this respect they also represent an *intervention* in the lives of the participants (Middleton, 1988:137; Fonow Cook, 1991:3).

Practical issues

Time

As has already been indicated, the greatest problem was for us to find time for the meetings. As chairpersons we were responsible for the monthly meetings and for the frequent communication with the principal. The public relations role often involved day time and evening activities. We all took an active role on several subcommittees and attended others from time to time. These were usually evening meetings. The active role on the discipline committee from time to time used many evenings and weekends. These activities were all in addition to our careers and family commitments. We all operated diaries and worked on the system of writing in the scheduled action group meeting dates for the year with the intention of working around them. This was normally workable but there were two occasions when making senior appointments, holding discipline hearings and attending to other crises had to take priority over our meeting. On the first occasion I tried to make another date but it took me about four to five hours of phone calls before we could find one evening, over the period of a whole month, that we could all attend. (see telephone notes in Appendix E) The second time it happened, we just carried on with one member short. When I look back, I marvel that the attendance was so high and I know this is a measure of the value the women set on

the activity of the group. It is also a measure of the types of people involved. These women were organised, responsible, loyal and energetic.

The time constraints also made it difficult for each of us to implement some of the strategies and plans that we discussed during the group meetings. We just did our best and then came back and discussed what we had failed to do and why.

Workload

The work load of secondary school boards increased considerably over the 1994 year and each of the chairwomen had at least one major time-consuming board issue to be dealt with on top of the routine work. These included high court action, industrial action, discipline hearings involving many students, two ombudsman's investigations and direct conflict with the principal. We all had our children in the senior school sitting external exams and most of us were at a stage of expanding our careers. This was partly linked to the increasingly 'independent' stage that our children had reached. At the same time we were all aware of the board elections in March/April of 1995 and were actively preparing ourselves and our boards for a smooth transition. None of these issues were unpredicted but they still had to be managed.

Data collection

In terms of the action research methodology there were very real limitations on the ability of the individual women to collect data and we increasingly relied on the group discussions to produce the school-related data for our reflection. Carr and Kemmis (1986:165) outline what they see as the essential aims and minimal requirements for action research. These are -

Essential aims -

a) To improve *practice*, *understanding* of the practice, and the improvement of the *situation* in which the practice takes place.

There were numerous examples of each of us making valuable contributions to our own Boards and schools through changes in our practice as leaders. It was the work in the action group that gave us the understanding, knowledge and confidence to effect many of these changes.

b) To *involve* in all the phases of planning, acting, observing and reflecting, those involved in the practice.

This is where our group does not 'fit the norm' as an action research group. All group members were involved in the planning and reflecting, even when it involved the action taking place in someone else's school. However, as the chairperson/leader of our Board, we each were "involved in the practice" of leading in our own school and in this capacity we were involved in all the phases of planning, action, observing and reflection.

Minimal requirements

a) A project takes as its subject- matter a social practice, regarding it as a form of strategic action susceptible to improvement.

The project took 'leadership' as the social practice that we could individually and collectively take strategic action to improve.

b) The project proceeds through a spiral of cycles of planning, acting, observing and reflecting, with each of these activities being systematically and self critically implemented and interrelated.

We did work through systematic cycles. The action group meetings which were held at regular intervals were where the reflecting and planning took place and between these we each went back into our own school environments to take the action and make our observations.

c) The project involves those responsible for the practice in each of the moments of the activity, widening participation in the project gradually to include others affected by the practice, and maintaining collaborative control of the process.

The actions we each took in our schools involved, at different times, all the groups in the school's community; the trustees, the principals and senior management teams, the students, the staff and the parents. While the action group maintained collaborative control of the cycles, the stakeholder groups in the schools were collaboratively involved in most of the actions even though they were initiated by the chairperson.

An example of the above criteria in action in all the schools is the area of improving practice in the discipline hearings of suspended students. This was an activity that we were all actively involved in as trustees and chairpersons. With one exception,

we chaired the discipline hearings. It is a process governed by the Education Act (1989) and one which involves making decisions that directly determine the educational future of offending students. We were very keen to fulfil this role as well as we possibly could. At the first action group, we discussed the experiences we had had in the past with suspensions and outlined the important requirements and issues involved. As we each outlined the actions we had taken in specific instances, the group members commented on ways these could be improved and other possible options for action. Information about documentation (letters to parents and the Ministry, minutes, cumulative records, notes taken in the meetings) was shared and compared. We each identified for ourselves areas we needed to change and/or other possible ways of operating. Back in our schools we implemented the changes in procedure necessary to comply with the legislation and the principles of natural justice. Although these changes were small, each one resulted in the Board and the school complying more fully with the law and therefore being less vulnerable to having action taken against it. We brought back to the next group the changes we had made and discussed further examples of hearings. We shared ways we had dealt with students and which of these had been effective and which had not. It was not possible to plan specifically what action we would take in any given situation, since each is unique and must be handled as such, but it was of great value to discuss options and to compare the severity of punishments for particular offences. As we worked in our schools to try some of the strategies that the group had discussed, more profound changes began to be made in the creative ways we dealt with offending students and their families. We all noted over the period of time that we worked together on this issue that we were able to improve the safety of our schools, better facilitate the hearings to everyone's benefit, better fit the punishments to the crimes, be more effective in our dealings with parents and be more confident in our own leadership role.

Checking back with Carr and Kemmis's criteria :

Aims

We significantly improved our own practice as leaders as well as the practice of our school discipline committees. We improved our own, and our fellow trustees' understanding of the practice through an increased knowledge of the Act and an

increased understanding of the principals of natural justice. We improved the situation in which the practice takes place by making discipline hearings more user friendly for the participants and more legally 'safe' for the trustees and for the school.

Minimal requirements

The subject matter is one of critical social importance and one that we were keen to improve as much as possible. The group went through systematic cycles of planning, acting, bringing back observations and data and collectively reflecting, reviewing and 'replanning' to the extent it was possible. As chairpeople we had collective responsibility with our fellow trustees for the practice. Through direct training, sharing of information and through our own improved practice we widened the participation to include the others affected by the process.

Some time has been taken to include and explain this example in this chapter as a means of demonstrating the types of important outcomes of the process that are not directly documented in the discussion on leadership, yet which occupied significant parts of our time.

Ethical issues

Governorship by trustees is guided by the Education Act and by the school charters. Any large organisation has sensitive issues that it must deal with. Schools tend to have more than many because their core business is working with children and their families. The trustees 'Code of Conduct" (Appendix F) gives clear guidelines to trustees about how to behave. Their code of conduct directs them to -

- Respect the integrity of staff, the principal, parents and students.
- Be loyal to the school and its charter.
- maintain the confidentiality and trust vested in them.
- ensure strict confidentiality of papers and information related to the Board's position as employer.

Boards are also governed by the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act (1989). This means that board meetings are open to the public except when the issue being discussed is a sensitive one that directly affects people in the

school. In this type of instance the Board must go "into committee" using the appropriate procedures laid down by the Act. When this happens, the discussion remains confidential to board members forever.

The things that we most wanted to talk with the group about and seek help with, tended to be these sensitive and difficult issues that by their nature came into the category of 'confidential'. At our first meeting we talked at length about this and felt that it was essential that we were able to be totally honest and open with each other if the group process was to be effective. This included, we agreed, using peoples names and showing documents if necessary. Again, because we were the guardians in our own schools of this important aspect of our work, we did not have to explain, convince or remind each other of the critical importance of confidentiality.

One my responsibilities as a researcher was to ensure I had informed consent (Burgess, 1989:64). This was achieved by ensuring that the relevant school personnel knew about the research and what the guidelines were. My letter seeking permission to involve the school in the research went to each board. (Appendix G) Most schools wrote back giving permission. I left it to each of the chairwomen to explain to her own board about what we did together and about the confidentiality contract. I personally checked with each of them that they had talked with their boards and I personally talked with each principal to ensure they understood the guidelines. It was clear that they did, and their attitude was that because they and their boards could see how this project was helping both the chairwomen directly, and their schools indirectly, they were very happy that it was happening. My interviews with the principals and comments made by trustees at the board meetings I attended confirmed that they both understood and approved.

An ethical issue that I had not predicted, related to the interviews I had planned to do with the principals. The idea of the principal interviews was part of the original written proposal that I had sent to each of the schools. I had intended that it take place part-way through the year. The group had been meeting for some time and members had had quite a lot of interaction with each other and with me. I had also interviewed each of the women. We had each talked at length and in depth about our relationship with our principal and any difficulties we had experienced. A very strong sense of loyalty to, and trust in, each other had built up very quickly. I became aware that I was

putting off the interviews with the principals and I had to think about why this was. It was important that the principals could say anything they wanted to and to be honest about their chairpersons and, for this to happen, I would have to assure them that I would treat the information confidentially (Kelly, 1989:110). At the same time, I knew that the chairwomen would want honest feedback, in order to continue in their process of changing things for the better. It felt like a built in dissonance and I did not know how to resolve it. I took the problem to the group and we solved it together, just as we had every other issue we had dealt with. The women felt it was very important for me to do the interviews and understood the need for the principals to be able to talk confidentially. They designed the questions for me to ask, and it was this action that gave me the confidence to go ahead. In every situation, except one, the relationship between the principal and the chairperson was both a strong and a positive one. They already knew what their principals thought of them and of their work in the school. They were all much more critical of themselves than any of their principals was. With one exception, the interviews with the principals were very successful and I found it quite easy to give general feedback to the women without breaking the confidentiality.

The principal referred to above as the 'exception', presented me with a problem. I knew from the chairperson of this school that there was a history of difficult relationships with this principal. The previous chairperson of the Board, a male, had resigned because of the difficulties. The group had heard of, and discussed at length, the issues and strategies this chairwoman was trying to use to break through or work around the difficulties. As with all the other schools, I phoned and talked directly to the Principal reminding him of the reason for the interview and explaining the confidentiality. I had a very welcoming and friendly reception with immediate willingness to make a time for the interview and no hint of the difficulties to come later. I arrived for the interview and was taken into the Principal's office. I sensed immediately some uneasiness, so I took extra time to go over all the guidelines again. He preferred that I did not tape the interview and I made a point of shutting the recorder in my bag. The questions he then asked me confirmed my suspicions about his unease and I told the Principal that I sensed his uneasiness and that there was no obligation whatever for him to do the interview if he was not comfortable. He assured me that he wanted to go ahead but wondered what the questions would be. I handed him/her my

set of questions and explained that they had been designed by the Chairwomen as a group. I stressed that it was up to him to decide what he felt comfortable in saying. Although he insisted on going ahead, the interview did not yield the data that the questions had intended. He talked at length about his dissatisfaction with 'Tomorrow's Schools' and the way Boards made it difficult for principals to do their jobs. The 'interview' took a long time and yielded some very valuable data of an unplanned kind but I was unsure what I should use in the report. The data were not only what he said, but the way he said things, his body language, and what he did not say. Following a discussion with my supervisors, I had the notes typed up and forwarded him a copy with a letter that asked if they were an accurate account of the interview and if there was anything he wished added or changed. I did not receive a reply of any kind. Later in the year this principal requested that I be a guest speaker to his area cluster group and introduced me in glowing terms as a researcher with integrity and ability. I have taken this as indirect affirmation of my decision to include the interview data.

Many of the potential ethical dilemmas discussed by writers such as Burgess (1989), Riddell (1989), Bouma (1993), Anderson (1990), and Dixon et al (1987) relating to interpretation and ownership of data were not an issue for our group both because of both my own participation and our shared interpretation of the data.

A final issue arose when I attended some of the Board meetings as an observer. In two instances I noticed procedures being followed, or not being followed, which were inconsistent with the Education Act. While they were not serious in themselves, they could have made the Boards vulnerable had they been challenged. Should I intervene? (Harold, 1994:62). In each instance I decided to discuss it with the chairperson at an appropriate time after the meeting. This was appreciated by the chairwomen and I felt it had been the correct decision.

Data analysis

Data analysis began early in the research process because the women participants were involved in the interpretation of the issues as they emerged. As soon as I thought something important was arising through the interviews, literature, the visits or the group discussions, it was brought to the group for their comments. This did not always

result in an in depth or profound analysis. At times group members had discussion issues that were more important to them and the transcripts show that on several occasions when I raised such topics for comment, the group soon moved onto something that was more pressing for them. I felt then, and still do, that the needs of the group were paramount and that my thesis needs would be best served by the group dealing with what was important for them.

All interviews and group discussions were taped and transcribed for later analysis. Three copies of each was produced. Every page was given a number and each small paragraph was numbered (Appendix B). The numbers were linked to codes that indicated -

- which interviewee or school
- which interview/group discussion
- which page of the transcript

This allowed one set of the transcripts to be cut up into sections and individual quotations without losing the information needed to quickly relocate the section in its original context.

The transcripts and the research notes were read a number of times and, as I read, I picked out key ideas and themes that either recurred or related directly to other themes. This is using the "grounded theory" approach of Glaser and Strauss (1967), where the themes emerge from the data without the researcher predetermining them (Blase, 1987; Bogdan and Biklen, 1982). A word or two that described the idea was written in the left hand margin. After they had been rechecked several times the themes or topics were 'mapped' out onto a big sheet of paper.

One set of transcripts was cut up and sorted into the topics or themes. These individual quotations were themselves sorted into a logical order, taped onto a sheet of paper and then selected quotations were integrated into the script.

In the final individual interviews with each participant, the researcher raised some of the key ideas that had emerged from the data and asked each of the women to comment. These comments and opinions were integrated into the analysis both directly as written data, and indirectly by assisting my understanding of the data as I wrote up the thesis. Finally, as soon as each of the 'findings' chapters was drafted, a copy was sent to each of the women for their comments, concerns, additions or deletions. Their

response was almost identical to those of the women who worked through a similar process with Lesley Treleaven (1993:2).

> Given the group's inquiry into its own processes, there was little disagreement as participants read my developing text. We engaged to clarify meanings until in recognising "yes that fits with my understanding", we can claim validity for the participants of this current account.

Overall, my role as the researcher, being the only person with access to all the data and the literature, was influential in the processing of the issues for inclusion in this document, but there was a great deal of input from the participants as a group and as individuals, in the identification and interpretation of those issues.

Limitations of the study

The study departed from its original plan in a number of ways. Initially there were four participants, excluding myself. In this framework I had proposed to visit each board of trustees twice in order to observe meetings. I had also planned to attend some school functions at which the chairwomen were fulfilling a part of their role as chairperson. I had planned to personally interview both the principals and the elected staff representatives of each school. Because of the changes in the participants and the expanded size of the group, these extra tasks became unmanageable. To have been able to observe each participant acting in a range of aspects of their chairperson's role would have added to the richness of the data and helped with the process of triangulation. On the other hand, it was beneficial to have worked with more participants than I had anticipated. Being able to interview the staff representatives as well as the principals would have added another perspective and helped with the triangulation of data. Again, it would have doubled the workload when the sample size increased.

It could be argued that the joining of the group by two members part-way through the cycle of meetings detracted from the pure nature and continuity of an action research group as outlined by writers such as Carr and Kemmis (1986:1990), Kemmis and McTaggart (1988:23) and Oja and Smulyan (1989:12). Certainly from the researcher's point of view it created a heavy unplanned workload and changed the group dynamics each time a new member joined. I believed, however, that it was important for

the group as a whole to decide what to do and that it was up to me to adapt my research needs to cope. I also felt that one of the excellent attributes of action research is its adaptability (Poskitt, 1994:75). The view of the participants was that they were finding the meetings so productive that they wanted to include rather than exclude others from this process.

Conclusion

In my 20 years of working as a qualitative researcher, this is the first piece of work in which I have actively involved my fellow participants working with me in the interpretation of the data. In no way did the process remove any responsibility from me to be rigorous in the ways the data were handled but it did give me a measure of confidence that I have seldom experienced before. The difference lies in the opportunities I had, through the action group, to raise issues **as they arose** and to have them discussed; rather than reflecting back my view of things for comment after the event and in a more formal written way. My experience of this latter type of reflexivity is that, while it is better than not doing at all, it tends to require people to look at the ideas that someone else has presented and to respond to these rather than having an open opportunity to generate their own response. The researcher ends up feeling confident that what they have said is not incorrect, but they do not know if what they have said is complete. In this study, as participants we not only generated our own data but also worked as a group to discuss it, challenge it, understand it and interpret it.

The following three chapters document and comment on these data using the words of the women, their principals and fellow trustees to illustrate points.

CHAPTER SIX

Issues faced by the chairwomen

Introduction

This is the first of three chapters which present and discuss the data gathered through the study. Six chairwomen and their experiences have contributed to the data. A feminist post-structural approach has been taken to the discussion and was selected because it allows both the similarities and the differences between women acting in the same subject position to be explained. Clearly each school will have its own history, culture, personalities, politics and issues that, at any point in time, are unique to it. This chapter does not attempt to deal with those types of issues. What will be described and analysed here are the issues that either all the chairwomen, or most of us, had in common, that emerged and were discussed during the action group meetings, and which have leadership implications. A closer look at these issues that emerged as being important to the women enabled them to be grouped according to the source(s) of the challenges/problems.

Some of the issues related directly to requirements of the position of chairperson of the board. These were the need to build a positive working relationship with the principal, dealing with student discipline, having public responsibilities, and being a role model. Each of the women had to find ways to achieve all these requirements and they each worked within their own unique situation to achieve outcomes that they felt positive about and that served the needs of their school. In some instances there were legislative requirements that had to be adhered to, but there were opportunities to meet these as well as finding ways of operating that the parties involved were comfortable with.

Other issues arose out of the support, lack of support and/or pressures put on each of the women by the other people that they interacted with. These included members of their family as well as the personnel on their board and in their school. At the same time that the chairwomen were negotiating the competing demands of the various subject positions they chose to work within, the people they were in regular

contact with each had their own views of what they felt were appropriate ways of behaving in the positions. There were times when the values, the views and the needs of some of these people were in conflict with those of the chairwoman. Issues of discrimination and domination had to be worked through, as did lack of support, and in some cases direct challenges, from family members.

As well as issues arising from the requirements of the position of chairperson, and issues resulting from interactions with other people, there were issues that each of the women experienced resulting from the ways they each elected to manage their lives. Although each of us found differing ways to manage the tensions, there were two areas in which we all found ourselves dealing with the same issues. These were the pressures associated with managing our time and the personal costs we experienced as an outcome of the decision making processes we used.

Finally, the issue of self-confidence was important for each of us in different ways. This was an ever-changing part of each of our subjectivities, which altered and developed as we experienced various positionings and made our work as a chairperson either easier or more difficult depending on our interpretation of our experiences.

As well as presenting the data, I will be interpreting and analysing it within a feminist post-structuralist approach in an attempt to understand individual experiences. Links are made to the literature which sometimes challenge and sometimes confirm it. The literature often takes an essentialist position in talking about 'women' as a particular and unified group. Even further, it often compares and contrasts 'women' to 'men'. My post-structuralist analysis does neither of these things. Rather it highlights the differences between and within women and describes how these differences occur as the chairwomen negotiate the complexity of their conflicting positions.

At the same time, the discourse of femininity that has influenced past studies has also influenced the women in this study who, from time to time, talk about women's ways and occasionally contrast them with those of men.

It will become clear also that in many ways the women in this study do think, feel and act in very similar ways, especially in reflecting their sense of leadership identity.

The reader will become aware, as I did, of this moving in and out using structuralist and post-structuralist language because of these reasons.

Building a relationship with the principal

The legislation for Tomorrow's Schools , developed within school leadership discourses of devolution, self management, community control and partnership, builds in dual leadership for each school. The chairperson leads a board of trustees which employs the principal and staff and is responsible for the governance of the school. This model comes from the discursive fields of business and local government. For instance, the legislation which guides the way a board must operate is The Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act. The principal, on the other hand, is responsible for educational leadership and the day to day managing of the school (Harrison, 1995:10). This is clearly in the discursive field of traditional education. There is the potential for problems in any organisation where a professional staff and board of directors work together and particularly when the board comprises elected volunteers The discourses differ in significant ways and "Maintaining the balance of power between board and staff (is) a delicate issue" (Daniels, 1988:248).

Before Tomorrow's Schools, the accepted norm was that the principals were autonomous and were not, in practice, accountable to anyone unless they committed a major indiscretion or crime. Under Tomorrow's Schools the board of trustees is to play an active governance role, develop policy which the principal is required to implement, appraise the principal, negotiate a performance contract with the principal (Pointon, 1988:19), and be ultimately accountable for everything in the school including curriculum delivery. A new relationship had to be forged (ERO, 1994:15) as one of the principals described-

> *At first I thought "is this really your business?", but she (the chairwoman) would explain that she thought it was her business- from this perspective- and therefore she would like to be briefed on it. After that I would brief her on everything. She probably got more than she bargained for but I trusted her and she had a very intimate knowledge of what was going on in the school. That gave me the strength to do the hard things.*

The new relationship forged, as described in the quote, was one in which the chairperson understood what was required of her and was strong enough to insist that the principal kept her adequately informed. At first, this was a new way of operating for this principal who had previously not been required to inform anybody in an ongoing way.

A high level of trust and respect developed between them and this was in part due to the active involvement of the chairperson leading to 'intimate knowledge' and to her demonstrated willingness to keep within her appropriate role. The resulting partnership was based on the trust that developed and, rather than feeling threatened by the chairperson's demands, the principal gained strength from the partnership. He found it easier, than in the past, to take the hard decisions because he felt supported by the shared responsibility.

In nearly every case where schools have experienced major conflict, it has been difficulties with this governance/management relationship that have caused the breakdown and it is not difficult to see the potential for power struggles between the two leadership positions. The full time professional leader is legally the employee of the group of educational lay people led by a part time lay person. The Trustee handbook (1995:5-810) stresses that "it is pivotal to the success of the school that there be a smooth, harmonious relationship between the chairperson and the principal". Fortunately, as the participants in this research demonstrate, these relationships are mostly successful (University of Waikato, 1993; ERO, 1994:15).

It became clear that in five of the six schools, the relationship between the chairperson and her principal was very professional and was characterised by mutual respect. Particularly successful aspects of the relationships included frequent and regular contact, genuine partnership based on a clear understanding by each of the respective roles, shared confidences, and openness and honesty. They shared a strong loyalty to the school and a commitment to put the needs of the students first, and acting as a sounding board for each other was an important part of the relationship as one of the chairwomen described-

> ***** *(the principal) runs things past me. S/He wants confirmation that s/he is doing the right thing.....I don't always agree mind you but that's OK too.*

The chairwomen were all aware of the importance of working hard to ensure a successful relationship and the need to negotiate ways through differences of opinion.

> *I have enormous respect for (the principal). I didn't quite know what he was like at the beginning and we had a wary relationship, circling around each other in a way because I suppose he didn't know what he thought of*

me either. We have had one or two little problems but they have never stood in the way of anything and I think we get on very well now.

As well as the inbuilt potential for power struggle, because of the dual leadership, there is evidence in the literature that women school trustees often bring an orientation and perspective to school boards that differs from their male colleagues[30] (Marshall and Heller, 1983:32; Shakeshaft, 1987:208). It is suggested that women are changing the decision making process, are attempting to increase public involvement and are rejecting traditional definitions of management and governance (Marshall and Heller, 1983:32). Shakeshaft suggests that being aware of the potential conflict "might prevent the drawing of battle lines between what is now a male-dominated superintendency and a school board increasingly composed of women" (1987:208).

The size of the sample in my study does not allow generalisations to be made about any influence gender may have had on the success or otherwise of the principal/chairperson relationships. All but one of the chairwomen had a male principal. Those of us with male principals felt relaxed about the gender difference and tended only to notice it when the personality of one or more of the individuals influenced the way they responded. One of the chairwomen gave the following example-

*Sometimes when ******* gets all stressed out I would love to say to him 'come down to the pub for a beer', or 'let's have a game of golf' but he is so prim and proper that he would have a fit if I did, so I have to ask my (male) deputy to do it.*

In this example, had the chairperson been male, the principal would not have perceived either going to the pub or playing golf as being problematic. Since he liked and respected his chairwoman, there was no suggestion that he did not want to spend time with her or that he would have not been happy to talk work in an out of school setting. The chairwoman felt that he was concerned about how other people might perceive their relationship if the two of them were seen in a public social setting together. Vilkinas points out that "many men still exist who are more comfortable working with other males (than with females)" and argues that for men who work together "this relationship

[30] Marshall and Heller suggest that women are changing the decision making process, are attempting to increase public involvement in education policy decisions and are rejecting traditional definitions of management and governance.

may be maintained through similar hobbies or interests in sport, and is reinforced by familiarity such as that gained through common toilet facilities"(Vilkinas, 1991:23). For five of us, this did not appear to be the case in the "work" relationship but, in at least one instance, it was the case when the relationship moved into a social context. In my own instance I did, on several occasions, go to lunch with my male principal but we did not share similar hobbies, interests in sport or toilet facilities! Although there may be limits on what some people would accept as socially appropriate activities for professional colleagues of different genders to engage in, in my own instance it was the lack of interests in common, rather than any perceived societal sanctions, that stopped me suggesting other options. We both enjoyed a good meal and glass of wine and there were times when it was helpful to combine school discussions with such social interaction which is what the other chairwoman was wanting to do.

Some of the literature suggests that men may be threatened by competent women. Hagen and Kahn say that "men only like a competent woman from a distance" (cited in Shakeshaft, 1987:97). My observations and the transcripts indicate that, for four of the five men in this study, this was not the case. The evidence of the success of the relationships and working partnerships was in the way the principals talked to me about the upcoming elections when they knew their chairwoman was not going to stand for election. This was the case for all but one of the women because all their children would, by the time of the election, have finished secondary school. The principals said they were *feeling very concerned, in fear and trepidation, concerned, worried, apprehensive and not looking forward* to their chairwoman standing down. In fact all of us took a great deal of trouble to ensure that there were able people ready, willing and trained to stand for the next elections. The anxiety of the principals related specifically to having to build a relationship with a new chairperson.

The one exception mentioned earlier, where one chairperson and her principal were not able to establish a good relationship, was complex and cannot be detailed here except to say that this principal told me in the interview that he did not feel happy about the whole concept of Tomorrows' Schools and the role that boards played. He believed that most other principals felt the same way, although my data show that this was not the case for any of the other principals in this study. His previous (male) chairperson had resigned early because of frustrations which would indicate that the tension was not

primarily caused by gender or personality difference, but rather by the threat posed by change.

> ...a perceived need to change is tacitly linked in an individual's mind with a challenge to authority. The less ready individuals are, through temperament or training, to make this change, the more they will resist perceiving the evidence which would result in accommodation to new ideas. Authority-dependence may be closely linked with a reluctance to surrender the past or to modify the self-image through the incorporation of new ideas....To the extent that change is imposed on individuals from outside them, it will also be accompanied by a sense of losing control. (Nias, 1993:146)

The Principal would not relinquish the authority that he was used to having before boards of trustees came into existence. Much of the conflict arose over the chairwoman either attempting to implement processes that were clearly part of her responsibility as the leader of the Board, or challenging practices of the Principal which kept the Board uninformed about issues for which it had the ultimate responsibility. There were several occasions during the period of the research when the current chairwoman considered resigning. It was her view that the Principal was not only threatened by change, but also by women in positions of power. The Principal used this leadership subject position and the 'professional role' attached to it to access and control information.

> Where expertise poses as authority and is supported in its pose by institutional and professional structures and affiliations, it is difficult for women to challenge its verdicts, to seek open-ended, interpretive advice, to displace pronouncements from 'on high'. (Code,1992:188)

The mere presence of the Principal in the school all day/every day gave him opportunities to take immediate action (or not take action); to access, control and withhold information; to informally influence people and to find ways to resist accountability. Since the Board and chairperson were ultimately accountable for everything that happened in the school, but were unable to stop many of the actions of the Principal, the chairperson felt powerless.

> People held accountable for the results produced by others, whose formal role (the chairperson[31]) gives them the right to command but who lack informal political influence ..... are rendered powerless in the organisation. (Kanter, 1977:186)

There were some notable changes, and important outcomes from the school's point of view, during the time the action group met, but in the end the chairperson chose to stand down, as had the chairperson before her, rather than to force issues which would result in an overt power struggle and shift the school into a crisis/conflict situation.

Dealing with discipline

Another demand of the position of chairperson of the board is the overall responsibility to deal with serious student misbehaviour. When a student has exhausted all of the usual means the school has of managing inappropriate behaviour, the principal can suspend her/him for a short period of time, or indefinitely. If the student is suspended indefinitely the board of trustees must, as outlined in the Education Act, conduct a hearing and make a decision about the child's future. The behaviour of the student will have been very serious to have caused this consequence. The process is complex and must be followed carefully, if the decision the board makes is to be valid and remain unchallenged. The situation is one with many inbuilt tensions, as illustrated by the following common scenarios. The staff usually want the child to go from the school but the parents usually desperately want the child to stay. Many other students may be adversely affected by the suspended child's behaviour either before and/or after the suspension. It is often very difficult to establish the truth, when the various stakeholders may be telling lies or interpreting the truth to their advantage. The board is responsible for ensuring a safe learning environment for **all** its students and staff but, at the same time, the future of a child is at stake.

All the chairwomen took a very active part in, and felt very strongly about the importance of, this particular part of their governance and leadership role. We all tended to take a very 'hands-on' approach and do a lot more than was strictly required

---

[31] My addition

and, in spite of the tensions described above, we felt very confident about our ability to facilitate the hearings. All the principals saw this as an area of real strength in their respective chairwomen and said that they felt very confident in their ability to handle these difficult situations well.

Some aspects of the way we dealt with the role are noteworthy and were commented on specifically by the principals. We all tried to build a relationship directly with the child and took quite an intimate and sensitive approach.

> *I say that we are all going to listen to the student's version of what happened and I say to them directly "In order for us to make the right decision today, it is really important that you are prepared to talk to us, because if you are not we don't know if we have got all the information we need". They often seem quite surprised that it is important for us to hear their problem. I always sit right beside them and we always start off quietly together.*

> *I ask the child if they play sport and if they say yes I ask them what they play. If they say rugby I ask them what happens if they break a rule and they say they get sin binned. I tell them that they are sin binned right now and that if it happens next time they are out. I do it that way so they can grasp it.*

We were creative in developing consequences that students would understand and take seriously. Frequently they were required to do some hours of service for the school or to make reparation in some way to the people who had been affected by their offence(s). The emphasis was on trying to achieve *a win-win* outcome and *to make sure they come out of it all having learned something about how much damage they caused.* Another aspect that many of the principals commented on, was the way the women dealt directly 'parent to parent' and used the discipline hearing as an opportunity to help some parents understand their own children and their role as a parent, in relationship to the school.

