INFORMATION TO USERS

LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING :

A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF A FEMALE

PRINCIPAL

Anne P. Lessard
McGill University, Montreal

July 1999

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Reseach
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of
Masters of Arts

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-54999-2

Canadä

Abstract

This qualitative case study explores how Maude, a female principal, leads her school and reaches decisions on a daily basis. The study took place in a private, Catholic all girls' school in an urban setting in the province of Quebec. Over the course of the four months spent in the research site, data was collected through observation, interviews and the collection of artefacts.

The findings of this study suggest that Maude played three distinct leadership roles to which metaphoric labels were associated. She was a peacekeeper when assuming a socio-political stance, a gatekeeper when establishing and preserving the instructional standards of the school and a gardener when tending to the health of both individuals and the institution. Maude's decision-making process was found to differ from traditional models in its application. Her decision-making process included five stages; receiving incoming information, lending a critical ear, reaching down for further information, analysing the information and sharing the decision. Throughout both her leadership and her decision-making, Maude demonstrated many of the values attributed to *women's ways of administering*. She led and reached decisions based on care, courage, respect, vision, order, fairness, collaboration, excellence and intuition.

Few studies have investigated how female principals lead their school and reach decisions. Much of the literature on leadership has focused on the male perspective. Only recently have researchers acknowledged the androcentric bias found in the leadership literature. This study provides an *other* perspective on leadership, a female perspective. As such, the emergent educational leadership framework takes into consideration the influence values, mainly attributed to women have on both leadership and decision-making. The framework proposed outlines the fluidity associated with leadership and decision-making when seen through a gendered filter.

Consideration for further studies includes undertaking a qualitative inquiry which would include the perceptions of vice-principals, teachers and students on educational leadership and the role values play in both fulfilling the school mission and shaping the school culture. In the bilingual context of Quebec's school system, it would be equally enlightening to conduct studies in both French and English settings.

Résumé

Cette étude qualitative explore la façon dont Maude, une directrice d'école, administre son école et prend ses décisions quotidiennement. Cette étude a pris place dans une école secondaire catholique privée pour jeunes filles en milieu urbain dans la province de Québec. Au cours des quatre mois passés dans le site de recherche, les données furent recueillies par observation, entrevues et collection d'artefacts.

Les découvertes faites au cours de cette étude suggèrent que Maude joue trois rôles distincts au niveau de la gestion de l'école, rôles illustrés par trois métaphores. Elle jouait un rôle de gardienne de la paix elle assumant une position socio-politique, un rôle de portière ou de contrôleur en établissant et préservant le standard académique de l'école et finalement un rôle de jardinière en prenant soin de la santé des individus et de l'institution. Le processus de prise de décision de Maude diffère de celui des modèles classiques dans son application. Son processus de prise de décision comprend cinq étapes; la réception de l'information, l'écoute critique, la poursuite de l'information, l'analyse de l'information et finalement, le partage de la décision. À travers sa gestion et sa prise de décision, Maude démontrait plusieurs des valeurs attribuées à la façon féminine de faire. Elle gérait et prenait des décisions basées sur le soin pour autrui, le courage, le respect, la vision, l'ordre, l'égalité, la collaboration, l'excellence et l'intuition.

Peu d'études ont suscitées les méthodes de gestion et de prise de décision féminines. La majorité des écrits en gestion mettent l'emphase sur la perspective masculine. Les chercheurs ont à peine récemment reconnu le biais androcentrique retrouvé au sein des écrits en gestion. Cette étude présente une autre perspective en gestion, la gestion au féminin. En tant que tel, le cadre de gestion en éducation qui ressort de cette étude prend en considération l'influence qu'ont les valeurs, principalement attribuées aux femmes, sur la gestion et la prise de décisions. Le cadre proposé souligne la fluidité associée à la gestion et la prise de décision vue à travers un filtre féminin.

Une considération pour des études futures inclue une étude qualitative portant sur les perceptions de directeurs ou directrices adjoint(e)s, enseignant(e)s et étudiant(e)s sur le rôle que joue les valeurs sur la réalisation du projet éducatif et sur la formation de la culture de l'école. Dans le contexte bilingue du Québec, il serait d'autant plus intéressant de mettre en marche des études en milieux francophones et anglophones.

Acknowledgements

To Maude, for allowing me to enter her life and learn about more than leadership and decision-making. Maude, I admire your courage, vision, devotion to others and your dedication to education.

To my advisor, Dr. Lynn Butler-Kisber, who provided unconditional support through the highs and the lows, whose subtle cues caused great reflection, and whose expertise and guidance made me, not only a better researcher, but a better person.

To all Duggan House women who supported me through the entire academic process through discussions, instruction, questions and a great many laughs.

To Michele and Jo who could always provide me with a different perspective, encouraging words and the power to have fun!

Et à tous les membres de ma famille, pour leur support, l'aide constante, les mots d'encouragement et leur foi en moi. Je n'aurais pu même espérer entreprendre cette nouvelle aventure sans eux.

Merci!

Table of Contents

List of Tables and Figures

Chapter I

Introduction

Decision-making represents one of the most significant processes of school administration. Daily decisions are at the core of school leadership because they will singularly or cumulatively promote or hinder the attainment of the school mission, and are integral to the development of students. School leadership requires choices. In order to determine how decisions are reached on a daily basis, the context of the school leadership needs to be observed and described. Then, an analysis of the content of the decision-making process can be undertaken. To frame the context, this qualitative study focuses on school leadership as an experience lived by a female principal in a private, Catholic, single-sex school for girls located in an urban area in the province of Quebec. With the contextual picture drawn, subsequently the study focuses on the content of the decision-making process in terms of situations requiring choice and the strategies used from the identification of a problematic situation to its resolution. Given the female gender of the principal, feminist theory provides both a methodological and an analytical lens for describing the principals' ways of administering her school.

Background of the Problem

Looking at the intersection of academic bodies of literature on educational leadership and decision-making through a gender filter, one finds a gap. The intersection is in fact noticeable for the lack of attention that it has received (Shakeshaft, 1989b). Leadership is a phenomenon which has been studied and analysed by researchers of various disciplines; sociology, psychology, business, political science, and education, representing only a few examples. In order to better understand, describe and define the phenomenon, studies have been conducted using various methodologies. The research focus has emphasised variables, such as leader traits and behaviours, and later on contingencies. Until recently, however, gender has not been considered when attempting to create new leadership theories; instead, these theories have been based de facto on the male gender. Consequently, women have been generally excluded from leadership studies. Little is known about how women lead schools and more specifically about how female principals reach decisions.

Klenke (1996) reports that leadership theories built earlier this century assumed no differences between men and women. She writes,

> ...for the most part,(...) definitions of leadership are presented as if leadership were gender-neutral. Yet, traditionally, women were believed to lack the traits and behaviours considered prerequisites for effective leadership, traits such as aggression, competitiveness, dominance, Machiavellianism, ambition, and decisiveness. Similarly, high levels of energy, tallness, a commanding voice, persistence, and assertiveness were presumably requisites to lead effectively; but they are also qualities which typically have been missing from descriptions of women. (Klenke, 1996, p. 9)

The assumption that leadership is a gender-neutral phenomenon can be challenged on many levels. Leadership theories were largely constructed by men, about men, for men; women were excluded from these studies (Helgesen, 1995; Shakeshaft, 1987b). Shakeshaft (1987b) reports that many scholars have demonstrated that "theories and concepts emerging solely from a male consciousness may be irrelevant for the female experience and inadequate for explaining female behaviour" (p. 149). Women are different from men in their ways of thinking (Gilligan, 1982), communicating (Tannen, 1990) and leading (Helgesen, 1995). It is understandable how women felt excluded when classical leadership theories have been based on traits described in *The Great Man Theory*.

Leadership theories, which will be further described in the review of literature, have evolved over the 20th century from the Great Man Theory to the contemporary Facilitative Leadership model. Some of the most prominent theories, Great Man theory, Trait Theory, Theory X and Theory Y, Situational-Leadership Theory, and Contingency Theory are widely described in leadership texts (Hoy & Miskel, 1996; Lunenburg, 1995; Northouse, 1997). Contemporary perspectives on leadership include such models as Transformational Leadership, Symbolic Leadership and Facilitative Leadership. The context in which theories were constructed accounts for their essence. At the beginning of this century, studies on leadership were mainly conducted in industrial settings with the

intent of increasing productivity. The leader was central to the studies. As one can infer from a title such as *The Great Man Theory*, the focus of the studies was on *men* in leadership positions. As time progressed and the knowledge base increased, researchers focused on more than the leaders' traits; they looked at the leader within the framework of the group and its dynamics. The context in which the early studies on leadership were conducted consisted mainly of top-down, bureaucratic, male-dominated structures. The current context, many decades later, now consists of multicultural, dynamic, and varied organisations. The focus of contemporary models is on initiatives aimed at building a shared vision and developing collaborative decision-making (Lunenburg, 1995). Leadership theories have indeed evolved and women are slowly gaining some ground within changing conceptualisations. However, more studies about women in educational leadership are necessary to fill the knowledge gap that has developed over the years.

In examining more specifically the leadership and decision-making bodies of literature, there is an expressed necessity to increase the knowledge base to include women's experiences. Some studies conducted on women in the last decade highlight areas where knowledge is still scarce. In the educational leadership field alone, the need for further studies of specific areas, such as the Canadian context, (Young, 1992) is very apparent.

The decision-making literature presents several different models (Hoy & Tarter, 1995), reports findings on the place of ethics in decision-making (Beck, 1996; Beck & Murphy, 1994; Greenfield, 1991; Lulofs, 1994; Marshall, 1992; Millerborg & Hyle, 1991; Walker, 1993) and presents the importance and the place of values in decision-making (Beck, 1984; Campbell-Evans, 1991; Chomye, 1996; Corral, 1994; Lakomski, 1987; Sharples, 1984). Few researchers, however focus on both gender and decision-making (Irby & Brown, 1993; Mertz & McNeely, 1993). The knowledge that has been accumulated on gender and decision-making is scarce and has been gathered through "either self-report studies or perceptual studies, asking subordinates how their principals or superintendents go about making decisions" (Shakeshaft, 1987, p. 186), hence omitting first hand observations of principals' and superintendents' practices. Waddell (1996) stated that

...because of the need to know more about female administrators, it is important to conduct research on women in educational leadership by actually telling their stories. (...) By telling their stories, we document the experiences of female administrators and thus, expand the literature in the field. (Waddell, 1996, p. 1)

Her dissertation entitled *A female in the elementary school principal's office; A beacon for women* presents a case study of Peggy Mole, a female elementary school principal as both a parallel to Wolcott's (1984) *The man in the principal's office* which was an ethnographic study of a male elementary school principal. Waddell's study presents a female perspective of educational leadership.

Telling stories, gaining voice and creating forums in which to be heard have been important elements on the feminist agenda. Gilligan's (1982) *In a different voice* contributed to the validation of women's ways, as did the story by Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberg & Tarule (1986) entitled *Women's ways of knowing*. An important acknowledgement came out of the new feminist literature, that is, the literature of the last few decades; women's values are assets to organisational life. Some authors, in describing female leadership, focus on the values which are integral parts of women's ways of leading. Beck's (1994) ethic of care expresses those values as does Regan and Brooks' (1995) double helix metaphor, a framework describing the values constituting the female strand. Smith (1992) also focused on female values when she built a "wheel of empowerment" to define an equality leadership paradigm counterbalancing the wheel of power and control, the symbol of patriarchy. She states that "women in educational administration must take their personal values and strengths to the political arena to transform education, and ultimately, society" (Smith, 1992, p. 11).

Although I cannot pretend that my study will change society through an addition to the knowledge base, it may provide insight on theories presented by women in educational administration and other fields. Astin and Leland (1991) indicate that studies have focused on prominent women, but that little is known about the leadership of more ordinary women. The literature suggests there is a need to describe further how women administer their schools, using a gendered lens to help delineate *women's ways*, that is,

the values and concepts used as a basis for leadership and more specifically for daily decision-making (Hall, 1996; Regan & Brooks, 1992; Shakeshaft, 1987a; Wiber, 1995).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of educational leadership by examining leadership as a context for daily decision-making in a female principal's life. More specifically, this qualitative case describes; (1) how one female principal leads a private, Catholic, all girls' high school; (2) how the decision-making patterns are used by the principal on a daily basis (3) how the female perspective is present at the core of the principal's school leadership and decision-making.

Definition of Terms

The two main concepts deserving attention are decision-making and leadership. The relationship between these two concepts is fluid as leading requires that the leader make decisions. Choices made will in turn determine the quality of the leadership, as it is a logical assumption, without delving into the measurement of outcomes, that if a leader causes the organisation to meet its goals through appropriate decisions, the decisions reached act as proof of sound leadership.

Leadership is a term that has been defined throughout time in many academic fields. It has been associated with many words and concepts such as "direction, authority, interaction, initiation, persuasion, motivator, reinforcer, cheerleader, facilitator, coach, nurturer and delegator" (Lunenburg, 1995). Bolman and Deal report that "the English word *leader* is more than a thousand years old, little changed from its Anglo-Saxon root *laedare*, which meant to lead people on a journey (Bolman, 1991, p. 404). The importance of the ancient definition of leadership brought forth by Bolman and Deal lies both in the concept of the journey and of followership. The image of the journey conjures up at least two paradigms; one of the journey itself, the day to day process of progressing along the road and the second, the ultimate goal, the destination. No individual can undertake a journey as a leader without followers, and the ability to respond to the followers' needs may be a defining factor of leadership. Studying leadership from the followership perspective is beyond the scope of my study.

Helgesen (1995) presents one difference between male and female leadership by referring back to the hunter-gatherer era. Men went on a hunt, a singular big event with a climactic moment, similar to reaching the destination on a journey. Women spent days repeating the same actions, gathering food and tending to the homestead. Gathering, day after day, parallels the steady progression along the journey. Acknowledging that there exist differences in how men and women lead and how they conceive of leadership, and considering that this study focuses on the leadership patterns of one female principal, leadership will be defined, in the context of my study, as the process of accompanying and guiding others on an educational journey.

Decision-making is defined as the "deliberate process(es) of choosing from the content of alternative courses of action" (Walker, 1991, p. 11). Decision-making is a rational, deliberate process of choosing aimed at steering actions towards some predetermined goals, such as the school mission. If the school mission targets the integral development of students, then, all decisions made by the principal should aim at getting one step closer to this pre-established goal. The need to outline different courses of action is important in the process, since without options, there would be no need for a choice to be made. Thus, assessing a situation, outlining the options, establishing grounds for successfully achieving predetermined goals and operationalising the preferred course of action are all elements of the decision-making process supporting educational leadership. In the context of this study, decision-making is defined as the deliberate process of selecting one course of action from alternatives.

<u>Significance of the Study</u>

In the light of the void mentioned in the academic literature about how women lead and how they reach decisions, this study is significant in illuminating how Maude, a female principal exercises her leadership through decision-making. Shakeshaft (1987) proposes six stages of research on women in administration starting with the total absence of women to the role of women in the transformation of educational administration theory. Two stages of particular importance are "the search for women who have been or are administrators" and "women studied in their own terms" (p. 13). One question framed by Shakeshaft, relating to those stages influenced the choice of the research methodology for

my study . How do women describe their experiences and lives? This question needs answering to fill in the gap existing in the literature. Answers will help other school administrators understand the female experience and as Shakeshaft suggests, will generate "a view of the world from a female perspective" (p. 13).

Klenke (1996) also makes a strong case for the potential impact studies about women could make in society.