As a consequence of attempting to achieve the types of outcomes described above, we often found ourselves struggling to move within the constraints placed on the board by the school's lack of staffing resources, a lack of appropriate outside support services, and a lack of control over what could be required of parents and caregivers.

In the action group we discussed why it was that we each took such an interest and prominent role in student discipline. It seemed to each of us to be more important than just going through a required process and we did feel that this was gender related.

We felt it was significant that we each had the direct and recent experience of dealing with our own teenage children and because of this closeness to the situation, we hoped we might be able to resolve a difficulty positively and make a positive difference in the child's life. The way one chairwoman felt follows-

> *I wonder if it is just being a mother, a maternal sort of thing. When things are wrong, mothers address them don't they. It is a maternal thing. If things are wrong, you don't like them to be wrong and you have feelings that you don't want them to spin off and hurt other people. I think its a female type of role to take that responsibility.*

This feeling that we were positioning ourselves as 'mothers' rather than as 'parents' was felt strongly and demonstrates the powerful influence on us of traditional assumptions about femininity and nurturing. We had each played the major parenting role for our own families and although this was drawing to an end because of the age of our children, it was still a reality at this point in time. Within the timeframe of a discipline hearing, we usually chose to position ourselves as 'chairperson', in order to carry out the legally required process; 'mother', in order to understand and empathise with the parents; 'judge', in order to weigh up the evidence and make the required decision, 'caregiver', in order to empathise and be responsible for the future of the child; 'employer', in order to understand from the staff's points of view what was appropriate and possible to achieve; and 'facilitator' of the discipline committee working with the other members to reach a consensus. We were sometimes aware of moving from one positioning to another and, at other times, we occupied several at the same time and juggled the demands of each in the search for the best outcome. It is not surprising that we nearly always found these hearings *emotionally shattering.*

It is interesting that in this very complex and demanding role, which has the potential to have far-reaching effects on people's lives and major legal repercussions, contrary to the expectations of others, we felt strong and confident. "The perception that women are not tough enough to handle the political environment or the discipline problems of a high school remains strong" (Regan and Brooks, 1992). We asked ourselves what was it that allowed each of us to feel familiar and comfortable with the way we chose to be and to act in this context. We felt it was probably because we were totally focussed on trying to help somebody rather than make an impression on them.

Our own sense of wellbeing was less important than those of the other people involved. Although it was not always easy to reconcile the differing needs of the various stakeholders, we had the responsibility to consider the wellbeing of the one student with the wellbeing of all the other students in the school. Gilligan (1982) described this as an "ethic of care" and Shakeshaft (1987:197) identifies that women, rather than men, are likely to be more involved in student affairs and are concerned more with marginal students. While it was certainly the case for each of us, there is no reason to assume such interests are an automatic result of being female. Rather it appeared to us that it was directly linked to our recent active parenting.

Having public responsibilities

The third issue directly resulting from occupying the position of board chairperson is that of the choices, requirements and expectations to enact public responsibilities. In each school the expectations and traditions differed regarding the chairperson's public enactment of this subject position.

We all felt that attending events and being visible around the school was important and were quite comfortable about this part of the role. We enjoyed the school occasions and felt that we were actively supporting school activities and affirming the people involved through our attendance. Being a spokesperson on behalf of the school in order to obtain funding, resolve resourcing issues and chairing discipline hearings were also tasks that we all felt confident and comfortable with. These tasks had very focussed purposes that could clearly result in positive outcomes for the school if we performed well enough. Also, usually the outcomes were tangible.

In all the schools, however, the role also included speaking at events such as school assemblies, prizegivings, staff meetings, parent evenings and special ceremonial days. Two of the chairwomen felt very uncomfortable with this task, to the extent of wanting to avoid it completely. One of the women, on the other hand, had spent many years as a candidate for a national political party and she enjoyed the public speaking and was very experienced in speaking to audiences, even hostile ones. I had had considerable experience in a wide range of leadership positions and just accepted this aspect as part of the deal. It was a task that gave me neither pleasure nor concern. The

other two women were confident enough to do the required speaking but it was a part of the responsibility that they did not enjoy.

It was important to all the principals that the chairwomen did the public speaking part of the role. We had all taken over the position from chairmen who had, apparently, been quite happy to speak publicly. The principals saw it as an important part of being a leader of the school and actively pushed for it to happen. One expressed his views as follows-

> *It is a disappointment to me that she doesn't want to say something in assembly. I can understand why, but it is sad that she doesn't want to say a few words. That puts her in the same role on the stage as my own wife and I think that is wrong.*

For most of us the following sentiments articulated by one of the chairwomen expresses our feelings about the public speaking-

> *It's a tradition within the College that I wouldn't change for anything, much as I loathe it.....I wouldn't say I am more comfortable with it now (after several years). I hate and loathe it, but once it is over it is fine.*

We did not find it easy to analyse or understand the reasons why some of us found it such a difficult task. In 1974, Rosaldo and others[32] argued an approach which is usually referred to as the public/private sphere separation. It can be summarised as follows-

> ...common to all known societies was some type of separation between a domestic sphere and a public sphere, the former associated with women and the latter with men. Because in most societies to date, women have spent a good part of their lives bearing and raising children, their lives have been more bound to the domestic sphere. Men, on the other hand, have had both the time and mobility to engage in those out of the home activities which generate political structures. Thus, as Rosaldo argued, while in many societies women possess some or even a great deal of power, women's power is always viewed as illegitimate, disruptive, and without authority. (Fraser and Nicholson, 1990:28)

Some writers make the point that women are often cast in a passive or subservient public role (James and Saville-Smith, 1989:93) and that when a woman enacts a role that is usually enacted by a man, there is a tendency for her "not to be taken seriously"

---

[32] Cited in Fraser and Nicholson (1990:28) in a discussion on theoretical approaches to gender.

by others (Ellis and Wheeler, 1991:87) or her behaviour to be labelled "inappropriate" by men (Shakeshaft, 1987:198). Gilligan gives the following as a possible explanation of the perceptions of others.

> The difficulty women experience in finding or speaking publicly in their own voice emerges repeatedly in the form of qualification and self-doubt, but also in intimations of divided judgement, a public assessment and private assessment which are fundamentally at odds. (Gilligan, 1982:16)

There was no evidence of either of these scenarios in this study, the opposite in fact. There was pressure for the chairwomen to fulfil the public speaking role and affirmation when they did. The chairwomen reported receiving very positive feedback after a public speech. This was validated by the principals as one described -

> ***** *had to be encouraged to speak, but when she did she was great value, very crisp, very good presentation. I had to work on her and say "look will you just say a few words?", and she agreed reluctantly.*

The reluctance and lack of confidence came from the women themselves. Unlike 'Dorothy' in Court's study (Court, 1994c:41), for some of the chairwomen, the dislike and lack of confidence **were** confined to the task of public speaking. The powerful women leaders that Miles studied reported very similar experiences (Miles, 1985:158). One way of viewing this is that "women contribute to the creation of their own invisibility" (Daniels, 1988:48) because "giving up the retiring stance and becoming visible can be personally costly" (ibid). Again, other than feelings of discomfort and *a couple of sleepless nights*, there was no evidence in this study of any major or long term personal cost.

One possible explanation is given in a paper by Regan and Brooks-

> Men seem to have two different rule books, one to guide their conduct in the public sphere, and one to guide their conduct in the private sphere. Women, who have been historically confined to the private sphere only, grow into adulthood with only one set of rules, which guides life below the fault according to the values of care and collaboration. As we have moved into the public sphere over the last twenty years, we have taken our rule book with us, initially quite ignorant that 1) there is another set of rules operating in that arena and 2) that we are carrying our indigenous rule book with us into the public sphere. (Regan and Brooks, 1992:22)

In our study, the women who had the greatest difficulty with the public role were those who had the least experience in it. Miles (1985:159) commented that "..it all gets easier the more experience you have of it". While we all agreed that a degree of confidence comes with experience, it seemed too simplistic to accept this as the total explanation. From my own experience, while I knew I was quite capable of public speaking, and had had quite extensive experience over many years in a range of career and leadership positions, I did not seem to reach a stage where I felt as confident about, or rewarded by, this experience as I did with other aspects of the role. I had the confidence to want to be 'me', and to project my own subjectivity in my public speaking including the types of 'below-the-fault values' that Regan and Brooks mention. At the same time, I was aware of the expectations that my 'audience' must have had after years of listening to the ways men approach speech making : *jokes and quotes from a microphone on central stage*. My wish was to tell stories and interact with my audience but, with memories from my own school days of the Governor General and various other prizegiving speakers, I negotiated somewhere in the middle because I thought the 'rule book' did not include my rules and "the truth is that different standards are applied to (publicly visible) women" (Clark, 1994a:1).

At the same time it was not simply because we were afraid of making fools of ourselves.

> *I make a fool of myself all the time, in front of the board, in front of the staff - and I'm the first person to laugh at myself. I'm not at all concerned at what others think providing I believe I'm doing the best possible job and I'm convinced that the school is better off because of it.*

There appeared to be an important link between the way we felt other might perceive us, the public assessment that Gilligan discusses, and our own inability to assess this in relation to the effect it might be having on the school. We were not, after all, doing it for our own gratification or needs. We were doing it for the benefit of the school. In the other situations where we enacted the public responsibilities, we had some measurable outcomes against which we could judge our success. Some examples given by the chairwomen included a child returned to school under a behaviour contract, the City Council granting permission to build a marae, the Ministry of Education

agreeing to fund some property maintenance, and a sponsor donating an annual scholarship for students. In this public speaking task, however, we were reliant on the expressed judgement of others, or the lack of it, as our means of evaluation. Even when this was positive, it was expressed in terms of how well **we** had 'done', rather than any mention of how beneficial it had been to the **school.** The closest any of us got to an expressed benefit for the school was encapsulated in the following insight that one of the chairwomen had-

> *At our school all the annual occasions are part of many years of tradition and this is one of the special things about our school. We are all committed to keeping the traditions going and one of my parts in keeping that going is to do the speaking thing when it is necessary. Whether I like it or not doesn't count, it's part of what is important for our school.*

This would indicate that not only do we not have the rules (Regan and Brooks, 1992:22) to guide us in the public sphere, and not only are the current rules not always appropriate to the ways we want to operate, but we do not even see the purpose or value of the exercise. For us to value such an exercise, we need to believe that the school benefits in some way.

Being a role model

Very closely linked to the previous issue of performing public responsibilities is that of being a role model. By being a role model, we were talking about *being in a position of major responsibility - where the buck stops- and knowing the staff and students would watch how I behaved.*

This issue was not one that was discussed frequently by the chairwomen, but we were all aware of our presence in the school as a leader. We were also aware of the lack of women on secondary boards and of the few who get to be chairwomen. Only one of the schools had ever had a woman as its chairperson, although two had had a woman as principal. At no stage in any of the transcripts, however, is the word 'token' used as it is often in the literature (Shakeshaft, 1987:198). While most of us were in a gender minority on our board, we did not feel like a 'token'. Rather, we were confident that we had been elected the chairperson because of what our fellow trustees perceived our qualities and abilities to be.

The history of five of the schools is probably the norm and was demonstrated by the photos in one of the board rooms of the past boards of governors and trustees. There was one woman in each of the photos (one photo had two) but all the rest of the participants were men in white shirts, ties and dark suits. The chairperson was always a man and the one woman was the secretary. In describing in a similar way the pictorial matter in schools, Abigail says that-

> In general women are not seen at all, and that if they do appear it is as typists, nurses and librarians. What is more, the research showed that the sexism conveyed in language and pictorial matter is simply not noticed by the majority of staff. (Abigail, 1983:11)

This is supported by Alton-Lee and Densem (1992:218) who conclude that the "simple assumption that women in senior staff positions provide role models for children may be unwarranted".

Chase and Bell (1990:173) argue that, because there are so few women leaders in such positions, their actions are "particularly visible and readily scrutinised". There is no evidence in the data of our being regarded as role models, but this could simply be an outcome of the research design. The views of students and staff were not canvassed.

All the chairwomen mentioned, at some stage, an awareness of our personal appearance while we were in the school and our wish to *dress well*. This meant wearing clothes that would be expected of a professional or business person.

We were more aware of the desirability of role-modelling behaviours and attitudes such as *respect, honesty, fairness, caring and openness*. As women leaders, we were aware of our possible impact on the women students and staff more than on the other trustees.

> *I would like to think that the students that I had dealings with, whether in the good or bad range, felt good about our interaction. I tried to put up a good stance so that (people see) that a woman can be a leader in a big position like that and have men around her without being scared of them and hold her head high. I didn't bounce around or make a big thing of it. I would like to think that the energy I had and the presence I portrayed was one people could feel good about.*

At the same time as being aware of being a role model for women and girls, we all felt a responsibility to be a role model for **all** of the people that 'being a leader' put us

in touch with. We were all very aware of being an elected representative and of the obligations this placed on us to ensure the people who had elected us felt satisfied by the way we enacted our trustee position.

Bronwyn Davies, with her post-structuralist 'viewpoint', brings quite a different way of thinking about how students and staff might interpret the presence of one woman in high-status positions in schools.

> Of course the absence of women in high status positions is an observable part of the inequitable social structure, and children are highly observant and pick up the details of the way inequity is done, as the basis of their understanding of the way the world 'really is'..... One woman, who is the exception, is probably, as far as the child can see, someone who has got her gender relations wrong- which of course she has- since the symbolic order which defines how men and women ought to be has not changed. Even though that particular woman may find herself more often than previously in a powerful position in relation to others, the struggles that she will daily undergo to survive as a woman *and* as a person with power, will mean that one or other of these will continually be compromised as she juggles her contradictory subject positionings. (Davies, 1989:4)

This juggling of contradictory subject positionings was something that we did all experience and examples are discussed in this chapter in the following section that deals with expectations that some other people had of us and how they thought we should or should not behave in the leadership position, and other positionings. Overall, the struggles arose more often in our private and family lives than they did in our leadership position.

Family support

This issue, and the following issue of discrimination/domination, arose for the chairwomen, not as an automatic requirement or consequence of holding the position of chairperson, but because of the expectations and attitudes held by other people towards their being in the position.

Most literature in the area of women in management and leadership tends to assume "dual careers"[33] plus children as the combination. In this study, the women have

[33] Ellis and Wheeler (1991:159) define "dual career" couples as "two persons engaging in a life-style in which each individual pursues a separate career along with a committed love relationship".

that "dual career" as well as the added position of chairperson of the board, with all that that entails. Many of the dilemmas faced by busy women juggling many subject positions that are described in the literature do apply to our situation. As mentioned in the discussion on time management, it tends to be the woman in a relationship who is expected to at least have control over the running of the household. She is also expected to take the primary responsibility for the children.

> Clearly many married women are not getting the required emotional and domestic support from their partner that their male colleagues take for granted. (Ellis and Wheeler, 1991:158)

The women in this study described major differences in the attitudes of husbands towards their being chairwomen. Each of the women saw it as her personal right to take the decision to be a chairwoman and none of us had 'asked permission' of our husbands before we took it on.

> The central feminist issue here relates to the wish that women have to be, and to be recognised as having existence in their own right, as human, not the negative powerless side of a duo, not nothing. (Davies, 1989:9)

However, three of the husbands were unhappy to some extent. The ways that this unhappiness manifested itself ranged from open anger and arguments through to a disapproval that could be sensed.

> *He never comes to anything at the school. I never thought he would be like this. He has been on all sorts of committees for years. He spent about four years going up and down between Auckland and Wellington. It was all right when I went on the board. It is only since I have been chairman*[34] *that I have been criticised. I have been surprised that he has reacted very badly. He is full of criticism of what we are doing.*
>
> *I always felt I was doing it without his full approval. I was doing it because I chose to do it and other things were suffering because of it.*
>
> *My husband has never supported me in board work. He just doesn't want to know about it. They wanted him to sit on stage with me and I said, "It is my first public speech" but he said "NO. I'll be somewhere in the audience".*

[34] This woman always referred to herself as a chairman. She felt that the word 'chairman' was descriptive of a position and was not in any way demeaning of a woman who might hold the position. The views of the women varied greatly on this issue.

> *He got up on stage once with me.....and he never did it again. It's quite normal for a wife to accompany a husband to things. It's accepted for her to be a decoration on the side but when it is the other way around, they can't take it. I think that is my situation.*

Daniels (1988:220) seemed to understand how it feels to be in these women's shoes when she said-

> Actions through which women assert that they can act outside of this duality, that they can have personhood in their own right, meet almost inevitably with incomprehension or with anger, though the anger often erupts from a psychic rather than a 'rational' existence .

The situation for the other three chairwomen was totally different. Their husbands were not only actively supportive of the work itself but were happy to take over many of the family responsibilities in order to give the women time for the school work and were proud of the role their wives played. Two of the women explained -

> *They (the family) have grown up with me like this all the time. My husband has always been interested. He doesn't try to stop me. It would be stupid for him to try to stop me. He comes to prizegivings and goes on stage. Last night we had our staff Christmas ball and he came. I think he is more worried about what I am going to do with my time next year (after finishing on the board).*

> *He has never known anything different because when we met we had both finished our degrees and we were both established in our careers. I was already a company director and it was that relationship from the beginning. He has never known any different. That was the 'me' that he married.*

We chairwomen had all "been socialised into the 'cult of domesticity'" (James and Saville-Smith, 1989; Court, 1991), as had our husbands (Daniels, 1988:220). Although other experiences, ways of being, and ways of understanding things, had impacted on our lives, we were aware of the powerful influence of our families (Middleton, 1988:190) and 'kiwi culture' on the lifestyles we had chosen.

> Although there has been in New Zealand a widely held accepted belief in equal opportunities for all, this has existed alongside a belief that women are naturally suited to being wives and mothers, with the latter being their primary roles. (Court, 1994:5)

One of the clues to understanding the difference in the attitudes of the husbands lies in the words of the last cited chairwoman's verbatim. Two of the very supportive husbands had each formed their relationship with their partner on the basis that she already was actively involved in public leadership positions. For the women whose husbands resented their being chairwomen, this had not been the case. They had each accepted this leadership positioning at a later stage of their relationship with their husband and it was a new experience for the husband to see his wife in that position. It appeared to be the public parts of acting in the position that these husbands found the most difficulty watching and/or participating in. The women were shifting the boundaries of their own subjectivities and their husbands were uncomfortable with this. One chairwoman, who had not been publicly active before, was changing her own subjectivity to incorporate what she perceived to be the requirements of the chairperson subject position, and had a supportive husband who was happy to encourage her as she grew in the role. She explained -

> *When I go to the College at the end of the year, my biggest bug-bear is addressing the senior assembly. It's getting better. My speech is longer than 30 seconds now. I always ask him to go down the back so I can sight him because he will not sit on the stage, and he will support me like that.*

For three, however, this kind of support was not there and they had to find ways to continue doing what they wanted to do without it causing too much conflict.

> *I just juggled everything. I knew that the thing that most annoyed my husband was if the evening meal was late, so I would always organise that, even if it meant that someone else would cook. It was generally the little things that brought tension into the occasion. I just constantly sorted and got them right so that they didn't.*

Frisby and Brown found the same concerns in their study of women leisure service managers.

> Women are still largely responsible for the majority of household activities in addition to the demands of their jobs. Many of the married women said they have tried to get their husbands to contribute more and that they do take on some tasks regularly, but it is still the women who have to get

> things organised. Several women said they have 'given up' trying to get their spouse to share more because it creates too much marital strife. (Frisby and Brown, 1991:313)

Two women in Cameron's study 'blamed' their sport leadership involvement for the ending of their relationships (Cameron, 1994:41) and several others discussed the strain on their relationships because of it. One of the chairwomen, after *a particularly bad session at home* considered resigning from the board, but her fellow trustees talked her out of it. A more frequent way of managing the situation in order to avoid conflict was *not to talk about it (board matters).* Women in Daniels' study said they had learned to "successfully ignore their husband's disinterest" (Daniels, 1988:40). Research on the support given by husbands is mixed, but Shakeshaft (1987:108) found that "*all* respondents underscored the importance of husbands, partners, and other family members in allowing them to continue to succeed, even in the face of other barriers".

Husbands were not the only family members who challenged the women. Although it was uncommon, the teenage children occasionally resented their mother not being *on hand* when it suited them. These were not challenges to the mother as chairperson but rather, to what their children saw as her lack of availability, and to the expectations the women had of their children regarding household chores.

> *(daughter) took great delight in telling people how mean I was. Nobody else (in the daughter's view) had to go home and do housework while their mother was at the school in meetings. I thought that other parents work and their kids go home to help but she felt most hard done by.*

This was probably a normal teenage challenge to a parent but, when any such thing happened, the women felt uncomfortable about it and it added one more challenge to an already pressured life. In some instances the 'concern' was a feeling of guilt that the family was, in some way, 'paying a price' for our involvement (Morrison et al, 1992:19/113).

> *When our relationship was in some difficulty, I felt inordinately guilty that I had absolutely overdone the amount of time I had spent on board matters. When I look back that was rubbish. No one suffered. I was just struggling with everything and the board wasn't the real problem.*

We talked about why we might feel concerned or guilty and went back to our perceptions of how we had been positioned, and had positioned ourselves, as mother and wife.

> *I had a job and career but the number one thing for me in those days was that you got married and had a family and were a mother. It was still a pretty traditional role and my parents are still very happily married. I grew up in that kind of environment and those were my expectations.*

Four of the women went into their marriages with this view of life but their perceptions and their positioning of themselves changed as they gained confidence from new experiences in organisations such as Playcentre and Kindergarten.

> *I grew in my role in Playcentre to the point where I was on the Federation Executive and I grew into that as I grew as a person. The manager of my work at the time said he could not believe how much I had grown in skills and many other things. Maybe I was just letting loose. It was an evolutionary process through to the board. It was a combination of that and the fact that my children were more independent then and didn't need me so much. I felt sufficiently free to do the other things. To go on and do them more and generally getting more confidence I suppose.*

This sense of an evolving subjectivity was as new for each of the women as it was for their husbands. The women, however, were developing from choice and enjoying the experience. For three of the husbands, these were changes that were being forced on them and were changes that they did not like. The last straw appeared to be the public demonstration of the changes in the acting-out of the chairperson's position.

Discrimination and/or domination

The first time we discussed whether or not we were discriminated against as women in our role as chairwomen we all felt that, at that point in time, this was not an issue for us. However, my own words from one of the later groups tell a different story:

> ***When we started off we all said we had had a good run really, not having had trouble with the way we are treated by men or by their expectations, but the more we talked the more examples we came up with.***

Court (1989b:34) and Shakeshaft discussed such denial-

> Women often experience, but deny, sex discrimination. Erickson found that the denial of discrimination is a survival mechanism.....A number of studies document barriers to women that at first don't seem to indicate sex discrimination; however a second look leads us to prior practices or conditions that hurt only women and not men. (Shakeshaft, 1987:106)

Some of the instances of discrimination we did experience related to interactions with individual men and these men were in the middle to older age groups.

> *He has got a real problem with women which is well known. Since he has arrived at the school, he has employed a ratio of men to women at something like 5 to 1. He has not employed a woman for two years.*

> *He has a definite problem with women and he lets it show. He is arrogant and ignorant. He lays down the law....It is his manner more than anything else. I guess he feels intimidated on the board because he probably feels his own ignorance but it comes through as hate.*

Other studies have noted the tendency for older men to 'resist' or 'block' attempts at change by women leaders (Neville, 1988; Court, 1992:189; Cameron, 1994:54).

At other times, rather than it being an individual causing difficulties, it was the whole male dominated board of trustees. The discrimination could happen in subtle and covert ways or in overtly patronising or aggressive ways.

> *In the early days I had a real battle because I was the only woman on the board and I thought that wasn't how it should be. The men were quite chauvinistic and red-necked when I look back and I had some almost stand up battles at board meetings in an attempt to have women co-opted. They used to say "there is no difference" and "people are people".*

> *When I first went on the board I couldn't believe the patronising attitudes. There was one other woman and myself. She was relatively strong and I can recall meetings when we both stood up and told them to stop patronising us. It was awful. It was just terrible when I look back. They wouldn't take us seriously and that was hard.*

Other times it was the wider school environment that positioned women in ways that they felt oppressed by.

> *When I (the principal) first came here (to the school) it looked like Colditz castle and felt like it. There was a dominant maleness about it and power was seen as a male domain. She (the chairwoman) was up against it. A lot of the power that was, and still is, wielded in the school was by some fairly strong and aggressive males. That hasn't phased her at all and she has got past that.*
>
> *They have got in the staff room what they call the "men's corner" and no-one goes there except these men that have sat there for years and years.*

Each of the examples spoken about in the group was followed by a description of the strategies used by the particular woman to change what she perceived as an unacceptable situation. After articulating the "men's corner" example, the chairwoman said:

> *We used to go and sit there at lunch time. They sort of stalk around you for ages. You have taken one of their chairs and how dare you. There are about half a dozen other chairs in the same proximity but no; **she** is sitting in **my** chair. They wouldn't know what to do. I would sit down and start to talk to them and you could see them relax a bit.*

Other examples demonstrated that it sometimes had taken a number of years to change the group values and ways of operating. One man had come *an enormous distance in six years.* One chairwomen reported that *it (respecting women's views) didn't come easy,* and that *it took a few years to sort out.*

The women expressed feelings of frustration and sometimes anger at what happened to them, but also determination to change the behaviour.

> *There were difficulties caused by the males who treated support staff and women like second-class citizens. I had it both ways (as a staff representative). I fought long and hard and they treated me terribly. They made me leave meetings. In the early stages I did not know enough to be stroppy and, even when I became stroppy, they closed the meeting down when I refused to leave. Since I have had more say (as chairwoman) things have changed and I have made sure they are well looked after.*

In all of the instances discussed by us during the action groups, we did not remain passive but, rather, acted as change agents at differing levels; with individuals, with the board, and with the school.

The exceptions to this were culturally-related instances. All the chairwomen were at times unable to fulfil a leadership role that a previous chairman had fulfilled because of their gender. As women, at powhiri, we were not given speaking rights which, as one of the principals said, *her male counterpart on the last board had.* Middleton (1993:32) points out that "in such settings, Western feminism and anti-racism/biculturalism come into conflict". Our knowledge of, and attitudes towards, tikanga Maori varied but most of us understood Maori protocol enough to know and accept, as Pakeha women, a different role in a ceremonial occasion. There were examples of instances, however, in which some of the chairwomen felt challenged in their legitimate leadership role, outside of formal Maori situations, merely because of their gender. For example, one said-

> *The only time I felt discriminated against was by the whanau. I don't think they would deal with any woman anyway. In that leadership role I don't think they were overly happy with me.*

This was validated by her principal's observations.

> ******** was seen by **** (the Maori BOT representative) as the enemy as it were. That affected every meeting. She handled it very professionally and very graciously. If he said those sorts of things to me it would have been very different. I think she did very well under provocation in very difficult circumstances that weren't of her making. I think she gained an enormous amount of respect for that. He is so entrenched in his attitudes that this is what women do and don't do. He represents all the things that feminism was invented for.*

Frisby and Brown (1991:306) report that "problems emerged when the women (leaders) dealt with some ethnic community groups which have traditional attitudes towards women's roles". On formal Maori occasions the chairwomen accepted the role ascribed to them by Tangata Whenua and did not have any wish to change it. On the non-Maori occasions, when Maori people were involved, the chairwomen tended to feel powerless to attempt to change things and either ignored the discomfort or paid a quiet personal price. There were specific reasons given in each instance as to why the sexist behaviour had not been challenged such as, *there were lots of them and only one of me; I thought his attitudes were so entrenched that I would be wasting my time to make an issue of it;*

and *I knew everyone else could see it for what it was and I didn't want to cause an even bigger problem by saying something.* The anti-racism/biculturalism discourse was taking precedence over the sexism discourse because the chairwomen felt there were bigger issues at stake for their schools. The support of the Maori community was regarded as important in the schools with significant numbers of Maori students and it was often difficult to get Maori representation on the board of trustees. In some instances it was judged to be worth putting up with personal discrimination, in order to retain the support that would benefit the school.

These were the exceptions, however, and as described earlier, the women took deliberate action over a long period of time to change discriminatory behaviour. There were hints from our childhood experiences of where the determination had come from to change these things in our adult world. Most of the women had experienced being dominated by some significant person or people in their childhood.

> *There was a war between them (older brother and sister) and me and my younger sister. We were like two sub groups. We were quite distinctly kept apart. We were the little girls and they were the big ones. Even when I was at high school I was one of the little ones. In a way I was kept in that younger position.*
>
> *My parents had strong views on things and I can remember questioning something and I was jumped on. So the idea of having thoughts of your own was not encouraged and that is part of being a leader. I didn't think it unusual at the time but it had a dominating effect on me.*
>
> *********** was a very conservative girls' school. It was absolutely dominated by a headmistress. Looking back it was a terrible school. We really felt we were not respected as people with ideas that mattered.*
>
> *My father was 'the boss' in our home and what he said went. There were times that I was furious with our mother for going along with it when she knew he was wrong. It made me very determined to make sure I never had to put up with that sort of situation again.*

In these positions we were relatively powerless at that time to do anything about the situation but we had not forgotten the effect it had had on our lives at the time and it had helped to build the determination and strength to change things in our current situations. We were aware of the historical domination of women and could see how, in our current context, the domination that Weedon describes still has an impact.

> Gender relations, so far as we have been able to understand them have been (more or less) relations of domination- that is, gender relations have been (more) defined and (imperfectly) controlled by one of their interrelated aspects - the man. (Weedon, 1987b:309)

One of the women still felt dominated by her husband inside their home (Court, 1989b:4) but she did not let this stop her doing what she wanted to outside the home.

Unlike many women career leaders, we did not have to "win authority and the right to lead" (Court, 1992:189) because we were elected by our fellow trustees to do exactly that. Rarely, if ever, did any of us experience the types of overt discrimination, such as patronising verbal abuse, described by some writers (ibid; Miles, 1985:144; Shakeshaft, 1987:96; Cameron, 1994:54). Most of our battles were more subtle and harder to identify specifically as discrimination, since the issues were often presented in other guises. This, in part, explains why the chairwomen did not immediately identify the instances as discriminatory. Because of their covert nature, they were more difficult to deal with.

Time management

This is one of two issues identified by the chairwomen which were not a direct result of the demands of the position itself, or pressures put on us by other people. The issues of managing our time and of paying a personal price were a result of the priorities each of us set, the decisions we made and the ways we chose to juggle and negotiate the subject positions we took up. The difficulties that the chairwomen experienced in order to find time to participate in this research have been discussed briefly in the methodology chapter. The chairwomen all had careers of many years standing. Two of us worked part time, although this 'part' was significant and comprised at least two thirds of a full time position. The rest of us worked full time, although all of us had the autonomy in our work situation to allow us to visit the school at almost any time. In practice, the school work took a significant amount of time from our career work. Since we were in positions where our income was directly linked to the work we did, there was no ethical dilemma about our taking the time out. It was our choice and our financial loss.

On top of our career work, we were all married and had teenage children attending school, so we had husbands and family to care for as well as a family home to run. The literature frequently highlights the fact that it is the norm, rather than the exception, that it is the woman in a relationship who takes the responsibility for household tasks (O'Neill, 1992:41; Morrison et al, 1992:17). A New Zealand survey (NZPA, 1995:16) conducted in 1994 indicated that this is still the reality.

Like the women leaders in other New Zealand studies (Neville, 1988; Cameron, 1994), our lives were incredibly full. Most of us were involved also in the community in a number of organisations and/or neighbourly activities and obligations.

> The concept of the 'dual-career syndrome' has become somewhat inadequate, and the term 'multi-committed woman' is a more suitable description of many successful career women. (Neville, 1988:58)

We each had interests and hobbies that we enjoyed, although during the time as chairwomen we found that these tended to be the things that were the first to be sacrificed. Being highly organised about what we did do was important and we agreed with the writers (Cameron, 1991:47; Treleaven, 1993:3; Court, 1994b:16) who have noted the experience that many women have through a need to "juggle family and career roles" (Acker, 1989:40) as being an "excellent school for managers" (Helgesen, 1990:31).

> *Being a mother of small children and working or studying at the same time prepares you brilliantly for managing your time. There are always about twenty things happening at once. I used to use the time I was driving the car, or even when I was on the toilet, to plan ahead and do lots of the working out of which order to do things in. In the house I would have three of four tasks on the go at the same time. I learned to quickly switch from one to the other and to plan ahead well by thinking out all the possibilities. It is a perfect training ground for a management role.*

Because meetings were often in the evening, a 'typical' day might begin at 6:30 and go through without stopping until 9:00 or even 10 p.m. A board meeting evening would often be later.

Unlike the women in some studies (Morrison et al, 1992:115), the chairwomen did not "feel pressure to conform to one role or another, without the freedom to

combine them". We found ourselves negotiating the demands of various subject positions (chairperson, woman, mother, professional, etc.) but accepted this as a reality that we had chosen and made no attempt to keep them separate. For example, we might phone home during a meeting to check on our family, we might talk at a board meeting about how a woman's response may feel and we might take work time to complete a school task. This way of being was described by the women corporate managers in Morrison's study as 'switching' and was felt as a strain by them (ibid). In contrast, it was a regular part of the way we chairwomen organised our lives and brought the sense of 'wholeness' observed by Marshall (1984:113) and by Court (1989b:152) in their work with women leaders.

O'Neill points out contradictions between a woman's intellectuality and her reproductive sexuality and says that "in one sense, women's association with the home is irrational, in another it is necessary and eternal" (O'Neill, 1992:49). We saw our home and families as integral and important parts of our lives and subjectivities, our sense of who we are as individuals. We each gave these aspects high priority. As with the woman administrators in Neville's study we each believed it could be said of us that "despite this very busy life her personal and family life is not neglected, she has a sense of balance and control" (Neville, 1988:148). We would probably go as far as to say we "successfully balance(d) work, family and personal commitments" (Ellis and Wheeler, 1991:158) if 'personal commitments' were taken to be the school trustee work.

Personal cost

As discussed in the previous section, the women were very busy people trying to juggle the competing demands of the various subject positions they occupied. Enacting the subject position of chairperson, the way these women chose to fulfil it, was very demanding of time. The total number of hours in a week was not counted but we estimate it to have been between six and twelve in an average week. There were some weeks when we would have spent more time in the school than in our own career job, or with our families. As well as the total number of hours, the urgency of dealing with some situations meant that we had to drop everything else and deal with the school issue immediately.

> *I have made myself too available. You say 'for emergencies' but everything is an emergency one way or another, or it sounds like it when they ring you up*

We have no measure of the hours and effort that other secondary board chairpersons put into the job but the experiences of each of the six of us were very similar. Some researchers (Daniels, 1988:202; Cameron, 1994:37) discuss the importance of putting a price on the voluntary hours and also note that many expenses are carried by the volunteer as part of the work. Cameron and Daniels mention that women are "ambivalent about setting a price tag equivalent to their service" and are often reluctant to ask for reimbursement of expenses (Daniels, 1988:203). We agreed that it was often the case that we did not ask to be reimbursed for small expenses for either of two reasons: because it seemed petty to ask for small amounts or because we were so aware of the financial needs of our schools that we regarded these small amounts as donations.

Because, for three of us, our income was directly related to the hours we put into our work, the cost in time was also a cost in dollars.

> *I am self-employed and I know that any time at school is time that I am not there at the end of the phone. The time being on the board has cost me bickies.....so I know that in the future I am going to be a bit greedy.*

Cameron found the same thing happening for the self employed women in her study. "It is not just that they are not getting paid, but that it is actually reducing regular income" (Cameron, 1994:30). This was not something that any of us were concerned about because, again, we regarded it as a donation and as part of doing a job well. It was, however, something we were aware of and it was also something that others were aware of, as one of the principals outlined-

> *Her involvement? Well I couldn't ask for more and I am embarrassed at times by her generosity. She will also put personal money into the school. A lot of that is in terms of taking time off work to be here. You tell her off for doing it but it doesn't make a scrap of difference, she still does it. I feel the school owes her a tremendous debt. Her involvement shouldn't be more and in some ways it should be less. It will be a hard act for anyone to follow.*

The principals commented on the accessibility of their chairwomen and as the election time drew nearer for the women who had said they were standing down, others on the board became aware of the extent of the role and the need to find someone willing to take it over. Comments such as *she will be a hard act to follow,* and *the shoes are just too big* related to more than merely the accessibility, but the amount of time that was spent for the school was one of the factors that were considered.

> *I think one of the reasons that ***** was anxious about taking the job is because he looked at me and saw what I did. I said, "People do the job in their own way". He said he would only do it if I would help for the next year.*

The time and effort were factors that, to some extent, were under our own control and we chose to work at that pace. It was not inefficient or careless use of time. It was time used effectively to *do the job well.* We all felt that we had a tendency to be perfectionists in all aspects of our lives and that we always saw through any responsibility we took on to the best of our abilities.

A price we probably did not predict and one which, at times, took a toll on each of us was the emotional stress and pressure. Frisby and Brown found that over half of the women leaders in their study reported encountering stress and health problems and they put it down to "the many demands on them as they attempt to balance their personal and professional lives" (Frisby and Brown, 1991:316). In the discussion on family support[35] the pressure of negotiating husband's responses with the demands of the subject position is discussed. Apart from these pressures, and while we were all acutely aware of such demands, this was not a reason given by the chairwomen as a cause of stress or health problems. Examples of stressful times for the chairwomen included the death of staff members, suicide of a student, physical assault on a teacher by a student, and assaults on students. One of the women described one stressful situation-

> *There were two things I learned when our caretaker dropped dead at the school. If people are so shocked they are like stunned mullets, you (have to) tell them in a nice slow loud voice what to do and they will do it. The second thing I learned was how to get in touch with the coroner because I*

[35] See chapter six, section three.

> *had to track down the body and get the keys off it so we could lock and unlock the place.*

There were many times during the discipline hearings that we had to listen and deal with some tragic family situations and very emotional family members. The decision to expel a student always weighed heavily on our emotions and in the course of our 'duties' as chairperson we were sometimes verbally abused and physically threatened.

> *One time I was told that he (a father) would make sure I would live to regret ever hearing his name; but the worst one I had was a father who very proudly told all of us that he had taught his son to fight like that (a serious unprovoked physical assault) and he was going to stand outside the door and wait until I came out and show me.*

We knew that such attacks and pressures were just part of the job, and were not directed at us personally or because we were women. There were several instances when our male principals had received similar abuse or threats. There were, however, times that each of us, temporarily, wondered whether it was worth it.

> *I found that (the verbal attack and criticism) very difficult. I felt like standing up and telling them that we are just parents and we don't get paid for this. They should help their own child and not just expect us to come up with all the answers. I felt like saying "None of us want to be here. I should be home cooking dinner for my own family".*

In many ways, our greatest costs were to our own personal leisure time and interests (Neville, 1988:77, Cameron, 1994:37). The lack of sleep and rest (ibid), and lack of time to socialise (Frisby and Brown, 1991:316) were things we all noticed.

> *I don't remember the last time that I sat down and read a book or did my sewing or just put my feet up. The thought of a sleep in has often been attractive when I knew I was going in to school for a workshop or to do the annual budget. I'm not moaning because I am choosing to do what I do but it will be nice when it happens again.*

They were 'costs' in the sense of our going without them but it was a price that was willingly 'paid' by us all. The reasons for this are discussed more fully in the next chapter on motivation.

Self confidence

This final issue is the most difficult to understand and one which was an area of difference amongst the chairwomen. Unlike the other issues discussed in this chapter, it was hard to pinpoint the source of or reasons for the lack of confidence.

One of the women, at the early stages of both the action group and her chairing, was very lacking in confidence.

> *I was asked to be it (chair) by the principal and I wasn't at all keen to do it. I don't see myself as that sort of person. I'm happy enough to be on committees but I'm not a good leader of other people. You should be endeavouring to do things like that but I feel inadequate or not competent for it. I wish I could have started off in a lesser organisation where being a chairperson wasn't quite so important, and got some experience at it.*

Some writers have suggested a significant gender difference in levels of self confidence (Chaganti, 1986[36]) and others have put forward the lack of self confidence and low self image as internal barriers that prevent women seeking leadership positions (Schmuck, 1976, cited in Shakeshaft 1987:84; Cameron, 1994:50). One of Helgesen's women leaders said that women need help to build their confidence and that "it often takes women ten years longer than men to realise how good they really are" (Helgesen, 1990:163). Such essentialist assertions are not supported by this study.

Two of the chairwomen did feel confident about all the aspects of the position and felt that this personal self confidence helped them to support others to be confident. De Crane describes this insight and explains what he sees as the reasons behind this-

> Self confidence in a leader also helps that individual to have confidence in, and support the advancement of, the people in his or her organisation.....self confident leaders are not threatened by the success of others in the organisation. They are quick and genuine with their praise for others' successes and don't waste energy worrying about their status or that of their peers in the organisation. (De Crane, in Hesselbein et al, 1996:255)

[36] Cited in a discussion on gender differences in Campbell,1992:275)

While there is evidence in this study of most of the things that De Crane describes, they apply to **all** the chairwomen and do not help to explain the differences in the levels of confidence among the women.

The other three women felt relatively confident with most aspects, but two had difficulties with the public speaking requirements of the position. Shakeshaft points out that women may have self confidence in 'private sphere functions' but have not been allowed to participate in 'public sphere functions' -

> We have not studied self confidence through the eyes of women but rather have forced women to be measured by male-defined standards of self confidence. Thus it is not clear whether women have less self-confidence or if they only have less self-confidence in areas in which they are traditionally thought not to excel. (Shakeshaft, 1987:84)

> What we all agreed on was that confidence comes with experience.
>
> *I think that anyone that has to get up and speak, when they don't do it very often, goes through a nervous trauma. I have had to do a lot over the years and it reached a stage where it was very comfortable. It was getting to the stage that was hard, and after that I was fine. I don't think it has anything to do with being a woman. I think it's a nervous ordinary thing that most people go through.*

This supports Shakeshaft's view that -

> It might be argued that any human will have lower self-confidence in areas where he or she is not experienced than would an individual who has experience. Low self-confidence might be viewed, then, as a product of a system that keeps women separated from experiences that would help build confidence in the public sphere. (ibid)

This would seem to be leading to a tidy conclusion, were it not for the chairwoman who was self-confident in all aspects of being a leader. She had the experiences that some writers have associated with having confidence. She was experienced as a leader and professional in administrative situations (Shakeshaft, 1987:130), and had a history of salaried work experience (Daniels, 1988:61). Yet she was having great difficulty and experiencing a loss of self confidence in handling conflict with the principal. It was clear to the other chairwomen that this particular woman had highly developed communication skills and was doing a superb job of working through a very difficult

situation. While we could all understand her frustration and sense of powerlessness, we could not see a reason for her loss of confidence. We had all demonstrated ourselves capable of taking action and of making major decisions when appropriate[37]. At the same time we could each identify situations in which we had experienced similar self doubts. Code differentiates between *authoritarian* knowers and *authoritative* knowers.

> An authoritative knower is often diffident about his or her degree of expertise, fallibilist, and prepared to reconsider or even to reserve judgement. Authoritarian knowers, who have more reason to be diffident, often are less so. (Code, 1992:185)

The chairwomen's ways of operating and feeling placed all of them clearly as authoritative knowers. As authoritative knowers, therefore, we would need to follow Nancy Badore's advice: "I don't think you can make a contribution until you've moved beyond wondering if you're good enough" (Helgesen, 1009:163). Court says that evaluation, reflection and an openness about one's limitations should not be confused with lack of self-esteem or lack of confidence (Court, 1989b:152). As the researcher in this study, with the benefit of the views of the principals, and the observations of the board meetings, it appeared to me that the chairwomen gave themselves less credit for their skills and abilities than did other people[38] and that we were often our own harshest critics. It appeared to me that this chairwoman had been so reflective and self critical that she had undermined her own self confidence. She had set herself a goal and because it had not been fully achieved to her satisfaction, she felt that she had failed her board and her school and it was this sense of failure that had caused the loss in confidence.

Considering the question as to why we differed so much in the area of confidence, it appears that confidence could not be measured in such a way that we each had a finite amount of it and that some of us had more than others. Although we were each acting within the subject position of chairperson our confidence varied according to each given situation, the goals or standards we each set for ourselves in that context,

---

[37] See the chapters on 'strength and determination' and 'accepting responsibility'.
[38] This is discussed further in the chapters on 'humility and self deprecation' and 'reflection and self evaluation'.

and the extent to which we judged we were achieving them. Experience of a given situation did help, but did not automatically result in increased confidence.

Many studies of women career leaders point to the importance of mentors and role models as sources of confidence (amongst other supportive benefits) (Frisby and Brown, 1991:303). This was not mentioned, at any stage of the study, by any of the chairwomen. When I asked about this, they had neither sought or received help from anyone they considered a 'mentor'. Miles, in her study of over forty powerful women leaders noted that the "vast majority" had not had mentors and that it was "hard to escape the conclusion that 'being mentored' may not be so important as it has been cracked up to be" (Miles, 1985:140). This discussion led to talk about the benefits of the action group. We agreed that participating in a group, and learning from and listening to the experiences of each other, had given us confidence.

> *The group was such a help to me. Just seeing other women who were successfully doing it. Some of the women were so confident and successful, well, they appeared to me to be doing things successfully. Just to hear them talking about how they handled things and so on, was a tremendous help to me.*

Conclusion

A glance at the chapter sub-headings could easily give the impression that this leadership experience was one filled with obstacles, personal difficulties and battles and the data have shown that, to an extent, this was the reality. It does not mean, however, that any of us regretted our experience as leaders or that we did not enjoy our time in the position. To the contrary. In spite of the difficulties, we all felt it had been a very rewarding and worthwhile time. Most of us would also describe it as enjoyable and one of the life experiences that we treasure.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Motivation

Introduction

The literature discusses ways in which women and men leaders are motivated differently. It notes that women are not likely to be motivated by money and career ladders (Shakeshaft, 1989:205); personal status and achievement (ibid:174); career aspirations, power and rewards (Still, cited in Pringle, 1987:111); or ego or power (Cameron, 1991:62). We are told that women career leaders put students first (Shakeshaft, 1987:174) and favour more people-oriented projects than do men. Literature[39] on women's career leadership discusses the frequency with which women leaders either choose not to marry and/or not to have children. It also discusses the importance of notions of 'career' paths, financial rewards and personality characteristics such as 'bossiness'.

It was listening to the chairwomen talk about what motivated them to become involved which first alerted me to the importance of the **voluntary** nature of trustee leadership. From the very earliest interactions of the chairwomen with each other, and from the interview data, it was clear that these women were not only filling a very different subject position (**voluntary** leader) but also that they were driven by some different motives. At the same time as being chairperson of the board, each of the women had her own independent career established and this career was very much part of each person's subjectivity, that is, how she viewed herself. The motives for the each of the chairwomen in taking on the trustee and leadership responsibility were different from those influencing them in their career positions: they were altruistic and primarily focussed on service.

> *Being a trustee and being chairperson, it's nothing to do with my job. It's what I do in my spare time because I love it. You often have that block with staff. I said at one meeting, "We don't do it for the money you know. We don't take any expenses. This is not part of our working careers. I do*

[39] Detailed in the literature review under the subheading of women's leadership

it because I am passionate about my local school. I love the area. I'd do anything for the area. Most of all I love the kids. Every last kid in that area is special.

This chapter explores, therefore, the altruistic and service motives of the women. It demonstrates how such a driving force had a profound effect on the ways in which the women led and also on the issues they perceived as priorities, some of which were discussed in the previous chapter.

Service

There are two main aspects to our desire to serve our local school. There is our acknowledgment of the importance of our local community to our lives and the obligation that we feel local people have to be active in their community. The women each had a history of being actively involved in their community in a range of organisations. This mirrors the "high degree of community involvement and/or visibility" that was a feature of the trustees elected at the beginning of Tomorrow's Schools (University of Waikato, 1990:11). One of the women in Middleton's study notes that "these qualities of deep social concern made them more dedicated to the job" (Middleton, 1989:60). Also, the awareness of having been elected by "a constituency" made us feel responsible to it (Marshall and Heller, 1983:32).

*I think another thing for me was that they felt I had an ear to the ground in my community and I did. It was a closer link for people. I know that ****** were happy that I was in the chair, that women out there are on the board. You see people at the supermarket and things. I know it sounds silly but I know most of the kids and their families.*

This is another channel that they (community people) can go through to solve their problems. (I wanted) to make people aware that there are good people in the community that are prepared to stand up and do a job.

What is interesting is that this feeling was obvious to others, as one principal described-

*She is very community minded. She has been involved in the ******** community for a long time now; she is involved in tennis and business here; she knows people and is trusted by people.....She had served on the Intermediate before that and because she knew something about it she decided to follow her daughter through the secondary system as well.*

The second aspect relates directly to providing a service to the school that the women's children attend. Cameron found this same reason given by the women leaders of sporting organisations (Cameron, 1994:17). Reciprocity is part of this motivation. Quotations almost identical to the one that follows, which was made by a principal, were made by both the principals and the chairwomen themselves.

> *She is doing a service for the school. She is that kind of person, she supports her kids and her motives have not been selfish. Her kids are getting something out of the school and she feels that she needs to put something in.*

There was also the wish to be in close contact with what was happening for our own children, to ensure that we had knowledge of the school and to be in a position to know that the school would continue to provide well for the children while they were attending.

> *Both my parents had a lot of influence in my life in different areas but they never got involved in the school and I used to hate that. Kids would have parents coming to the school. The kids that had parents on the committee were seen by the teachers as kids that were doing well and fitted in well. We were the riffraff from down the road. That has been one of my reasons for my involvement. I decided I was going to know what they were doing and that my children knew I was taking an interest in them.*

This interest and concern for the wellbeing of the education of our own children was transferred to the wellbeing of every child in the school.

> *I know we have to be responsible for finances and property and industrial relations and so on and so on, and I know all these things directly impact on a safe and happy school but the bits of the job I really love are the ones where you deal directly with the students. It's the prizegivings and the productions and the discipline hearings. It's working with the students on the subcommittees and listening to the feedback from the councils. If you can save one kid from being expelled or make their parents realise that they need to help. That's what makes you feel that all the rest of the work is worthwhile.*

None of the women were at all motivated by the need or wish to gain anything for themselves. We all **did** gain a great deal of satisfaction from many

outcomes that were achieved and the whole experience was part of our ongoing life-long learning, but none of us had sought the position of chairperson. Three of the women had to be actively persuaded to take on the role and were, initially, very reluctant to do so.

> *Then I got a huge nudge to be the chair because they were frightened that another guy was on his way to get the job and they wanted to get rid of him.*

In contrast, three of the women had had previous experience of chairing committees and were happy to take on the role because they believed, from their past experience, that they would be able leaders. Two of these women expressed to the group their belief that they would rather chair the board themselves than serve under other members who either had shown their incompetence or were believed not to be impartial on issues. Although she did not actively lobby, one of the three wanted to be the leader. Her principal said -

> *She is political. That is her thing. I don't think she would be content just to be a board member, she wants to be chairperson of the board. I think she has a vision for education, what she wants her children to be going through, and I think she thought that if she wants that, she has to make sure it happens.*

Even in this instance the motive was to achieve things for the school rather than the desire for personal status.

> *We weren't singularly seeking kudos. It was a group participation thing. I think there was another common denominator here (in the action group). It wasn't "I am here and I am boss and king of the pile". It was "I work on the board and I am one of the team on the board".*

In all instances, the women felt unthreatened at the thought of their board not re-electing them to the chair at each year's annual meeting[40]. We were also happy to move

[40] The Education Act that set up Tomorrow's Schools stipulates that each board of trustees, at its annual meeting, elects a person to 'preside' over board meetings. The School Trustees Association handbook describes this person as a 'chairperson'. Although the trustees are elected for a three year term, the chairperson is elected for a one year term.

on as soon as our own children were no longer at the school and to encourage and assist someone else to take over the role.

> *I will think I have done my time and it is good for new blood to get into the school. I put in 100% when I am there but when it's over I will put my 100% somewhere else.*

Daniels (1988:208) notes that women community leaders express the need, and even the desire, to move on, in the belief that this is good for both themselves and the organisation. The personal benefit comes from new challenges, new colleagues and friendships and interesting new situations. We all felt that our schools would benefit from the new ideas and energy that a new leader would bring and we believed that it was important for trustees to have their own children at the school.

Stephen Covey believes that all leaders should feel a responsibility to serve their community and that the leader of the future will be a leader in every area of life, including family life.

> The problem is that , on the whole, there has been a marked weakening of the responsibility that neighbourhoods, communities, churches, families and individuals feel towards volunteering. It has become too easy to absolve ourselves from this responsibility to our communities. I believe that it is a family responsibility and that everyone should have a sense of stewardship about the community--every man, every woman, and every child. There should be some real sense of stewardship around service. (Covey, 1996:158)

He identifies the need for leaders to ask themselves "Am I a *model* of this principle of service myself?" and "Does my family see me dedicating my time and abilities to serving them and the community?" (ibid). Many comments in the transcripts demonstrated that each of the chairwomen would have not only answered "yes", but also would have felt that Covey had accurately summed up her main motivating force.

Rewards

> Rosener notes the difference in rewards between career and volunteer leaders-
>
> Many women had their first work experiences outside the home as volunteers. While some of the challenges they faced as managers in volunteer organisations are the same as those in business, in many ways,

> leading volunteers is different because of the absence of concrete rewards like pay and promotion. (Rosener, 1990:124)

The chairwomen mentioned a wide range of things that gave them satisfaction. These included things such as *appointing good executive staff; watching the principal grow; appointing a business manager; watching the strategic plan implemented; seeing the board coming together; introduction of a senior uniform; and getting a good ERO audit.* It was because we experienced such outcomes that we felt the energy was worth spending.

> People who get involved in public causes often open themselves to frustration and disappointments, but.....those moments of making change happen for the better are among their lasting joys. There's something wonderfully rewarding in being part of an effort that does make a difference. (O'Connell, 1976:xii)

We all noted that there was little direct positive feedback when you are in the role.

> *I think there are times that you would like some affirmation that you are doing the right thing but people don't tend to give you that sort of encouragement until you leave.*

Small acknowledgments such as complimentary seats for the school play or musical were appreciated but the main satisfaction was from seeing people working well together and watching projects progress.

To be a change agent

The process of change in an institution is complex and the governance role brings a specific context to the process. Weedon notes -

> 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 serve hegemonic interests or challenge existing power relations. (Weedon, 1987:25)

This was an area where the chairwomen held differing views and enacted their position in different ways. Three of the women had some specific things that they

wanted to see changed but they were very keen to see that, overall, their school did **not** change. They had chosen that school for their children because of its traditions and ways of doing things and they worked hard to ensure that these were maintained. The following quotes express the views of two of the women-

> *I wanted to see the College get through the transformation into Tomorrow's Schools and to see that it went smoothly and that we blended into everything and that it was a reasonably smooth ride..... but history is very important to me so I wanted to see it remain.*
>
> *The conservatism (we want to uphold) is standards, standards of behaviour, dress and courtesy-- rather than saying that children must be in straight lines and all the rest of it, seen and not heard--we are not like that. We are conservative with traditional standards and values.*

One of the principals described how he felt about his chairwoman's strong need to retain the traditional ways of doing things.

> *I think she is a conservative. She values tradition..... I think she is a holder of standards and traditions. She is not obstructive when we bring ideas forward but she is a guard on not doing things too impulsively.*

Although they valued many aspects and wanted to ensure that these did not change, they did work towards changes, for instance, in the way the board operated and in some of the relationships within the school.

The other three women each valued many aspects of their schools but did have agendas for change. These agendas were quite different from each other and were specific to each individual woman and her particular school.

> *I was looking to change some of the traditions and the culture of the school. I wanted to keep the good things I was seeing but the principal didn't have good relationships with a lot of the staff.....and I wanted to change that. I especially set out to achieve biculturalism really. It was a deliberate plan of education. There were lots of others who wanted it also but the previous leadership had not, so it had to be driven from the top.*
>
> *One of my reasons for being on the board was that my son had left the school and he had had a really bad time there.....He brought a lot of it on himself so I am not blaming the school but..... I couldn't understand how this had gone on in the school for so long without someone being aware*

that it had happened so I wanted to make sure that things like that will not carry on at the school.

I sat on the board for years when we just fluffed around and no-one did anything except me. I just found it hopeless that we were never moving forward and we had a very conservative principal who wasn't going to move unless we made him.

Unlike most agents of change who work fully within an organisation, the chairwomen, and their fellow trustees, come from 'outside' of the organisation and are, therefore, less directly 'shaped' by the organisation than the people who work within it. The chairwomen, and the trustees, were both the 'authors' **and** the 'agents' of the governance changes. They were the 'authors' of the management changes, through the school policy writing, and the principal, and staff, became the 'agents' responsible for the implementation. In practice it was the principal, who is also a trustee, and often members of staff who were involved in policy development. Often the policies were developed to reflect current practice rather than to introduce change.

All the chairwomen were very aware of the need to approach change carefully, to be fully informed themselves, to keep others fully informed and involved, to allow time for ownership by stakeholders to occur, for the process to be transparent and for there to be genuine democracy. Court (1994c:46) called this 'nudging' people towards change, and said that it is a technique that "holds fewer risks of retaliation than more confrontational methods of demanding or imposing change. Many of the action group discussions centred around the **process** of achieving things and there was a strong awareness of the valuable outcomes that occur as a result of the process itself.

When we did our Charter we set up a big committee and had whole day workshops. We mapped out and worked our way through a plan that produced the Charter, but that was only one of the good things that came out of it. That group had had such a neat time that they became the committee that produced the policies. There were parents and staff, students, board people and the loyalty and enthusiasm that came out of their work lasted for years. We still call it our Charter committee and they still do all the policy reviewing and quite a lot of the school review stuff.

We each had instances when we did not achieve something we believed in and wanted. This was regarded by the chairwomen as normal, expected and totally appropriate.

> *I had some things that I was not happy with in the school and I thought that if you are not happy with something you should do something about it.....Once you are on the board you approach things with more insight and realise that you can't necessarily change things.....there were some I could help with.*
>
> *Because I am on the other side now I am aware of the process and how long it can take. You can't rush in there so you end up being the person that is the go between.....trying to smooth the water but also to ensure that through the board something is going to happen.*
>
> *There have been a few things that I would have liked to see happen but I got outvoted. Maybe some will happen in the long term and some probably never will. That's just part of working with a team.*

All of us made changes in the **ways** in which things were done. We felt that this was more important to achieve than were some of the more tangible goals.

> *I wanted to break down those old rules and have some sort of input into the high school. The men always seemed (in the past) to take over. I look at it now and the parents have far more access to the school than they did.*
>
> *If they would say that they (the old board) never used to do that, I would say "who cares". There was to be no comparison between the us and the old board, and they stopped talking about it because we didn't want to know.*

These are examples of what Weedon (1987:24) was talking about when she said that change might challenge existing power relations. There is evidence in the literature of women bringing "a different orientation and perspective to school boards" (Marshall and Heller, 1983:32). Specifically mentioned are changes to decision making processes, increasing public involvement, a shift in board interest from finance to curriculum and rejecting traditional definitions of management and governance. Examples of all of these were evident in the data. We all sought an inclusive method of decision making where every trustee was expected to contribute. This was in marked contrast to some of the 'rubber stamp' decision making that had taken place before our leadership. We had all

initiated a form of school review which involved getting feedback from the parents, and in some instances the students, rather than just working with the views of the staff and the board. There were several examples of 'job sharing'. One board rotated the role of 'chairperson' at the board meetings. Another encouraged two students to 'share' the position of student representative and supported the staff in doing the same with that of staff representative. The two former examples were initiated by the chairwomen and the latter was warmly encouraged after being suggested by two women staff members. All these examples contravene what is allowed by the Education Act, which states that the board will elect one person to preside over the meetings and says that one student and one staff representative will be elected. The chairwomen, and the boards, believed enough in what they were doing to continue, or at least find 'ways around' the Act even though their board was technically acting unconstitutionally. Court describes job sharing as "a useful step towards breaking down outmoded hierarchies through facilitating co-operation" (Court, 1994:18). As well as this, I saw it as both a practical way of sharing large workloads and a valuable means of getting more people actively involved in sharing responsibility. Davies, however, warns that-

> The difficulties of such changes should not be underestimated, since the structures created by the forms of practice that constitute them do have sufficient force to undermine the attempts of isolated individuals to change them. (Davies, 1989:8)

This proved to be true, even when it was a whole board and staff (rather than an isolated individual) that supported the changes. A report by the Education Review Office (the structure) required one of the schools to abide by the Act (the form of practice) and abolish the job shared positions. This board was warned that it had been acting unconstitutionally and its decisions could be overturned because they were invalid. The board decided to revert to the official procedure outlined in the Act and elect only one official representative, but in practice to continue having the two people share the position and both be paid as trustees. If voting was ever required, then only the officially elected person would record a vote.