> Moreover, by understanding the different leadership contexts, whether in today's corporations, national and international communities, school systems, or reform movements, and the opportunities and constraints associated with each of them, women can acquire the skills and competencies to become instrumental as agents of change. By understanding the leadership context, women can become more influential in creating a climate more conducive to the acceptance of women leaders, and increase the demand for them as role models for both women and men. (p. 25)

To influence change in society and to reach a destination where women are perceived as strong role models, women and young aspiring female leaders must identify with leadership roles portrayed in studies and theories. Studying a female principal in an all girls' school has interesting implications as far as understanding the values that are transmitted to the next generation of women leaders through both the daily decision-making and the leadership approaches favoured in the school context.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

Women have rarely been the foci of traditional literature on educational administration. Recently, though, some authors have worked to outline and to a certain extent, legitimise the female experience and its value to the field (Regan, 1990; Reynolds, undated; Shakeshaft, 1989a). Outlining women's ways and providing different approaches to leadership becomes critical as the world changes and organisations traditionally built around a hierarchical bureaucratic model evolve into non-hierarchical, flattened, open systems. More and more, the "female strand" (Regan & Brooks, 1995), the caring community builder becomes an asset. There is more to leadership than the charisma, the

height and the strength of the leader. School leadership is about building communities, promoting harmony, valuing people and accompanying them on a journey, an enlightening educational journey. Choosing to lead according to a different model from that described in traditional leadership literature is a deliberate decision which creates in and of itself a different context for understanding decision-making.

This thesis is about understanding how Maude, a female principal administers a private, Catholic, all girls' high school, looking specifically at both her leadership approach and her daily decision-making process. At the core of decision-making and leadership are certain values which presumably influence school administration. A four month qualitative inquiry provides the opportunity to observe and document both the subtle and the repetitive behaviours of a leader, creating a picture of both the content and the context in which the school administration actually takes place. This study is about walking beside a principal as she, herself, accompanies and guides her school on a journey.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

The ways in which we define a phenomenon such as leadership have a great deal to do with how we study it, how we measure it, what kinds of metaphors and symbols we apply to it, and how we use it in practice. It also determines how we try to make sense of leadership situations, many of which are characterised by complexity and ambiguity. Moreover, *leadership* means different things to different people. Though the call for leadership may be universal, individuals, groups, organisations and nations agree that there is little clarity concerning what the term means. (Klenke, 1996, p. 6)

In my review of the literature, I outline a number of leadership theories as well as studies conducted in the last few decades, in an attempt to provide more clarity about the phenomenon. As Klenke (1996) writes, leadership is characterised by complexity and ambiguity and therefore requires choices. Decision-making represents the second section of the literature review. Lastly, this chapter provides a section on women in educational leadership.

Conceptual Framework

As depicted in Figure 1, three bodies of literature inform this study. This literature review focuses globally on educational leadership as documented in the last two decades. Decision-making represents an intricate activity within the larger educational leadership phenomenon and thus constitutes the second body of literature. Given that the participant in this study is a female principal, the third body of literature informing this study is the female perspective, a gender filter used to interpret educational leadership and decision-making.
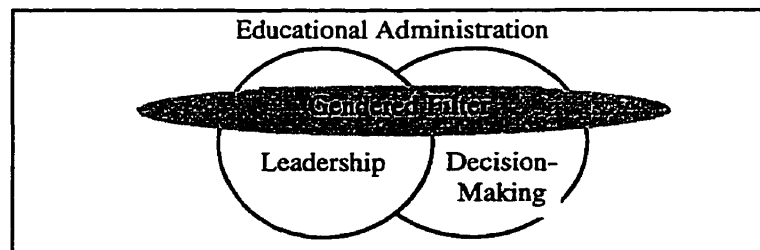
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Leadership

Leadership is a complex phenomenon which has been researched in many academic fields. In education, "leadership is one of the most talked about, written about, and researched topics" (Lunenburg, 1995). Authors (Bolman & Deal, 1991; Lunenburg, 1995; Shaw, 1981; Stogdill, 1974) have summarised the leadership studies conducted from the beginning of the century to the 1980's. Their summaries include the classical leadership studies and theories, that is, the studies and theories which most students in educational leadership study in an introductory class. Table 1 presents, chronologically, several different approaches to leadership, along with corresponding description and the associated findings when available.

Table 1.

Approaches to Leadership Described in a Time Frame

Approaches to Leadership	Description and Findings
Trait Approach Dated back to Greek and Roman civilisations up to the present, the trait approach has not been attributed to a single author.	As far back as the Greek and Roman civilisations, leaders were thought to be born and studies consequently focused on leaders' personal characteristics in an attempt to predict who could become a leader. Authors report that hundreds of empirical studies yielded little consistency in findings. Overall, "the findings suggest that in order for a person to be a leader, he or she needs the necessary goal-related abilities and skills, must be able to relate effectively to others and must *want* to be a leader." (Shaw, 1981, p. 325).
Behavioural Approach (Lewin, Lippitt & White, 1939; Rosenbaum & Rosenbaum, 1971 in Shaw, 1981)	Following studies on leader traits came studies on leader behaviour. The studies conducted revealed "markedly different patterns of interaction as a function of leadership style" (Shaw, 1981, p. 326). Autocratic leaders generated more hostility and aggression than did democratic or laissez-faire leaders. Production levels were sensibly the same in all groups.

XY Approach (McGregor, 1960 in Shaw 1981)	McGregor proposed two different sets of assumptions. In the first, Theory X, leaders need to be directive because followers inherently dislike work and responsibilities and consequently need to be coerced. Theory Y, on the other hand, portrays followers as imaginative, ingenuous, creative and desirous to take on responsibility. These followers respond well to a participative leadership style.
Contingency Approach (Fiedler, 1967, 1984 in Lunenburg, 1995)	According to this approach, leadership is "a function of the interaction of leadership style and situational dimensions within the organisation" (Lunenburg, 1995, p. 101). Research focuses on the analysis of *least preferred co-worker* (LPC) scores obtained from questionnaires as a prediction the leader's effectiveness. Three factors are considered; leader-member relations, task structure and position power. In summary, "the data from research generally support the contingency model (...), although the agreement between predicted effectiveness and actual performance is not always precise" (Shaw, 1981, p. 341).
Structural Approach (Managerial Grid) (Blake & Mouton, 1969, 1985 in Bolman & Deal, 1991)	Two dimensions contribute to the leadership effectiveness, according to this approach; concern for task and concern for people. The two dimensions are depicted as eighty-one cells on a graph, with position (1,1) being low task, low relationship; (5,5) being a compromise between concerns for both task and people and (9,9) being high task and high concern for people (Bolman & Deal, 1991). This approach to leadership was criticised for several reasons; first, it only accounts for interaction between the manager and a direct subordinate; second, it does not integrate all the dimensions of an organisation; third, other stakeholders are not part of the picture; last, there are no guidelines for varied situations.

Situational Approach (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977, 1988 in Bolman & Deal, 1991)	In this approach a graph depicted the maturity of the followers against the leadership style as composed of task and relationship orientations. Juxtaposing one of the four leadership styles (telling, selling, participating and delegating) on the readiness level of the group is the key to situational leadership. Support for this model is inconclusive (Bolman & Deal, 1991).
Transactional Approach (Hollander, 1978 in Shaw 1981; Bass, 1985)	This approach emphasises leadership as "a two-way influence process which involves a social exchange relationship between the leader and his or her followers" (Shaw, 1981, p. 334). The locus of leadership is found at the intersection of three elements; leader, followers and situation.

Many concepts associated with leadership emerge in Table 1. Leadership is based on the interaction between leader and followers in a given situation. Context is significant, as is the premise that leadership is a relational activity. However, there are two notions often associated with leadership omitted in Table 1: goals and values.

For Hollander (1978, in Shaw, 1981) and Hersey (1984 in Bolman, 1991), the goal is part of the task, one element of the situation. For others, such as Evans (1970 in Lunenburg, 1995) and House (1971 in Lunenburg, 1995), the goal is the focus of the path-goal theory of leadership. Different academic fields suggest different points of emphasis for the study of leadership. In the context of my study, having defined leadership as a process rather than a destination, little attention has been given to goal-specific leadership literature.

The approaches presented in Table 1 are gleaned largely from a business perspective. Many of the studies were conducted with the hopes that findings would help increase the productivity in industrial settings (Lunenburg, 1995). Some studies based on a hierarchical bureaucratic structure received criticism because the theories "typically assume that the domain of leadership is limited to the relationships between managers

and their immediate subordinates" (Bolman, 1991, p. 412-413). When these theories are transferred into the field of education, the notion of societal well-being and growth needs to be considered; for example, children should not be thought of in terms of subordinates. Paraphrasing Hodgkinson, Grace (1995) points out "the legitimation of educational leadership is related to the wider socio-political conditions in which an institution is operating and related also to the expectations and perceptions of the leadership-followership relation" (p. 64). In the Canadian context of the 1990's, students and parents alike increasingly have been voicing certain expectations relating to school leadership. No longer is the principal master of the school; rather, the principal is now accountable to various stakeholders. These new notions of leadership have arisen in the last decade to respond to the changing nature of schools.

There are a number of contemporary educational leadership approaches including facilitative, transformational and symbolic/cultural. The common thread among these approaches is the leader's willingness to include followers, in this case teachers, in various aspects of school administration. The outlook on leadership-followership relation is different when considering these leadership approaches. Followers are not synonymous with subordinates. Followers are colleagues and the subtle semantic difference creates a completely different atmosphere in the daily school life. These models possess similarities and differences contributing to the paradigm shift from the bureaucratic models to the more hospitable school cultures, elements which are outlined in the following sections.

Facilitative Leadership

Empowerment is one of the concepts representing the shift in paradigms between the hierarchical, bureaucratic model of leadership and the flat, open system approach of the nineties. Empowerment is an integral part of two leadership approaches, facilitative and transformational. Conley and Goldman define facilitative leadership as "the ability of principals to lead without controlling, while making it easier for all members of the school community to achieve agreed-upon goals" (1994, p. 3). The authors go on to describe *facilitative power* as the energy flow which circulates within an open system. The image which comes to mind is not one of a pyramidal structure, but rather that of a

web of connections similar to the human nervous system. Summarising their research on facilitative power, Dunlap and Goldman (1991) conclude "instead of most of the administrator's time being focused on controlling acts, most of it can be focused on facilitation of others' knowledge, talents, and expertise"(p. 23). This type of power is associated with what was labelled by Ouchi (1981 in Leithwood, 1992) as Type Z organisations, where power flows *through* as opposed to *over* people. This type of system is different from the traditional hierarchical (labelled Type A) organisations in that the decision-making style is participative as opposed to authoritarian and unilateral. Leithwood (1992) states that "the non-educational organisations that have undertaken this Type A toward Type Z ground-shift have usually done so not out of concern for individual rights or social justice but because such a shift increases their productivity" (p. 9). Leithwood argues that for change to be successful in schools, for the paradigm shift from bureaucracy to empowerment to take place, leadership should be facilitative.

Conley and Goldman (1994) conducted research on facilitative leadership and outlined their findings as ten propositions. Some important concepts are inherent in these propositions. First, they associate facilitative leadership with "the creation and management of tensions" (p. 14). The creation of tensions takes place when the leader highlights the gap in perceptions between what is and what should be. The management of tensions provides the leader with many opportunities to wear the counsellor or the moderator hat. It extends the repertoire of roles taken on by the leader. The role of negotiator plays a part in facilitative leadership as the leader must encourage the establishment of a shared vision. The shared vision provides a fertile ground to plant the seeds of new leadership structures. With a common vision in place, the leader can capitalise on the strengths of individuals and encourage the constant development of new leaders. The ripple effect of the new leadership structures should not stop at the level of the teachers; it should continue to students, parents and other stakeholders. Conley and Goldman believe that by building a vision all members of the school community buy into, change can be achieved and common goals can be reached. However, the product is not all that counts, the process is equally significant. Valuing the process should not be synonymous with reinventing the wheel. Facilitative leaders need to make decisions about

the expenditure of limited available energy and resources. Despite having new leadership structures in place, the leader is still accountable for the decisions made about time and resources, and more significantly, the overall school performance. Conley and Goldman conclude their propositions by stating that "facilitative leaders need support to sustain their efforts and counteract isolation" (p. 33). Despite the rarity of facilitative leaders, this approach to leadership is nevertheless seen as carrying an expectation of improvement, which slowly replaces cynicism and frustration.

Transformational Leadership

As previously stated, facilitative and transformational approaches to leadership share some elements. Lashway wrote the following about facilitative leadership:

> Influenced by leadership developments in the private sector, educational researchers have increasingly focused their attention on 'transformational' models of leadership that emphasise collaboration and empowerment. The facilitative leader's role is to foster the involvement of employees at all different levels. In contrast with traditional leaders whose domination is derived from formal authority and hierarchy, facilitative principals create environments in which teachers can work effectively. (...) Facilitative leadership requires that administrators trust and believe that others can and will function independently and successfully. (Lashway, 1995, abstract)

As evident throughout Lashway's and Leithwood's discourse, facilitative and transformational approaches to leadership are intertwined. Transformational leadership was first contrasted with transactional leadership by such authors as Bass (1998) and Leithwood (1992). One of the main features of transformational leadership, according to Bass, is the leader's ability to motivate the followers and "exceed expected performance" (Bass, 1998, p. 2). Furthermore, Bass' empirical research demonstrates that transformational leaders integrate some or all of the four components of transformational leadership, namely, charismatic leadership, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration. Leithwood expanded on the concept of transformational leadership in the field of education. His research findings present transformational leaders as individuals in "continuous pursuit of three fundamental goals;

1) helping staff members develop and maintain a collaborative, professional school culture; 2) fostering teacher development; and 3) helping them solve problems more effectively" (Leithwood, 1992, p. 9). Bass and Leithwood researched the same phenomenon in different contexts and reached similar conclusions. The image they present of their leaders is not one of a dictator, but rather that of a facilitator who takes the pulse of the organisation and finds ways to ignite the creative fire of followers such that they will be motivated to reach organisational goals and contribute to a positive organisational culture.

Symbolic/Cultural Leadership

The role of the leader in shaping the school culture is also a focal point in symbolic leadership. "By virtue of position, choices made by the designated leader are likely to exert a greater influence on the culture than are those made by any other member of the organisation" (Reitzug, 1992, p. 187). There are four other leadership forces besides culture at the disposal of the leader, according to Sergiovanni's (1984 in Reitzug, 1992) model; technical, human, educational and symbolic forces. Sergiovanni argued that only excellent leaders use symbolic and cultural forces to inform their educational leadership. School administrators readily use the technical force in planning, organising, co-ordinating and scheduling. The human force in school leadership relates to all thoughts and behaviours directed to providing support, building morale and encouraging growth in students and teachers. Leaders use the educational force as they accomplish instructional tasks such as supervision, preparing professional development for teachers and guiding them with expert professional knowledge. The symbolic force in school leadership relates to the modelling of desired values. Cultural leadership goes one step further by "defining, strengthening, and articulating the values, beliefs, and cultural strands that give the school its unique identity" (Reitzug, 1992, p. 191). Reitzug and Reeves (1992) produced a thick description of one principal's symbolic leadership as well as beliefs, assumptions and values constituting the school's culture. Their conceptualisation of leadership includes the following propositions:

> 1: Symbolic leadership takes place on two levels; overt (...) and
> embedded.

2: Behaviour contains an external substantive and an internal symbolic component.

3: Frequently, there is a discrepancy between the leadership force represented by the substantive component of behaviour and the force represented by the symbolic component.

4: Actions taken, language used and artefacts created are mediums through which symbolic messages are sent to followers.

5: Management and leadership are not separate functions. Part of a principal's leadership occurs through the symbolic messages that are communicated in the fulfilment of management duties.

6: Symbolic and cultural leadership are inseparable. As principals practice symbolic leadership, they simultaneously practice cultural leadership.

(Reitzug, 1992, p. 211-215)

An important contribution made by Reitzug and Reeves is the taxonomy of symbolic leadership which incorporates actions, language and artefacts. Some of the actions include the way time is spent, where the energy is committed, meetings attended, things rewarded, rituals, school tours and decisions made. Examples of language used include conversations, feedback, stories, non-verbal communication, books read and favourite sayings. Artefacts are all the documents produced as well as those displayed as objects and on bulletin boards.

The description offered by these components of symbolic leadership are important, because they are closely tied to the values which are transmitted and lived in the school environment, hence the proposition that cultural and symbolic leadership are inseparable. The principal's actions, language and use of artefacts contribute to the making of the culture and are based on values. Although some could argue that values are also present in the technical, human and educational leadership forces, Reitzug and Reeves' articulation of the symbolic leadership components help delineate more accurately the symbolic and cultural foundations of leadership. Observation of symbols, rather than technicalities, represents one step away from the bureaucratic model of leadership.

There are a few elements differentiating facilitative, transformational and symbolic leadership from bureaucratic and hierarchical approaches to leadership. First, a flattened structure exemplified by the use of facilitative power and empowerment is central to practices of facilitative, transformational and symbolic leaders. Second, researchers are moving away from the investigation of technical aspects of leadership aimed at yielding a higher organisational productivity. To the contrary, a common thread through research on facilitative, transformational and symbolic approaches to leadership is a focus on promoting change schools not only at a structural level, but also at a human level (Leithwood, 1992; Lashway, 1995; and Bass, 1998). One example of this is an assumption outlined in Reitzug and Reeves' findings; "all individuals must grow, and all situations are learning situations" (Reitzug, 1992, p. 206). Another comes from Conley and Goldman's research:

> Facilitative leaders are aware of (...) beliefs and norms, but they do a
> great deal more to cause teachers to examine their assumptions and
> change their practices. They nurture a new set of symbols and meanings,
> ones that support broader, more collaborative change, risk-taking, and a
> redefinition of individual and collective goals and assumptions. They
> create both the illusion and the reality of motion, of positive change that,
> despite uncertainties, leads to a school that better serves the children who
> attend it (Conley & Goldman, 1994, p. 13).

The conceptualisation of leadership has indeed evolved away from the bureaucratic and hierarchical model where decisions were made unilaterally by the great charismatic leader. Research has shown that educational leaders are turning to approaches which promote collaboration and participative decision-making in an effort to provide a better education for the students.

Decision-Making

Making decisions is part of the daily routine of a principal. Some decisions are made in passing in the hall when a student asks a question. Other decisions are reached in isolation, behind closed doors. This section of the literature review outlines decision-

making models as well as some of the decision-making factors researched over the last 15 years.

Decision-Making Models

Kids playing hide and seek decide who is *it* by chanting "Eniminiminemo..."; family members decide who does the dishes by drawing a name from a hat; and parents decide which house to buy by carefully assessing a number of different factors. These are all situations requiring a choice. The outcomes to the first two scenarios are inconsequential; however, in the third situation, more consideration must be put on all the pertinent factors. A principal could choose to use any of the strategies above; however, keeping in mind the attainment of the school mission, the use of a rational decision-making model would likely be advisable.

Hoy and Tarter (1995) outline different decision-making models: classical, administrative, mixed scanning, incremental, garbage-can and political. Table 2 (p.20) outlines the major differences between the various models. In looking more carefully at the classical decision-making model, two fundamental assumptions are perceptible. First, decisions reached are rational and second, one best course of action exists. This seven step model consists of identifying and diagnosing the problem, outlining the alternatives, anticipating the consequences, evaluating the different courses of action, selecting and implementing the preferred alternative. This model's inherent flaw (Hoy & Tarter, 1995) is its focus on the *one* best strategy. The perfect course of action would be outlined if the decision-maker had access to complete information and had the cognitive ability to analyse all factors influencing the situation (Hoy & Tarter, 1995). In the best of worlds, the classical model would be used by all-knowing principals to reach important decisions. In complex organisations such as schools, obtaining *complete* information seems to represent a utopian goal, given the fluctuating nature of the environment.

The administrative model, although similar to the classical model, respects the uncertainty present in principals' lives. Five steps constitute this model: recognising and defining the problem, analysing the difficulties in the existing situation, establishing the criteria for a satisfactory solution, developing a strategy for action, and initiating a plan of action. The main difference between the two models lies in the aim of the process; the

classical model aims at maximising by opting for the *one* best course of action, while the administrative model aims at *satisficing*, a word coined by Hoy and Tarter (1995) for finding a satisfactory solution.

One step further from the *one* best course of action is the incremental decision-making model, the model representing the art of *muddling through* (Hoy & Tarter, 1995).

Table 2.

<u>Comparison of Decision-Making Models</u>

	Classical	Administrative	Incremental	Mixed Scanning	Garbage-Can	Political
Setting Goals	Organisational objectives are set prior to alternatives	Objectives are usually set prior to alternatives	Objectives and alternatives are intertwined	Policy guidelines are set prior to alternatives	Objectives emerge spontaneously	Objectives emerge spontaneously but are personal
Means-ends analysis	Always begins with a means-ends analysis	Frequently begins with a means-ends analysis, but occasionally, ends change	No means-ends analysis; means and ends are not separable	Broad ends and tentative means focus the analysis	means and ends are independent; chance connects them	Personal ends determine organisational means
Decision process	Optimising organisational goals	Satisficing	Successive comparing	Adaptive satisficing	Connecting by chance	Politicking to achieve personal ends
Under-pinning	Theory	Theory, experience	Experience, comparison	Theory, experience, comparison	Chance	Power

Note. <u>Administrators Solving the Problems of Practice</u> (p. 90), by W. K. Hoy and C. J. Tarter, 1995, Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

This model is used in complex situations where the outcomes can hardly be predicted. The major difference between the incremental and the administrative model beyond the complexity of the situation is the amplitude of the decisions. As the title of this model suggests, the decisions reached produce small incremental changes, to allow the decision-

maker to monitor the situation every step of the way. The challenge for a decision-maker using this model is to keep the focus on the organisational mission.

The mixed scanning decision-making model integrates the administrative and the incremental models, abiding by the answers to two questions: "What is the basic mission of the organisation? What incremental decisions will move the organisation in that direction?" (Hoy, 1995, p. 47-48). Etzioni (1989 in Hoy, 1995) advanced seven rules for the mixed scanning model which emphasise different trial and error approaches as well as procrastination strategies, which are used in cases of uncertainty. Action can be warranted despite uncertainties and the lack of information. Keeping the organisational mission in mind, the decision-maker can outline experimental, reversible, incremental alternatives and reach a decision following the mixed scanning model.

Selecting alternatives by picking strategies out of a hat is what the garbage-can decision-making model is based upon. Its basic underlying premise is chance, not rationality. The garbage-can model may be adopted by organisation with high uncertainty, complexity, discontinuity and chaos. Hoy (1995) wrote, "The garbage-can model explains why solutions are proposed to problems that do not exist, why choices are made that do not solve the problems, why problems persist in spite of solutions, and why so few problems are solved" (p. 61). A good decision is made when the solution proposed actually matches an existing problem. The element of chance clearly represents the weakness of this model.

The political model may be equally as problematic as the garbage-can model when it comes to school administration. Whether a decision-maker relies on chance or on his or her personal agenda to select a course of action, the outcome may be equally disastrous to the welfare of the organisation if personal goals diverge from organisational goals. The political model is operational when organisational means are used to reach personal goals. Hoy (1995) stated that "the political model is a descriptive framework that relies on power to explain decision-making" (p. 68). Furthermore, Hoy (1995) added that organisations run by political decisions tend to foster conflict and chaos.

The six models presented above have their use in different contexts in schools, despite certain shortcomings. In the context of school administration, one could assume that

stakeholders would not appreciate the use of either garbage-can or political models to reach significant decisions. The educational mission and the means to reach the ends should be laid out as a guiding force behind rational decision-making.

Figure 2 illustrates a five stage decision-making cycle, which Hoy (1995) associated with the administrative decision-making model. This cycle provides the imagery of decision-making as a dynamic process where one decision reached may lead to another decision and so on and so forth.

Recognise and define the problem

Analyse the difficulties

Initiate the plan of action
- Program it
- Communicate it
- Monitor it
- Evaluate it

Establish the criteria for a satisfactory solution

Develop an action plan
- Specify the alternatives
- Predict the consequences
- Consider the options
- Select and action plan
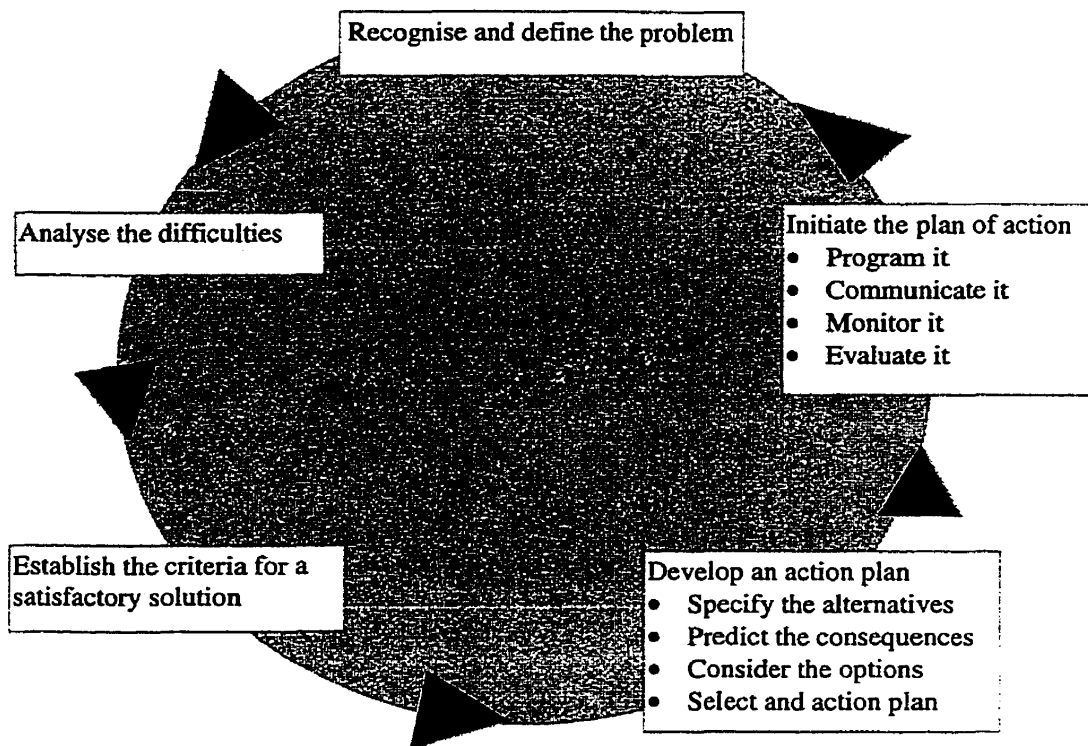
Figure 2. Decision-making cycle: Five step process used in the classical, administrative, incremental and mixed scanning decision-making models (Hoy & Tarter, 1995, p. 19).

The cycle clearly expresses the satisficing approach to decision-making, although some elements of the administrative decision-making cycle are present in other models as well. Before a decision can be reached, there is a need to gain an understanding of the situation requiring a choice. Alternatives need to be outlined as well as associated consequences. Once the analysis is done, there is also a need to put it in place by implementing a plan.

Whether the cycle takes place at an incremental or administrative level, the basic foundation of the decision-making process remains the same when rationality stands as a basic parameter.

Although the term *problem* is used in Figure 2, decision-making does not occur only when problems are at hand. Decision-making can be anticipatory of problems, as well as reactionary. Much research has been done relating to problem-solving, particularly in terms of developing or demonstrating expertise (Allison & Allison, 1991; Allison & Allison, 1993; Allison & Nagy, 1991; Leithwood & Steinbach, 1995; Short & Rinehart, 1993). Problem-solving *per se* is beyond the scope of this study. Principals make decisions daily which do not necessarily entail a problem.

Walker (1993) offers a model which differs slightly from the model presented in Figure 2 (p.22), but which addresses the problem of semantics; her eight step approach to decision-making includes examining the situation prior to specifying the problem or *the opportunity*. An additional element is a consideration for the input from the stakeholders (Walker, 1993). The other steps, outlining the options, selecting and implementing a course of action follow the model described above. The inclusion of the stakeholders suggests the participation of more than one person in the decision-making process.

Wiber (1995) researched decision-making in female superintendents and outlined the difference between hierarchical decision-making and shared decision-making. She states that,

> an advantage of hierarchical decision-making is simply that the
> work of individuals can be the co-ordinated and controlled by
> having them follow the directives of a superior. There is a
> conscious attempt to link means to ends, resources to objectives,
> and intentions to activities. (Wiber, 1995, p. 18)

This model resembles the classical model in that the decision-maker attempts to maximise the outcome of each decision to reach the goals. In the perfect hierarchy, each person's role is clearly defined and may also provide opportunities to specialise and develop expertise in one specific area. Since the organisational chart is designed as a hierarchy, it does not provide many opportunities for collegiality as communication

between individuals occurs within the established vertical channels. Hierarchies conjure up scientific management approaches to leadership and administration aimed at increasing productivity rather than focusing on the personal and professional growth and development of organisational members.

Shared decision-making is part of the facilitative and transformational approaches to leadership. The aim is to flatten the structure and promote communication among all the players involved in the organisation. The change literature explores shared decision-making as a means to foster collaboration (Conley & Goldman, 1994; Fennell, 1996; Fullan, 1996; Lipham, 1983; Restine, 1993). Wiber states, "Research indicates that shared decision-making adds to the quality of life among professionals by promoting enthusiasm and higher morale, greater self productivity and co-operation, and personal growth and development" (1995, p. 20). Shared decision-making is not the panacea of all decision-making models; one significant shortcoming is the time factor. A group reaching a decision will likely take more time to do so than will an individual. If group members' values do not converge towards a common mission, conflict may arise. Values represent one factor impacting decision-making which researchers have investigated considerably. The following section will look at research conducted around factors affecting the decision-making process.

Decision-Making Research

Decision-making is a complex phenomenon. As presented in Figure 2 (p. 22), decision-making can be viewed as a cyclical process. It takes place at various levels throughout each day in any individual's life. People decide what to eat for breakfast, what to wear to work, how to fill their leisure time, in short, how to lead their lives. Some decisions are made instinctively, others require more thought. Some are made in isolation, others shared with friends, family or colleagues. The context often determines the importance of the decision. In an educational administration context, decisions made by a principal can range in importance between dismissing a student from a class two minutes before the sound of the bell to implementing a new curriculum. Some decisions are made to avoid problems and other decisions are made to eliminate problems.

Trider and Leithwood (1988, in Corral, 1994) differentiated between external and internal factors affecting decision-making. External factors refer to "scheduling constraints, policies and guidelines, (...) community values and needs, budgetary matters, and factors specific to the situation" (Corral, 1994, p. 20). Internal factors pertain to "experience, personal motivation and goals, knowledge about issues, and educational values and beliefs" (Corral, 1994, p. 20). Wiber (1995) profiled a few factors affecting how decisions are reached. She included context, trust, time, professionalism of the organisational culture, and personal interactions and relationships between the decision-maker and others. The influence of context, and of personal and professional values on the decision-making process, are factors common to Corral's and Wiber's dissertations.