While it is possible to look at each example and analyse the specific changes, probably more important was the overall slow attempts to change the 'culture' of the boards and the schools. Blackmore (1992:68) says that the presence of women should

significantly challenge and alter the values, culture and ethos of traditionally male dominated institutions which means changing the ways in which things are done as well as what is done. It means "changing the term of debate and the rules of the game" (Clark, 1994c:2). Prior to the chairwomen's elections, their schools and boards tended, to some extent, to reflect what Watson (1988b:101) describes as an education system that is "hierarchical, strictly regulated, male-dominated and conservative". Evidence in the data from the principals' comments, from the researcher's observations and from the comments made in the action groups, demonstrates that the chairwomen actively worked towards shared decision making, tapping into people's skills and knowledge, having women represented and respected and developing a climate in which (all) people were cared about and cared for. The following chapter on leadership style discusses this in detail.

Conclusion

This governance leadership, which impacted on the lives of many hundreds of students, teachers and parents, was a position that had enormous responsibilities and which we performed in our spare time. McDowell (1992:186) notes the increasing trend towards continuous employment for women, especially those with professional qualifications. We were either in a professional career, or running our own businesses, and managing our families as our first priorities. It was in those areas that we achieved job satisfaction, career advancement, financial security and the self fulfilment that goes with being loved as a wife and mother. There needed to be something else that motivated us to accept the tiredness, stress and responsibility that accompanied governing a large secondary school in our spare time and this motive was that of service to our children's school and our local community, and the knowledge that we were making a difference.

When career jobs fall into this realm of 'caring and servicing' they are likely to filled by women and are described by McDowell as "in the ghetto.....at the bottom of the occupational hierarchy"(McDowell, 1992:181). Although we did not discuss the importance of service in relation to careers, my impression is that the chairwomen would see it as a valid and rewarding **career** path as well as a powerful motivation for voluntary work.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Leadership style, attitudes and practices

Introduction

Having discussed the motives for being involved and the types of issues we became involved in, in this chapter I explore the particular attitudes, styles, and behaviours that characterised the ways the women took up their leadership position. As individuals, we each brought to this subject position our unique blends of attitudes, beliefs, experiences, skills and knowledge which contributed in an ongoing way to our changing and evolving subjectivities. The characteristics discussed in this chapter are the ones that emerged from the data as being important. In most instances, the characteristics apply to all six chairwomen and, when this is not the case, it is clearly explained.

High involvement

One of the characteristics mentioned by the chairwomen, and by their principals, was their frequent and active presence in the school and their involvement in a wide range of school activities. As previously mentioned, we all had some flexibility in our career jobs that allowed us to be in the school during the normal school day if necessary but the extent of our involvement was far greater than what was 'required' or expected.

> *I try not to ring ***** at home because I know that on average she will be in the school two or three mornings a week. I have never had a problem getting hold of her. She is very accessible..... she will pop in and she always plans her visits around morning tea time (ie to spend that time with staff). (Principal)*

> *I think her leadership is strongest in terms of her being ever present in the school but not overtly obtrusive. **** has the skill if being in and around the school, being supportive of me (principal) in particular, but also of all staff members. (Principal)*

> *We also backed it up (the BOT discipline process) and I don't think the principal had had that back-up before. We would keep the student there*

and I would go down to the whare and meet with the family and support people. We met again several times in a few weeks and I would keep in touch and go back over it a month later. We put the time in and in a way we took the load off the staff. (Chairwoman)

As well as being present in the school, we made an effort to be seen to be interested and supportive of people and activities, and to be visible and available to all the people associated with the school.

I do pop in a lot and if I am down there I go through the staff room and say 'hi', not start formal discussions, just let them know I am around. When I go and sign cheques I sit at a desk in the front that is for student messengers. It would be sad if they thought they couldn't come to me.

Because I'm involved in the school I have made a conscious effort to go to most of the things they have.

Some ways the involvement was described by the chairwomen included: *A staggering amount of time and energy; every other day; always at the school; very accessible.*

It should be noted that we went to the schools only if there was a reason. The difficulty we each had in finding hours in the day to fulfil the requirements of competing subject positions ruled out purely social visits. Having a high level of active involvement, on the other hand, was one of the ways we each chose to take up the leadership position.

Commitment, energy and enthusiasm

We perceived ourselves as energetic people and were perceived this way by those we worked with.

- *It struck me that we all work very hard and are conscientious.*
- *I certainly feel that way myself. Whenever I go into any thing I always try to put 100% in.....I have tended not to dabble. I have got the board, my work and my home. I wouldn't like to try to do two works, two boards or two homes. I think that having one area outside of work and home is enough for me to cope with.*

  It strikes me again and again that if you want someone to do something, you don't find someone who has a lot of spare time because they will say 'no'. You look for someone who is busy anyway and they will organise

> *their time. It is the busy people that get things done in this world, not the ones that have the time and should be doing it.*
>
> *We are all busy, energetic and optimistic people.*

Schein highlights the importance for leadership of this way of being-

> Much is said about the vision of entrepreneurs, but not enough is said about the incredible *energy* they display.....I am always struck by the fact that the leaders have so much energy and transmit that energy to their subordinates. It is an energy born out of strong personal convictions.....such people often literally breath life into the organisation; hence we should use a term like *animator* to describe this kind of leader. (Schein, 1996:61)

I doubt that some of the chairwomen would have allowed themselves to be described in this way, because of their tendency to 'play down' anything that sounded like praise[41] but it was the picture that the data show and was how their principals saw their contribution.

We were all people who set high standards and goals for ourselves, often knowing that we could not expect these of other people. Cameron noted similar characteristics in the women sporting leaders she studied and went as far as to conclude that they applied more to women than to men leaders. She said "women have more commitment and take greater pride in their jobs" (Cameron, 1994:61). It is not clear how such essentialist conclusions can be drawn from such a study because it was a study of women leaders only.

We approached things positively and optimistically with a desire to say 'yes'. *I think we try to find solutions rather than put up blocks.* At the same time, we tried to be realistic and be aware of not spreading ourselves *too thinly.* This was usually achieved by *being clear about priorities* and setting realistic time frames.

---

[41] See chapter subheading "humility and deprecation".

Although I am very busy it is very productive good use of energy and I am not feeling pressured. My work (career) has increased and I am finding it harder to make the time I used to make (for school) but I am not feeling pressured.

Other researchers have noted the high level of commitment of the women leaders they studied (Neville, 1988:149; Daniels, 1988:240; Restine, 1993:40). This commitment, however, was not restricted to the **amount** of time spent. It often involved giving up personal time and pleasures and, for all of us, it also involved giving up time from our career jobs. Since four of us had jobs in which our chargeable time determined our income, we often did school work at the expense of our personal income.

We perceived this 'energy' and 'activeness' to be part of our personalities and the ongoing giving of service, to some extent, to be more common in women than in men. We saw women as being active and fulfilled in areas other than their careers, **as well as** within their careers at the same time. We felt that, unlike men, who seemed to keep their 'work/outside of work' subject positions separated, women seem able to be committed and energetic in several subject positions at the same time and to move within each and from one to another frequently. This frequent movement resulted in an increased ability to deal with any inconsistency and dissonance as well as providing a wide range of insights and understandings. It is an holistic use of energy and a combining and intertwining of subject positions that defies tidy timelines and categorisation. This was summed up by one of the women in a discussion about the differences between men's and women's attitudes to retirement.

Men have so much trouble going into retirement. You don't even hear of women going into retirement do you? Up until now, women have never retired. It's such a man's thing....it is a crisis in life for them. Women have never retired, never!

The retirement discussion demonstrated the difference that the women perceived. The men were seen to concentrate their energy and enthusiasm on their work identities at the expense of other concurrently held subject positions and so when 'retirement' arrives, there is disruption in the man's life and a major readjustment in the directing of energy is required. For women, on the other hand, the changing of direction is occurring all the

time and so retirement from a particular subject position[42] (a job) is merely one more of many ongoing adjustments.

As well as having personal energy and enthusiasm, we worked very hard to energise and enthuse others.

> *I always expect to (input energy) more than anyone else if I'm the leader and I know that the way I go about things is going to make a difference to the way the others feel about what they do. I find if I'm really positive about things and talk about the outcomes for the students that it will help the others to feel keen to be involved*

Rosener, in her international survey on women and men leaders came to similar conclusions -

> The women leaders spoke of their enthusiasm for work and how they spread their enthusiasm around to make work a challenge that is exhilarating and fun. (Rosener, 1990:123)

We saw the sharing of enthusiasm and the motivation resulting from our energy as being a requirement of the subject position of leader and part of the 'language' of being a leader. This is using language in the post-structuralist sense of being a "chain of signs" (Saussure) and a "system of meanings" (McLennan, 1992:37) rather than just words. Such oral and body language signifies our constructions of 'a leader' and is aimed at encouraging and empowering others, is deconstructing the hierarchical leadership discourse in which the leader is the prime mover, and encourages other trustees to be energetically involved themselves.

When working with fellow trustees, who are also giving their own time voluntarily, it is perhaps even more important to motivate, energise and affirm people than it is when you are a leader of paid employees, who will, to some extent, be motivated to perform in order to keep their position.

> Peter Drucker maintains that the leader of a well-run nonprofit organisation is likely to be more skilled than the CEO of a profit-centered business, because the nonprofit manager must rely upon volunteers, who will simply devote their time elsewhere if the organisation appears troubled. Thus the ability to motivate is absolutely paramount. (Helgesen, 1990:71)

---

[42] As defined with a particular field of paid work.

Caring about people

The literature on women's leadership is full of references to their being more 'caring' than their men counterparts (Hare-Mustin and Marecek, 1988:458; Neville, 1988:150; Helgesen, 1990:21; Regan and Brooks, 1992:5). Some describe it as "empathetic to the feelings of others" (Frisby and Brown, 1991:309) or "sensitivity to the needs of others" (Gilligan, 1982:16). Another aspect of the caring is having a "respect for the feelings and opinions of others" (Frisby and Brown, 1991:309) or "attending to the voices of other than their own and to include in their judgements others' points of view" (Gilligan, 1982:16).

While not attempting to speak for 'women', it was clearly evident from the transcripts and observations that all these chairwomen had a caring respect for people as individuals, for their differences (Neville, 1988:133), and for all aspects of their realities, not only the aspects that were school related (Work, 1996:78). We were very sensitive to how people were feeling, what their strengths and weaknesses were, what contributions they were making and what their needs were. This included the students, the principal, staff, parents and trustees as some of the women's comments demonstrate-

> *I spent quite a bit of time chatting with people outside or meeting them socially just to get to know them a bit better so maybe I could figure out what the things were about them that they could do well or how they operated so as to encourage that particular area.*

> *The greater the diversity, the stronger the community. That includes the range of politics and ethnic diversity. It is finding ways to tolerate and work with those differences...enjoying the fact that people have different skills that they are prepared to offer.*

If any of the needs of these people or groups were competing, the over-riding priority was always seen to be the students.

> *Caring for the kids. That is my number one thing. Caring for* ***all*** *the kids, not just my own kids. All the cultures and those with problems...all of the kids.*

> *I think I brought something different. People did make comments about the human touch and compassion. The kids appreciated it. In particular I knew quite a lot of the worst kids.....and they had confidence because I knew them and I could speak to them by name.*

A dimension of caring was to ensure, whenever possible, that people *did not get hurt, upset, feel put-down or unvalued.* Gilligan makes a link between this caring and morality by giving the example of 'Alison' who was "tying morality to an awareness of power but equating responsibility with not hurting others" (Gilligan, 1982:139). The chairwomen demonstrated, during the chairing of the meetings, instances when they exercised this responsibility by ensuring that individuals were not hurt by other individuals. We were very aware of our caring feelings and behaviour and did think it was gender related. In particular it was often discussed in relation to student discipline hearings when the student was present as well as her/his parents or caregivers. These 'hearings', which are required by legislation, were used as an opportunity for a family conference and were often very emotional experiences for all participants. The empathy of the chairwomen for the parents, and their strong desire for a good outcome for the student, usually saw them talking 'parent to parent' and delivering some strong messages.

> *I think a woman is more sensitive in those areas and I think it is a maternal sensitivity that makes you function a bit differently. A man will go in and say this is very cut and dried...he (the student) shouldn't have done this...so that is it...'out'! We tend to think "oh my goodness, look at that poor mum sitting there suffering and what a brat this child is. What can we do for him?". You go down the maternal thing more than anything.*

> *He (a young student) was really looking for help and we actually sent the kid out of the room and dealt with the parents. I said "You guys have got to wake up. This kid is seeking help. You are tired, we can see that and we know you have six other kids but I'm sorry-- you have got* ***seven!*** *That kid needs your help. He needs you to do things with him. You are going to* ***have*** *to bring him up."*

These examples demonstrate that the women saw 'caring' as more than just doing things to make people feel good or to prevent them getting hurt. It is sometimes necessary to front people with a situation in order to help them move in a positive direction. This requires exercising one's judgement which, according to the principals, the chairwomen were very skilled at doing. Bateson sums up this wider understanding of caring as-

> The best caretaker offers a combination of challenge and support,.....to be nurturant is not always to concur and comfort, to stroke and flatter and

> appease; often it requires offering a caring version of the truth, grounded in reality. (Bateson, cited in Green and Manera, 1995:10)

O'Neill says-

> ...there is a wealth of evidence to show that women shoulder pastoral responsibilities, whereas men assume both formal and informal responsibilities for administrative and curricular matters. (O'Neill, 1992b:68)

While the principals each commented that they felt this was some of the most important and effective work they observed their chairwomen doing, it by no means meant that we were not actively involved in areas such as finance, curriculum and policy. On the contrary, we involved ourselves in every aspect of the governance role. It was our level of interest and energy in the pastoral care of students and teachers that differentiated this area from the others.

The caring attitude was also manifest in the affirmation given to people. This included saying thank you, giving tangible rewards and taking time to demonstrate that they are valued as people as well as for their contributions.

> *I was very aware of what people did at service dinners or any functions at the school. I was always very aware of anything that the staff or students did hence there were always these great long thankyou letters, a long list of them because I think that everyone should be acknowledged.....the boys that did the parking, for instance.....I know they got a thankyou from the teacher but I don't think it hurts to get a letter from the board to say you are doing a great job and it is really appreciated.*

The women in Rosener's survey (1990) talked of "giving others credit and praise and sending small signals of recognition" and found that examples of sharing and giving credit to others abound. Gilligan says that women "not only define themselves in the context of human relationship but also judge themselves in terms of their ability to care". Gilligan (1982:127) says that "...self and other are interdependent and that life, however valuable in itself, can only be sustained by care in relationships". Middleton (1988:185) suggests that radical feminists would argue that "women's capacity for mothering gives them power and special qualities of nurturance".

The caring that the chairwomen described may be an extension of the subjectivity developed while in the position of "mother", but the way they talked about the caring

had nothing to do with 'mothering' in the sense of an adult/child relationship or with power **over** anyone. Caring had to do with working within a 'leader' positioning in ways that aimed to **em**power others. Belenky et al express this as an underpinning way of thinking for women-

> Women typically approach adulthood with the understanding that the care and empowerment of others is central to their life's work. (Belenky et al, 1986:221)

While such an essentialist view, that is talking about all women as though they are the same in this regard, does not sit comfortably with a post-structuralist analysis, the quotation is included because it represents well the way each of the chairwomen approached working within this subject position. Similar views have been expressed by Shakeshaft and Gilligan, who said that women are guided by "a morality of response and care" (Shakeshaft, 1989:195) and by "an injunction to care" (Gilligan, 1982:100). From a post-structuralist perspective however, the ways in which we each carried out the caring and empowering differed depending on our own subjectivity, that of the person we were working with as we perceived it, the context at that point in time, and varying past experiences and positionings. It is possible that while in the subject positions of 'woman' and 'mother', rather than because we were women, we had been exposed to the benefits of caring and being cared about and could see the advantages of transferring such attitudes and actions into the milieu of the school and the board in particular. The chairwomen were certainly extremely aware of the benefits that accrued to all, both individually and collectively, from the caring. This is the same approach taken by Wade (cited in Lyons, 1990:283) who stressed the interdependence of relationships and the underlying value of "well-being of all - what will be good for the group and the organisation" as well as each individual. The act of behaving in caring ways was ongoing, as each chairwoman negotiated specific situations and contexts and found appropriate ways to demonstrate caring . It was a process rather than an event, or even a series of events.

Shared power and responsibility to act

The literature has much to say on how women feel about and exercise power and it also compares the ways in which women and men use power. Traditionally, organisations such as the church, the military, and the school have been organised hierarchically and "power, prestige and money are directly related to position" (Regan and Brooks, 1992:17). These positions at the top of the pyramid were, and often still are, occupied by white males who are the "creators and guardians of truth" (ibid). Their positions of power have enabled particular sets of values, practices, beliefs and attitudes that support their views of the world, to become accepted as the "best or normal way to do things" (Court, 1994c:35). Such hierarchical structures provided and ensured control (Miles, 1985:81) and as control is associated with inequality, such hierarchies created and perpetuated inequality (Smith, 1992:6; Acker, 1993:14).

Many writers "conclusively demonstrate" (Neville, 1988:28) that women prefer, and use, a less hierarchical and more collaborative and democratic leadership style than men (Shakeshaft, 1987:197; Orr, 1989:3; Lyons, 1990:293; Ramsay et al, 1990:22) who tend to be more directive and dominating (Rosener, 1990:121; Eagly et al, 1992:91). Such essentialist observations are not adequate as explanations and the chairwomen in this study were different from each other in the ways they chose to view and exercise power. The power of the chairwomen was power with a difference. There were no overt demonstrations, public displays (other than the minimum role requirements), symbols and trappings, or pulling rank. Instead they showed power through sensitivity, caring and awareness; power through building relationships; power through transparency; power through stability with flexibility; power through optimism and quiet determination; shared power through consensus; and power with humility. Judi Marshall (1984:107) provides a very clear explanation of the need to shift our thinking from definitions of power which are based on the assumptions that power "is competitive, a matter of individual ownership, motivated towards control and expressed through doing". She presents her belief that power "can be cooperative, based in joint ownership, directed towards influence and expressed in individuals' quality of being'.

She presents a four-dimensional map of power in which the dimensions are-

- power over others
- structural factors
- personal power
- power through/with others

The chairwomen could have exercised legitimate 'power over others' in their formal elected subject position, but there was little or no evidence in the data of this happening. The closest example was one chairwoman whom I observed move several motions from the chair in order to speed up the discussion process. In discussing it with her later, I found that she was unaware that her action was different from that of any other trustee and did not realise that someone else should have seconded the motion before it was discussed. The 'personal power' and the 'power through/with others' does, to some extent, describe the ways in which these chairwomen chose to operate but at the same time that these similarities exist, they do not explain the differences in the women's attitudes or in the types of operating 'structures' they set up. Gilligan proposes that women have a problem with competitive achievement (Restine, 1993:3) which means that they are uncomfortable with hierarchical models in which they are positioned at the top, over others. Rather, it is argued, they prefer a structure of interconnection and interdependence in which the power is shared (Gilligan, 1982:14, 62, 167) and they prefer to position themselves 'with' their colleagues. This was not true of all the chairwomen however. One of the women had been a political candidate and was very comfortable with the notion of competitive achievement. She did want to be the chairperson but, at the same time, she was very comfortable in a power-sharing partnership with the principal and in shared decision making with her board. Shakeshaft says that "power means different things to men and women" (1987:179). My data demonstrate that power means different things to different women as well, even when they are holding the same leadership subject position of board chairperson.

There were differences in the way the chairwomen reacted to the concept of 'having power'. Two of the chairwomen reacted against the idea that they held any power.

> *I am interested in our discussion when we were talking about power. As soon as someone said the word I thought "what power? I don't have any power"*

The others were aware of the power that went with the positions of trustee and of chairperson. This is partly the 'structural' power ascribed under the Education Act and partly the 'personal power' that is generated by each individual leader as she works with her fellow trustees. We were also aware of our attitudes towards power and our exercising of it.

> *I think I am aware that it would be really easy to abuse the power. I think that I am constantly trying very hard to make sure that I don't do that. I'm thinking about how easy it would be to include some people and not other people. Who you get on committees and things, it would be easy to swing some of that if you wanted to. I mean it would be easy to swing a discipline sub-committee. I could cook a committee that would be a conservative one or a liberal one. We have enough people to do that easily.*

> *He (the principal) cannot have a relationship with any women who are in positions of power or with women who are powerful themselves. I (chairwoman)am in a position of power although I don't use it but there are women in my school who are powerful women within themselves, they just don't take his crap and he can't relate to that.*

Although one of the chairwomen quoted above said she did not have power, it became clear as discussion progressed, and through the interviews with the principals, that all the chairwomen exercised power but we did it in such ways that it was exercising power **with** people rather than **over** people (Marshall, 1984:108; Neville, 1988:136; Blackmore, 1989:123). This does not mean that we were not willing or able to stand up and take strong decisions and action when it was judged to be important, or when it was a requirement of their role[43]. What it does mean is that we were able to work with people in ways that left them feeling empowered rather than disempowered. Two of the principals described their chairwomen like this -

> *She can walk into his office in her own humorous style and make it (his aggressive and autocratic behaviour) a non issue. His power is taken*

[43] The chairperson has a casting vote in the situation that votes cast for and against are equal. There was one example given during the group discussions.

> *away because she is not a confrontational person but he doesn't feel powerless, he feels good.*
>
> *She doesn't throw her weight around. She is more the supportive type of person and that is important in today's environment.*

Each of the chairwomen worked actively to try to achieve a collaborative and openly democratic way of operating. This is very similar to what Neville's (1988:136) administrators describe as their preferred way of operating. This similarity is interesting because of the range in levels of experience of these women acting in leadership positions. It is easy to understand that experienced leaders would select this way of leading because their past experience had demonstrated that it was effective. But why did the inexperienced leaders choose this way of working? The following quotes from the interview and discussion transcripts draw a picture of the mindsets of the women in exercising choice in their leadership style: *we don't nominate, we ask for volunteers; democracy...is the power of the group; happy to share the responsibility; people have just accepted that there is not going to be a hierarchy; they are* ***all*** *entitled to be involved; very open to other people's suggestions on how to handle things; a non-pyramid leader; shared decision making and input; a partnership type;* and *having as many people as I can being part of the process.* One chairwoman said -

> *I have always had that ability .....Making people feel at ease I see that as part of leadership. Once people have confidence in you, they will run with you.*

As one principal described - *She looks to other people for ideas but that is not because she doesn't have her own ideas.*

While still fully accepting the specific tasks and responsibilities of the chairperson, the women saw themselves as *part of the group, not as different from the group,* and *being a member of a team but having a dash more responsibility.* Their aim would be achieved if *everyone walked beside each other.* The importance of the leader being a "member of a team of equals" (Court, 1992:153), at the centre or middle of the group (ibid; Helgesen, 1990:45), "leading from behind" (Court, 1992/1994) is a recurring theme in studies of women's approaches to leadership. One of the strategies used by the all the chairwomen, which is probably common to most secondary boards, is that of delegating tasks and responsibilities to sub-committees. Several of the principals

commented on the extent of the delegation and the genuine trust that their chairwomen had in the people to whom the responsibility had been delegated (Neville, 1988:150). In taking up the position of chairperson, they did not act as gatekeepers. One principal said -

> *Before **** was chairperson I would have to ring the chairperson first and then the other people. Now, rather than ringing her, I will ring the person responsible for the matter....it cuts down all those steps and the matter is resolved a lot quicker.*

On one of the boards, the trustees shared the chairing of the main board meetings. Most of the boards had members, other than the chairperson, chairing the sub-committees. Other strategies the women described were aimed at encouraging participation (Rosener, 1990:121). These included suggesting specific tasks for specific people to ensure that each member made an 'expert' contribution, changing the order of the agenda to give each member early opportunities to speak, bringing a person into the discussion by stating that their experience would provide valuable insights, ensuring that members did involve themselves fully in discussions and encouraging decisions to be made by consensus rather than through formal votes.

> *Generally trying to compromise at all times, trying to be sure that in the end everyone felt OK about the things we were planning to do.*

> *When it comes to making a decision as a group it gets talked through. The only time we have ever had to vote on something is for appointments. The rest of the time it is talked about.*

All of the chairwomen were aware of the importance of sharing knowledge and information if board members were to be able to actively share in the decision making and care was taken to ensure that there were effective communication systems working. Helgesen contrasts the effort that the women leaders she studied made to ensure information sharing, with the tendency of men to 'hoard' information (Helgesen, 1990:27). In this study, the transcripts and observations demonstrate the efforts that the chairwomen made to communicate. These included the regular dissemination of written information, frequent telephone discussions, visits to school in order to keep people informed, talking at staff meetings, parent evenings and student assemblies and informal 'chats' about important issues. The data show three instances of gatekeeping and

withholding of important information. All three instances involved men. One was the principal who was always taking actions without consulting or informing his board, and the other two were previous chairpersons who chose to take decisions and act without informing fellow trustees. In all instances, these ways of enacting the leadership role resulted in fellow trustees feeling angry, excluded, demoralised, frustrated and disempowered.

The decision to exercise leadership in a shared way was not merely a calculated one based on the expectation that it would produce good outcomes. In each person's situation it was based on a genuine belief that the strength of the group would always outweigh the strength of any of its individual parts. None of the chairwomen saw themselves as having all, or even most, of the answers. They each believed they had strengths **and** weaknesses and, at the same time, actively wanted to empower others and to use their strengths for the benefit of the school.

> *It doesn't bother me one bit if someone wants to change direction or do something different as long as everyone gets behind it.*

> *I lost some quite major things that I felt quite passionate about and it didn't bother me really. I put in my penny's worth like everybody else and if it didn't go my way then that is fine. Go in and do it the way that the group decided.*

While we all shared the ideal of full participatory democracy, the reality was often difficult to achieve. There was evidence in the interviews with the chairwomen and the principals, that some of the previous boards of governors or trustees had been heavily controlled by either principals or chairpersons, or both. Not all the trustees were used to working in this democratic way or to having such active involvement expected of them. Chairwomen reported having battles to try to encourage the group to take responsibility for making a decision and also to share the workload in carrying out the decisions.

> *To share the work load has been my main goal since I have been chairing. Getting people to take responsibility for doing things and focus on long term planning for the school which we have never done.*

It's all about sharing. I do not believe it's my role to take on all these things. It's my ultimate role to make sure they happen but its not my role to do all the work.

The chairwomen believed that this leading from **within** was an essential part of ensuring strong and sustained shared leadership in the school. The approach was perceived by the principals to be effective and they all (but one) expressed concern should they ever have a chairperson in the future who did not bring the same level of skills or similar attitudes.

I guess she has played a role in most of our committees but on the other hand she is not dominant, apart from the ones where she knows she has to be, like suspensions. She is prepared to be supportive rather than up front. Some might say that is a lack of leadership but I feel it is just the opposite. It is real strength. She is there but she gives the others the support to see things through.

The drive to empower other people in this kind of way (Restine, 1993:48) is a combination of valuing individuals as people with a belief in the importance of shared ownership of a process.

While all the chairwomen operated in the ways described in this section, there were differences in the pace that each of us worked at. At one end of the pace continuum, one of the chairwomen was very relaxed about how soon thing got done and relied on the board as a group to set the pace. Four of us were prepared to allow time for action to materialise but did take an active role in monitoring, pushing when necessary, taking an active lead sometimes in order to speed things up and occasionally taking direct action in order to force an issue. At the other end of the continuum, another of the chairwomen differed in the extent to which she was prepared to spend time and energy pushing people to participate. Her principal summed it up as follows:

****** likes to get the decisions done and if someone doesn't get on board then that doesn't matter; it is their problem, not hers. In that sense she is stronger than I am I suppose - but it is a different kind of leadership.*

This chairwoman worked actively towards full involvement and shared decisions, but her time limits were more restricted than those of the rest of us.

We did not attempt to evaluate our performance as a leader summatively, either as individuals or as a group, but, because our formative self-evaluation was so regular and ongoing, I feel confident in saying that we each felt satisfied with the effectiveness of the use of power in this way and with the overall effectiveness of our leadership. Helgesen says that

> What is needed, then, is leaders who can work against these feelings of alienation that affect our institutions, by bridging the gap between the demands of efficiency and the need to nurture the human spirit. (Helgesen, 1990:234)

Kanter looked at successful women managers and identified what characterised their styles. She concluded that it was women with system power and "an interest in empowering subordinates (sharing power with them)" who were the most humane as well as being the most successful and effective (Kanter, 1977:302).

We were each in a process of negotiating when and how to lead, and when and how to follow (Kagan, 1994:53) and were happy to do both but we did not expect it to be without its problems.

> *There were times when I could have screamed ... it would have been a hell of a lot faster and easier to do it myself ... I had to hold my breath and have another go at giving them the chance to find a solution that they would all live with ... in the end I know it was the right thing to do*

Shared leadership "is not a panacea" (ibid). It takes time, patience and skills. The chairwomen each had their own unique mix of those attributes and worked hard at continually honing the two latter.

Facilitative style

A key aspect of leading a board is the facilitation of the meetings and in particular the monthly meetings. There were differences in the amount of facilitation experience the chairwomen had had and, to some extent, our level of skills and confidence corresponded to our experience.

The extent to which formal meeting procedures were followed varied. Some of the following information comes from transcripts but the observations of board meetings were the source of much of the data. All the chairwomen opened the meeting formally with greetings, welcomes and thanks to various participants. Some adopted the agenda and called for apologies. All ratified the minutes of the previous meeting, called for sub-committee reports and presented a chairperson's report. All followed a formal process to the extent of having circulated an agenda and meeting-related documents for all members Most of the chairwomen insisted that these be circulated prior to the meeting so that people came prepared. The most common practice was for each agenda item to be discussed by the group, with relative informality, and then for a final outcome and/or decision to be formally recorded. All chairwomen made sure that there was lots of flexibility in the order of things and were willing to make adjustments or be sidetracked if necessary. Decisions were put in the form of motions that were 'passed', although the reality was that the decision making occurred **during** the discussion, and the putting of the motion was a formality for the purpose of documented records. "Voting" usually happened informally, **after** the decision had been arrived at through consensus, and occurred orally by the chairperson calling for "ayes" and "noes". This 'after-the-event formality' was evidenced by the lack of time given for any abstention or negative 'vote' to be articulated.

There were differences in the degree of formality/informality reflected in the seating arrangements at the meetings. To some extent this was determined by the facilities the school had available. One board, for example, held their meetings in the staff room sitting on lounge furniture which created an atmosphere of informality. The others each had a more formal seating arrangement around a table and some met in a 'meeting room'. One school had a 'board-room' with formal photographs of past boards on the wall. Although the 'feeling' of formality and the extent to which non-board members were physically included varied, all the meetings took an informal approach through a technically formal framework imposed by the legislation.

What was very noticeable was that throughout this formal 'framework' there was a high degree of informality and relaxed interaction. It was clear that *making people feel comfortable and relaxed* was seen by us as a prerequisite for full participation, though the informality and comfort was balanced with an eagerness to *be*

focussed and get the job done. Regan and Brooks described such an environment as "synergistic" (Regan and Brooks, 1992:8). The chairwomen described being aware of their role in *keeping the meeting together; keeping it running; knowing the personalities around the table and knowing how to manoeuvre them to let them have their say; when they ramble and get off the point you get them back in line; remind them that some of the things said... are in confidence; sum up the issues; check on how people feel* and *bring people back on focus with the issue.*

My notes taken at the board meetings indicate that the chairwomen, at the same time as maintaining this *laid-back* atmosphere, were very active facilitators who used a wide range of strategies for keeping the meeting flowing and focussed. Their body language reflected their verbal action. When they wanted to intervene or change the direction of a discussion they physically leaned forward to gain attention. Conversely, they sat back when others were speaking, in order that the attention be focussed on the speaker. They actively questioned, restated ideas and motions, clarified situations, summed up discussions in order to move on, stopped side discussions, reminded people of past decisions in order not to reopen discussion and interrupted or affirmed people in order to ensure everyone participated and felt valued. The tone of their voice and the inflections used were skilfully selected to encourage participation. Sometimes a sentence was left unfinished so that somebody else would finish it with their ideas.

Chp. So the next thing we need to do is -
➢ I think the next thing is for us to read the CVs and-------etc

Sometimes a statement would be made, but with the voice raised at the end. It was not put as a question but it sounded 'open' so that people felt free to treat it as a question and respond if they wished.

So we should pay for the two extra teachers from the foreign feepayers' fees '?'

The chairwomen frequently checked for understanding, feelings, and opinions and sought feedback on issues and progress.

Would you be happy with that?

So let's check this out -----

How does everyone feel?

I need to know if you think we are on the right track

For most of the women, these skills had become so habitual, or as one of them described *'natural'*, that they had become unaware of the extent of their intervention. This became evident when I fed back my notes taken at the meetings. At the same time, even the most confident of us were still aware of what we were wanting to achieve and of the need to constantly work at it.

> *I felt capable and confident although I never sat back and enjoyed the meetings. I tried to make them tight without being tight. I tried to hold them together but having enough looseness and fun in them to make them an enjoyable occasion, I hope.*

All recalled situations at meetings when their skills and authority had been put to the test. This is written up in other sections[44]. Some board members needed to have their behaviour guided, and sometimes modified, in order that others felt free and had the time to contribute. This was done firmly and skilfully. There is no evidence in the transcripts or the observation notes of the types of "bossy, stroppy or bolshy" behaviour that Cameron's (1991:46) leaders reported. Rather it was a "facilitative/personal style which was relational and integrative in nature" (Frisby and Brown, 1991:309). We were not trying to orchestrate equal speaking time for each member but rather to ensure each individual shared the decision making responsibility by contributing at appropriate times and that each felt they had been heard on issues that were important to them.

The purpose behind choosing to work in such a facilitative way was to achieve active participation and ownership of the process by ensuring collective and democratic decision making (Neville, 1988:136). As chairwomen we were felt a responsibility to act as the 'catalyst' for this process (ibid:138).

---

[44] See 'strength and determination' and conflict avoidance and fronting issues.

Honesty and directness

Characteristics that we all shared were those of being *up front and honest, open, frank, direct* and *being to the point.* These were things that we were aware of ourselves, that we observed in each other, that we perceived as strengths, and that other people (such as the principals) commented on. One of the chairwomen described us as -

> *All of us had something about us as we spoke. We tended to be able to speak well, to get out what is meant, and to go to the point, make it and finish it. We were 'straight up and down' type people. We looked each other in the eye. We didn't fluff around the place. There was a focus on what we were doing. The strength was there and yet all of us were able to listen, we could accept someone else's point of view- maybe chew it a bit- but respect where that person was coming from.*

We worked hard at achieving openness and honesty among the board members. Problems and contentious issues were discussed openly with all the parties concerned[45] (Green and Manera, 1995:13). Fellow trustees and the principals were told directly if there was a problem that they had caused, or if there were difficulties that they were involved in. Helgesen gives a similar example in which one of her leaders said to an employee "But if you *do* have a problem, you'll know it" (Helgesen, 1990:192). The honesty included the willingness to ask questions, to admit our faults and shortcomings, and to ask for clarification, (Cameron, 1994:63) help and advice as soon as we needed it. Our observations of the members on our boards indicated that there was a gender difference in this characteristic and this was supported by comments made by some of the principals. One of the chairwomen said -

> *Women are more likely to seek help and say "look I just can't do it". They are more up front and honest. A man sees it as some sort of failing. If I don't know something I will go and ask someone. I will ring up and say "I'm as thick as a brick.....". Men often won't admit that they don't know.*

A male principal said - *The men will bluff. The women will say if they don't know how to get it right.*

---

[45] See section on 'Conflict avoidance and fronting issues'.

Some researchers have noted this willingness to "admit you don't know everything" as a characteristic of women leaders they have studied (Ramsay et al, 1991:7; Court, 1994b:16).

The women described this honesty and directness as being closely linked to values of fairness and justice and a commonsense and down to earth approach. They felt that being *fair* and *unbiased* was often required in situations when a number of people, or stakeholder groups, were involved and the groups were in conflict with each other. A post-structural analysis challenges the absoluteness and implied neutrality of concepts such as 'fairness' and being 'unbiased'. Each of us would have acted out our version of those concepts in terms of how we interpreted the requirements of the chairperson subject position and in the light of our past experiences in any related positionings. The honesty and openness were seen as part of the fairness because people interacting with us could then interpret our motivation and reasoning in the light of what we said.

The openness applied to being open to ideas and suggestions (Court, 1994c:42) as well as being open in the sense of being transparently honest about oneself.

> The best leaders are transparent: they do what they say; they "walk the talk." People believe in them because they act in line with the values they espouse. They do not play Machiavellian games of manipulation and duplicity. In that sense they are simple. (Bardwick, 1996:137)

Court describes this view of leadership as one-

> .....that doesn't see the need for the leader to present an image of infallibility. Rather it emphasises a belief in authenticity and honesty and a bringing of a sense of 'wholeness' (warts and all?) to the work of teaching and leadership. (ibid:43)

Strength and determination

We did see ourselves, and each other, as strong people and each of the principals mentioned this as an important attribute that their chairwoman had. Other writers on the subject of women's leadership have noted strength and/or courage as attributes (Miles, 1985:56; Neville, 1988:44; Helgesen, 1991:33; Regan and Brooks, 1992:11; Cameron, 1994:48; Bardwick, 1996:138).

In this study there are two kinds of strength that were evident. There were occasions for us all in our role as chairperson when we, and/or our school, were strongly challenged. On these occasions we were very capable of overt strength to the extent it was judged to be necessary, as one example demonstrates. At a council hearing for the building of a new school facility, some neighbours accused the chairperson and deputy chairperson of having a personal interest in, and gaining financially from, the project. The chairwoman said publicly that this was not true, that it was deliberately misleading and that she would take legal action if the accusations were not withdrawn with an apology. Other examples included writing letters to the Ministry, the media, or to individuals; arranging a public meeting for neighbouring schools to discuss an issue of shared concern; calling the staff together to answer concerns; speaking to a student assembly about behavioural concerns; and speaking out at School Trustee Association meetings.

On such occasions, as the leader, we often needed to be strong for others also.

> *We had another one (discipline hearing) where they brought a lawyer in. I took the meeting the same way saying*[46]*..... The lawyer said "I have spent the last three hours with the family and the child and I would like you to direct the questions through me." I said " Excuse me, this is our meeting and I am not going to change the procedure for you. You will have ample time to talk and ask questions and you are most welcome but we are here as a group to discuss it (and I'm not going to play your games matey).*

This verbatim was from one of the action group transcripts, where as a group we talked very informally with a lot of laughter. The bracketed words were not the actual words directed at the lawyer, but her way of telling the story to the group. The same applies to the next quotation where the Ministry were told to stick it up their jumper.

> *(We expelled a child) and the Ministry of Education ordered the Board to take the child back. I wrote and said that, under section..... of the Act, this child has been expelled and these are the reasons and you can stick it up your jumper.*[47] *I have not heard another thing.*

---

[46] The chairperson gave a long explanation here of the usual introduction and setting of ground rules that took place at the beginning of such a meeting.

[47] See previous footnote

When the issue of strength was discussed by the group or in the interviews, it was talked about as an *"inner strength"* that became obvious only when necessary, such as in the examples quoted above.

> ➢ *I think to land in that role we had to have a strength in us to do it. I guess you would say we were all reasonably strong personalities.*
> *K* *How were we strong?*
> ➢ *Its not an overt ego type of strength that any of us have*
> ➢ *It would be the strength of the personality I guess. Strong in the sense of being just. You have taken on a challenge and you need strength for that. Strength to carry out what you believe in.*

This personal courage is described well by Bardwick-

> Having integrity rests...partly on personal courage. It requires truthfulness with oneself as well as with others in terms of what is genuinely valued and what is considered important. (Bardwick, 1996:137)

Part of the having personal courage is the ability and willingness to take risks (Neville, 1988:138; Regan and Brooks, 1992:11), which was another attribute the chairwomen believed they had. "In addition to courage, leaders must have some certainty about which direction to take and which path to choose" (ibid).

> *If you wait until something is a dead cert before you are willing to give it a go- nothing would ever happen, would it. I'm a great believer in calling something a trial and perfecting it as you go along. It doesn't mean that we don't prepare properly first. It means we are willing to take risks to get something important happening.*

During the interviews, I learned that nearly all of the chairwomen had, during their childhood, overcome major personal difficulties related to their childhood. In each of these situations we had needed to take on a responsibility that was really an adult responsibility. In each instance, we felt we had been forced into a situation requiring great strength and, as a result, had learned at an early age that we were very capable people when we had to be. Some (very abbreviated) examples are:

* One chairwoman's parents owned a holiday camping-ground and the children of the family had to work with their parents to run the place. This meant, even as a very young child, working every weekend and holiday

time. Although the children were paid, they did not have any freedom, as other children did, to play with friends or take holidays. *We were brought up very tough. Brought up to work. Brought up to expect very little except what you work for. We didn't have a social life.*

* When another chairwoman was between the ages of seven and ten years, her mother was critically ill and was frequently hospitalised. This child became the 'mother' of the family in terms of caring for her own mother and in the sense of providing emotional support for her father and siblings. *I felt for a long time a lot of burden and responsibility for my family...to protect them from the reality of it. Mother-type responsibilities.*

* The father of another chairwoman was an alcoholic and gambled away most of the family income for many years. Eventually he walked out on the family, leaving mother without a job or car, and with three dependent children. In her mid-teens, the young woman became the emotional support for her mother and had to find an immediate means of being totally financially independent. *I had to be strong for my mother. She was devastated and had to borrow a bike and get herself a job. I had to do five part time jobs to earn enough to keep me at university.*

* In one case, the parents took two of the children out of secondary school (13 and 15 yrs) and on a six-month trip to Europe and left them attending a French-speaking university while the parents travelled around the Continent. The elder of the two became the 'parent' and was finding ways for the two children to cope with being left on their own, on the other side of the world in a country where nobody spoke their language. *Things started in childhood have horribly long effects. I was the elder of the two and I remember being resentful of the fact that she had exactly the same privileges as me, yet I had the responsibility to look after her because I was the elder.*

* For another, who was one of ten children, her life was turned upside down when her mother left the family. She began failing at school and got pregnant and left during her school certificate year. She married and kept her baby. *I left school because I knew I was failing. I think I was destined to fail at that time because everything was against me, and that's exactly what I did.*

Neville described half of her women administrators as having had "disruptions in their childhood that affected their life patterns". These women, like the chairwomen, later interpreted the "disruptions" as learning and growing experiences that gave them "strength and direction" (Neville, 1988:44). Miles (1985:56) wrote of similar experiences in the lives of the women leaders studied and said "it is a mark of the calibre of these women that they are able to make something positive even out of the most negative events".

In comparison with these kinds of life traumas, the types of school-related 'crises' we faced in our chairperson's role seemed insignificant. Although we did not go around from day to day thinking about our childhood experiences, there is no doubt that we had developed inner strength from those experiences and a degree of confidence that we could cope with something serious if it was necessary. Helgesen described the inner strength that her women leaders had as "strong psychological and spiritual resources" (Helgesen, 1991:33). Miles makes the important point that-

> The women who achieve power and become personally powerful, in a related and interlocking process, are not geniuses, goddesses, or favoured in the cradle with a magic secret that was withheld from 'ordinary' females. They are not stronger by nature- they become strong by behaving as if they are. (Miles, 1985:214)

In the same way that language produces and constructs meaning (McLennan, 1992:37; Jones, 1991:86) rather than merely being a reflection of it, so we construct our own reality through the ways we act, react and interact with others. For the chairwomen, the strength remained so long as there was some hope for desired change and so long as there was no major challenge to their values. Regan and Brooks (1992:11) noted that several of their women leaders made comments such as, "I

couldn't stay there any more and continue to be healthy" when their core values were challenged. This was exactly the situation with the chairwoman who experienced conflict with her principal. It was not a lack of strength that saw her finally decide to leave. It was her strong belief in what was best for the school in the long term and her refusal to compromise her values that gave her the strength to leave..

Conflict avoidance and fronting issues

The literature presents evidence that women leaders are willing to confront power (Court, 1991:161) and take responsibility for 'sorting out' difficult situations (Court, 1989b:154). Women's ways of dealing with conflict have been described as softer and more negotiating (Daniels, 1988:244), warmer and more humanistic (ibid). Women are more likely to attempt to avoid conflict, to diffuse a situation using conflict reduction techniques (Shakeshaft, 1987:188), or use constructive approaches to conflict solving (Orr, 1989:3). Men, on the other hand, have been described as more likely to use authoritarian responses (Shakeshaft, 1987:188) and face down opponents in situations of conflict (Connell, cited in Court, 1992:183). Some writers attempt to explain why these differences might exist. Shakeshaft (1987:189) suggests that because women value people more and have a greater respect for them, they are more likely to use compromising and conciliatory strategies which have proved to be more effective when used by anyone. Daniels suggests that women have to learn to manage conflict in the family where relationships are stable and must continue, so they become skilled at actively avoiding conflict as well as dealing with it (Daniels, 1988:44,242).

Examples in the data suggest that the chairwomen did not all handle conflict in the same way but the variance in methods and style seemed to relate more to selecting an appropriate response to each given situation than to a 'woman's' way of operating or even a particular style that could be attributed to an individual. We described how we, as mothers, were the person in the family who took responsibility for fostering good relationships and so we have had considerable experience in such negotiations. We also said that it was often easier to deal with people who are not immediate family than with members of your own family. Whenever possible people were given opportunities to save face and things were done in a caring way. We noted that in school situations, if

this did not work, then in the interests of the students and the school the issue was dealt with firmly.

We were all people who would put a great deal of energy and use of skills into avoiding conflict situations. This was not out of a fear of conflict, nor from a concern that we could not deal with a situation if it arose. It was from a desire to use all the available energy in positive directions rather than have it spent *putting out fires*. In the position of chairperson, we were often required to mediate or arbitrate a situation. Student discipline hearings, required by law, would be the most frequent instance. Others included a complaint from one party against another such as a parent against a teacher or the principal against a member of staff. Sometimes decisions that the board was required to make would pit one group against another and it was not always easy, or even possible, for both parties to feel satisfied with the outcome. It was often such issues that would be discussed at the action groups. It became clear that we were each prepared to front[48] an issue or a person directly when it was needed. This was another attribute that many of the principals commented on and appreciated.

> *I never saw any of us shirk an issue. Some things were very difficult, particularly for ****. It would have been easy for her to take the easy line but she never ever did. I was full of admiration for her and what she had to cope with. It was clearest with her but I would say that about everyone here.*

> *She has been influential in keeping board members active and interested....she has been able to take on some of the more, I wouldn't say formidable people, but potentially more awkward people and put them in line.*

Accepting responsibility

The level of awareness and understanding amongst the chairwomen of their responsibilities in this subject position varied, and tended to be heightened through the action group discussion process itself. The more we shared what our boards were doing, and what each of us as chairwomen was doing, the more aware we each were of

---

[48] I avoid the use of the word 'confront' because of its association with the word confrontation. "Fronting' is used in the sense of positively and actively dealing with an issue in a non-confrontational way.

the potential of our role. The chairwoman whose board members shared the facilitation of the board meetings was less sure of her awareness.

> *You feel a responsibility for getting things done. I don't know about that. I would like to hear what the rest of them (fellow trustees) think about that. I think I do without realising, but I don't know that I am doing it.*

Although we each worked hard to facilitate an active team and to share power and responsibility, we were aware of the additional responsibilities that went with being 'chairperson'. In the words of the women: *we (the chairwomen) all felt responsible and took our responsibilities seriously; the buck stops with you; at the end of the day, no matter what, you are 'it"; I realise that if any major decisions are made and they are the wrong ones, it would come back at me.*

Some writers discuss women's willingness to make the tough or difficult decisions (Neville, 1988:150; Court, 1994c:44). For all of the boards in this study, most of the decision making was a shared process, although there were times, especially in a crisis situation, that decisions had to be made immediately and we chairwomen had that ultimate responsibility. We were all comfortable with this and did not find it unreasonably stressful. At the same time, we were aware that we were *laypeople* and that there was not always a lot of advice and support available when it was needed, unless the school was willing and able to pay for it. We became aware that we could be personally liable under the Health and Safety Act.

Experiences we lived through in relationship to the 'ultimate responsibility' being ours included: being taken to court; being verbally and physically threatened; being verbally abused face-to-face and over the phone; being taken to the Human Rights Commission; being part of an ombudsman's inquiry; dealing with the death of a staff member and the suicide of a student; being challenged by lawyers, Members of Parliament and the Youth Law Office; and dealing with the teachers' union. Is it any wonder that at times we asked ourselves, *"How the hell did I get into this, when all I wanted to do was help my child's school?"*, or, *"I ask myself why I am doing this...life is too short, too short."*

While at the time of the 'crisis' the involvement is all-consuming, the majority of the time was productive and enjoyable. Even when things were going well, however, we did have an awareness of our responsibility.

> *I still do sometimes feel a heavy burden of responsibility ....with keeping it moving, creating the momentum, and being the catalyst. Thinking about where we should be going next, what does the future hold?, what sort of ideas do we need to implement to be part of it? We have some wonderful people on our board and we delegate everything out and they do their jobs. They share all of it and things are working well but I'm very aware that I am the person doing a lot of the thinking, throwing in ideas and nudging people along.*

There were differences in the extent to which each of the chairwomen regarded being innovative and the generator of ideas, as part of enacting the position of chairperson. Some viewed the position as requiring more emphasis on the facilitation of others' ideas. Some saw it as an equally valid choice to participate as well as facilitate and chose to do both to varying degrees.

One thing we agreed on was that we had the *overview* of the group and needed to be constantly *watching the dynamics, checking that we had all the skills we needed, thinking ahead if someone was going to leave,* and *always (being) on the lookout for potential new members.* Daniels discusses the latter issue-

> One aspect of leadership prized by respondents is the ability to find the right people to make a successful board.....The ability to make a board effective by choosing the right mix of members has to be accompanied by the clout required to persuade others to accept an appointment. (Daniels, 1988:235)

Most of the chairwomen had had some active involvement in recruiting coopted or appointed members and some had taken an active role in dealing with board 'personnel' issues.

> *Earlier on we had an elected member who only came for the money. He always arrived late and unprepared and left early.....he refused to go on any subcommittees and would not do anything outside of the monthly meetings. I asked for his resignation but he said "no" and told me there was nothing I could do about it. I knew legally he was right but morally I was not going to let him take one of our elected places and collect the dollars and do nothing. I told him I would call a special meeting of the parents who elected him and let them decide. He did resign, but I would have gone through with it and he knew it.*

Perseverance and patience

The transcripts frequently include phrases like the following: *I persevered; I stuck with it; I would never walk out half way through; I hung in there; I was quite determined; I said I was serious about it; and we weren't going to wimp out.* One of the women summed up the reasons for such determination:

> *My feeling is that we are all quite determined, not to get our own way, but determined as you have said, to see things through. To do the best for the school and to make sure that no-one got off track. We were determined to make good things happen, I felt.*

Often, although not always, this *seeing things through* required time and patience. Helgesen quoted one of her leaders as having the same awareness-

> I try not to give people the feeling I'm rushed.....Rushing is no way to bring out what's best in people, and I'm always looking for the best. That's ultimately behind my determination to take my time. (Helgesen, 1990:80)

Restine (1993:48) identifies "patience and persistence" as critical attributes that women have and in Cameron's report, the women's verbatim statements include the words "stickability", "thorough", "endurance" and "patience" (Cameron, 1994:62).

One area where such attributes are required is in the collaborative decision making process. Democratic ways of operating require consensus to be reached and this takes time. We were constantly seeking to find the right balance between giving everybody the time they needed, and keeping up the momentum of the process so that it did not stall. In the opinions of all but one of our principals, we achieved a good balance most of the time.

Willingness to challenge

There were many examples of changes that the chairwomen wanted to make to the way things were done. In some instances these were changes to the way the school had done things in the past and some of these have been discussed in other sections.

Some related to involving more people and others, to involving people more. Examples include actively consulting parents on issues that had previously been seen as teacher decision making territory, such as homework and discipline; informing and including students in decision making, both in student forums and at a board subcommittee level; and being accessible to the staff and forming an active and direct communication link with them.

The transcripts provide evidence that we each brought our own preferred ways of doing things and, although this was open to negotiation, adaptation and compromise, we often felt that it was important enough to insist on some aspects, even if they met with some opposition. One of the principals described it as *"setting a new tone"*. Some of the strategies are included in what some writers would consider "women's ways of doing things", such as bringing a relaxed informality to occasions, getting rid of formal language in documents like the annual report, making sure there were flowers on tables and on the stage, using first names, and deleting academic qualifications from documents unless they served a specific purpose. Neville (1988:152) talks about a "deeply-embedded image of masculine leadership" and Malcolm (1978) says that "women who aspire to fill a leadership role traditionally held by men face evident role conflict". We did not experience much opposition to the types of changes detailed above but were prepared to push for them to happen even if a small number of people were holding out against them.

It may be that this is another example of a difference between voluntary and career leaders, although Court said that the women managers she studied "have been challenging stereotypes of the ways in which women 'should' behave. They have also been developing their sense of autonomy as managers....." (Court, 1989:144). We did not all choose to do the same things, or to do things in the same ways. When we discussed some of the issues outlined above, such as involving students more and genuine community consultation, we discovered that we shared the same underlying values and beliefs but were each keen to work with our own board and school community to negotiate a process that they could feel ownership of.

There is a difference between making changes to the style of operating and making structural changes. We were sometimes involved in doing both. Chase and Bell (1990:172) warn that "Individuals often do resist the constraints they face, but individual

actions do not change the systems that produce the constraints". In some instances, the changes required challenging the system itself, as defined through the legislation. This usually related to the composition of the board and its mode of operating. The type of informality, previously described, at board meetings is not what is required by the legislation. Nor is the rotating of the role of chairperson at formal board meetings. There were many instances of relaxing of the boundaries of procedure in order to better meet the needs of the people involved. Two of the chairwomen initiated the involvement of two student trustees rather than the one elected representative. This was not provided for by the Act and, in one instance, the Education Review Office forced the school to change back to one. The response by the chairperson was not to comply, but rather to find a way in which the board could continue to elect and pay two students, even though legally only one was the official trustee.

Most of the chairwomen encouraged non-trustees attending board meetings to join in the discussions, or at least to sit around the table. The Local Government and Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 does not allow for such informality but it frequently happened. There were variations in the degree to which the chairwomen allowed such informality. Some extended it only to deputy principals and staff attending but others extended it to anyone who arrived.

> *We join everyone that is there into the conversation. If it really came to a dispute, I would have to say that this discussion is only for board members, but it has never happened.*

In several of the schools, teacher representatives and student trustees were included on the student discipline committee and, on one board, two teachers job shared the teacher trustee position. These 'challenges' to the system were not made lightly and the latter example could potentially put a board at risk of acting unconstitutionally, so why did the chairwomen take such a risk?

> *I have been thinking about that and it is interesting, because if you look at the Act and the way boards are set up, they don't allow for that. They force you to elect your chairperson at the annual meeting and you are not allowed to have staff reps job sharing. I presume that means we are not allowed to have chairpersons or principals job sharing under the Act, so it imposes quite a rigid hierarchy. Power models are slowly changing to cooperative partnership ways of working but that is taking a long*

> *time.....We can't wait for the Act to catch up before we do things the way we know they work best.*

The legal requirements and restrictions imposed through the Local Government and Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 reflect and promote the male dominated and constructed culture that is common practice in the discursive field of business. In Cameron's study of women leaders she found that -

> Many women, however, appear to become accommodated to this male culture. They overcome constraints not by challenging them but by ignoring them, or by redefining them as appropriate or normal. These women become assimilated men. (Cameron, 1994:74)

In the case of the chairwomen, this could not be further from the truth. In summary, we were prepared to be *risk takers* and to *push the boundaries* if we believed the changes would improve the way things were done. We were *prepared to take a bit longer and go around divergent routes* because we believed in the importance of the *process* as well as the *outcomes.*

Listening

Many writers on women's leadership styles comment on the ability of women to listen (Shakeshaft, 1987:181; Helgesen, 1990: 243; Rosener, 1990;123; Restine, 1993:48). They noted that not only do women listen more, and more carefully than men, but also that they 'listen' for feelings as well as ideas; they hear emotional and personal issues as well as facts. At times, they involve others in the listening process by "thinking things through out loud" (Rosener, 1990:123) to ensure they (the woman speaking) have understood fully.

This was not a behaviour that the women in this study commented on about themselves but it was something that nearly all the principals commented on and it was very evident to me as I observed the board meetings. The principals saw the *listening very carefully* as an important strength. They also said that other people *felt listened to* and that this led to a high level of respect for the women and a willingness to cooperate with the team even when the person held a different view point.

Use of humour

The action group meetings were characterised by a great deal of laughter. It became evident very early in the time we spent together that we each initiated humour and enjoyed it when anybody else did. Humour was used to release feelings as well as being part of the expression of the pleasure we found in each other's company.

Green and Manera (1995:13) noted that women administrators identified humour as a valued strength. Restine (1995:48) called it a "critical attribute". Miles said that the women leaders she studied "rejoice in their varying senses of humour, from the driest of the dry to bubbling uproarious fun" (Miles, 1985:168). Humour, initiated by the chairwoman, was a feature of all the board meetings that I observed and we discussed this in the action group.

Humour was used to set the tone of a meeting, as one of the principals described -

> *She also has the respect of her board member colleagues. I don't think anyone questions her leadership. She tends to keep board meetings on a very pleasant note. We have jokes so it doesn't become too heavy. It is the unobtrusiveness of it that is good.*

It was used to defuse tense situations and to help a process of healing. Sometimes the women made a joke about themselves or their own behaviour in order to allow someone to save face. There were many examples when the chairwomen planned amusing gifts, made humorous presentations and drafted outrageous letters in order to create enjoyment and lighten a situation. An example of an amusing gift being given was when one of the women purchased an *enormous, loud and disgusting flower arrangement* to present to the principal as a support gesture at a time when the school was going through a major crisis. It had the desired effect of relieving the tension and giving everybody a chance to laugh and unite in the humour. Another example was a *fake* draft annual report that the chairperson produced in order to get the board members involved in contributing ideas. Miles (ibid) described women using humour to "see them through the sticky patches".

> *Humour always works wonders. It is the best way. Some awful things go on in schools and they can wear you down and break your heart. They go on in the world of reality and the way of coping with that is by trying to see the good side with a bit of humour. Sometimes humour is not appropriate but often it helps.*

Humour was used to give a strong message to somebody in a way that they would find less threatening. The following examples were observed at board meetings[49].

> To two men who were holding a discussion on the side that was getting heated: *Listen you two, I'm going to have to separate you soon.*
>
> To all trustees, because they were taking time to settle at the meeting: *As usual you have all read the correspondence carefully and have thought in advance which questions you want to ask. I'll wait with baited breath.*
>
> Humour was used to achieve action.
>
> We *had a guy who chaired the property sub-committee and he used to say he had put at least two mistakes in his report and that if people hadn't spotted them there would be trouble. It became a joke and I developed it by saying that I expected to see the bits highlighted on people's minutes. We all laughed like crazy but actually it made a real difference. As I developed the joke at the meetings, people began using highlighters and it got them into the mode where they felt guilty if they hadn't come prepared.*

Finally we were *all quite good at laughing at ourselves* and learning from the experience. Shakeshaft noted that women laugh at themselves and use their own personal experiences as examples for humour, in contrast to men who joke more often and tend to poke fun at others (Shakeshaft, 1987:182). Miles says that "women of power do not take themselves too seriously" (Miles, 1995:168). I feel that this is a description we would all identify with and enjoy. We took our work seriously, and our role in that , but did not take ourselves seriously. One of the chairwomen, when reading the draft of this script, wrote *for sure* beside the words *we were all quite good at laughing at ourselves.* We did not discuss as a group, why it was that we could so easily laugh at ourselves. My own analysis would be that it links to the ways women/femininity has been constructed in opposition to authority. To laugh at ourselves became one strategy we used to negotiate the contraditions embedded in traditional constructions of the subject positions of 'woman', 'leader' and 'chairman'.

---

[49] Written examples of humorous incidents do not easily convey the feelings evoked at the time. In each instance the comments were made in a manner that was enjoyed by all present.