Context is included as the backdrop in studies on decision-making, whereas the impact of values on the decision-making process constitute, in and of themselves, a niche of research. Marshall (1992) studied school administrators' values. She interviewed 26 administrators to gain insight into their dilemmas and the role values played in the decision-making process used to resolve those dilemmas. She found three guiding principles: religion, family and personal value systems. She also found that "administrators were willing to state their own core values" (Marshall, 1992, p. 377). Fairness, caring and openness were prevalent values among the principals involved in her study. She wrote, "While the volunteered statements of these administrators show a pattern of caring, sharing, high empathy for teacher fairness, and healthy respect for parents, the strongest value that emerged is concern for the individual student" (Marshall, 1992, p. 381). This concern for students could also be labelled care. Marshall, Patterson, Rogers and Steele (1996) built on their individual, previous research to create a clearer picture of administrators operating according to an ethic of care.

Taking the conclusions from her research one step further, Marshall (1996) stated that "caring (....) is a situation- and person-specific way of performing in the world that requires being fully and sensitively attuned to the needs of the cared for by the person caring" (p. 278). The ethic of care is viewed as a "valuable perspective to guide (...) decision-making"(Marshall, 1996, p. 278). Marshall et al. (1996) found three necessary behaviours to sustain a caring environment: creating, maintaining and enhancing

connections; recognising and responding to contextual realities; and demonstrating concern by responding to needs. Administrators in the study insisted on the importance of taking personal and professional opportunities to forge and maintain relationships with all their stakeholders, including people in the community at large. They also highlighted the need to scan the full picture before making any decisions. Throughout the daily lives of these administrators, care was at the forefront of their minds when reaching decisions. Marshall et al. (1996) are "convinced (...) that caring is a necessary condition for transforming schools into successful living and learning environments" (p. 291). Noddings (1992) also wrote about the ethic of care. In her forward to Beck's (1994) work, she reminds readers about "the tendency in highly bureaucratised systems (...) to attend most diligently to those above us in the hierarchy" pointing to the fact that "much of an administrators' time goes into compliance" (Beck, 1994, p. ix). She also remarks that "when we evaluate our work through the perspective of caring, we experience a motivational shift toward those who need us and to whom we must now respond" (Beck, 1994, p. ix). Values provide a different lens through which decision-making can be understood.

Campbell-Evans (1991) and Chomye (1996) both studied the influence of values on decision-making using Beck's (1984 in Campbell-Evans, 1991) value framework. The framework outlines five types of values: basic human, moral, social and political, intermediate-range and specific. Table 3 (p. 27) specifies some examples associated with each value category.

Campbell-Evans (1991) found the three most important types of values influencing principals' decision-making patterns to be, in order of importance, social and political, basic human and moral values. Within the particular categories, Campbell-Evans found participation, co-operation, sharing, solidarity, respect for authority, commitment and community to be the most significant of the social and political values. Knowledge, helping others, happiness, respect for others and survival were prioritised within the basic human category. The moral values preferred included responsibility, carefulness and fairness.

Chomye (1996) used a different methodology to study values in relation to decision-making. As opposed to Campbell-Evans who interviewed eight principals, Chomye concentrated on one principal. He provided examples to illustrate how the values outlined in Beck's framework influenced the decision-making process from two different perspectives. He interviewed staff to gain some understanding of their perception of the influence of values on the decision-making process and he also interviewed Ben, the principal to provide a second perspective. The principal outlined fewer values at work than did his staff. The five basic human values most influential in the principal's decision-making were responsibility, respect, knowledge, community involvement and a sense of meaning. Due process, justice, loyalty, commitment, co-operation and solidarity were the most significant social and political values, while caring, honesty, truthfulness and courage were the most significant moral values. Intermediate-range values were non-influential from the principal's perspective, whereas some specific values such as the particular school culture, the particular programming and the principal's vision did guide the decision-making process. Building a vision "was seen by Ben [the principal], and by his staff, as being of paramount importance in influencing any decisions that Ben made" (Chomye, 1996, p. 34).

Table 3

Beck's Value Framework (1984 in Chomye,1996, p.50)

Value	Exemplifiers
Basic human	Survival, happiness, companionship, friendship, helping others, participation in community, self-respect, respect from others, knowledge, freedom, a sense of meaning in life
Social and political	Peace, justice, due process, tolerance, participation, co-operation, sharing, loyalty, solidarity, citizenship, respectability
Moral	Carefulness, responsibility, courage, self-control, reliability, truthfulness, honesty, politeness, fairness, unselfishness
Intermediate range	Food, shelter, entertainment, relaxation, fitness, positive family relationships, ability to read and write, meaningful employment, financial security
Specific	Material goods, particular neighbourhood, particular friendships, high school diploma, particular sports involvement, particular political party, particular job

The insight gained from Beck's value framework and the two studies profiled represents both an awareness of the number of values influencing decision-making and the realisation that perceptions may differ significantly between the decision-maker and others. Chomye provided the perspective of one male principal. Campbell-Evans interviewed eight principals, amongst which seven were men and one was a woman. Priorities were put on different values by different leaders. Hodgkinson defined values as "concepts of the desirable which tend to act as motivating determinants of behaviour" (1983, p. 36). Values influence the decision-making patterns of principals which in turn impact their overall school leadership. The models which have been presented throughout the leadership and decision-making sections mainly represent the dominant Western, white Anglo-Saxon male view. As societies change, it becomes more and more important to include *other* perspectives, because leadership is, after all, conceived by the relationship established between the leader and the followers and decision-making is a process which shapes leadership. In a school where sixteen languages are spoken and over fifty nationalities are represented, for instance, a leader cannot afford to remain dedicated to "one best way" (Bolman & Deal, 1991) of leading; *other* perspectives need to be part of a principal's repertoire. The female perspective represents one of these *other* perspectives, a gender filter, which deserves closer attention.

The Female Perspective

In the historical development of this field [educational leadership], not only have women researchers and theorists been relatively few in numbers, the very concept of gender has remained largely invisible. (...) The view [which has enjoyed a long history in this field] has relied heavily upon organisational theory (e.g., bureaucracy), technology (e.g., scientific management), environment and goals (e.g., human relations). *Other* perspectives, such as the many developed in the last two decades, have had to do so in opposition to this dominant view. (Reynolds, 1995, p. 3)

The female perspective is an *other* perspective (Young, 1994). Many authors have argued for the inclusion of the female perspective in the study of leadership (Mitchell, 1998; Regan & Brooks, 1995; Reynolds & Young, 1995; Shakeshaft & et al., 1984). Regan

(1995) expresses that the problem does not lie in women learning about school leadership through the perspective of men's experience but rather in being told and believing *"that's all the knowledge there is"* (p. 18). The importance of including *other* perspectives in educational leadership has also been articulated by Shakeshaft (1987):

> The world of women has important implications for theory and practice in a field. To be useful and inclusive, theory and practice needs to take into account the experiences of all the players. Unfortunately, the field of educational administration, not unlike most other fields and disciplines, has not seen the world from an inclusive perspective and thus presents only a partial picture. (p. 194)

The value of an *other* perspective lies in the light that it sheds on leadership as a lived phenomenon. The experiences of women as educational leaders have only recently been regarded as significant, despite the fact that education is dominated by a female work force. Rielh (1996) and Reynolds (1995) commented that there have been several approaches taken to study leadership; one approach argues for *no difference*, another for *differences* and yet a third goes *beyond differences* (Reynolds, 1995).

> Another approach to and examination of leadership from a gendered perspective is to listen to the voices of women, not to compare them with men, but simply to let women claim some of the discourse space about leadership in general and school leadership in particular. (...) Thus, by looking at leadership from a women's perspective, we can begin to identify the content and themes of their approaches toward leadership and how they might like to see leadership evolve. The question is not whether all women lead in particular ways, or even whether women tend to lead in ways that differ from men. Rather, the question is whether women promote, through their practice and research, a particular rhetoric about leadership that can contribute to more effective leadership and more successful schools (Riehl, 1996, p. 905).

The research conducted on women in educational leadership in the last two decades, constitutes this section. Particular attention is paid to both the "particular rhetoric"

composed by the integration of values and organisational roles of women and the implications research findings have on reshaping the conceptualisation and rhetoric of educational leadership according to *women's ways*.

One of the pioneers in feminist research is Carol Gilligan who not only "criticised Kohlberg for throwing away the data he had collected on women which did not fit the model he was using" (Harding, 1987, p. 56) but who also subsequently developed a psychological theory of human development integrating data on women's development. The findings presented in *In a Different Voice* outline women's desire for connections and their focus on an ethic of care, while highlighting men's desire for separation as well as their focus on an ethic of justice. In response to the request to describe themselves, "all of the women describe a relationship, depicting their identity *in* connection of future mother, present wife, adopted child, or past lover" (Gilligan, 1982, p. 159). On the other hand, Gilligan (1982) reported that

> although the world of the self that men describe at times include *people* and *deep attachments*, no particular person or relationship is mentioned, nor is the activity of relationship portrayed in the context of self-description. Replacing verbs of attachment are adjectives of separation.
> (p. 161)

Gilligan's articulation of women's ethic of care contrasting with men's ethic of justice was one of the first steps in legitimising *women's ways* in moral reasoning.

Researchers have developed interesting *other* models of leadership, many building on the importance of connectedness and values. Valerie Hall's (1996) statement that "in education, (...) discussing leadership without discussing leader's values is like music without sound, dogma without belief" (p. 4) points to the significant place values occupy in educational leadership.

The following leadership models, often established through the type of feminist research approach described by Riehl (1996), demonstrate how connectedness also relates to the roles and the positions that female school leaders chose to assume in their daily school administration and how women adapt to many organisational roles and prefer to stand "in the middle of things" as opposed to above others (Helgesen, 1995). Concepts

which resonate in the bureaucratic world are related to the hierarchical positions, the top-down relationships between managers and subordinates, the focus on goals, where often, the ends justify the means. The concepts constituting the female perspective of leadership are those echoing the web of connection, the flat structure where leaders stand amidst followers, where the focus is as much on the process, the journey, as it is on the goals or the destination.

Double Helix

Regan and Brooks' (1995) research describes a model of leadership drawn from 11 case studies of women educational leaders. The double helix is constructed like a DNA strand, with two interlocking strands. "One of those strands symbolises the contribution to leadership grounded in men's experiences" (p. 25) and the other symbolises the female experience composed primarily by five attributes: collaboration, caring, courage, intuition and vision. These values resonate with Gilligan's (1982) concepts of connectedness and with Regan and Brooks' (1995) definitions of the ethic of care.

Collaboration, according to Regan and Brooks (1995), is "the ability to work in a group, eliciting and offering support to each other member, creating a synergistic environment for everyone" (p. 26). The leader does not stand at the top, but rather amidst other members of the group. Caring is defined as "the development of an affinity for the world and the people in it, translating moral commitment to action on behalf of others" (Regan & Brooks, 1995, p. 27). Care requires some give and take. Courage represents "the capacity to move ahead into the unknown, testing new ideas in the world of practice" (Regan & Brooks, 1995, p. 30). One of the participants in Regan and Brooks' (1995) study expressed that:

> when women are courageous, they are not saying 'Here, look at me-look at
> what I am doing'; instead they exercise courage in support of the
> organisation. They take the high road and encourage everyone in the
> organisation to achieve the high road with them. Their kind of leadership
> doesn't call attention to the leader, it calls attention to everybody because
> it is participatory and collaborative. (p. 30)

Intuition relates to the "ability to give equal weight to experience and abstraction, mind and heart" (Regan & Brooks, 1995, p. 33). Vision reflects "the ability to formulate and express original ideas, enabling others to consider options in new and different ways" (Regan & Brooks, 1995, p. 36). All attributes of the *female strand* work together as a process. Visionary leadership is trusting one's intuition, collaborating with people, knowing how to care for each individual and having the courage to put forth new ideas.

The attributes constituting the female strand are not exclusive to women, as the male attributes are not exclusive to men. There is a link between the two strands. In the natural world, the two strands of the double helix are linked by bridges of hydrogen bonds. In the social world, the two strands of the double helix are linked by a process of communication between the masculinist and feminist strands, which we have chosen to call relational knowing (Regan, 1995, p. 63). Relational knowing was a term coined by Hollingsworth (1992 in Regan, 1995) who included the following as descriptive elements of relational knowing:

(1) requires careful listening;

(2) involves both instantiation and the reflection on what is known;

(3) cannot be termed *relational knowledge* because of its fluid and present character;

(4) is attentionally generated through a sense of care for self and other;

(5) occurs in the acceptance of where we are now (becoming);

(6) is situated in the larger, social, political world;

(7) occurs more in energy or intuitive perception than in either concrete or abstract form;

(8) evokes past memories of stored knowledge transformed into knowing through not only cognitive, but moral, spiritual, psychological and physical response; and

(9) allows the teacher to act in an intuitive mode; an involvement of the sense, a commitment and receptivity, a quest for understanding or empathy, and a productive tension between subjective certainty and objective uncertainty.

(p. 80)

Regan and Brooks (1995) arrived at their model by combining their own experiences with conversations held with women educational leaders. They gave women an opportunity to express their experiences as educational leaders. Together, they constructed new knowledge. They put words to their common experiences. They came to express their form of leadership as relational leadership. According to them, a relational leader is someone who conceives of a different world.

> She or he is a visionary who has the intellectual capacity to embrace the plausible and the implausible, who thinks globally and reaches beyond the moment, applying both divergent and convergent thinking to effect change. Intrinsically motivated by a moral code of conduct, a leader empowers others to achieve mutually agreed upon goals and, when necessary, guides others to behave in morally responsible ways. Relational leaders have a broad vision of the goals to be worked towards. (Regan, 1995, p. 41)

This definition is not one describing female leaders; it is one describing relational leaders. The model presented by Regan and Brooks includes both the female and the male elements of leadership. They concentrated on the female strand in order to describe the strand to which little attention had been paid in the past, in an attempt to fill in the knowledge gap. Furthermore, they offer a way to integrate both the female and the male attributes in order to generate a more effective conceptualisation of leadership and to legitimise *women's ways*. Their leadership model integrates values and concepts quite different from those presented in classical leadership models. They contribute an *other* perspective on leadership.

Metaphors

Klenke (1996) thought about an *other* leadership perspective when she helped create the double helix during the Writers Conference, a forum where women could express their views and experiences about leadership. Other women chose to research leadership through the use of interesting methodological approaches, arguing that alternative methods provide an opportunity for women to regain their voice. Klenke (1996) focused on the use of metaphors. She believes that "one way of breaking with established ways of

conceptualising leadership is by drawing on symbolic constructs or metaphors" because "metaphors generate new meaning and insights" by forcing us "to discard old concepts and words" (p. 13). The metaphor that she used to summarise the concept of leadership is that of the prism.

Klenke, in her description of the prism metaphor, presented the leadership diamond as composed of gender, context, culture and the leader-follower relationship. Gender, for example, has been largely omitted as a dimension in the study of leadership (Klenke, 1996; Shakeshaft, 1986). "Virtually all theories of leadership, past and present, have been developed by men, and only recently have feminist scholars begun to respond to the androcentrism which permeates study in this field" (Klenke, 1996, p. 15). The fact that women have been invisible from the study of leadership is reason enough to include gender as a component of a leadership metaphor, as the purpose of the metaphor is to look at a phenomenon from a completely different perspective. Klenke (1996) reports that "gender is always in the way when female leaders are evaluated and acts as a filter for assessing women's leadership skills and effectiveness" (p. 17). Gender seems, from Klenke's perspective, to have acted as a barrier for women. Gender need not constitute a barrier, though. Observed from a different perspective, some attributes, such as those presented in the double helix, may promote more effective leadership.