Valuing intuition

There were many examples discussed during the action group discussions and in the interviews where we ended up by concluding that we had been right to trust our own judgement and intuition. I did not, however, find many references to these attributes in the literature. This lack of literature is, in itself, interesting but not easy to explain. It is not surprising that studies that took place in a discourse when 'traits' such as intuition were associated with femininity and weakness made no mention of them in relationship to leadership, a discourse associated with men and strength. Such management discourses value rationality. Intuition has been discursively constructed not only as irrational but also as feminine and, therefore, in opposition to masculinity, authority and rationality. It does not, however, explain why the more recent literature and research of women leaders has made little mention of it. Code mentions Margaret Fuller and Matilda Gage who "praised women's intuition as a peculiarly insightful capacity" and, also Fuller who believed that women could "delineate with unerring discrimination" because of their "intuitive perception" (Code, 1992:13). In the discussions, however, the chairwomen did not talk about it as something that **all** women have, simply by occupying the subject position of "woman".

Examples from the study included a chairwoman making a judgement about a persons honesty and/or integrity, deciding whether to push a point further or let it be for a while longer, changing the way something was done, deciding whether people would be receptive to new ideas, deciding to trust your own instincts/judgement, and other less tangible issues. We felt that in many instances being aware of having and using intuition, was in some ways associated more often with women because we did observe it in other women, but very rarely in a man.

> *We had an occasion (at a discipline hearing) when it was obvious to me that the child was unhappy with one of the men. What we did afterwards was to talk to the child alone and there was some abuse going on between the man and the child...sexual abuse. The parents didn't know because the man had so much power over the child. I picked it up and so did the other woman on the board but the men didn't.*

Regan and Brooks describe intuition as "a natural mental ability strongly associated with experience" and believe that as we build on our experiences we put

greater trust in our intuition (Regan and Brooks, 1992:12). We felt that it was more likely to do with our abilities to synthesise a wide range of verbal, physical and emotional cues and that it involved abilities learned within a wide range of subject positions, usually occupied by women. We also felt that this level of trust in ourselves had not come early or easily and, although it had never let us down, was still not beyond question.

> *In the last couple of years as a woman I have learned to trust my gut instincts. It has taken a long time. You go through some flat periods when you are working part time. You lose confidence. In my late 30s I went through that quite badly. Even last year when I was having .....hassles - trusting my own instincts, my philosophy, that the way I automatically feel about a thing isn't wrong. It took a while to trust that and I have to keep reminding myself sometimes.*

We did not analyse what we thought might be the source of our intuition, but it was clear that, for the chairwomen, the willingness to trust it, to the extent of including it as a valid factor in decision making, came with experience. This experience seemed to be connected to acting within a number of subject positions and the increased awareness and understandings that come with seeing these differing ways of being. It may be that for many women the experience comes as part of occupying the positions of 'primary caregiver', 'parent helper', 'homemaker', 'neighbour', 'volunteer', 'social liaison person', 'nurse', 'teacher' and 'mediator' **as well as** the positions associated with marriage, work/career and being a citizen. It may also relate to power in that people, in this case women, in less powerful positions have to learn to 'read' situations carefully in order to maximise their opportunities. Most men, on the other hand, occupy a narrower range and a smaller number of more powerful subject positions.

Humility and self deprecation

It struck me early in the study that the chairwomen were very capable and articulate people who had the respect of their board and their community. The interviews with the principals and the observations of the board meetings confirmed my views of their obvious abilities and strengths. It was somewhat of a surprise, therefore,

to hear two of the women, on many occasions, being very self critical and humble to the point of self deprecation.

> *I am involved in doing home visits (as part of the student discipline requirement of the board) and when I did my first one I was very nervous and I thought "God I am walking into these people's house, Who the hell am I to walk in and say ....."*

Daniels found the same thing happening during interviews with women leaders and suggested that the statements may represent conventional disclaimers rather than genuine uncertainty, "yet their frequency, and their association with serious efforts at self evaluation, make them worth noting" (Daniels, 1988:58).

It is interesting to compare the comments of one of the women about herself - *I don't think I'm any great shakes as a leader* - with those of her principal - *I wanted her to take on the role (chairperson)...she is a very successful business person in her own right and it wasn't as if she didn't have the skills and ability, she clearly has both. She is a highly effective chairperson...she has a clear vision of what should happen and a very realistic appraisal of what did happen.*

There were differences in how we each viewed ourselves.

- *Don't you think it all comes down to ability?*
- *I would say I am the best person for the job*
- *I wouldn't say that (about herself). I think **** is very capable of doing it.*

Two of us were very confident of our own abilities and experience. We were self evaluating and would make jokes at our own expense, but we did not put ourselves down.

> *Personally I think that women put themselves down so much. They are not prepared to say "Here I am, I am ****** *****, This is me, I know I can do this, I will show you, and if it doesn't work then you can dump me." The fact is that they kept me there for six years so obviously they were happy with me.*

This chairwoman had been an electoral candidate as a young woman and had done exactly as she described above. Her ability to promote herself in this way was not an attribute shared by any of the other chairwomen. The other three women were somewhere in between. Most of the time they were confident about their own competence, but occasionally they had doubts, depending on what was happening to them at the time.

We discussed the issue at one of the group meetings and discovered that while some of us had reservations about our own performances, we were very impressed with those of our chairwomen colleagues.

> *I don't think of myself as a 'superwoman' but other people say that I am and I look at all of you and think that you are 'superwomen'. I don't know how to interpret that.*
>
> *We all look at ourselves as quite ordinary people and just being part of a group, but when we looked at each other and what we were each doing, for me that increased my awareness of the whole concept of superwoman and what it was that people were talking about. I had never taken that on board before.*

We also noticed when anyone put themselves down during the discussions, and we sometimes commented on it.

> ***** said "be yourself" but she puts herself down, and **** said that she had no qualifications but she is a registered nurse. I thought "you do have qualifications but you just play those down".*

Part of a discussion centred around qualifications. We all had post-school qualifications and five of us had university degrees. What was interesting was that (with the exception of one of us who was forced by the school to do so) none of us referred to, or included our degree letters in our election CV's. Rather than talk about what we had **done** or what we had **achieved** we all chose to include statements about what we **believed** in. We all noted that the men who stood for the boards included lists of their previous positions or status, qualifications they had achieved and evidence of why people should elect them, based on what they had done in the past. In contrast, we focussed on what we intended to do in the future and the beliefs that would underpin the

way we went about that. This is in marked contrast to the women that Shakeshaft (1987:204) cites, who insist on using a title to establish authority more quickly. One of the chairwomen summed up for all of us the way we felt about this.

> *When I think back, I have been allowed to do a lot (of financially unrelated) things because "Well, you're an accountant". I think that if I wasn't an accountant I would still have the same amount of intelligence, but because I wouldn't be an accountant I am sure they would think less of me and I find that difficult. When people ask me what I do I always downplay my role. I do it because I want people to respect me for who I am and what I do ....because I'm me. I want people to give me a chance as a person and not to make assumptions about me because I can show some letters behind my name.*

Some of us were top polling candidates in the elections. We will never know the reasons behind the way parents voted, but clearly they must have had some degree of confidence in us. There was an apparent dissonance between our knowledge and awareness of our own abilities and our tendency to perceive ourselves as the same as everyone else. It seemed that we believed that anyone with the right attitudes and determination could be a good trustee, and that most of them could be a good chairperson.

> *We can say (to other women) "Well, if I can do it then you can do it". You don't have to have 'x' amounts of qualifications or letters after your name. You can just be ordinary Mrs or Ms whoever. I think a lot of us ordinary women probably feel that we are really nobody, but if you turn them around to see that everybody is somebody, and if you have the power to think positively, then anyone can do it.*

Sayers quotes evidence to prove that "both women and men consistently undervalue the performance of women" (Sayers, 1991:163). This explanation is not helpful, however, because we did not undervalue the performance of other women, and the principals did not appear to undervalue the performance of their chairwoman. The principals did not think their chairwomen were 'ordinary'. Rather they described them as *exceptional, one in a million, superb and amazingly able.* Three of the principals expressed grave concern at ever finding another chairperson to *take her place* and one articulated her/his concern that *the shoes are just too big to be filled by anyone else.*

Something we all felt strongly about was not wanting any status symbols or preferential treatment. The literature cites examples of the trappings of power or status symbols such as reserved parking spaces, separate dining facilities (Rosener, 1990:121), and usually associates these with men.

> One way in which top women are determined to be different from their male equivalents concerns the vital area of status symbols, the measurable tokens of success. Trinkets and trappings are very important to males as external and visible marks of their progress up the ladder, but at a deeper level, according to numerous research studies, as lending them the feeling of power. (Miles, 1985:161)

While such things are probably more appropriately associated with a career leader than with a chairperson, we discussed ways in which we behave differently from our male predecessors.

> *I always make my own cup of tea when I arrive at the school. The chairman before me always asked the principal's secretary to bring in a tray.*
>
> *We sit in a circle so there is no 'place' for the chairperson that makes them any different from the others.*
>
> *I always sit in the waiting area if he (the principal) is busy. I never interrupt or pull rank unless it's a real emergency.*
>
> *When I have typing to be done, I either organise it myself or negotiate a place in the queue rather than insist it takes priority.*

The way we chose to take up the position of chairperson meant extra responsibilities but not extra privileges. Cameron describes this in terms of it being a job, not a status (Cameron, 1991:63). Rosener (1990:123) provides a clue when she explains that the women leaders "refrain from asserting their own superiority, which asserts the inferiority of others". She continues that they have an aversion to any behaviour that sets them apart from the 'others'. This explanation sits very comfortably with the behaviour and attitudes of the chairwomen, who did not see the need to conform to what others may view as behaviour appropriate to a leader/chairperson. To some extent, very different discursive constructions of what holding the position of 'chair' means had been laid

down in the schools by past chairmen who had either accepted and/or demanded quite different ways of being within the position. The 'head table' and prizegiving speeches described earlier in this script are examples. It was clear from the way I was first treated by the principal's secretary that the previous chairman had expected immediate access to the principal, coffee brought on a tray, priority carparking and a level of kowtowing that I found very uncomfortable. The other chairwomen had similar experiences as the previous transcript quotations demonstrate. It caused me to reflect on the way I was choosing to position myself and I was reminded of my career position of company manager and director of a large research company. The owner/director of the company expected and received the types of deference described above from support staff and I knew that he also expected similar service from his wife. He was choosing to take up the positions of 'husband' and of 'director' in similar ways. In the same way, there were strong links between the way I chose to take up my positions of 'woman' and of 'leader'. In both positionings I hoped to be respected for the way I behaved and interacted with people, rather than because of the ascribed position.

Attempts were made by each of us to build links with people and to dissolve the leader/follower divide. We were, in fact, designing a new set of discursive practices and constructing a different kind of chairperson position.

Reflection and self evaluation

This research project methodology was one in which the conditions were set for regular self-reflection (Lather, 1991:60). There was no initial period of "guardedness" with colleagues, as Holly describes (Holly, 1991:176). It was clear from the first interviews with the chairwomen that reflection and self-evaluation, often to the point of self criticism, was regularly engaged in by nearly all of us. We saw ourselves as ongoing learners and were totally unthreatened by needing to ask for help or advice.

> *I think I have improved and gained in confidence in the chairing. It's quite a learning curve but I'm always doing something or learning new things.*

We each regularly dusted off and examined the assumptions on which our decisions were based, or, as Lather describes it, did our personal "housekeeping at the site of intellectual work" (Lather, 1991:xvii). The transcripts gave many examples of when we each sought ideas and input about our performance from others, and acknowledged the input of others. Goldsmith stresses how important it is that a leader "model continuous learning in their day-to-day behaviour" (Goldsmith, 1996:231). The chairperson who felt the least skilled was very up front about it, as she and her principal stated:

> (Chairperson) *It is knowing that you don't have those skills, and accepting that and learning it. Or else thinking "do I need that skill?" because there is someone else here who can do it. You have to be prepared to acknowledge that someone else did it and I have no problem with that.*
>
> (Principal) *She has developed her own style (of leadership) by default...just by learning and being there. I think she has a long way to go and the good thing about it is that you can tell her that.*

Such self-reflection was almost always a constructive and useful exercise. The few exceptions were when we were so analytical/critical that we lost confidence in our own judgement or ability to act. Gilligan describes such a situation.

> .....women come to question whether what they have seen exists and whether what they know from their own experience is true. These questions are raised not as abstract philosophical speculations about the nature of reality and truth but as personal doubts that invade women's sense of themselves, compromising their ability to act on their own perceptions and thus their willingness to take responsibility for what they do. (Gilligan, 1982:49)

At times like this we each usually worked our way through the issue and the insecurity by discussing it with friends, husbands or colleagues. Discussions with the action group were the most helpful because the affirmation seemed more meaningful when it came from a woman acting within the same subject position.

Conclusion

As the list of characteristics emerged from the data, it appeared to be a rather one sided list of very positive traits and I researched the data carefully for less positive characteristics (either spoken or unspoken). As I thought about this, I realised that it was through my own subjectivity at that time, my way of being and seeing, that I was interpreting the traits as being 'positive', when many of those traits could be perceived by others as negative. Each of the chairwomen, on many occasions, fronted issues that polarised people. Their strength may well have been perceived as a negative attribute. Their facilitative style and their determination to actively involve people in decision making resulted in meetings and projects taking longer than they would have had the chairpersons made autocratic decisions. There was some evidence, especially in the early days of their leadership, that this did not appeal to people who wanted to get home early. Husbands were not always pleased with the level of commitment and energy the women judged to be appropriate, and challenged their priorities.

Overall however, from the principals' viewpoints, the chairwomen were judged to have done an extremely effective job and the approaches they took were highly appreciated and valued. The democratic 'style' of leading that empowers others and requires that they share decision making and responsibilities, seemed to be the preferred way of operating for the women who, secure in our own successful careers, did not have our egos or status connected to the leadership position. Our authority came from having been elected. Our drive and motivation, not from proving anything to ourselves but, from ensuring good outcomes for the school and for **all** of the people involved in that process. While there were differences among the women, these tended to be a matter of degree only and applied to the process of implementation rather than to the underpinning ideas, beliefs values and preferred ways of operating. We each, of course, brought to the subject position our own unique and ever changing subjectivity and negotiated ways of leading with our group in their own context; our school. While many of these characteristics of leadership style may also apply to chair**men**, we identified some that, from our own experience, we have observed as usually associated with women. It was an amazing experience to be reading a piece of literature about

women leaders and find a situation described as though it had been written by us and about us. This happened many times.

CHAPTER NINE

Conclusions

Introduction

The outcomes of this project have taken three forms. The first, and my initial motivation in beginning the project, has been the production of this thesis and the insights it has provided into women's governance and post-structuralist analysis. Secondly, as a professional researcher, the methodological insights and experiences gained from working collaboratively with the research participants and having them actively involved in the interpretation of the data has been invaluable. Finally, and of even more importance for me than either of the above, were the action groups that took place over the year and the benefits to us as individuals and to our schools.

Women's Governance

As the literature review demonstrates, nearly all educational research and writing on leadership has focused on the position of the principal which is a full time, appointed, professional and career leadership position. Until very recently theorists tended to have taken an essentialist position and discussed 'women' as though there are characteristics they all hold in common in contrast to 'men' who have different characteristics. Because most principal positions have been, and still are, occupied by men, most of the research and writing on educational leadership has resulted in 'men's ways' being accepted as normal and women being regarded as 'other' and compared to men. The male and career discourses of leadership have been dominant. This study deconstructs the ways that leadership has traditionally been viewed by studying women leaders in their own right through methodologies which centre women.

Governance

It focuses on leadership through the school Board of Trustees chairperson's position which, although it holds the ultimate authority and responsibility for the school, is part time, elected, lay and voluntary. While no attempt is made to determine whether ways of being and behaving are inherently female or resulting only from socially constructed experiences, this chapter deconstructs universalising oppositional models of gender relations in order to examine the similarities and differences in the ways six

women have each taken up their leadership position and to understand what is meant by 'difference' in this 'leadership with a difference'. It also examines the issues of power and the impact on the leadership of its voluntary nature.

The introduction of Tomorrow's Schools in 1989 brought many changes to education in Aotearoa/New Zealand both in terms of practical organisation and in philosophy. Parents and communities were to become more involved in their children's education and were to be directly involved in the governance of schools. Structural changes were made through the Education Act to ensure that the control of Boards of trustees is firmly in the hands of the **elected representatives**[50] and that these trustees are elected by the parents of the children at the school. Although secondary schools had had Boards of Governors with chairpersons (usually chairmen) before 1989, the introduction of Boards of Trustees and school self management brought new ways of thinking and being to the concept of governance. This included a combination of influences from the discursive fields of education, law and business. The Education Act itself says very little about the subject position of 'leader' of the Board of Trustees. On the other hand, all advice and training materials have a lot to say about its responsibilities and how vital the appropriate acting out of this position is to the well being of the school. It is one of the positions in a dual leadership partnership with the school principal who is responsible for the day to day running of the school. It is essential that each leader understands her/his own areas of responsibility, respects the rights of the other leader and is prepared to communicate and cooperate over the grey areas. The subject position of chairperson is to an extent defined by the discourse of Tomorrow's Schools, but at the same time it is associated in the minds of many with the discursive practices of the business world which is where it originated. This has implications for the ways in which chairwomen were taking up the position and for the expectations others had of them.

It is noteworthy that when women are often regarded as "the backbone of voluntary work" (James and Saville-Smith, 1989:100) there are so few women elected to secondary school boards and even fewer elected as leaders. The six women in this study were firstly elected by the parent community to the position of Trustee and then

---

[50] A Board of trustees must have, at any point in time, more elected representatives than coopted and/or appointed members. There are legislative requirements that ensure a postal ballot and new elections are held every three years.

elected by their fellow Trustees as their Board chairpersons. They were selected for this study because they are women who have been elected to this leadership position in state **coeducational**[51] secondary schools. In the past, and currently, this leadership position[52] has been predominantly occupied by men. Principal leadership in New Zealand secondary schools is also still the domain of men[53] and of the six principals in the study schools, five are men. While this study did not set out to compare the leadership attitudes and styles of women with those of men, the participants and the literature often comment on such difference (Shakeshaft, 1987; Neville, 1988; Hall, Cullen & Slack, 1989; Court, 1989b)

Some writers, taking an essentialist stance, have focussed on differences between men and women either directly by describing them, or indirectly by implication in talking about 'women's ways of being or knowing'. Working with the women in the action group, it would have been easy to do the same because it was noticeable that, when the women first got together, even though none of them had met before, there was an immediate rapport and equally immediate trust established. Even in the earliest discussions it was evident that we had many similar ideas about our positions as leaders. I will begin by examining these similarities.

Similarities in experiences, beliefs and practices

The demands of the position itself and the similarities of the schools meant that all the chairwomen faced some similar issues. These included the need to build an effective working relationship with the principal, having public responsibilities, dealing with student discipline, dealing with discrimination and domination, managing one's time and negotiating the often competing demands of several subject positions being occupied concurrently. The fact that all the women occupied the same position of chairperson meant that a lot could go unsaid but understood. Their understanding of the importance of confidentiality is an example of this. It has already been noted that, by definition of the research selection process, there were strong similarities in our age, marital and parenting statuses. This meant that we all occupied the positions of wife,

---

[51] In coeducational schools, there is no reason why men and women should not be elected in equal numbers although as the data show, this was far from the case.

[52] This 'position' is used in the context of chairperson of the Board of Governors and the Board of Trustees.

[53] The 1997 Schools Statistics Report says that 33% of all school principals and 25% of secondary principals are female. ISSN 1173-2504

mother of teenagers, trustee and leader. We were all Pakeha. Other positions we had all elected to take up included tertiary educated person, professional or business career woman, community volunteer, household manager and friend. We were all occupying a similar range of subject positions at the same stage of our lives and, therefore, having many of the same experiences in dealing with them.

Discussion indicated that there were a great many underpinning beliefs and attitudes we held in common. These included a belief in the responsibility of people to serve their local community, the importance of ownership through shared power and responsibility, caring about people and valuing each person's contribution, not seeing one's own views as having any more authority than those of others, believing and trusting in the strength of the group collectively to make decisions and to act, and seeing through a commitment fully with energy and enthusiasm.

It also became clear during the discussions that we chose very similar styles of operating as a leader. For instance, we all chose to be very honest and direct communicators, to be patient and persistent, to avoid conflict but to handle it if necessary, to listen carefully in an holistic way[54], to initiate humour and encourage it in others, to reflect and self evaluate, to value our intuition, to constantly affirm others but to give ourselves a hard time, to be strong for the group and the school and to accept responsibility and to challenge obstacles when they presented. Overall, we each saw ourselves as an integral part of our own Board and as a facilitator of decision making, process, action and change. Our focus was on people as the agents of action and change as well as on the issues themselves and the outcomes.

We had each been elected, and re-elected annually, as the Board leader for qualities that fellow trustees perceived we possessed. The data give some insights as to where the women felt some of these attributes had arisen. As described in Chapter Seven, family events during childhood had forced a heavy burden of emotional responsibility on each of us at an early age. The enforced occupation of the position of responsibility had outcomes which included a learned ability to deal with crises and stress, the development of inner strength, determination, confidence in taking responsibility and a strong work ethic. The occupation of the positions of wife, mother and household manager had resulted in a wide range of skills and attributes including

[54] This was listening, to gain understanding, through our ears, eyes, other senses and our intuition.

caring, patience, conflict prevention and resolution, dealing with difficult issues, managing time, managing budgets, people management, planning and coordinating projects. It was also in these positions we had learned to trust our intuition, to observe and listen, to reflect and self evaluate and of the importance of humour. Court names some of the same skills including "the effective management of time and budgets, facilitation of decision making and negotiation of conflict" and she describes the "overlaps between the work of mothering (or caring) and managing" (Court, 1994c:16). Because of the concurrent occupation of many subject positions by the women and because they took an holistic approach to the management of them, these attributes and "considerable management skills" (Treleaven, 1993:3) described above had become an integral part of the women's ways of operating and there was ready transference of the skills, knowledge and attributes from situation to situation within the various positions. Ruddick said that this holistic approach is marked by a "unity of reflection, judgement and emotion" (cited in Code, 1992:13). Leadership style, then, can be seen as emerging not out of biological sex, or of sex-role orientation (Korabik, 1990:286) but rather out of the occupation and interaction between a wide and particular range of subject positions.

Differences in experiences

Some writers acknowledge that there are also differences among men and among women, some even going as far as to suggest these may be greater than the differences between men and women (Code, 1992:17; Court, 1994c:39). There were differences between the chairwomen in the ways they took up their leadership positions and there were differences in the ways that they dealt with the dissonance and competing facets of the various subject positions they occupied concurrently. Firstly, the differences in the ways they chose to take up the position of chairwoman included the time each was willing to allow for a process to take its course without intervening; the extent to which each was willing to enact the public aspects of the chairperson position; the type of relationship formed with the principal; the extent to which each was self critical and put herself down and the level of self confidence in her ability to deal with some issues and situations. There were even greater differences in the ways we each handled the pressures and conflicting aspects of the various subject positions we occupied

concurrently. In particular, this applied to the conflict between the position of chairwoman and those of wife and of mother.

In the same way that I examined the external influences in relationship to the similarities, I will do so in relationship to these differences. It is important to explore whether significant differences in the schools, or their personnel, would have had an influence. Compared to the wide range of types of secondary schools in the Auckland area, these six schools are remarkably similar in many ways. They are coeducational by definition, have student rolls of about 1000, are multicultural and have a very similar mixture of ethnic groupings and socioeconomic status[55]. At the same time, there were some differences in the six schools and between the six principals. Two schools placed a high value on traditions and this was supported by their chairwomen. Others prided themselves on being 'at the cutting edge' of innovation. Again, this was supported and, to some extent, driven by their chairwomen. The contexts in which they operated, therefore, differed in some respects and may have influenced the choice of the particular school for their children. There were differences in the gender, personalities and attitudes of some of the Principals. One in particular, and in contrast to the others, disapproved strongly of the concept of Tomorrow's Schools and resented having to share power in a dual leadership partnership. One was a woman. These differences were not, on the whole, the things that, in the opinions of the chairwomen, accounted for the differences we were experiencing in the ways we felt and acted. Nor did we feel, when we discussed these, that we could put them down to variations in our childhoods, parents, ways we grew up, education or personalities although we all acknowledged the impact of these things on our lives.

Gendered home relationships

Careful analysis of the nature of the differences indicates that they have more to do with the order of life experiences through which we each took up various subject positions and went through the process of negotiating the pressures, dissonance and conflicts that arose within positions and within relationships. The women who had married early and were younger at the time they took up the positions of wife and mother found the greatest difficulty to be negotiated at that time was finding time for

[55] Five of the six schools were either a decile 3 or 4. The decile ranking is a Ministry generated score that ranges between 10 being the highest SES and I being the lowest.

themselves without compromising their responsibility to their children or their husband. Even as they undertook tertiary education and re-entered the paid workforce, they found ways to do this that did not compromise the expectations that their children and husbands had of them and the expectations that they had of themselves. These marriage relationships were quite traditional in that husbands worked fulltime and had jobs which took priority in terms of family time and allocation of tasks. The women were expected, and were happy at that stage of their lives, to fit their continuing education and developing careers around this priority and to do it at a pace that did not interrupt their husband's or the family's timetables. They wanted to actively parent their children while they were small and were prepared for any cost to be to their personal time. They were not in leadership positions at this stage and their husbands experienced them as being focussed on their marriage relationship and on the home and family. When they eventually did decide to take up, at the request of their fellow trustees, the position of chairwoman they were faced with resistance from their husbands that often manifested itself in complaints related to the time the position was occupying and the 'disruptions' or changes that resulted. An example was the husband who complained that time spent in the leadership role resulted in his dinner not always being ready at the traditional time. The women, however, were convinced that the real issue was one of power and the resentment was really because the women were no longer seeing their occupation of the position of house manager as taking priority over occupying the position of leader. What allowed the change to occur for the women was a combination of factors. Their children were older and, therefore, less dependent; in other words the position of mother to teenagers was being taken up quite differently from that of mother to young children. The experiences associated with the position of career woman were bringing new knowledge, interactions and confidence so that the women's changing subjectivities included a belief in their right to choose their own priorities for the use of their time. The way the women were seeing their position of wife was changing to be one of enacting a more similar role as their husband and so they wanted to negotiate new agreements on family tasks which would allow them more freedom and to represent a more equally shared distribution of tasks. The husbands, on the other hand, did not want to change the ways they had taken up their positions and so they resented these

new pressures which they perceived to be caused by the leadership position which their wives had taken up.

In contrast, two of the women had taken up positions of career women and of leader before they met their husbands and had had the freedom to negotiate the demands of these without having to consider the demands or needs of a partner. These positions were already a part of their subjectivities and their activities when they entered into the relationship. As they later negotiated the subject positions of wife and mother, these new positions temporarily took priority over the other positions. The husbands were at the same time negotiating their new positions of husband and father with partners whose expectations included an acceptance of their having been leaders. The women's perception was that when the leadership position was assumed again, the husbands did not feel threatened by seeing their wives re-taking an already familiar and accepted position. For these chairwomen, the experiences they had gained previously in enacting leadership positions were part of their repertoire and they were able to assume them again and negotiate the logistics of managing their family and personal lives with more confidence than their fellow chairwomen could do. Weedon describes such negotiations as being at the heart of feminist post-structuralism.

> Feminist post-structuralism insists that forms of subjectivity are produced historically and change with shifts in the wide range of discursive fields which constitute them. Feminist post-structuralism goes further than this to insist that the individual is always the site of conflicting forms of subjectivity. (Weedon, 1987:33)

Shared leadership

The similarities between these women leaders, and some of those described in the literature, are a result of their occupying a similar range of subject positions and experiencing similar conflicts and negotiation processes. It may be that the emerging emphasis in the literature on the value of ownership and shared leadership for **all** leaders, both women and men, is a reflection of the changing combinations of subject positions taken up by men as they enter into partnerships with women who have the same career demands as they do, resulting in their taking up some of the positions that were previously the domain of women. Examples include those of child caregiver, teacher, nurse, school parent helper and house manager.

Recent literature on leadership places a strong focus on shared leadership. In 1990, Peter Senge wrote about the need for collective leadership and for leaders who are "designers, stewards and teachers" (1990:340). In his view, a sole charismatic leader who rises to the top does so because of their own lack of vision, their inability to master change and the powerlessness of others. Roland Barth (1990) discusses the notion of all participants in an organisation being **both** leaders and learners or followers. These are very much the sorts of underpinning philosophies shared by the chairwomen. At the same time, Kagan (1994:53) points out that shared leadership takes more time, money and skills that are often taken for granted. The skills that she identifies are "communication, negotiation, conflict resolution and empowerment". These are some of the skills that the principals valued in their chairwomen. Although not all the chairwomen credited themselves with having such skills, they were demonstrated by the data and link directly to the issues, attitudes and skills described in the previous chapters with which the chairwomen saw themselves dealing as part of their belief in sharing leadership.

Power relationships

Implicit in any discussion of leadership are power relationships; shared leadership implies shared power. The issues of power relations are important but complex. The position of chairperson itself has in-built contradictions in the expectations others have of the position. The principal, for instance, may see the chairperson as a supporter, an employer, a co-leader and/or a parent and lay volunteer and a good chairperson will, indeed, be all of these things. School staff may view trustees as their employers or as a group of fundraising parents. Parents may view the chairperson as the person with responsibility to govern the school, the person with the power to expel their child or as their representative. Each of these dimensions of the position place the chairwoman in differing power relationships with others. Fellow trustees elect their chairperson to lead them, to control the Board meetings, to liaise with the principal, to sign school documents, to be their spokesperson and to exercise a casting vote if necessary. It is a position that potentially allows significant personal power to be exercised. As shown in previous chapters, however, the women reacted quite strongly against the notion of their exercising personal power and they rejected all the symbols of power, even when these had previously been part of the school's culture. It would appear that the Boards in the

study, in electing and annually re-electing these women, were wanting leaders whom they could trust to share that power. What some trustees did not initially understand was that their chairwomen would insist that they shared the power through full participation, delegation, shared decision making and shared responsibility for the outcomes of the decisions. Power was not seen as existing in a finite quantity but rather as something that expands as it is shared (Shakeshaft, 1987:206) and is limitless (Restine, 1993:3). The reason that the chairwomen took such a strong stance on this issue was their total commitment to positive outcomes for all the people in the school and their belief that this is achieved through empowering as many people as possible to participate in collective action. They believed, as Kanter does that-

> Power is the ability to *do,* in the classic physical usage of power as energy, and thus it means having access to whatever is needed for the doing. The problems with absolute power, lie in the fact that it renders everyone else powerless. On the other hand, empowering more people through generating more autonomy, more participation in decisions, and more access to resources increases the total capacity for effective action rather than increases domination. (Kanter, 1977:166)

The chairwomen were working in subject positions which gave them authority (as Trustee and chairperson) and, at the same time, the position of woman which, however, is socially constructed as less powerful than 'man'. The chairwomen did not step outside of their elected subject position, or neglect it in any way, they encouraged others to step inside it also or to incorporate parts of it into their own subjectivities in order that the capacity for effective action is increased and sustained through shared ownership and responsibility. Out of the negotiating of potentially conflicting subject positions they were constructing for themselves different and effective ways of 'being' a chairperson and leader. Their understandings of leadership came from experiences within other subject positions, including those of wife, mother and household manager. The evidence of this study would support Hartsock's plea for "a theory of power that recognises that our practical daily activity contains an understanding of the world" and her suggestion that "theories of power for women (might) also be theories of power for other groups as well" (Hartsock, 1990:172). If it is similar daily experiences gained during the occupation of a similar range of subject positions that have led to the attitudes, beliefs and skills described in relationship to the leadership position, then the

gender of the person occupying the many positions may be irrelevant. This is an area for further research.