Context is the second factor in Klenke's leadership prism. She argues that context shapes the process of leadership. "Contextual factors set the boundaries with which leaders and followers interact and determine the constraints and demands that are put on leaders" (p. 18). Contextual factors are broad: they include political, economic, social, religious, business, technological, historical and community settings, to name just a few. School leadership operates within many contextual parameters, such as provincial or state curriculum guidelines. The context also extends to societal trends, such as the increasing use of technology. Schools are micro-societies with their own rules of operation, but they are still part of a larger context. Context is therefore one filter through which leadership can be analysed and observed, context cannot be ignored.

Culture is the third filter constituting Klenke's (1996) leadership prism. Culture is a theme which has been associated with many of the studies on women in education (Hall,

1994a; Regan & Brooks, 1995; Restine, 1993; Rusch & Marshall, 1995). In Klenke's terms, "culture concerns the conditions and the forms in which meaning and value are structured and articulated within a society" (p. 23). She adds that "culture determines the identity of a human group in the same way as personality determines the identity of an individual" (Klenke, 1996, p. 23). Culture is composed of many aspects, such as gender and language and is based on values. Each organisation creates its own culture. Each leader has an impact on the organisational culture.

Klenke (1996) presents a model of leadership based on the juxtaposition of several prisms. She proposes that an examination of leadership through such lenses will contribute a different and unique understanding of the leadership process. "Each leadership prism refracts knowledge and different insights into the process of leadership and the roles women and men play in this process" (Klenke, 1996, p. 24). Her model confirms that gender matters as a factor in the study of leadership and it also confirms that gender impacts on the formation of organisational culture. Culture built and cultivated by women deserves closer attention.

<u>Culture, Power and Gender</u>

Valerie Hall researched six women headteachers in Great Britain using a power-culture metaphor (Hall, 1994a). The purpose of the study was to examine how female headteachers influenced the organisational culture. The basic assumption guiding her research was that different people make use of resources differently, based on their underlying values and beliefs, to reach specific goals. Findings revealed that the women participating in the study were committed to "empowering self and others, encouraging collaboration and modelling leadership" (p. 5). Hall found a strong link between the values expressed in structured conversations and life-history interviews and the female heads' patterns of communication, decision-making and interaction with staff and the school as a whole. "For all six [headteachers] power means making things happen by having and using resources, empowering others, having and communicating a vision, shaping the school's culture" (Hall, 1994, p. 9). Power is thus used by women to shape the school culture in such a way that staff and students alike feel empowered. Hall

positioned power, culture and gender within the analytical framework presented in the figure below:

Values and experiences brought to the job

(derived from)

- Family situation
- Educational experiences
- Career choices
- Preparation for headship

descriptions based on life history interviews which influence

Being on the job

(philosophy and practice)

- Values (about power, priorities, leadership, management, ethos, other people, education, children and curriculum)
- Personal/professional
- Self-organisation and development
- Being a woman

leading to conclusions about management and gender, leadership, androgyny, women leaders and equal opportunities, women heads' responses to educational reform

Doing the job

(repertoire of observed behaviours, style, talk, non-verbal communication)

- Using power
- Shaping culture
- Strategies/tactics
- Being a change agent

Descriptions based on observations and respondent validation

Conclusions regarding the relationship between style and strategies and autobiography/context and gender

Product; An analysis of headship as done by women
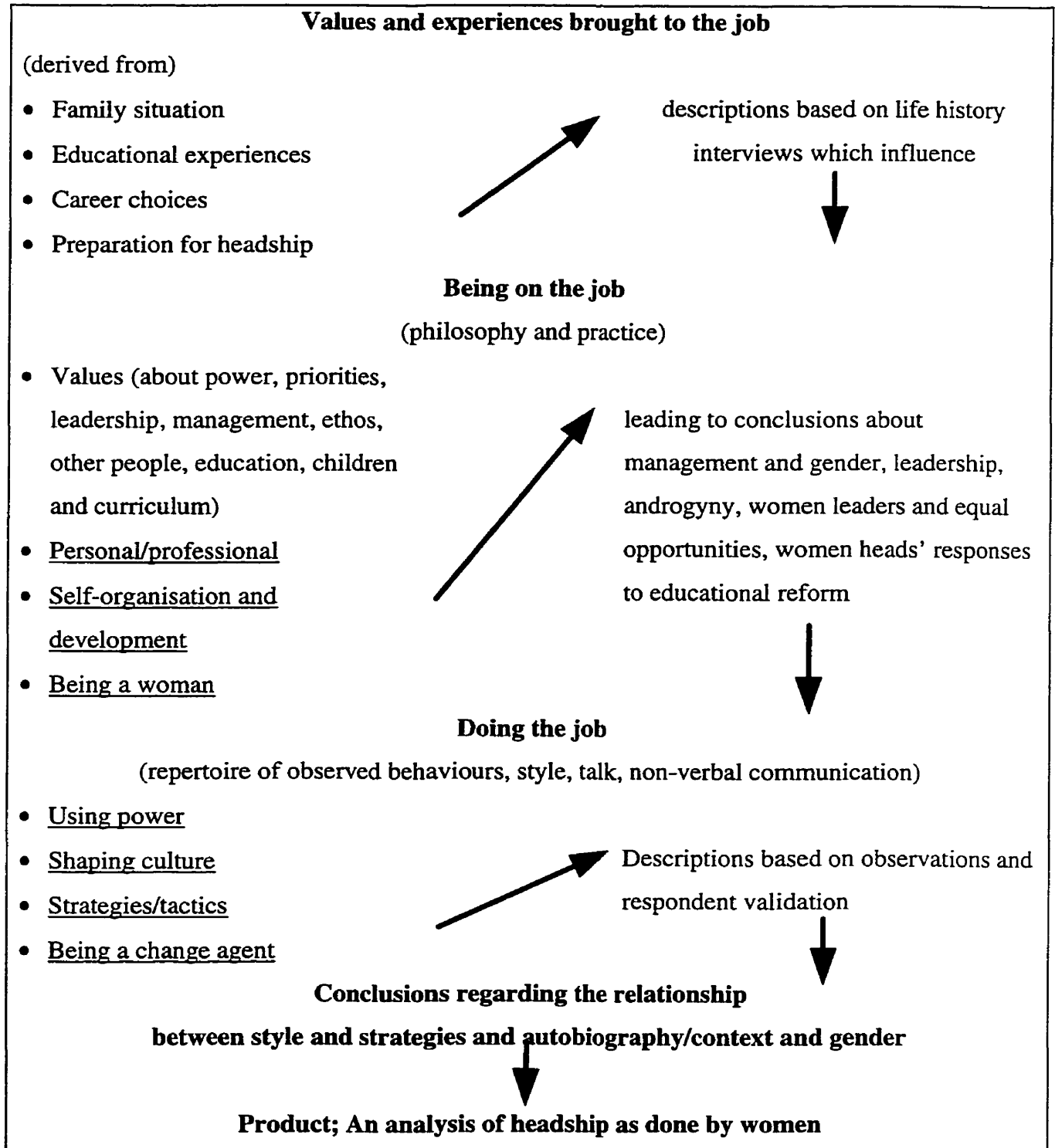

Figure 3. Hall's (1994b) analytical framework locating values and experiences as pertinent to being in and doing a job within a culture and power metaphor.

There are three levels present in Hall's analytical framework, namely, the educational administrators' background consisting of values and experiences, the translation of those values and experiences into a personal philosophy, and finally, the application of the philosophy into daily professional patterns of leadership. This framework offers a perspective for the analysis of several aspects of educational leadership. Hall's qualitative research approach "emphasises gender relations rather than gender differences" (Hall, 1996, p. 3).The study focused on the life history of the six women, including their childhood experiences, relationships and professional careers. An interesting aspect emerging from Hall's analytical framework was a means to answer "*How* did the headteachers use power and shape cultures?"

Hall found that the six female headteachers she studied did not shape the culture of their schools by riding in like "knights on white chargers to the rescue" (Hall, 1996, p. 190).

> They aimed to create and support organisational cultures characterised by trust, openness, involvement and a sense of self-worth. At the heart of managing others was their continued vigilance in managing themselves as leaders and as women. Their self-management (of self-presentation, self-organisation and self-development) were honed to enable them to demonstrate self-control as a legitimation of their claim to be in charge of the school. They valued being *authentic* and being *consistent* at work, to give credibility to the role models they provided for others. Through self-reflection and engagement in self-development, they held up mirrors to their own performance, though regretted others' diffidence in giving them honest feedback. Their symbolic leadership behaviour depended for its effectiveness on their sensitive readings of others and of the situation.
> (Hall, 1996, p. 186)

Reading the situation relates to a certain extent to Regan and Brooks' (1995) attribute of intuition and to Gilligan's (1982) concept of connectedness. It requires acuteness in perceiving minute changes in a situation, or changes in behaviour, which are sometimes first perceived intuitively. Noticing changes means recognising *normal* from *abnormal*

which requires having previously gathered infinite clues from people and situations through relationships, hence the sense of connectedness. The female administrators studied by Hall sought to bring out the best in people throughout their leadership activities, such as during selecting, motivating, developing and reviewing teacher performance. Power was used to empower and the participants' influence on the school culture was aimed at promoting a collaborative, open and trusting environment.

Hall introduced her research by stating that:

> if women who reach senior management positions in education can be shown to practice what has been described as 'critical leadership', then, they might also be seen to have challenged the association of management, masculinity and autocratic control over others. (...) Within this perspective critical leadership encompasses school management practice which liberates rather than controls. Its strength is its concern with ethics and morals, not just efficiency and means. It represents *power to* rather than *power over*. Leadership and followership are interchangeable. The power of the individual leader is limited. The awareness of non-dominant groups is raised. Finally, critical leadership stimulates organisational change through mutual education. (Hall, 1996, p. 5)

The use of the concept of power in Hall's definition of critical leadership resembles that of other researchers looking at women and power in educational settings (Fennell, 1994; Hurty, 1995; Irwin, 1995; Smith, 1992).

Hurty (1995) researched power by observing, interviewing and listening to seventeen female elementary school principals. One purpose of the study aimed to establish a definition of power. The principals responded that to them, "power is the ability to get the job done" (Hurty, 1995, p. 383). Hurty added:

> If indeed power is the ability to get the job done, then *how* they went about getting the work done is what gives meaning to an authentic definition of power, identified through and validated by their experience. The picture that emerged was a vision of *power with*, power redefined out of their

daily struggles to get the job done, the job of educating children in a

challenging urban multicultural school district. (Hurty, 1995, p. 384)

Hurty outlined five components of *power with* which emerged from her research. *Power with* is composed of emotional energy, nurtured growth, reciprocal talk, pondered mutuality and collaborative change. These elements are very closely related to the attributes of the female strand outlined in Regan's (1995) double helix model. These elements require elaboration.

Emotional energy relates to the "willingness to use, honestly and openly, a full range of emotions" (Hurty, 1995, p. 385) in the course of daily interactions with teachers, students and parents. Hurty commented that emotional energy was not only evident in the work of the women she studied, but was also an effective tool for getting the job done.

The human exchanges I observed as these women principals went about

their work, rather than being casual and routinised, gave evidence of

emotional energy at work; tending to feelings of children, teachers,

parents; expressing enthusiasm, showing compassion, and sharing anger

and joy. Such awareness of feelings produced some word or gesture of

caring; a nod of acknowledgement, an accepting tone of voice, humour to

ease tension, a hug, a smile of welcome, tears, enthusiasm and excitement

or anger in language, eyebrows knit in concern. These acts communicate a

range of feelings. (Hurty, 1995, p. 386-387)

Nurtured growth relates to all that is done to ensure that the children learn and grow in the best possible environment. The principals in Hurty's study were unanimous in stating that the children were their priority. One of the principals emphasised observing children in order to have the ability to identify their needs. Nurturing means first, getting to know the students by being present, available, and paying attention to changes, and then providing the support required. The principals also remarked that providing a nurturing environment for children to learn was best accomplished by setting the stage for collaboration between students, parents, teachers and themselves.

Reciprocal talk is a strategy which was used by principals both in their daily decision-making and in their interaction with others. It involves listening and talking, asking and

answering questions and taking turns in conversations. This is different from the communication patterns of hierarchical organisations where information flows up and down. Reciprocal talk represents more of a circular pattern of communication. This communication pattern involves talking *with*, as opposed to talking *to* others. It is an inclusive power strategy useful in building trust. The principals in Hurty's study emphasised the importance of this strategy in getting the job done.

Pondered mutuality is a rumination process, a reflection strategy. "Pondered mutuality involves turning things around in one's mind, exploring options, pondering responses gathered through reciprocal talk, checking back with colleagues, cogitating on possible consequences" (Hurty, 1995, p. 391). The principals took several steps in making decisions; they gathered information by talking and listening to others, they pondered, they reviewed the facts before going back and getting more information. "These principals' reflection depended on meditation, intuition, observation and communication" (Hurty, 1995, p. 391). Reflection is normally a solitary process and is often associated with passivity. However, reflection can include others through various communication strategies, hence the *mutuality* aspect to Hurty's conceptualisation of the reflection process. This is yet another expression of women's need for connectedness. At the root of pondered mutuality is an appreciation for others' feelings and a desire to get the job done by including all parties in decisions which impact on their lives.

The need to include others is also central to collaborative change, the fifth of Hurty's power strategies. The notion of change here refers to the implementation of any new idea or program, such as implementing a new curriculum, changing the schedule or redesigning classroom allocation. Hurty (1995) described collaborative change as the "art of defining common interests, common responsibilities, common problems and common solutions" (p. 394). Empowerment is part of this power strategy. By building a collaborative setting in which to exchange ideas about interests, problems and solutions, the principals in Hurty's study were expressing *power with* as opposed to *power over*.

Woven through all the feminist perspectives and models of leadership are values. The values of care, courage, connectedness and collaboration are present in one form or another in each of the models presented in this section. Women were chastised in

organisations for being *too emotional*, yet, the use of emotions is now perceived, in school leadership, as a strength which facilitates the establishment of a more supportive and nurturing environment in which students can grow. The point in presenting a feminist perspective on leadership is not to prove that women make better school principals than men, but rather to add *other* elements to the discussion of educational leadership in the hopes of providing a more complete picture of educational leadership.

Summary

Studying educational leadership as the lived experience of a female principal, looking more specifically at the decision-making process, required further investigation into three broad bodies of literature. The literature review focused on both the theoretical models and the research results presented in the last two decades for leadership, decision-making, and the female perspective, as a gender filter to educational leadership.

The focus of the leadership literature has shifted, in the last twenty years, from hierarchical, bureaucratic traditional perspectives to broader approaches including flattened structures and different uses of power by different players. The research reveals that empowerment, collaboration and an ethic of care are leadership ingredients which may generate schools cultures promoting student growth and learning (Noddings, 1992; Shakeshaft, 1989b).

At the base of sound educational leadership fostering growth and learning are daily decisions. Decision-making does not take place in a vacuum where all the information required to reach a decision magically manifests itself. Decisions are made based on factors. Certain external factors are well established, such as the provincial or state curriculum guidelines. Other factors, such as values, are internal and vary among individuals. Hodgkinson wrote that "it is impossible to free decision processes of the value component" (p. 29). He added that it is not surprising that values "should be so salient in an activity which is philosophy-in-action, continuously engaged in the interrelation of ideas, people and things" (p. 29). Values, then, are at the core of decision-making which is a fundamental element of educational leadership.

The ethic of care is one value discussed in relation to decision-making (Marshall, 1992). Chomye (1996) and Campbell-Evans (1991) both researched the impact of values

on decision-making using Beck's (1984 in Chomye, 1996) value framework. The lessons learned from the studies concentrating on values and decision-making are that many values affect the decision-making process and perceptions as to which value has the most impact vary between the decision-maker and others.

The female perspective on educational leadership reveals models where such values as care, collaboration, courage, intuition and respect are at the core of both decision-making and leadership (Regan & Brooks, 1992). The women who participated in studies outlining *women's ways* expressed their desire to be connected (Gilligan, 1982), their strong will to be in the middle of things (Helgesen, 1995) and their devotion to the students (Grace, 1995). An emphasis on the female perspective is important given the nature of the setting and scope of this study. Present in the literature is a need for further exploration of women as leaders and women as decision-makers (Shakeshaft, 1989b). The following chapter outlines the methodology used for the study of one female principal's educational leadership and decision-making.

Chapter III

Research Methodology

<u>Introduction</u>

Much of the research conducted on women in educational leadership has focused on filling the knowledge gap left by androcentric research in the development of leadership theory (Patterson, 1994; Restine & Nan, 1993). Filling the gap starts with women identifying *their* issues and adopting methodologies which allow their voices to be heard and their experiences to be understood (Gilligan, 1982; Mies, 1991). To understand women's experiences, one must induce from their perspective. Qualitative research allows the flexibility to delve into one woman's world. Given that this study aims at uncovering how Maude, a female principal leads and decides, the methodology needs to allow for observation and for Maude's world to emerge from the data. More specifically, in order to obtain answers to the research questions, a qualitative inquiry was chosen as an appropriate methodology to make meaning of the participant's experiences.

The research designs of qualitative studies vary from study to study; however, according to Bodgan and Biklen (1992) they share five features. Qualitative research (1) takes place in a *natural setting* with the researcher as the *key instrument*; (2) is descriptive; (3) focuses on the study of a process as opposed to a product; (4) concentrates on inductive data analysis; and (5) concerns *meaning*. Qualitative research represents a large field which is further sub-divided according to the theoretical orientation of the researcher.

Lundsteen (1986) outlined an approach to qualitative research according to four elements and six steps.

> Research (1) observes human behaviour in its natural setting over a
> substantial period of time, (2) claims examination of carefully selected
> particular cases, (3) incorporates as many of the complexities and variables
> into a setting as possible and (4) is usually comprised of six main steps.
> First, the appropriate project is selected. Second, access (...) is obtained
> and rapport (...) established. Third, research questions evolve as the
> subjects are observed. Fourth, data is collected though reactive and non-

reactive methods (...). Fifth, data analysis proceeds inductively (...).

Sixth, the research report is generally descriptive, letting generic patterns emerge from a sum of particular pieces of data. (p. 1)

Wilcox (1982) remarked, agreeing with Lunsdteen's second element, that a researcher cannot focus on *everything*. My study focuses on the description of two intricately woven phenomena present in a private high school; leadership and decision-making as experienced by Maude, a female principal. Spending four months shadowing the principal provided insight into her world and into the culture of her school, which resulted in a *thick description* (Geertz, 1973 in Bogdan and Biklen, 1992) of the phenomena under study, including as many complexities and dimensions of the principal's behaviours and context as possible.

Some researchers believe that the participants should be empowered as *social actors* in research (Anderson, 1987) and that their voices should be heard through narratives (Mishler, 1986). As there exists a need in the leadership literature for research to fill the gap created by the existing androcentric perspective, by giving women voice, a qualitative inquiry seems an appropriate research methodology for this study.

Using Lundsteen's (1986) six steps of qualitative inquiry described above as a conceptual basis, the remainder of the methodology chapter focuses on site selection; access, entry and exit; researcher's stance and process; data collection; data management; trustworthiness; and data analysis. Since the immersion in a research site is an intense experience, the description will be transmitted as personal accounts, using the first person with the aim to lighten the discourse.

<u>Research Questions</u>

Throughout my qualitative inquiry, the research questions evolved as a reflection of daily observation in the research site, readings and personal reflection. The initial focus was placed on the decision-making process; however, as it became evident that decision-making took place in the more global context of educational leadership, the primary focus shifted to the observation of leadership patterns and roles played by the principal in the

school. As my case study focused on a woman, a basis for comparison came from other women presented in the literature.

The research questions which guided this study follow.

1.0: How does a female principal lead her school?

    1.1: Who is the principal, as a leader?

    1.2: What leadership roles does the principal play in her school?

2.0: How does the principal reach her decisions?

    2.1: How does the decision-making process fit in school leadership?

    2.2: How are situations requiring decisions identified?

    2.3: What are some of the strategies used by the principal in reaching decisions?

3.0: How is the principal's educational leadership a demonstration of *women's ways*?

<div align="center">Research Design</div>

Site Selection

Since I decided to study a female principal in her school setting, selecting the site was a very crucial part of the research design. Marshall and Rossman (1989) describe the ideal site by the following criteria.

> The ideal site is where (1) entry is possible; (2) there is a high probability that a rich mix of many of the processes, people, programs, interactions and/or structures that may be a part of the research question will be present; (3) the researcher can devise an appropriate role to maintain continuity of presence for as long as necessary; and (4) data quality and credibility of the study are reasonably assured by avoiding poor sampling decisions (p. 54).

The site of a local private girls' highschool was chosen and contained all the above criteria. The site was recommended by a colleague who knew the principal to be open and willing to participate in academic endeavours. The fact the school was private meant the principal could decide independently whether she wanted to participate in the study; entry was possible exclusively with the principal's permission. Leadership and decision-making have been documented as integral elements of school administration (Leithwood,

1992) ; therefore, the likelihood I could study them in the site was high. My role in the site would be that of a researcher, but playing *any* role in the site was contingent upon establishing a connection with the principal during the first interview which took place in August, 1997. I felt I entered into a negotiation process. *She* had to want to work with me, and I had to try and establish whether she would be someone with whom I could comfortably associate for approximately a year. After my first visit to the site, I gave the principal, Maude, time to think about her participation in my research. Maude was a pseudonym chosen to preserve the principal's identity. I liked the site both in terms of the physical setting and in terms of the principal's description of the educational mission and its interplay with the human experience lived in the school with students and teachers. The site was officially selected at the beginning of September 1997, based on Maude's receptivity to the research project and on the apparent compatibility of our personalities. Lastly, I was also drawn to the site because it mirrored the setting in which I learned as a high school student and worked as a teacher; a private, Catholic high school for girls.

Access, Entry and Exit

Gaining access to a site, "because of the almost *live-in*, intimate nature of the researcher's role (...) assumes even greater importance" (Lundsteen, , p. 5). Gaining access happens at different levels and takes place throughout a study. In my study, the two different levels of access were first, at the level of the principal, and second, at the level of the other participants. Access was an on-going issue as I was introduced to different people in different situations.

At the level of the principal, gaining access to my site was a three-step process. First, I called the principal and asked to meet her to present my research project. Since she agreed to meet me, the second step was actually going to the school to present my proposed work. This meeting happened at the beginning of August 1997, at a time when the school year had not yet started. The meeting lasted an hour. I answered what Bogdan and Biklen's (1992) consider to be five recurring questions pertaining to access; What am I actually going to do?; Will I be disruptive?; What will I do with the findings?; Why her?; What will she get out of her involvement in the study?

I explained to Maude how I wanted to gain an understanding of the decision-making process as part of the overall activity as the school leader. My intention was to *shadow* her in every context she felt my presence would be appropriate, remaining receptive to and conscious of her comfort level. As Lundsteen (1986) put it, "being an ethnographer is not a rude business, persistent, yes, but sensitive to the needs and feelings of those co-operating" (p. 5). I wanted to observe Maude, unobtrusively, for the best part of the study, and conduct interviews with her to deepen my understanding of her life as a leader. I assured Maude I would follow the ethical guidelines outlined by McGill University (see p. 55) and share my findings with her before the final document was drafted. Anonymity was guaranteed. I asked Maude what she considered the benefits of participation in the study to be, to which she replied that it would provide her with a learning opportunity. The meeting concluded and I proceeded with the third step to secure access, which was to send the principal a consent form summarising our discussion (see Appendix A, p. 113). Maude signed the form and we determined the date for my first official visit to the site.

As Bogdan and Biklen (1992) have indicated, access is an on-going part of research. Once I was in the site, I was still concerned about gaining access into the lives of teachers, students and other people present in the school, as they were a part of the principal's life and needed to allow me to observe their interactions with Maude. There were certain limits put on my data collection, jointly decided between Maude and myself. The structure of the Catholic school was such that Maude was accountable to the religious congregation. I knew that any interactions between Maude and the members of the congregation would take place in private and that pushing these boundaries would be uncomfortable to everyone. I was satisfied that I would have sufficient data from the many other contexts to which I was to have easy access. The financial matters of the school were another confidential area. I did not feel the finances were directly relevant to my work, and so, Maude and I agreed it would be best in those situations if I left the scene.

There was a subtle negotiation which took place around access, throughout the study, in both formal settings, such as meetings between Maude and her closest co-workers and informal settings such as lunch in the cafeteria. Staff meetings provide an example of

entry negotiation where access was both allowed and denied to me by teachers. Maude would subtly test the waters by asking teachers whether they took objection to my presence at meetings. In general, teachers had no objection. In one particular situation, a teacher made a point to exclude me from a meeting, a behaviour which Maude attributed to the teacher's discomfort with my acquisition of knowledge about a particular issue. Again, these kinds of situations present trade-offs in the research process, the delicate balance between access and ethics. However, I felt sure that my length of time in the site would counteract, at least partially, these types of access limitations.

My first day in the site felt awkward. I did not know where to sit or stand. I felt that I had an active role to play, but I just did not know exactly how or where. In a memo I wrote after the first week in the site, my feeling of awkwardness was evident:

> When I first met the principal, I was intimidated. I did not feel comfortable
> spending a whole day (in the site) the first week. I wanted to get to know
> the school, the layout, the history, the people... Also, I was not totally at
> ease with the methodology for my research. I felt that I had to have a
> definite plan for every day... I did not feel comfortable just sitting there.
> The first day, the principal totally cleared her desk so that she could devote
> time to me. Having the focus on me made me extremely ill-at-ease but,
> luckily, the adjustment phase for both of us only lasted a few days. (Sept.
> 12th, Field Note Memo, Lines 3-12)

As a novice researcher, I should not have anticipated anything different; "the feelings of awkwardness and not belonging that characterise this stage (of fieldwork) often end with some clear indication of acceptance from the subjects" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 87). I felt the acceptance when I joined Maude, two teachers and a dozen students on a week-end canoe-camping trip. The context in which the interaction between Maude and I took place changed from school to wilderness, from formal to informal. We had an opportunity to get to know each other as individuals and I got a chance to peek through the window of personal interactions between Maude and the students. One interesting turn of events during that week-end was a thunderstorm which hit the little island where we were camping on our second night out. Many of the students were afraid and Maude appeased

and reassured them, by visiting each tent and making sure that everyone was warm, dry and heard. When I saw Maude tend to the needs of students, I began to gain insight into her ways of leading. The week-end out in the wilderness was what I perceived as the *real* entry into the site and the beginning of meaningful data collection.

I collected data over a four-month period (see Data Collection, p. 52). Then came the time for me to exit the site. I had been told that exiting a research site, in this case the school, was as delicate as gaining entry. *I* was prepared to exit the site when I did, but I realised that *Maude* would have been happy to see the study prolonged. I had become a presence in her world to which she had grown accustomed. I proceeded to exit as I had entered; slowly and diplomatically. I informed Maude that I would decrease the frequency of my visits, and that I would stop my data collection visits with the beginning of the students' examination period, which was the end of the term in the school. I told her that I would come in the following term to verify certain points and to conduct a few more interviews with her, the teachers and some students. On my last day, Maude and I went out for lunch and we had the opportunity to talk on a more personal level, about topics external to the site; it was a good conclusion to site visits.

Researcher's Stance and Process

Despite the fact that, as Lundsteen (1986) put it, being a qualitative researcher is not *rude business*, the fact still remains that, I was a new body at the scene and I was aware of my role, my stance and my potential influence. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) describe the role of a researcher entering a site:

> In one way researchers join the subjects' world, but in a way, they remain detached. They unobtrusively keep a written record of what happens as well as collect other forms of descriptive data. They attempt to learn from the subjects, but not necessarily be like the subjects. They may participate in their activities, but on a more limited basis, and they do not compete for prestige or status. They learn how the subjects think, but they do not think like the subjects. They are empathetic, but also reflective. (p. 79)

Finding a comfortable researcher stance was a challenge throughout the study, partly because of my inexperience as a researcher and partly because of my dynamic nature. I went through a process that included various stances.

It was difficult for me, at the beginning of the study, to be a silent, passive observer. I empathised with both students and adults in many situations. I wanted to *jump in*, but I successfully fought my instinct to try and lend a helping hand. As I became more comfortable with a more passive observer stance, I found members in the site attempting to draw me into their lives. There was a fine line between being an observer and being impolite by not engaging in conversation in a social setting. Building trust, not only with the principal, but with other people present in the site, was crucial in order to maintain access and acceptance.

Over time, my stance changed from passive observer to observing participant. This happened during my third month in the site, after I decided to increase the frequency of my visits. There were a few instances, particularly in meetings with parents, where the principal looked to me to complete a sentence or provide different words to her explanation. Put *on the spot*, I could not *just sit there*; I felt I had to respond and I did. There were times when members in the site seemed to share information with me in the hopes of getting a glimpse into the principal's thoughts on a particular topic. There were also times when people asked me to perform certain duties. In all of these types of situations, I innocently refused to engage. In most sensitive interactions, Maude was there to explain my stance to others.

As the study evolved, and as I became more comfortable with the complexities and the human dynamics in the site, my repertoire of researcher stances increased. I was comfortable being a participant observer. The subtle difference between observing participant and participant observer lies both in the level and the intent of engagement in specific activities (Allum, 1991). The emphasis in observing participant is on the observation, hence the intent to participate minimally, principally as an observer. There were certain situations, however, where I felt I would gain more insight into a specific process if I were to observe Maude as a participant in the scene. One such situation was the process of selecting students for the following year. The process involved several

steps from planning, administering, marking, and compiling the entrance exams to Maude's final decision-making. I observed the planning, did not participate in the administering phase or the final selection phase, but took part in marking the exams and compiling the information obtained, as I saw a chance to gain a greater understanding of the process by participating. I also helped to prepare the examination schedules because I felt it was an opportunity for Maude to share with me the parameters, the traditions, the frustrations and the goals involved in this activity. I also perceived these two situations as opportunities for me to give back to the site and to Maude.

The admission process, as well as the scheduling were two discrete activities which I observed from beginning to end. It seemed timely for me to progressively withdraw from participation after these two activities and the term came to an end. It was a natural conclusion. I prepared to exit the site. I used each visit in my last month to slowly revert to more passive observation. Some teachers invited me to social events, but I chose to decline their invitations, because withdrawal seemed more appropriate, at that point, than further involvement. I felt I had to negotiate my exit as much as I had negotiated entry into the site.