Powerful leadership with a difference

A final issue to explore is that of the voluntary aspect of the leadership and the link with the motive of service. Because each of the women had a career outside of the trusteeship position, any needs they had for financial rewards, professional and business challenges and fulfilment and autonomy of decision making were fulfilled through their career subject positions. Still discusses women's "predilection for service career areas and consensus management styles (Still, 1990:169). Of the six women in this study, five had service oriented careers and four of them were in health or education. It was clear that, with the exception of competing pressures over time, the women moved with relative ease within and between the voluntary and career subject positions. They used the same skills and took most of the same beliefs and attitudes into each. At the same time, they took the leadership aspect of those subject positions into their family lives and other voluntary work. This frequent transference of skills, attitudes, knowledge and learnings between the subject positions provided them with extensive experience and enabled the women to manage the competing pressures of the various positions by minimising the dissonance and maximising the consonance. Covey in writing about the leaders of the future says that -

> The leader of the future will be a leader in every area of life, especially family life. The enormous needs and opportunities in society call for a great responsibility towards service. There is no place this spirit of service can be cultivated like the home. The spirit of the home, and also of the school, is that they prepare young people to go forth and serve. (Covey, 1996:159)

The chairwomen modelled these values through their board leadership, working towards strengthening the group, and then using the collective strengths of the group to achieve the best outcomes for the people in their schools. The women were powerful, but powerful **with** others rather than compared to them and powerful in what they were able to achieve with their boards. Their personal power came from their humility, their understanding of the use of power in a shared way and in "the dignity they nurtured in

those around them and at all levels in their respective organisations (Heskett and Schlesinger, 1996:117)

Post-structuralist analysis

As described in Chapter Two, I selected a post-structuralist approach for the analysis of the women's accounts of their leadership because I felt it was one with which they would be comfortable, unlike some of the other feminist theoretical approaches, and because I felt it would enable me to explain difference. Although I felt confident reading and writing about the approach in my study and assignments and I felt confident about its concepts in relationship to my data, I had great trouble articulating the data using language appropriately.

Using the concepts of discourses and discursive fields did not present difficulties.

Working with the concept of subject positionings, however, did. This study required a very careful analysis of the subject position of chairperson and its conflicting relationship to the other positions concurrently held by the women. The position itself is a complex one and within it, the women had a wide range of varied tasks, skill requirements, expectations, constrictions and opportunities. I found myself falling into using the language of role theory to describe aspects of the 'being' in the position. Working with the feminist concept of subjectivity presented even more challenges. It was as though one's subjectivity was so ever-changing and evolving as to be almost too elusive to describe.

A very recent reading of the articles by Alison Jones (1997) and Bronwyn Davies[56] 1997 has helped me to clarify my ideas about the reasons for my difficulties. Jones said "terms such as 'subjectivity', 'positioning', subject positions' have been taken up by students in confused and unwittingly contradictory ways" (1997:261). I do not, however, feel my difficulties have resulted from what Jones describes as a failure to understand the structuralist base of post-structuralism. Rather, I find myself identifying with Davies (1997:281) views that there is, to some extent, an expectation from academics that "we require of our students - that they learn to mimic the discourses we

[56] These two articles appeared in a 1997 copy of Gender and Education. The first was by Alison Jones who described difficulties she observed in her students' use of post-structuralist theory. It is followed by a reply from Bronwyn Davies.

want them to use" and that students, therefore, need to conform by using the language that is already in accepted use rather than developing new ways of expressing things.

Davies further says (1997:281) that "the skills of attending to texts in post-structuralist ways are ones which must be struggled after continuously; they are not achievable as a repertoire of specific skills, though there are ways of writing and speaking which are helpful in producing post-structuralist practices". While I can see that as reasonable, I am left with the anxiety that if this post-structuralist discourse is so difficult to work with (as Davies suggests), in a way that is acceptable (as Jones suggests), that only extremely experienced academics can understand it and get it right, then how much promise does that hold for its future usefulness.

Methodological insights

The process of involving participants in the collection of, and reflection on, data is an integral part of any action research programme although it can be difficult to achieve in practice. In this study, as detailed in the chapter on "Methodology in Action" the group worked differently from most action research groups in two ways -

Firstly, each participant went out separately to take action in their own school and with their own board. The action was not taken by the action research group as an entity.

Secondly, as well as reflecting on the data, the women were all involved in the interpretation of it. They were not working from an already articulated theoretical position but rather from their own practical theoretical base. The difficulties were many because we were interpreting data at the same time as collecting it. Even though it remained my task, as the primary researcher, to take up the challenge of a post-structuralist analysis of the data I had the privilege of the benefit of the wisdom and understanding of the group collectively. It gave me a confidence in presenting the data that I had not previously experienced in over thirty years as a researcher.

Outcomes for participants and their schools

One of the best outcomes of the action groups was the way the members felt about being involved and the personal benefits they reported.

There are all the side benefits, like meeting people that there is some sort of common ground with. Being able to know that you are not by yourself. That shared ground, that shared experience.

*For me what has happened is that I can do whatever I damn well want because there are five of us here and we all do it (what we each want), so it is just not a problem. I don't have to do it any other way other than the way I want to. I think that is really good.....I guess it has given me confidence. This is how **I** operate and this is how it will be done.*

I realised that although I thought I was doing thing pretty well, I wasn't perfect and no one is. Some areas of the non perfectness I tried to fix in relation to what I had been told by you guys. It was really important learning for me.

When each of the women was interviewed at the end of the research, after the action group had finished meeting, I asked whether they thought it was important that the group had comprised women only. All felt strongly that this had been a vital factor in the success of the group as a vehicle for empowerment. Comments centred around the immediate honesty and trust that were essential in order for the group members to get on with the sharing and the work of the group without anyone feeling threatened, dominated or pressured.

K- Do you think our group would have been different if there were men involved?

➢ *Most definitely*

K- Can you tell me about that?

➢ *There is always the -- I was going to say fear. There is always the thought, subconscious thought, that they are going to take over.*

K- So without, what happens?

➢ *Without that, there is far more collaboration and participation from all members of the group rather than sitting there listening to some men going on.*

It has probably been easier as a group of women just to let it all hang out. If we had half men and half women you would probably find that the men would not be totally honest because they wouldn't like to think that they were not perfect. We are totally open and that is where we are different. We can do that quite openly and feel relaxed about it. I think that is what makes the difference.

The support, increased knowledge and understandings, achievements, confidence gained and action taken in our schools were outcomes that have had long term benefits for many. Although no longer a trustee at my school, I am still involved in a number of ways and am able to observe the longer term results of the policies, programmes, systems, training and ways of operating that were set in train during the time of the research. I feel sure there would be similar observable outcomes in the other schools.

Future research

As with all research studies, this study answered a number of questions but, at the same time, raised new issues and questions.

As the literature review demonstrates, there are very little data available on voluntary leadership that is done in addition to having a career, rather than being a career substitute. There were strong indications that the motivation was different for non career voluntary leaders than it is for appointed career leaders. Further investigation, in particular in the field of education, could provide valuable insights.

While the views of the principals were part of this study, the views and perceptions of fellow trustees were beyond the scope of the study. It would be valuable to understand how the follow trustees perceived their chairwoman and also, whether or not they felt that they as trustees played a leadership role on the board.

Also beyond the scope of the study were the perceptions of the students and staff of their school chairwoman. Clearly the school principal would be more directly involved as a leader with these groups than would the board chairperson but, in light of the efforts of the chairwomen to include and value input from students and staff, it would be good to know how aware of and how important the groups felt it was.

Finally, as signalled earlier, it would be marvellous to have a similar study on the men's leadership in the same field. It may be that the whole focus of leadership, for men and for women, is changing and that the available literature present an outdated picture but we will not know if this is the case without current information about men's voluntary leadership.

APPENDICES

A. O'Rourke Letter

B. Examples of data coding and processing

C. Interview questions for principals

D. Participation in action groups

E. Telephone notes for setting a meeting date

F. Trustee Code of Conduct

G. Letter requesting Board permission

9 June 1993

Kay Hawk
Chairperson
Board of Trustees
Onehunga High School
17 Liverpool Street
Epsom
AUCKLAND

Dear Kay

Nga mihi nui ki a koe.

Thank you for attending the meeting of women secondary school Principals and Chairpersons at the Northern Management Centre of the Ministry of Education on 31 May 1993.

I very much enjoyed the discussion about the education of girls and will refer the issues raised at the meeting to Policy division for consideration in future planning. I will also ensure that the following points made at the meeting are incorporated in the briefing notes prepared for the incoming Government:

* Despite the improved achievements of girls at school, long-term effects are not evident in terms of the overall success of women in employment. There is clearly a need to educate employers so that women experience equity in the workplace.

* Girls and women still have difficulties in balancing the multiplicity of roles expected of them in society. The effects of family, social and economic pressures on the achievement of girls still need further research and affirmative action.

* The education of boys and men must include an understanding of the changing role of women.

* There is a need for more women members of Boards of Trustees and for strong women teachers in boys' schools.

* School/Industry links should be developed further to enhance employment opportunities for girls and women.

* Some improvement has been made in the performance of girls in Mathematics and Science. Girls now need to be involved much more seriously in the use and development of technology.

* Schools are facing a dual role of educating students both for the long-term needs of a fine-tuned, highly competitive society, and for the short-term needs of the immediate future for students who will be unable to gain employment and need a wide range of social and leisure skills.

6-10 Nugent St, Grafton, Auckland 3
Private Bag 92-614, SYMONDS STREET, Auckland 3
TELEPHONE: 0-9-377 7655, FACSIMILE: 0-9-302 3019

* It is now evident that the slow progress of women to achieve equality in spite of a great deal of individual effort is also due to the structures and systems of society and that inequality must now be looked at from this perspective as well as from the perspective of personal achievement.

Many thanks for your participation in a most valuable discussion.

Naku noa na

Maris O'Rourke

Dr Maris O'Rourke
Secretary for Education

Public Role.

but the actual chairing part of it ... See Maureen doesn't play a large role in the assemblies as I would like, so that I was really pleased when I cranked up to say something in assembly and it is a little bit of a dissapointment to me, I can understand why, but it is sad that hasn't wanted to stand up and say a few words. That puts her in the same role on the stage as say my own wife, and I think that is wrong. I have always tried to get to do something like dish out the prizes or something, not that ithink that is a woman's role in particular. That is why I demanded aggressively this year the

Public role. IP: E8

weren't all comfortable with speaking at the prizegiving.

Public role

A -I refuse to do that and I never feel too comfortable addressing the staff. In fact, I would say that is probalby my most difficult thing because I feel, certainly not from all the staff, in fact it is quite a small group, butat there is a small group of staff members that are quite political and sort of view the board in a quite an antagonistic way. FC1.1k

(22)

... I had to do three speeches at senior prizegivings. They got shorter

Public role

What do you do ?

I do the opening address and I must admit I was scared because I had never given a speech in public before. Our principals speech is usually half an hour long. A67.22

Public role

had to be encouraged to speak, but when she finally did she was great value, very crisp, very good presentation. I had to work on her and say look will you just say a few words. Reluctantly she agreed. just quales at the thought of it. I told her that the prizegiving is a board occasion and she could take over it if she wanted and she said she was going to delegate it to me, which is alright as long as we know what the lines are. The one IP C16 IP: E4

Public role

day of the year I hate, even though I have done a lot of public speaking, is the prizegiving. After Ive got over my bit its OK. ICR.5

been there A66.11

Prizegiving

I welcome everybody and then I will be asked to introduce the speaker and then I will be made to give out some of the presents, or one lot of certificates and then I have my close and that is when I give the ...

The questions are -

* Is the Chairperson's leadership effective?
  Is she doing a good job?

* How does the BOT work as a group?
  What role does the Chairperson play in the group?

* What style of leadership does she have?

* How accessible is she?

Does this meet your needs?

* What are her motives in being Chp.?

* Is she an initiator/innovator?
Should she be?

* What is the extent of her involvement in the school?
  Would you prefer she was more/less involved?

* Governance/Management -
  Is this well understood in this school?

  Does the Chairperson keep/cross the boundaries?

* What role does the CHp. play in student discipline hearings
  How effective is this?

	school	PARTICIPATION											
		Initial Interview	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Group 6	Group 7	Informal Mtg	Final Interview	Principal Interview	BOT Mtg
Kay	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chp * Replaced by - Chp *	2	✓	✓	Resigned								✓	
				Elected	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chp *	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chp *	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chp *	5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chp *	6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chp *	7							✓					

CORE GROUP

Chairperson	✓	✓ FR	✓ starts your battles	✓	✓	✓
Tues. 8						
Mon 14	✓	—				
Tues 15	✓					
Wed 16	✓	✓		—		
Thurs 17	✓	✓		✓		
~~Fri~~						
~~Mon 21~~	~~✓~~	~~—~~				
Tues 22	✓	✓	—	? NO ✓		
~~Wed 23~~	✓	✓				
~~Thurs 24~~	✓	✓				
Mon 28	—	—				
Tues. 29	✓	✓	✓	Pol not ✓	✓	
~~Wed~~ 30	✓	—				
Thurs. 1	—	✓	✓	✓		
Mon 5	✓	? NO ✓	✓	✓	Pol not ✓	
Tues 6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Wed 7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Confirmed
Thurs 8	✓	✓	✓	—		
~~Fri 9~~						

CODES OF CONDUCT

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees agrees to adhere to the following code of conduct:
Each Board of Trustees is charged with governance of its school. Effective governance is a successful blend of professional expertise and community involvement. This co-operation should lead to effective and positive relationships between the trustees and staff and ensure that the educational well-being of students is maintained. This code of conduct shall be standard for all boards of trustees throughout New Zealand and apply to all members.

Trustees shall :

1. ensure that the needs of children and their learning are given full consideration when planning, developing and implementing learning and teaching programmes.

2. ensure that all students are provided with an education which respects their dignity, rights and individuality, and which challenges them to achieve personal standards of excellence and to reach their full potential.

3. serve their school and their community to the best of their ability and be honest, reliable and trustworthy in all matters relevant to their roles and responsibilities.

4. respect the integrity of staff, the principal, parents and students.

5. be loyal to the school and its charter.

6 maintain the confidentiality and trust vested in them.

7. ensure strict confidentiality of papers and information related to the Board's position as employer.

8. act as good employers.

9. ensure that individual trustees do not act independently of the Board's decisions.

10. ensure that any disagreements with the board's stance on matters relating to the employer position are to be resolved within the Board.

11. exercise their powers of governance in a way that fulfils the intent of the Treaty of Waitangi by valuing and reflecting New Zealand's dual cultural heritage.

12. use the Maori community's own processes to consult with the Maori community.

13. Trustees shall have the capacity to enter into contracts to receive funds in return for specified programmes and services.

The Board of Trustees accepts the following:
The principal is the professional leader of the school and is responsible to the Board of Trustees. The responsibilities of the principal will be stated in another document held by the school and available for public inspection.

BOARD OF TRUSTEE MEETINGS

School Trustees are obliged to abide by the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 which provides that:

1. Meetings of boards of trustees should be open to the public, with copies of the agenda to be made available. Times and places of board and committee meetings should be published with reasonable notice, in terms of section 46 (5) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

2. Resolution or motion may be made to exclude the public from the whole or part of the proceedings of any meeting, in terms of Section 48 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

3. Bona fide reporters for any newspaper or news service are deemed to be members of the public and are entitled to attend any meeting or any part of a meeting for the purpose of reporting the proceedings for any newspaper or news service. They must withdraw with other members of the public when the Board of Trustees goes into committee.

4. Minutes of meetings are to be available at the school's office and the office of the servicing agent/authority for public scrutiny.

5. Any member of the public may inspect the minutes of any meeting, or part of any meeting of the Board of Trustees (not being a meeting or part of a meeting from which the public were excluded) and may take notes from these minutes.

6. Any member of the public so inspecting any such minutes who requests a copy of any part and tenders the prescribed amount (if any) shall be given such a copy.

7. The secretary of the Board of Trustees should take such precautions as may be necessary to ensure that no person inspecting any such minutes shall inspect or see the minutes of the part of the meeting from which the public was excluded.

Kay Hawk
17 Liverpool Street
Epsom
Auckland 3

18 February 1994

Trustees
Board of Trustees
Auckland

Dear Trustees,

My name is Kay Hawk. I am currently studying for a Masters in Educational Administration at Massey University and have been granted permission by the University to do a thesis.

The topic that interests me, and that I have been granted permission to study, is the leadership role of female chairpersons of coed secondary school Boards of Trustees. I enclose a full copy of my proposal.

In the Auckland area there are 63 coed secondary schools and only five of these are chaired by women. I chair the Board of Onehunga High School, so I am one of the five.

Before submitting the proposal, I met with three of the women and we discussed ways that we could work together so that I could do my study and that they could benefit as well. They were all willing to take part.

It would not be appropriate, however for this to happen unless the four Boards were also willing so I am writing to ask your approval for my study and for the participation of your Board.

As well as the chairpersons meeting together, I would like to be able to attend two Board meetings over the period of the year and to conduct an interview with the Principal and the Staff Trustee. I would also like to attend a few school functions in which the Board has a role.

I would at all times seek your guidance and permission and assure you of total confidentiality of information. I will be discussing the details of such ethical issues with the chairpersons before beginning.

I will be very happy to answer any questions or to attend a meeting to introduce myself.

Looking forward to your reply

Kay Hawk

Bibliography

Abigail, J. (1983) "The myth of equal opportunity in N.Z. secondary schools", ***PPTA Journal,*** 1983:10-14

Absolum, M. (1995) "Getting the best out of Tomorrow's Schools" In ***New Zealand Principal/Te tumuaki o Aotearo,*** Vol. 10, No. 2, June 1995

Acker, S. (1983) "Women and Teaching: A Semi-Detached Sociology of a Semi-Profession" In Walker, S. and Barton, L. (eds.) ***Gender, Class and Education,*** Basingstoke: Falmer Press

Acker, S. (1987) "Feminist Theory and the study of Gender and Education", ***International Review of Education,*** 33: 419-435

Acker, S. (ed.) (1989) ***Teachers, Gender & Careers***. New York: The Falmer Press

Adelman, C. (1993) "Kurt Lewin and the Origins of Action Research" ***Educational Action Research,*** 1:1 :7-24

Aitken, J. (1991) "Boards of Trustees: Partnership and Power" Address to NZ School Trustees Association. 18 May, 1991. Ministry of Women's Affairs

Alton-Lee, A. and Densem, P. (1992) "Towards a Gender-Inclusive School Curriculum: Changing Educational Practice" In Middleton, S. and Jones, A. (eds.) (1992) ***Women and Education in Aotearoa 2,*** Wellington: Bridget Williams Books

Altrichter, H., Posch, P and Somekh, B. (1993) ***Teachers Investigate their work: An Introduction to the Methods of Action Research,*** London: Routledge

American Association of School Administrators (1990) ***Women and minorities in school administration: Facts and figures 1989-1990,*** Arlington, VA:AASA

Anderson,G. (1990) ***Fundamentals of Educational Research.*** London: The Falmer Press

Antler, J. and Biklen, S. (eds.) (1990) ***Changing Education: Women as Radicals and Conservators,*** Albany, NY: State University of New York Press

Armstrong, N. (1992) "Handling the Hydra: Feminist Analyses of the State" in Du Plessis, R. et al (eds.) (1992) ***Feminist Voices,*** Auckland: Oxford University Press

Arnot, M. (1982) "Male hegemony, social class and women's education", ***Boston University Journal of Education,*** Vol.164, No.1:64-89

Aronowitz, S and Giroux, H. (1985) ***Education Under Siege: The Conservative, Liberal and Radical Debate over Schooling,*** Boston: Bergin & Harvey

Ball, S. (1987) ***The Micro-Politics of the School,*** London: Methuen

Ballard, R.and Duncan, P. (1989) ***Role of the Principal and Trustees in Tomorrow's Schools***, Implementation Unit, Department of Education. Wellington

Bardwick, J. (1996) "Peacetime Management and Wartime Leadership", In Hesselbein, F., ***The Leader of the Future,*** San Fransisco: Jossey Bass

Barnes, J.D. (1994) "Women in the Foot-Hills: Researching Women Principals" In ***New Zealand Journal of Educational Administration,*** Vol.9, Nov 1994

Barth, R. (1990) ***Changing Schools From Within,*** San Fransisco: Jossey-Bass

Bass, B. (1990) Letter published in the "Debate" section of the ***Harvard Business Review,*** 1990

Belenky, M.,Clinchy, B.,Goldberger, N., & Tarule, J. (1986) ***Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind,*** New York: Basic Books

Berk, S. (1980) ***Women and Household Labour,*** Beverly Hills: Sage Publications

Blackmore, J. (1989) "Educational Leadership: A Feminist Critique and Reconstruction", In Smyth, J. (ed.) ***Critical Perspectives in Educational Leadership,*** Lewes: Falmer Press

Blackmore, J. (1992) "More Power to the Powerful: Corporate Management, Mergers and Implications for Women of the Reshaping of the "Culture" of Australian Tertiary Education", ***Australian Feminist Studies,*** 15 August, 1992

Blackmore, J. (1993) "'In the Shadow of Men': The Historical Construction of Educational Administration as 'Masculinist' Enterprise", In Blackmore and Kenway (eds.) ***Gender Matters in Educational Administration and Policy,*** Lewes: The Falmer Press

Blackmore, J. and Kenway, J. (eds.) (1993) ***Gender Matters in Educational Administration and Policy: A Feminist Introduction,*** Lewes: Falmer Press

Blair, K. (1980) ***The Clubwoman as Feminist,*** New York: Holmes and Meier

Blase, J. (1988) "Dimensions of Effective School Leadership: The teacher's perspective", ***American Educational Research Journal,*** 2(4):589-610

Blumberg, J. (1980) "Benevolent Beginnings: Volunteer Traditions among American Women, 1800-1860." In ***Women, Volunteering and Health Policy,*** Conference Papers of United Hospital Fund. New York: United Hospital Fund of New York

Bogden, R.C. and Biklen, S.K. (1982) ***Qualitative Research for Education: An introduction to theory and methods***, Boston: Allyn and Bacon

Bouma, G. (1993) Revised Edit. ***The Research Process***, Oxford : Oxford University Press

Bowles, G, Klein, R.D. and Rutenberg, T. (1983) "Selected Annotated Bibliography of Articles on Theories of Women's Studies", In Bowles, G and Klein, R (eds.) ***Theories of Women's Studies***, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul

Brandt, R. (1992) "On Rethinking Leadership: A Conversation with Tom Sergiovanni", ***Educational Leadership,*** Vol.49, No.5, Feb.1992

Bridges, D. (1989) "Conducting Case Studies of Policing" In Burgess,R (ed.) ***The Ethics of Educational Research,*** Lewes: The Falmer Press

Bruyn, S. (1966) ***Human Perspectives in Sociology***, New York: Prentice Hall

Bryman, A. and Burgess, R. (eds.) (1994) ***Analyzing Qualitative Data,*** London: Routledge

Bunch, C. (1983) "Not By Degrees: Feminist Theory and Education" In Bunch,C. and Pollack, S. (1993) ***Learning Our Way: Essays in Feminist Education,*** New York: The Crossing Press

Burge, C. (1991) Collaborative Action Research Network, Suffolk, Unpublished document

Burgess, R. (ed.) (1989) ***The Ethics of Educational Research,*** New York: The Falmer Press

Burton, C. (1991) ***The Promise and the price: the struggle for equal opportunity in women's employment,*** Sydney: Allen and Unwin

Caldwell, B. & Spinks, J. (1992) ***Leading the Self Managing School,*** London: The Falmer Press

Cameron, J. (1994) ***Women Who Manage: Study of Volunteer National Sports Administrators,*** Sociology Dept., University of Canterbury, Christchurch, NZ

Campbell, J. (1992) "Beyond the Organisation: Women Entrepreneurs" In Olsson,S. (ed.) ***The Gender Factor: Women in New Zealand Organisations,*** Palmerston North: The Dunmore Press

Capec, M. (1984) "The Last Word", ***Association Of Governing Boards Reports,*** (Nov. - Dec.):46-48.

Capper, C. (1992) "A feminist poststructural analysis of nontraditional approaches in educational administration." ***Educational Administration Quarterly,*** 21(1):103-124

Carr, W. and Kemmis, S. (1986) ***Becoming Critical: Education, Knowledge and Action Research,*** London: The Falmer Press

Catt, H. (1993) "Women and the Electoral System", A summary of an Article by Helen Catt In ***Walking Backwards Into The Future,*** Women's Electoral Lobby, Wellington

Chaison, G. and Andiappan, P. (1982) "Characteristics of Female Union Offocers in Canada", ***Relations Industrielles,*** Vol.37, No.4:765-777

Chamberlain, M. (ed.) (1986) "Women Trustees, or 'Would You Not Be More Comfortable on the Sofa?'" In ***Women in Higher Education,*** Chamberlain, M, New York: Russell Sage Foundation

Chapman, J. (1986) "Improving the Principal Selection Process to Enhance the Opportunities for Women", ***Unicorn,*** Vol.12, No.1

Chapman, J. (1990) "Why aren't they appointing Women?" ***The New Zealand Principal,*** Vol.5(2), July 1990

Chase, S. and Bell, C. (1990) "Ideology, Discourse and Gender: How Gatekeepers Talk about Women School Superintendents", ***Social Problems,*** Vol.37, No.2, May 1990

Chemers, M. (1984) "The Social, Organisational, and Cultural Context of Effective Leadership" In Kellerman,B. (ed.) ***Leadership: Multidisciplinary Perspectives,*** Englewood Cliffs,N.J.: Prentice-Hall: 91-112

Cherryholmes, C. (1988) "Construct Validity and the Discourses of Research", ***American Journal of Education***, Vol.96, No.3:412-457

Clark, H.(Rt Hon) (1994a) "Not One of the Boys: Gender Issues in Politics", an address to a forum at the Centra Auckland Hotel, 22 April, 1994

Clark, H.(Rt Hon) (1994b) "Taking Business and Professional Women Forward in Politics, in Business and The Professions", Keynote address to the annual conference of the New Zealand Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, 29th April,1994

Clark, H.(Rt Hon) (1994c) "A Woman's Role in Politics: My Priorities for Women as Leader of the Opposition", an address to Auckland North Zonta Network, 12 July, 1994

Codd, J. (1989) "Evaluating Tomorrows Schools: Accountability or Control?" In ***Delta, 41***. (1989) Palmerston North: Massey University

Codd, J. (1989b) "Educational Leadership as Reflexive Action" In Smyth,J. (ed.) ***Critical Perspectives on Educational Leadership,*** London: Falmer Press

Code, L. (1992) ***What Can She Know? Feminist Theory and the Construction of Knowledge,*** Cornell University Press: London

Connors, D.D. (1988) "A continuum of researcher-participant relationships: An analysis and critique" ***Advances in Nursing Science,*** 1988;10(4):32-44

Conrad, W. (1983) ***The Effective Voluntary Board of Directors,*** Ohio: Swallow Press Books

Court, H. (1995) "Young and Feminist: Negotiating 'Identities' in the 1990s", Massey University: MA thesis

Court, M. (1989) "Women in Education: Constraints on their promotion in NZ primary and secondary schools." Paper presented to the Women's Studies Association Conference, Christchurch.

Court, M. (1989b) ***Winning a Voice in Educational Administration: A Study of Women Working in Middle Management,*** Massey University: unpublished MEdAdmin thesis

Court, M. (1991) "Winning a Voice in Educational Administration: a study of women working in middle management." ***The New Zealand Principal***, Vol.6(2):10-16

Court, M. (1992) "Leading from behind: Women in educational Administration' in ***Women and Education in Aotearoa 2***, Middleton,S. and Jones,A. (eds) Wellington: Bridget Williams Books

Court, M. (1994) ***Women Transforming Leadership.*** Palmerston North, ERDC Press, Massey University

Court, M. (1994b) "Something Old, Something New: Women and Leadership in Education", ***New Zealand Principal,*** November,1994

Court, M. (1994c) "Removing Macho Management: Lessons from the Field of Education", ***Gender, Work and Organisation,*** Vol.1, No.1, January 1994

Covey, S. (1996) "Three Roles of the Leader in the New Paradigm" In Hesselbein, F. ***The Leader of the Future***, San Fransisco: Jossey Bass

Cowman, S. (1993) "Triangulation: a means of reconciliation in nursing research" ***Journal of Advanced Nursing,*** 1993, 18:.788-792

Cox, S. and James,B. (1987) "The theoretical Background" In Cox,S. (1987) ***Public and Private Worlds,*** Wellington: Allen and Unwin

Daniels, A. (1985) "Good Times and Good Works: The Place of Sociability in the Work of Women Volunteers", ***Social Problems,*** 32 (April): 363-74

Daniels, A. (1988) ***Invisible careers: Women Civic Leaders from the Volunteer World,*** Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Davies, B. (1989) "Education for Sexism: A theoretical analysis of the sex/gender bias in education." ***Educational Philosophy and Theory,*** 21.1.1989

Davis, B. (1997) The Subject of Post-structuralism : a reply to Alison Jones. In ***Gender and Education,*** Vol.9 No.3 pp271-283

Dawson, D. (1989) "Women find more bias" ***Dominion***, 25 August, p.1

Denzin, N. (1978) ***The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods***, New York: McGraw Hill

Department of Statistics, (1990) ***Women in New Zealand,*** Department of Statistics and Ministry of Women's Affairs, Wellington, New Zealand

Dick, B. (1996) Guest speaker at NZ Action Research Network Retreat, Waikato, 3 May, 1996. In NZARN Newsletter, UNITEC,Auckland. 1 June,1996

Dixon, B.,Bouma, G.& Atkinson, G. (1991) ***A Handbook of Social Science Research:A Comprehensive and Practical Guide for Students***, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Donn, M. (1986) ***The Position of Women in Education-1985,*** Wellington, Department of Education

Eagly, A., Karau, S., Johnson, B. (1992) "Gender and Leadership Style Among School Principals: A Meta-Analysis", ***Educational Administration Quarterly,*** Vol.28, No.1, February 1992

Education Review Office (ERO), (1994) ***Effective Governance: School Boards of Trustees,*** No.7, Winter 1994, National Education Evaluation Reports,Crown Copyright

Edwards, W.L. (1986) ***The Principalship in a New Zealand Secondary School: An Ethnographic Study,*** Ph.D. Thesis, University of New England

Eisenstein, H. (1984) ***Contemporary Feminist Thought,*** Sydney: Allen and Unwin

Elliot, J. (1981) ***Action Research: A Framework for Self-Evaluation in Schools***, Schools Council Programme 2, Teacher-Pupil Interaction and the Quality of Learning Project Working Paper No.1

Elliot, J. (1993) "What is Good Action Research?" Paper presented at the Fourth Annual Action Research Symposium, Puget Sounds Educational Consortium, University of Washington, Seattle, April 1993

Elliot, J.(ed) (1993b) ***Reconstructing Teacher Education: Teacher Development,*** London: The Falmer Press

Elliot, J. (1994) "Research on Teachers' Knowledge and Action Research", ***Educational Action Research,*** Vol.2, No.1,1994

Ellis, G. and Wheeler, J. (1991) ***Women Managers: Success on our Own Terms,*** Auckland: Penguin Books

Else, A. (1992) "To Market and Home Again: Gender and the New Right", in Du Plessie et al (eds.) ***Feminist Voices,*** Auckland: Oxford University Press

Epstein, C. (1990) Letter published in the "Debate" section of the ***Harvard Business Review,*** 1990

Eriksson-Joslyn, K. (1973-74) "A Nation of Volunteers: Participatory Democracy or Administrative Manipulation?" ***Berkeley Journal of Sociology,***17: 159-81

Evening Post (1989) "Men Outnumber Women in School Boards of Trustee Elections" ***Evening Post***, 10 May, 1989

Fenwick, P. (1982) ***Sex Differences in Applicants for and Appointments to Senior Primary Teaching Positions,*** Wellington: Department of Education

Fiedler, F. and Chemmers, M. (1974) "Leadership and Effective Management", Glenview,IL: Scott, Foresman. In Hoy,W. and Miskell,C. (1991) ***Educational Administration,*** 4th edition,New York: McGraw-Hill

Finch, J. (1984) '"Its great to have someone to talk to": The ethics and politics of interviewing women' cited in Burgess,R. (1989:83) ***The Ethics of Educational Research,*** Lewes: The Falmer Press.

Flax, J. (1990) "Postmodernism and Gender Relations in Feminist Theory" in Nicholson, Linda (ed.) (1990) *Feminism/Postmodernism*, New York: Routledge

Fleming, V. (1991) **Towards Nursing Advocacy: A Socio-Political Process.** Palmerston North: Massey University Thesis

Fonow, M. and Cook, J. (eds.) (1991) ***Beyond Methodology: Feminist Scholarship as Lived Research***, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press

Francis, R. (1990) "Trustee Gender Roles 'Concern'." In ***Dominion Sunday Times.*** 7th October, 1990:16

Fraser, N. and Nicholson, L. (1990) "Feminism from Social Criticism without Philosophy: An encounter between Feminism and Postmodernism" In Linda Nicholson (ed.) ***Feminism/Postmodernism,*** New York: Routledge:26-38

Frisby, W. and Brown, B. (1991) "The Balancing Act: Women Leisure Service Managers", ***Journal of Applied Recreation Research,*** 16(4):297-321

Gardiner, C. (1990) "Opportunities for Women: The effects of 'Tomorrow's Schools'" ***New Zealand Principal***, Vol.5(2):21-23

Gavey, N. (1990) "Feminist Poststructuralism and Discourse Analysis: Contributions to Feminist Psychology", ***Psychology of Women Quarterly***

Gilligan, C. (1982) ***In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development.*** Cambridge: Harvard University Press

Glaser, B. and Strauss, A. (1967) ***The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research.*** Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company

Goldsmith, M. (1996) "Ask, Learn, Follow Up and Grow". In Hesselbein,F. ***The Leader of the Future,*** San Fransisco: Jossey Bass

Gordon, L. (1992) "Educational Reform in New Zealand: contesting the role of the teacher." ***International Studies in Sociology of Education,***2,1,1992

Green, V. and Manera, E. (1995) "Educational Leadership: The Practice of Successful Women Administrators in the USA and Canada." ***International Studies in Educational Administration.*** Vol.23, No.2. Commonwealth Council of Educational Administration

Grob, L. (1984) "Leadership, The Socratic Model" In Kellerman,B. (ed.) ***Leadership: Multidisciplinary Perspectives,*** Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall

Guba, E. (1981) "Criteria for Assessing the Trustworthiness of Naturalistic Inquiries" ***Educational Communication Technology Journal,*** Vol. 29, No.2:75-91

Guba, E., & Lincoln, Y. (1981) ***Effective Evaluation.*** San Fransisco: Jossey Bass

Hall, A., Cullen, D., Slack, T. (1989) "Organizational Elites Recreating Themselves: The Gender Structure of National Sport Organizations", ***Quest,*** 41: 28-45

Hall, J. and Stevens, P. (1991) "Rigor in feminist research", ***Advances in Nursing Science,*** 1991;13(3):16-29. Aspen Publishers Inc.

Haller, E. and Strike, K. (1986) ***An Introduction to Educational Administration: Social, Legal and Ethical Perspectives,*** New York: Longman

Handy, C. (1991) ***Gods of Management,*** (3rd edition) London: Business Books Ltd.

Handy, C. (1993) ***Understanding Organisations*** (4th edition), Hamondsworth: Penguin

Hare-Mustin, R. and Marecek, J. (1988) "The Meaning of Difference: Gender Theory, Postmodernism and Psychology", ***American Psychologist,*** Vol.43, No.6:455-464

Harold, B. (1994) "A study of the Transition to Local Control of Three Rural Primary School Boards" ***New Zealand Journal of Educational Administration,*** Vol.9, November 1994

Harrison, R. (1995) "Who Governs? Who is Boss?: Impediments to Decision Making in Schools", ***New Zealand Principal,*** November 1995

Hartsock, N. (1990) "Foucault on Power: A Theory for Women?" in Nicholson, N. (Ed) ***Feminism/Postmodernism,*** New York: Routledge:157-175

Heald, S. (1991) "Pianos to Pedagogy: Pursuing the Educational Subject" In Bannerji, H. et al (1991) ***Unsettling Relations. The University as a Site of Feminist Struggles,*** Toronto: Women's Press

Helgesen, S. (1990) ***The Female Advantage: Women's Ways of Leadership,*** New York: Doubleday

Heskett, J. and Schlesinger, L. (1966) "Teachers Who Shape and Keep Performance Oriented Culture" In Hesselbein, F. ***The Leader of the Future,*** San Fransisco: Jossey Bass

Hesselbein, F., Goldsmith, M., and Beckhard, R. (eds.) (1996) ***The Leader of the Future,*** San Fransisco: Jossey Bass

Holly, M. (1993) Educational Research and Professional Development: On Minds that Watch Themselves, In Burgess, R. (ed.) ***Educational Research and Evaluation for Policy and Practice,*** London: The Falmer Press

Hoy, W. and Miskel, C. (1991) 4th edition, ***Educational Administration,*** New York: McGraw Hill

Huyssen, A. (1984) "Mapping the Postmodern" ***New German Critique***. No.33, 1994, pp.5-52. In Nicholson,L. (ed.) (1990) ***Feminism/Postmodernism,*** New York: Routledge:234-280

Jaggar, A. (1983) ***Feminist Politics and Human Nature,*** Sussex: Rowman and Allenheld

James, B. and Saville-Smith, K. (1992) "Feminist Perspectives on Complex Organisations" In- Olssen, Suzann (ed.) ***The Gender Factor: Women in New Zealand Organisations,*** Palmerston North: Dunmore Press

Jay, N. (1981) "Gender and Dichotomy", ***Feminist Studies,*** 1 (1981):48-51

Jayne, V. (1992) "What are they teaching our kids?" In ***Management***, August,1992

Jick, T. (1979) "Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Methods: Triangulation in Action", ***Administrative Science Quarterly,*** Vol.24, December 1979:602-611

Johnson, L. (1990) "Socialist Feminisms" In Gunew,S. (ed.) (1990) ***Feminist Knowledge: Critique and Construct,*** London: Routledge

Johnston, S. (1994) "Is Action Research a 'Natural' Process for Teachers?" ***Educational Action Research,*** Vol.2, No.1:39-48

Jones, A. (1992) "Writing Feminist Educational Research: Am 'I' in the Text?" In Middleton,S. and Jones,A. (eds.) ***Women and Education In Aotearoa 2,*** Wellington: Bridget Williams Books

Jones, A. (1993) "Becoming a 'Girl': post-structuralist suggestions for educational research." ***Gender and Education,*** Vol.5, No.2

Jones, A. (1997) "Teaching Post-structuralist Feminist Theory in Education: student resistances". In ***Gender and Education,*** Vol.9 No.3 pp261-269

Jones, D (1993) "Feminism/Postmodernism: A Beginner's Guide." ***Women's Studies Association Newsletter,*** Vol.14, No.1, Winter 1993

Kagan, S. (1994) "Leadership: Rethinking it- Making it happen, ***Young Children,*** July, 1994

Kaminer, W. (1984) ***Women Volunteering,*** New York: Anchor Press Double Day and Company Inc.

Kanter, R. (1989) "The New Managerial Work", ***Harvard Business Review,*** November-December,1989

Kelly, A. (1989) "The Ethics of School Based Action Research" In Burgess, R (ed.) ***The Ethics of Educational Research,*** Lewes: The Falmer Press

Kelley, R. (1991) ***The power of followership: How to create leaders people want to follow and followers who lead themselves,*** New York: Doubleday

Kemmis, S. and McTaggart, R. (1982) ***The Action Research Planner,*** Victoria: Deakin University

Kemmis,S and McTaggart,R (1988) ***The Action Research Planner, 3rd Edition,*** Victoria: Deakin University

Keown, P., Mcgee, C. and Oliver, D. (1992) "National Survey of Secondary Schools 1." ***Monitoring Today's Schools; Report No. 2,*** University of Waikato

Kilmister, T. (1989) ***Brilliant Boards- The Art of Governance,*** Wellington: NFP Press

Klein, R. (1983) "How to do what we want to do: thoughts about feminist methodology" ***Theories of Women's Studies,*** London: Routledge & Kegan Paul

Korabik, K. (1990) "Androgeny and Leadership Style" , ***Journal of Business Ethics: 283-293***

Kushner and Norris, (1980-81) "Interpretation, Negotiation and Validity in Naturalistic Research" cited in Lather,P. "Research as Praxis" In ***Harvard Educational Review,*** Vol.56, No.3

Lange, D. (1988) ***Tomorrow's Schools: The Reform of Educational Administration in New Zealand,*** Wellington: Government Printer

Lather, P. (1986) "Research as praxis," ***Harvard Educational Review,*** Vol.56, No.3, August 1986:257-277

Lather, P. (1986b) "Issues of Validity in Openly Ideological Research: Between a Rock and a Soft Place" ***Interchange,*** 17(4) Winter:63-84

Lather, P. (1991) ***Getting Smart: Feminist Research and Pedagogy with/in the Postmodern,*** New York: Routledge

Lofland, J. (1971) ***Analysing Social Settings,*** Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company. In Tesch, R. (1990) ***Qualitative Research: Analysis Types & Software Tool,.*** Hampshire: The Falmer Press

Lyons, N. (1990) "Visions and Competencies: An Educational Agenda for Exploring the Ethical and Intellectual Dimensions of Decision-making and Conflict Negotiation"

Malcolm, M. (1978) "The Most Invisible Woman", ***Set,*** 78, No.2, Item 12. Wellington: NZCER

Mann, R. (1959) "A Review of the Relationships between Personality and Performance." ***Psychological Bulletin,*** 56 (1959): 241-270

Marshall, J. (1984) ***Women Managers: Travellers in a male World,*** Chichester: Wiley

Marshall, S. and Heller, M. (1983) "A Female Style Could Revolutionise School Government", ***American School Board Journal,*** August, 1993:31-32

Mathison, S. (1988) "Why Triangulate?" ***Educational Researcher,*** March,1988: 13-17

May, H. (1992) ***Minding Children, Managing Men: Conflict and Compromise in the lives of Postwar Pakeha Women***, Wellington: Bridget Williams Books Ltd

McDowell, L. (1992) "Gender Divisions in a Post-Fordist Era: New Contradictions or the Same Story?" In McDowell,L. and Pringle,R. ***Defining Women: Social Institutions and Gender Divisions,*** Cambridge: Policy Press

McDowell, M. (1993) "Girls can do anything", Address to Carmel College Senior Prizegiving, 10 November,1993, In Massey University Albany Newsletter, Issue 8

McKernan, J. (1991) ***Curriculum Action Research - A Handbook of Methods and Resources for the Practitioner***, London: Kogan Page

McLennan, G. (1992) "Poststructuralist Theory", ***Lecture/Study Guide 2, 76.301: Advanced Sociological Theory,*** Massey University, Palmerston North

McTaggart, R. (1991) "Reflection on Teaching: Creating an enquiry culture in education" Address presented as Lansdowne Visitor at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. March 25,1991

Melcher, D., Eichstedt, J., Eriksen, S.,and Clawson, D. (1992) "Women's Participation in Local Union Leadership: The Massachusetts Experience", ***Industrial and Labour Relations Review,*** Vol.45, No.2, January 1992

Middleton, S. (1988) "Researching Feminist Educational Life Histories" In Middleton, S. ***Women and Education in Aotearoa,*** Port Nicholson Press: Allen & Unwin

Middleton, S. (1989) "Educating Feminists: A Life History Study" In Acker, S. (1989) ***Teachers, Gender and Careers,*** Lewes: The Falmer Press

Middleton, S. (1993) ***Educating Feminists: Life Histories and Pedagogy***, New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University

Middleton, S and Oliver, D. (1990) "Who Governs Out Schools? : The Educational Perspectives of Members of Boards of Trustees." In ***Monitoring Today's Schools. Report No. 2,*** University of Waikato

Middleton, S. and Jones, A. (Eds.) (1992) ***Women and Education In Aotearoa 2,*** Wellington: Bridget Williams Books

Mies, M. (1983) "Towards a methodology for feminist research" In Bowles,G. and Klein,R.D. (eds.) ***Theories of Women's Studies,*** London:Routledge & Kegan Paul

Miles, R. (1985) ***Women and Power,*** London: Macdonald

Miles, M., & Huberman, A. (1984) ***Qualitative Data Analysis,*** Beverly Hills: Sage

Minister of Education, (1994) ***New Zealand Schools/ Nga Kura o Aotearoa.1993: A Report on the Compulsory Schools Sector in New Zealand,*** Learning Media, Wellington

Minister of Education, (1990) ***Today's Schools: A Review of the Educational Reform Process,*** April,1990. Wellington

Ministry of Education, (1989) ***Governing Schools: A Practical Handbook for School Trustees,*** May,1989

Ministry of Women's Affairs, (1990) "Mana Wahine" in ***Women in New Zealand,*** Wellington: Department of Statistics and Ministry of Women's Affairs

Mintzberg, H. (1973) ***The Nature of Managerial Work,*** New York: Harper & Row

Morrison, A., Randall, P., Velsor, E. (1992) ***Breaking the Glass Ceiling: Can Women Reach the Top of America's Largest Corporations?,*** USA: Centre for Creative Leadership

Neville, M. (1987) "Women of Power in a Man's World: Career Profiles of Successful Women". M.Ed.Admin. Thesis, Massey University, Palmerston North

Neville, M. (1988) ***Promoting Women: Successful Women in Educational Management,*** Auckland: Longman Paul

New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA) (1993) ***Trustee handbook***, Auckland: CCH New Zealand Ltd. (Some inserts are dated 1995)

Nias, J. (1993) "Changing Times, Changing Identities: Grieving for a Lost Self" In Burgess, R. (ed.) ***Educational Research and Evaluation for Policy and Practice?,*** London: The Falmer Press

Nicholson, L. (1990) (ed.) ***Feminist/Postmodernism,*** New York: Routledge

NZPA, (1995) "Women still doing most housework", ***NZ Herald,*** Wednesday, March 1, 1995:16

Oakley, A. (1981) "Interviewing women: a contradiction in terms." In Helen Roberts (ed.), ***Doing Feminist Research***, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul:30-61

O'Connell, B. (1976) ***Effective Leadership in Voluntary Organisations,*** Chicago: Follett Publishing Company

Oja, S. and Smulyan, L. (1989) ***Collaborative Action Research: A Developmental Approach,*** London: The Falmer Press, Social Research and Educational Studies Series:7

Olsson, S. (ed.) (1992) ***The Gender factor: Women in New Zealand Organisations,*** Palmerston North: The Dunmore Press

O'Neill, A. (1992) "Educational policy initiatives for girls and women: are we included in the decent society?", ***The New Zealand Annual Review of Education,*** 2,1992

O'Neill, A. (1992b) "The Equal Opportunity Myth: Women in New Zealand Educational Institutions" in Olssen, S. (ed.) (1992) ***The Gender Factor: Women in New Zealand Organisations,*** Palmerston North: Dunmore Press

O'Rourke, M. (1993) Letter to Auckland female secondary Principals and Chairpersons of Boards of Trustees. 9th June, 1993, Ministry of Education: Wellington

Orr, E. (1989) "Engineers Don't Carry Handbags?!" In ***Set,*** No.1,1989, Item 7

Patton, M. (1980) ***Qualitative Evaluation Methods,*** Beverly Hills,CA: Sage Productions, In Tesch, R. (1990) ***Qualitative Research: Analysis Types & Software Tools,*** Hampshire: The Falmer Press

Phillips, A. (1987) ***Feminism and Equality,*** Oxford: Basil Blackwell

Piggot, E. (1993) ***Action Research as a Professional Development Tool in Higher Education,*** Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education, Massey University, Palmerston North

Pointon, N. (1988) "A Principal's Perspective", ***PPTA Journal,*** Vol.3:19-20

Poskitt, J. (1994) "Research as Learning: The Realities of Action Research in a New Zealand Individualised Learning Programme". An unpublished PhD Thesis, Massey University, Palmerston North

Poskitt, J. (1994b) "Teachers and Research- To be or not to be?" In New Zealand Action Research Network (NZARN) Newsletter, September,1995

Poskitt, J. (1995) "Action Research-Assisting Teacher Development", ***New Zealand Principal,*** June 1995:12-14

Power, H. (1973) "Aids to Democratic Leadership in Voluntary Organisations" Wellington, NZ: NZ Jaycee Incorp. 1973.

Prideaux, D. (1995) "Beyond Facilitation: Action research as Self-research and Self-evaluation. ***Educational Journal of Australasia,*** Vol.7, No.1

Pringle, J. (1987) "Women in Management: Choices and Dilemmas", ***Women's Studies Association Conference Papers,*** Dunedin, 1987

Pringle, J. (1992) "Survival or Success?: Ways of 'Being' for Women in Organisations, In Olsson,S. (1992) ***The Gender Factor in New Zealand Organisations,*** Palmerston North: Dunmore Press

Rae, K. (1994) "New Zealand" ***In International Directions in Education,*** Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration, Vol.2, No.2, September 1994:3

Ramsay, P., Harold, B., Hawk, K., Kaai, T., Marriot, R. and Poskitt, J. (1990) ***"There's No Going Back: Collaborative Decision making In Education",*** C.R.R.I.S.P. Hamilton, NZ, University of Waikato

Regan, H. and Brooks, G. (1992) "Out of Women's Experience: School Leadership for Women and Men", Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association's Special Interest Group: Research on Women in Education (University Park, PA, November 13, 1992)

Reinharz, S. (1992) ***Feminist Methods of Social Research,*** New York: Oxford University Press

Restine, N. (1993) ***Women in Administration: Facilitators for Change,*** Newbury Park,California: Corwin Press

Riddell, S. (1989) "The Ethics of Feminist Educational Research" In Burgess,R. (ed.) ***The Ethics of Educational Research***, Lewes: The Falmer Press

Riger, S. and Galligan, P. (1980) "Women in Management", ***American Psychologist,*** Vol.35, No.10:902-910

Robertson ,J. (1994) "The Development of an Educational Theory of Leadership and Research as Praxis." In ***New Zealand Journal of Educational Administration,*** Vol.9,Nov 1994

Rowland, R. and Klein, R. (1996) "Radical Feminism: Critique and Construct" In Gunew, S. (ed.) (1990) ***Feminist Knowledge: Critique and Construct,*** London: Routledge

Rosener, J. (1990) "Ways Women Lead", ***Harvard Business Review,*** November/December, 119-125

Sagor, R. (1992) ***How to Conduct Collaborative Action Research***, Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.(ASCD)

Sampson, S. (1989) "Why Male Control is Increasing", ***Set,*** No.2. Wellington: NZCER

Sandelowski, M. (1986) "The problem of rigor in qualitative research." ***Advances in Nursing Science,*** 1986, 8(3):27-37. New Orleans: Aspen Publishers

Sarros, A. (1984) "Not Interested in Promotion", ***The Victorian Teacher,*** 1.March. In Court,M. "Women in Educational Administration", ***Womens' Studies Association Conference Papers,*** Christchurch,1989

Sayers, J. (1991) "Women, the Employment Contracts Act and Bargaining: a discussion paper", ***New Zealand Journal of Industrial Relations,*** 1991, 16:159-166

Sayers, J. and Tremaine, M. (1994) ***The Vision and the Reality: Equal Employment Opportunities in the New Zealand Workplace,*** Palmerston North: Dunmore Press

Schein, V. (1973) "The relationship between sex role steriotypes and requisite management characteristics", ***Journal of Applied Psychology,*** Vol.57, No.2

Schein, V. (1975) "Relationships between sex role steriotypes and requisite management characteristics among female managers", ***Journal of Applied Psychology,*** Vol.60, No.3

Schein, E. (1996) "Leadership and Organizational Culture" In Hesselbein, F. ***The Leader of the Future,*** San Fransisco: Jossey Bass

Schon, D. (1983) ***The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action***, New York: Basic Books

Senge, P. (1990) ***The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organisation,*** New York: Double Day

Sergiovanni, T. (1991) Second edition, ***The Principalship: A reflective practice perspective,*** Massachusetts, Allyn & Bacon

Sergiovanni, T. (1992) ***Moral Leadership: Getting to the Heart of School Improvement,*** San Fransisco: Jossey-Bass

Sergiovanni, T. (1992b) "Why we should seek substitutes for leadership", ***Educational Leadership,*** Vol.49, No.5, Feb.1992

Shakeshaft, C. (1987) ***Women in Educational Administration,*** California: Sage Publications

Sheehan, A., Kerslake, J., & Slyfield, H. (1988) ***Position of Women in Education 1987(TEACAPS)***, Wellington: Department of Education

Slyfield, H. (1993) "The Position of Women in the Education Services, 1991 and 1992", ***New Zealand Ministry of Education Demographic and Statistical Analysis Unit,*** Wellington: Ministry of Education

Slyfield, H. and Sturrock, F. (1993) ***Literature Review of New Zealand research on Gender Issues in Early Childhood and Primary School Education,*** Wellington: Demographic and Statistical Analysis Section, Ministry of Education

Smith, F. (1992) "Women in Educational Administration: Moving from a paradigm of Power to Empowerment and Equality", Paper presented at the Sixth Annual Conference of Women in Educational Administration, September 27/28, 1992, Lincoln, Nebraska

Smith, L. (1992) "Maori Women: Discourses, Projects and Mana Wahine" in Middleton, S. and Jones, A. (eds.) (1992) ***Women and education in Aotearoa 2,*** Wellington: Bridget Williams Books

Somekh, B. (1988) "Collaborative Action Research: Working Together Towards Professional Development" in Bickt,C. (ed.) ***Semi-detached Teachers,*** Centre for Applied Research in Education: University of East Anglia

Sorenson, R. (1962) ***How to Be a Board or Committee Member,*** New York: Associated Press

Sotheran, S. (1993) "Women must be Mentors", ***Focus on Principals***, Vol.2, No.2. Wellington: NZEI

Stangl, J. and Kane, M. (1991) "Structural variables that offer explanatory power for the underrepresentation of women coaches since title IX: The case of homologous reproduction", ***Sociology of Sport Journal***, 8: 47-60

Statistics New Zealand/Te Tari Tatau. (1993) ***All About Women in New Zealand***, Wellington, New Zealand, December, 1993

Steinem, G. (1986) "The Trouble With Rich Women", ***M,***. 14 (June)

Stewart, D. (1996) "What's in a Name? : Removing the Governance Bogey" In ***New Zealand Principal,*** Vol.11, No.1, March,1996

Still, L. (1984) "Women in Management: An Exploratory Study", ***Women Australia,*** April-May, 30:9

Still, L. (1990) ***Enterprising Women: Australian women managers and entrepreneurs,*** Wellington: Allen and Unwin

Stoghill, R. (1948) "Personal Factors Associated with Leadership: A Survey of the Literature." ***Journal of Psychology,*** 25:35-71

Strachan, J. (1991) "Empowering women for educational leadership : a feminist action research project". Thesis, Waikato University, Hamilton

Strachan, J. (1992) "Beyond the Barriers: Empowering Women for Educational Leadership" in ***Theory and Practice in Educational Management,*** Alcorn,N. and Peddie,R. (eds.) Procedings of the 1st New Zealand Conference on Research in Educational Administration

Strachan, J. (1992b) "Taking Action: Empowering Women for Educational Leadership", Paper presented to the Seventh National Conference of the NZ Educational Administration Society, Massey University, Palmerston North, 12-15 January, 1992

Strachan, J. (1993) "Including the personal and the professional: Researching women in educational leadership" ***Gender and Education***, 5(1):71-80

Sturrock, F. and Parkin, M. (1994) "Elected Parent Representatives and Co-opted Members of Boards of Trustees", In ***The Research Bulletin,*** No.3, May, Ministry of Education, Wellington

Tesch, R. (1990) ***Qualitative Research: Analysis Types & Software Tools***, Hampshire: The Falmer Press

Theberge, N. (1984) "Some Evidence on the Existence of a Sexual Double Standard in Mobility to Leadership Positions in Sport", ***International Review for Sociology of Sport,*** 19/2 (1984)

Tomlinson, H. (1994) "Flattening the Management of your School or Educational Office", ***International Studies inEducational Administration,*** The Journal of the Commonwealth Council of Educational Administration, No.60, Winter 1994

Tong, R. (1989) ***Feminist Thought: A Comprehensive Introduction***, London: Unwin Hyman

Torbert, W. (1983) "Initiating collaborative inquiry." In Morgan, G. (ed.) ***Beyond Method,*** Beverly Hills,CA: Sage Productions

Travers, A. (1989) "The State Sector Act and Tomorrow's Schools: Implications for Women". ***Delta 41,*** 1989:33-39

Treleaven, L. (1994) "Making a Space: A Collaborative Inquiry with Women as Staff Development", Unpublished document, University of Western Australia

Trow, M. (1957) "Comment on participant observation and interviewing: A comparison", ***Human Organisation***, 16(3), 33-35. In Ramsay et al. (1990) C.R.R.I.S.P. Final Report, Hamilton,NZ: University of Waikato

University of Waikato (1990) ***Who Governs Our Schools?: The Educational Perspectives of Members of Boards of Trustees,*** Report No. 2 of the Monitoring Today's Schools Research Project, September 1990

University of Waikato (1993) ***Hear Our Voices: Final Report of Monitoring Today's Schools Research Project,*** Waikato print: University of Waikato

Vilkinas, T. (1991) "Australian Women in Management", ***Women in Management Review and Abstracts***, Vol.6, No.1, (1991) Australia: University of Adelaide

Watson, H. (1988) "Re-forming Education: The fate of Women and Girls in 'Tomorrow's Schools'" ***PPTA Journal***, Vol.3:29-30, Wellington

Watson, H. (1988b) "The Impact of the Second Wave of the Women's Movement on Policies and Practices in Schools", In Middleton, S. (ed.) ***Women in Education in Aotearoa***, Port Nicholson: Allen and Unwin

Webb, C. (1984) "Feminist methodology in nursing research", ***Journal of Advanced Nursing,*** 1984; 9:249-256

Weedon, C. (1987) "Socialist Feminism" In Ashton,T. and Whiting,G. (eds.) (1987) ***Feminist Theory and Practical Policies: Shifting the Agenda in the 1980s,*** Bristol: School for Advanced Urban Studies, Occasional Paper 29

Weedon, C. (1987b) ***Feminist Practice and Poststructural Theory,*** New York: Basil Blackwell

Whitcombe, J. (1979) "A comparison of career patterns of men and women teachers". A paper presented to the New Zealand Association for Educational Research Conference. December, 1979

Whitcombe, J. (1980) ***The Promotion of Women in the Primary Teaching Service,*** Wellington, Department of Education

Whitcombe, J. and Fenwick, P. (1982) ***Teacher Career and Promotion Study,*** Wellington, Department of Education

Whitson, D. and MacIntosh, D. (1989) "Gender & Power: Explanations of Gender Inequalities In Canadian National Sport Organisations" ***International Review for Sociology of Sport,*** 24, 1989

Wilson, P. (1986), cited in Court, M., "Winning a Voice in Educational Administration: A Study of Women Working in Middle Management, Massey University thesis, M.Ed.Admin. (1986)

Work, J. (1996) "Leading a Diverse Work Force" In Hesselbein, F. ***The Leader of the Future,*** San Fransisco: Jossey Bass

Wyatt, L. (1992) "Secondary Principalships: Where are the Women?", Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, San Francisco, CA, February 1992

Wylie, C. (1991) "The Impact of Tomorrow's Schools in Primary and Intermediates", 1990 Survey Report, NZCER, Wellington

Wylie, C. (1992) "Making it work, or making work? Some possible lessons from the first months of Tomorrow's Schools" ***NZCER,*** Wellington

Yates, L. (1993) ***The Education of Girls. Policy, Research and the Question of Gender***, Victoria: The Australian Council for Educational Research Ltd.

Young, D. (1990) "Mentoring and Networking: Perceptions by Athletic Administrators" ***Journal of Sport Management,*** Vol.4, No.1, January 1990