Allum (1991) included entry, passive observation, active observation, participant observation and exit as stages in the evolution of the researcher role in the site. The evolution of the researcher stance, described as such, is similar to the evolution of a group, a process including the stages of anticipation, introduction, participation, separation and recollection (Shaw, 1981). In qualitative research, the human factor must be acknowledged, as it affects the researcher stance and process. Entering a site is joining a group. As noted by Allum (1991),

> we often forget that while a project's research design may call for specific
> and well-defined methods and procedures, the course of the actual data
> collection is ultimately shaped by the relationships which evolve between
> the investigator and the subjects comprising the research site. (p. 2)

As a graduate student immersed both in the theoretical notions of educational administration and in a research site where some of these notions were applied, I found myself living an interesting dichotomy. My daily reflections often included perceptions of

how teachers felt the school should be lead, of Maude's feelings of joy or frustration in playing her different roles and of the sense I made of comments, behaviours and events. Memos were written in an attempt to merge theory and application and to try to understand certain patterns of behaviour.

The research process influences the lives of many. Marshall and Rossman (1989) wrote that "researchers acquire multiple roles in order to develop research relationships with different people" (p. 65). I played different roles and developed different relationships with people in the site. "Everett Hughes (1971) described fieldwork as a process of growth and self-awareness"(Allum, 1991, p. 3). I was aware that I played a role in the group. I had joined the group "as a person who had come for a visit, not as a person who knew everything, but as a person who had come to learn" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 79). I learned to balance the researcher stances to acknowledge the social element of group life without "going native" (Gold, 1958 in Bogdan, 1992).

Data Collection

There were three main data collection techniques used throughout this study; participant observation, interviews and artefact collection. The data collection period lasted four months (see Appendix B, p. 114). During the first two months, I visited the site one day per week. During the third month, I decided to visit the site every day, because I wanted to immerse myself more deeply in the experience. During the last month, in an effort to withdraw from my site, I chose to go back to a single visit per week. I believe this rhythm of visits helped me to understand both through close inspection and by stepping back.

Participant observation represented the biggest component of data collection. Field notes were written on a daily basis (see Appendix C, p. 115). As Bogdan and Biklen (1992) noted, it was important for me to develop some codes in note-taking, in order to protect both myself and others. There were many instances when people actually came over and looked over my shoulder as I was writing field notes. I had such intricate and personalised shorthand symbols, I knew nobody could decode my scribbling. I also chose not to walk around the halls with my note book, in order to blend in more easily. I wrote almost exclusively when I was in the principal's office, or in other meeting spaces, such as the parlour and the conference room.

Interviews also took place on various occasions. At the beginning of the research process, I conducted interviews to better understand the context of Maude's presence in the school (see Appendix D, p. 116). It was important for me to know more about her life and her career path, in order to contextualise her present position, and eventually, her leadership and decision-making . I also held interviews with members of the alumni (see Appendix E, p. 117), in order to gain more knowledge about the school as an institution. At the end of the research process, interviews were held with staff and students as member checks (see Appendix F, p. 118). All interviews were recorded with permission and were subsequently transcribed.

Artefact collection also took place on a daily basis. Maude and the secretaries gave me a mailbox in the secretariat, where all the information given to teachers was also handed out to me. Some of the documents distributed included the daily announcements made throughout the school, absence sheets, special memos regarding various types of school activities, calendars, and communication to parents, which were demonstrations of Maude's leadership and decision-making (see Appendix G, p. 119). These artefacts were effective in keeping me updated on the activities taking place in the school and were also instrumental in helping me generate a clear picture of the school culture.

Data Management

Data management took place both during the site visits, from September to December and after my exit from the site. Data management was divided according to the type of data that was collected, namely the participant observation, the interview data and the artefacts. I devised a system to classify the data collected daily. I put all the site communication in a binder chronologically arranged from September 1 to December 19, 1997. The binder was divided into three sections; interview data, field notes, and artefacts.

The interview data was transcribed shortly after each interview. The interviews were dated, labelled and the lines, numbered. The same system was applied to field notes. Field notes were first hand-written in small notebooks and were transcribed weekly. The transcription included line numbers and dates. Field notes were divided into two types, the participant observation and personal comments. These two types of notes were

transcribed into two different documents. The artefacts were collected and arranged chronologically.

The second phase of data management was more interesting because it was less mechanical and more analytical. Once I exited the site, I needed to find some way to manage the hundreds of pages of data generated. Four documents, namely interview data, participant observation, personal comments and member checks were divided into sub-documents according to the data analysis strategies discussed in the data analysis section (see p. 56). One copy of the documents was printed and put in a binder. The computerised files were saved and remained untouched. A second copy of the computerised document was encoded with symbols which would allow for efficient cross-tabulation during data analysis.

Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, trustworthiness addresses the issues of validity and reliability. The provisions taken to ensure the trustworthiness of qualitative research are discussed by many authors (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Reissman, 1993; Seidman, 1991). Maykut (1994) outlines four important components of trustworthiness outside of providing the reader with a "detailed description of the research process and outcomes" (p. 145); multiple methods of data collection, building an audit trail, working with a research team, and member checks. Although a few artefacts were brought back from the site, the main sources of trustworthiness for this study are the audit trail and the member checks. The use of a tape recorder provided a full account of the interview material, along with a full transcription of each interview, field notes, and researcher journal entries. These items constituted the audit trail. Member checks helped ensure that I was accurately describing the participants' experiences and perspectives.

Reissman (1993) states that "*trustworthiness* not *truth* is a key semantic difference; the latter assumes an objective reality, whereas the former moves the process into the social world" (Reissman, 1993, p. 65). She goes on to outline four ways to validate the narrative analysis; persuasiveness, correspondence, coherence and pragmatic use. Persuasiveness depends on one hand, on the extent to which the theory is supported by "evidence from informants' accounts" (Reissman, 1993, p. 65), and on the other, by the

rhetorical exercise of writing. Reissman's *correspondence* is equivalent to Maykut's *member check*. Reissman states that "investigators must continuously modify initial hypotheses about speaker's beliefs and goals (global coherence) in light of the structure of particular narratives (local coherence) and recurrent themes that unify the text (themal coherence)" (Reissman, 1993, p. 67). The audit trail reveals countless examples of coherence. The *emic* themes woven through the interviews and field notes often formed the base on which to formulate *rules of inclusion*, defining features for classifying categories of data. The last component of Reissman's validation procedure reiterates the first point made by Maykut, to provide transparency in the methodology and make primary data available for other researchers.

<div align="center">Ethical Considerations</div>

Ethics need to be considered throughout the entire research process, from conception to fruition. Prior to the study taking place, a proposal was submitted to the Ethics Committee of the McGill University Faculty of Education. The permission to conduct the study was granted (see Appendix B, p. 114). The first step towards conducting an ethical study was thus taken. Another preparatory step was obtaining the participant's signature to the consent form. In both documents, anonymity was guaranteed, not only for the participant, but also for other people involved in the principal's life. Furthermore, descriptions of the site were kept vague to further protect the identity of the participants. Pseudonyms were used in the same spirit.

Once in the site, other ethical considerations arose. As a researcher in the site, I found myself put in some precarious situations when I was asked to perform certain tasks, approached by a staff member who wanted to discuss certain issues, witnessed an interaction with a student in despair, or met with upset parents. In problematic situations, I chose to stand on the sidelines or to withdraw. It is one of the challenges of qualitative research to not *contaminate* the data by sheer presence. Choosing an appropriate stance, being aware of the impact of that stance, and adapting to the changing context, were all actions taken to maintain ethical standards.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process was a challenge; the data were coded, *de*coded and *re*-coded. The extensive literature on the analysis process was useful at some levels, but also overwhelming. The beauty of qualitative research, its flexibility, can also be a bottomless trap for a wandering researcher. I explored different data analysis strategies presented in the literature; axial coding, open coding, narrative analysis, profile development. Open coding made sense for the analysis of my data. I began to search through the data for emic terms and broad categories linking the data. After having read the data many times, the categories emerged and rules for inclusion were written. These rules are described further in the fourth chapter; however, one example puts an emic expression into context. One rule of inclusion was labelled tending and it refers to situations where the principal eliminates the *weeds*, the undesirable behaviour, from the environment and was based on the emic expression "too bad, so sad". A student was acting as a bully, which represented an undesirable behaviour in the site. After Maude and her colleagues had tried in many different ways to encourage the student to change her behaviour, and had obtained no positive results, the student was suspended. This is an example of an event falling into a category which emerged from the emic expression "too bad, so sad".

The initial data analysis for the study followed the Strauss and Corbin (1990) step by step procedure to open coding . First, the phenomena was labelled. "By breaking down and conceptualising we mean taking apart an observation, a sentence, a paragraph and giving each discrete incident, idea, or event, a name, something that stands for or represents a phenomenon" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 63). Concretely, the application of this process included two different mechanical strategies, one manual and one computerised, which both helped in designing somewhat of a ladder approach to data analysis.

The first step involved in the ladder approach to data analysis was to prepare the ground level. After having transcribed all the data and obtained a print out, I read through and affixed coloured labels to each paragraph thus dividing the data into nine broad categories: roles, settings, interactions with others, duties, values, situations, strategies, perceptions and change. Table 4 (p. 57) provides examples of the type of data which fell

under the broad categories. Coloured labels were also encrypted with a descriptor acting as a more discrete indicator; since this was the first division of data, there were countless descriptors used. Table 4 presents only samples.

Table 4

Data Analysis: First step

Category	Descriptor	Example of the data
Roles	• Educator	So today was a good example of how we are training the teachers to transmit the culture. We do things with order, we do things respectfully, and we do things that are correct. (Interview data, Sept. 12th, lines 1268-1271)
Interactions with others	• Vice-principal	The principal had a conversation over the phone about parents who drive their daughters to school and drop them off right at the door. The conversation was with the vice-principal. The underlying concern is with the safety of the students because when the parents get so close to the door, they have to cut the crowds of students walking towards the door. (Field notes, Oct. 2nd, lines 193-195)
Duties	• Checking in	The principal came in, checked voice mail, mail, memos, called the vice-principal to set some time for the meeting. The main issue is open house which will take place over the week-end. (Field notes, October 14th, lines, 403-404).
Values	• Protection	The principal's attitude is that these students should not be penalised by many teachers over time for one simple mistake that has been dealt with already between teachers, students, parents, the principal and the vice-principal. (Field notes, Oct. 9th, lines 394-395)

Situations	• Case: A-Z	The principal's reply to the teachers is that the student is good and she just needs structure. The teachers had requested that she not be taken back. The principal talked to the parents and the parents said that their daughter had never had a better year. The teachers were still not happy. They thought that they would have to water down their programs... The principal does not have a legitimate cause to refuse the student and cannot tell the parents that the daughter is not re-admitted to the school. The principal wanted to help the student. (Field notes, Sept. 12th, lines 68-74)
Perceptions	• Self-esteem	The principal believes that teaching girls is different then teaching boys. She firmly believes that the conflict resolution style should always aim at win-win resolutions. Teachers must do what they can to preserve the students' self-esteem. (Field notes, Oct. 2nd, lines 215-218)
Change	• As learner	There were some people from which I learned a little bit, you know, like when I was at the Ministry, my boss at the Ministry was younger than me, (...) she was a person that I looked up to. Then there were the people at the university, when I did my counselling program, I learned from them (....) In the last few years, I've learned a lot from my kids. I don't know if it makes any sense, but they are also a big influence on me. (Interview data, Sept. 18th, lines 902-912)
Strategies	• Meetings	The principal prepared a meeting for sec. 1 teachers to see about problems, issues, concerns... (Field notes, Sept. 25th, line 109)

This first step was an attempt to break down the data into smaller, more manageable chunks. The ground, prepared, a second step was taken.

Discovering categories came second. The researcher finds "the phenomenon represented by a category" and gives it a conceptual name (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 65). Bogdan and Biklen (1992) suggest searching through data for regularities, patterns and emerging topics and writing down words and phrases to represent these topics and patterns. I found patterns and sentences that were recurring themes throughout the data. In an effort to gain further insight into the function of the broad categories listed above, the computerised transcriptions of the data were cut paragraph by paragraph and pasted in sub-documents representing the various categories. Within each category, such as interaction with others, for example, more specific sub-categories were created. Table 5 provides examples of categories, descriptors and rules for the inclusion of the data in these categories.

Table 5

Data Analysis: Second Step

Category	Descriptor	Rules of inclusion
Interaction with others	• *De reculons* (Reluctantly)	*De reculons* was a term used by the principal to describe the current created by some teachers who are coming back to the school this year, reluctantly. Also refers to the behaviours which the principal characterises as under-handed and harmful to the spirit of the school.
	• *Mettre de l'eau dans son vin* (Taking things with a grain of salt)	This category refers to interactions between people who strive for win-win resolutions. There is a sense of negotiation aimed at promoting harmony.
	• Checking in	This category refers to situations where

		the principal gets in touch with others simply to provide an opportunity for conversation both in terms of relationship building and maintenance.
	• Collaboration	This category refers to situations where the principal is a participant at the same level as everyone else.
Situations	• Reaching for the heart	This category refers to situations where the principal strives to find ways to engage people in significant ways; she tries strategy x, monitors, tries strategy y, monitors and keeps on going back until she sees a sign of progress and happiness.
	• Untying hands	This category refers to situations where the principal's hands are tied by a *fait accompli*, but where she manages to *untie* her hands by developing a new policy or procedure to prevent the situation from reoccurring.
Strategies	• Giving wings	This category refers to situations where the principal provides support and encourages people to *fly* on their own.
	• Keeping the perspective	This category brings up the image of the principal standing at the top of a pile of random objects and peeling away the layers to finally get to the gold nugget, exposing it for everyone to see.

I began to see relationships among the patterns which in turn provided me with a deeper understanding; however, I needed another step to look at the function served by the data. I drew many diagrams putting different categories and pieces of data against others. I generated charts for the occurrences of certain patterns. I also took some time away from my data to gain a better perspective. After having created many drawings, I found convincing patterns emerging, which made their third step, naming categories, easy. From the top of the data analysis ladder, a picture arose out of the data which began to answer the research question. The final analysis is the topic of the Chapter 4.

Summary

The purpose of qualitative research is to describe a phenomenon taking place in its natural setting while using the researcher as the main data collection instrument. Qualitative studies take on a variety of forms. This qualitative study was mainly concerned with providing insight into the leadership and decision-making phenomena taking place at the administrative level of a Catholic high school in Quebec. Entry was negotiated throughout the study with both the principal and other players present in the site. The research stance evolved over the course of the four months from passive observer, to participant observer, with other subtleties. Data was collected over a four month period through interviews, participant observation and artefact collection. The data was analysed according to Strauss and Corbin's (1990) open coding. The result of the final data analysis is presented in the following chapter. Steps were taken prior, during and after the visits to the site to protect the identity of both the participants and the site itself.

Chapter IV

Discussion of Findings

<u>Introduction</u>

The purpose of the study was to describe how a female principal administers her school, focusing on her leadership and decision-making patterns. This chapter presents the findings of this study, outlining an educational leadership framework which emerged from the data analysis and provided answers to the research questions. The following sections provide more detailed answers to each research question, first focusing on Maude as an educational leader. Who is she as a leader? What roles does she play in her school? Three metaphors demonstrate how Maude participated in the daily school life. Together, the metaphors create a leadership framework different from the typical patriarchal and hierarchical models described earlier and paint a portrait of Maude as an educational leader. A decision-making model is then presented, answering the second research question; how does the principal reach her decisions? The novelty lies in how the principal lives the model, as opposed to how the model is built. The last section outlines how Maude's educational leadership is a demonstration of *women's ways*, by looking into the values underlying Maude's leadership and decision-making.

<u>Maude: An Educational Leader</u>

In an effort to gain a better understanding of Maude's background, I interviewed her about her educational path, her mentors and the circumstances which led her to undertake her current position (see Appendix E, p. 117). I felt that situating Maude's present position on her career path would provide me with insight into the experiences constituting her frame of reference. The following vignette relates some of Maude's experiences, while purposefully omitting identifying details in order to preserve anonymity. The vignette was built by choosing pieces of the data which originally came out of the interview data but which were reinforced, as important events in Maude's life, throughout my visits to the site.

Vignette 1: Maude's Background

A turning point in my education occurred when I was attending Teachers' College. I had a teacher who pushed me to perform. He realised that I was not really motivated in

school. I was a good student and I had really good marks and all of that, but I hated high school and when I hit college, I wasn't interested in working too hard; there were many other things which were more interesting! Once, I did not hand in an assignment and he gave me 0. He still asked that I submit the work and then he gave me 0. I knew I was going to get 0 for doing it and then he demanded something else out of me and I turned up this brilliant piece of work and he went crazy over it. He started insisting that I work hard and he gave me lots of encouragement, that was important to me. I went on to become a science teacher, because he was a science teacher and I looked up to him.

I graduated from Teachers' College and went on to teaching in a variety of different schools at a variety of different levels. I really liked teaching science, so much so that I went back to get an honour's degree in science at the local university on a part-time basis. I then took a position as a school disciplinarian, a vice-principal whose main duties were discipline. I was still teaching at the same time. One year, the vice-principal took ill and I was invited to take on that role, and I enjoyed that very much. The vice-principal came back and it was a little hard for me to return to the classroom because I liked the challenges the vice-principalship offered me. Then, I got pregnant and left the school for some time. When I came back, I decided that it was time for a change and I went back to school myself, to get a master's in educational psychology and counselling. I got involved in drop-outs and special education programs. During the practica, which were an integral part of the program, I re-connected with the schools and decided to become a guidance counsellor. I did that for quite a number of years.

Then, I knew someone at the Ministry of Education and they had a full-time position opening. I applied and got the job, so my school board *loaned* me to the Ministry where I learned and worked for a few years. I found that I was travelling too much, though, and with a family waiting at home, I found it challenging. When I heard about the position opening here, I decided to send in an application. I thought that with the administrative experience that I had gained over the years, both as a school disciplinarian, and a vice-principal and with my counselling background, I would be able to undertake this new challenge. This is now my sixth year at this school!

During her six years at the school, Maude applied the knowledge and skills acquired both through formal education and experience. When I asked teachers, students and vice-principals "What do you think Maude does all day?" they were at a loss for words. The vice-principals knew the components of her work, such as teacher supervision, student selection/admissions, and overall management of the school, but still had difficulty articulating what the principal does during a typical day. The difficulty lies in the belief that there does not exist *a typical day*. Teachers have such busy days themselves, they could not imagine what went on daily in Maude's life. All inferred that the principal went around preventing fires and taking care of problems. Their perception was that whatever it was that she was doing, she was successful, because the school was still standing and running well.

What does Maude do on a typical day? In order to provide a clearer picture of Maude as a leader, a vignette outlining a day in her life follows.

Vignette 2: A Day in Maude's Professional Life

Before 8:00 am, Maude drives up the hilly road leading to the central building of the school. She admires the school grounds immaculately kept; green lawn on the soccer fields and centennial trees alike. She quickly runs up the front steps, rings the bell and walks in at the distinctive sound of the unlocking door mechanism. She goes straight across the hall to the secretariat, exchanges greetings, checks her mailbox and proceeds up to her office on the second floor. She hangs up her coat, puts down her mail, turns on her heels and goes right back down to the main floor. She walks through the halls, past a billboard where announcements are posted on a big calendar, along with the names of students who received awards of academic achievements this month and she proceeds to the left wing of the school where students are already busy preparing for class. She gives students individual "Good mornings!" using their first names. She uses this opportunity to touch base with students who might have had successes in sports or other activities, with students who expressed certain difficulties, checking how situations have evolved, and with students who were absent the previous day. These informal check-ins with students take place until the bell rings at 8:15 am. If Maude sees a student or a teacher coming in

late, she will take note of it and check-in with that person then or later, to identify the cause for tardiness. Then, Maude continues on her tour of the school.

She visits the offices of the two vice-principals, Micheline and Jacinthe, providing an opportunity for them to exchange ideas about any issues or concerns. These encounters can take anywhere between two and 30 minutes. If the discussions are more involved, a meeting is scheduled for a later time, to allow both Maude and the vice-principals to deal with issues at hand. Maude will also visit Iris, the counsellor, if her office door is opened. If not, she will walk back to her office, sporadically popping her head into classrooms along the way.

When she gets back into her office, Maude checks her voice mail messages, responds to mail, and handles paperwork of all sorts. She also reads daily announcements and the absence sheet, noting who is missing and why. She will use this information on the next day's morning rounds. After the immediate paperwork is handled, different projects will take up the remainder of the morning, if parents or visitors do not drop in unexpectedly. Projects involve preparing the Open House, admission exams, exam schedules, and staff meetings; reviewing all the report cards to establish performance trends; establishing guidelines for teacher supervision and evaluation; and opening and maintaining communication channels with teachers, parents and students.

At noon, Maude goes down to the cafeteria located in the basement. The cafeteria is divided into two bright rooms where the sunlight comes pouring in, one bright room painted in light green, and the other in light pink. Most teachers and students take this time to eat and socialise. Maude views this time as a golden opportunity to interact with students. She walks around in her swift stride and stops to chat with students. Considering that the students all have many activities to go to at lunch time, Maude only has a narrow window of opportunity. The students have 50 minutes to eat and take part in activities, before going back to class. After lunch, Maude goes back to working on various projects, but the days when she can actually sit and devote her attention entirely to one project are rare. Students, teachers and parents frequently drop in unannounced. Maude views these encounters also as good opportunities to interact with others and to see how things are going in their lives, in and out of the school context. At 3:00 pm, the bell rings and classes

are over. Many students and teachers stay after school for various reasons; some are involved in sports, others in art, and others work on assignments. Maude's day does not end when the bell rings. Once again, she goes on her rounds around the grounds, to the gym, the art room, the science laboratories and the locker rooms. She leaves when the school is quiet and most teachers and students have gone home, and she comes back and starts the cycle again the next day.

By understanding her daily activities in terms of her functions or roles, I was able to get a deeper understanding of her work as a principal. As was demonstrated in Chomye's (1996) research, the perceptions between what the staff thought and what actually went on were quite different. Through observation over four months, some patterns emerged.

Maude played three distinct leadership roles in the school which all contributed to painting a picture of Maude as a leader. The following sections outline how Maude was a socio-political leader when acting as a peacekeeper, a leader tending to emotional and institutional health when putting on the gardener hat and as an instructional leader when assuming the role of gatekeeper. The three roles all achieved one common goal; Maude built a school culture and a community where both staff and students reported they could grow and learn in a peaceful, harmonious environment.

Maude: A Peacekeeper

Putting out fires is an emic term that came out of all interviews with Maude's co-workers and students. The peacekeeper metaphor arose as Maude's behaviours and attitudes demonstrated a strong inclination towards preventing or resolving conflicts. Maintaining a peaceful climate was incorporated throughout all activities and was predicated on such values as transparency, care and team building. Maude's peacekeeper role was operationalised in a process that included anticipating, acting and reacting.

Anticipation took place when Maude interacted with people to prepare them for an upcoming situation which she could foresee as problematic. One such example was when she telephoned parents to prepare them for the results on their daughter's report card. Maude scanned situations, looking ahead and was able to predict discomfort. She then

attempted to make peace before the conflict actually took place. For example, after

having gathered clues hinting to a teacher's poor performance, Maude approached the

teacher to tell her that she would be visiting her classroom to evaluate her performance. In

her conversation with the teacher, Maude emphasised the fact that this is a part of the

yearly cycle of an instructional leader's duties and that she would be visiting all teachers.

In handling this situation, Maude demonstrated care, by providing the teacher with time

to prepare for the visit. Maude's anticipatory stance allowed her to intercept a potentially

negative outcome before it materialised and use the energy to generate a positive

outcome. Another example took place between Maude and a vice-principal,

> The *Foire du Livre* will be taking place in the Grand Hall and Maude was
>
> wondering if the vice-principal, Micheline, had thought about that, so she
>
> called her, because it means Micheline will have to come up with a back
>
> up plan for general assembly, and Jacinthe, the other vice-principal will
>
> have to formulate a different plan for the junior activities which normally
>
> take place in the Grand Hall. Maude asked Micheline when the armistice
>
> celebration was taking place. Micheline replied that is was taking place in
>
> the Grand Hall at 10:50. Maude inquired 'But are not they setting up for
>
> the book fair in the Grand Hall?' (Field notes, Nov. 10th, Lines 1227-1241)

Maude's anticipation lead to action and in this particular scenario, Maude, Micheline and

Jacinthe, together, came up with satisfactory plans; students sat on the floor for the

general assembly and the junior activities were re-located. This anticipatory role not only

helped reduce problems, but it also provided "time and space" to bring others into the

process and work collaboratively.

The action category in peace keeping refers to situations where the principal

interacted, as a moderator, with others to find win-win resolution to a conflict. The aim,

in this category, was to promote harmony. Maude often wore her counsellor hat in such

situations. Her counsellor hat refers to situations where Maude actually dipped into her

professional counselling training to help decrease tension and promote clear and

productive communication. To exemplify this category and to demonstrate how

transparency and care prevailed, consider this situation. Maude had to call parents

because their daughter had been disrupting class. Maude had been keeping her fingers on the pulse of that situation for some time. She told me: "I have to call the parents and tell them the truth, nicely, but I have to say it". Maude told the parents that their daughter had no focus and was disruptive, which was especially a problem in the computer class. She laid out the scope of the situation, warning the parents that it could become a really serious issue. In the same phone conversation, on the other hand, the parents expressed strategies they thought would work to help their daughter focus. The parents agreed to become even more involved in outlining with their daughter, the importance of the issue and some immediate consequences for performing below the standards. The situation was not resolved after one phone call, but Maude's actions aimed at establishing a base for further discussions. She did not lead the parents along or pretend that the situation was perfect. She actively sought to promote a better situation for the student, her classmates and the teacher.

Despite Maude's efforts to anticipate and act on potentially distressing situations, some conflicts did arise. In such situations, the principal reacted and used care to extinguish the fire. One such situation happened at a parent-teacher interview night. Maude had anticipated many issues and had prepared the new teachers for problematic encounters with parents. Since there were about six new teachers in the school and it was the first parent-teacher interview night, Maude had decided to run a conflict resolution workshop for her teachers. In addition, she had briefed specific teachers about specific situations. One situation which the principal thought had been resolved weeks ago, resurfaced. A few weeks earlier, a new teacher had applied the policy statement outlined in the school agenda to what appeared to be a cheating situation. On page 14 of the school agenda, which students use daily, the following policy is outlined:

> Cheating on test, quizzes or examinations will not be tolerated. Teachers
> must report any cheating incidents to the vice-principal who will, in turn,
> notify the principal and the student's parents. **The student concerned will**
> **be given zero (0) on that examination or quiz.** (1997-1998 School
> Agenda, p. 14)

In the heat of the moment, this teacher had not consulted the vice-principal , Micheline or Maude and had attributed a student the grade of 0% on a test. Maude had dealt with the parents' and had come to a resolution which did not undermine the teacher's authority, but satisfied the parents. The parties involved agreed that the student could do a make-up exam.

Maude had not anticipated that the parents were still angry. When they came to meet the teacher, they exploded. The teacher, unprepared for the parents' outburst was put in a very uncomfortable position. The best Maude could do, after the parents had left, was to offer support to the teacher and to re-establish the communication with the parents and their daughter. The situation was resolved to everyone's satisfaction; however, Maude expressed frustration towards her inability to anticipate this conflict.

Maintaining a peaceful climate in the school was contingent upon the ability to keep track of what was actually going on in the school. Maude put mechanisms in place throughout her daily routine to keep herself abreast of events taking place in students', teachers' and school life. When the students were walking through the halls, so was she. With all senses, she took in information. She knew who was late, who felt under the weather, who had forgotten their shoes, who was having a bad day and who won a basketball game the night before. Being at the centre of the action was beneficial, not only for anticipating the necessary information for peace keeping, but for being seen as part of the community. These were the first steps in helping to build a harmonious community where students grow and learn.

Maude: A Gardener

The gardener metaphor has often been used in relation to women (Helgesen, 1995). Reasons for choosing this metaphor relate both to the actual actions undertaken, and the stance Maude assumed. There are many dimensions associated with this metaphor. A gardener prepares the ground, plants the seeds, waters the ground, weeds out the undesired elements, keeps track of the growth, tends to particular needs and finally harvests. In all, these were situations where Maude encouraged, through verbal or behavioural cues, the growth and flourishing of some aspect of others. With students,

often her aim was to foster self-esteem and with teachers, to facilitate better teaching and a better learning culture.

Preparing the ground referred to situations where Maude set up some procedure, activity, or event in order to promote growth. One example is the buddy system she established so that new students could be taken care of by the older ones. This category included planning and setting up and relied on both thought and interaction. Maude had strong beliefs which directly affected how she chose to prepare the ground. She does not believe in "the cookie-cutter model of administration", as she put it, where solution A is applied to problem A. She promoted a facilitator approach where the power is spread out. To Maude, preparing the ground also meant educating the staff in order to get the optimal, most fertile ground for the education of young women. When a new teacher came to share some concerns about how students were behaving, she gave him a few books to read about girls' development, outlining that it is different from that of boys. Another example of Maude's care for teacher development through thought and interaction took place in the planning of a professional development day.

> Also on the principal's plate today is planning the professional
> development day. She's on the phone with Jacinthe and Micheline
> discussing how the day will be organised. She asks them questions like
> 'How about if we schedule it this way...?' 'Will we have enough time?'
> 'What do you think?' 'I'll use a memo to tell them about this schedule and
> about the changes in parents' night.' (Field notes, Nov. 4th, lines 830-833)

Maude's attention to personal and professional growth was constant. She always celebrated opportunities for professional development, whether her own or that of someone else.

Planting the seeds refers to situations where Maude chose to improve a situation by *planting* ideas and suggesting a particular course of action. For example, Maude had an idea she wanted to share with staff. A meeting was scheduled, but Maude thought teachers could put the meeting time to better use. Instead of calling them to a formal meeting, she went around and suggested a solution. The teachers liked the idea, so no meeting was necessary and the desired outcome was reached; this saved the teachers time

while taking a few minutes out of Maude's day. Another exemplifying situation involved students.

> Two students walk in to Maude's office with a complaint against a teacher. They report that he offers special treatment, both good and bad. The teacher refuses to explain to the students why he 'picks on them'. (...) Maude asks: 'Is there anything that you can do?' Student: 'Last year, we did not pay attention, but this year, we are really trying... but I think that there is a clashing of personalities.' The principal: 'How about we try two things: 1- keep trying, as you put it and 2- let's plan a meeting with you, the teacher and myself.' Students: 'Agreed'. (Field notes, Oct. 9th, lines 340- 382)

In this particular case, Maude suggested a course of action which satisfied the students, giving them the feeling of being cared for and heard, thus improving the situation.

Nourishing refers to situations where Maude encouraged someone through some daily and sometimes small, discrete *pats on the back* either expressed through words or behaviours. Teachers reported that she often put notes in their mailboxes to thank them or to congratulate them. She also made a point of interacting with students throughout the day. Students reported many occasions when Maude made a positive impact on their day. One student commented,

> I see Maude quite often. She's always in the halls, walking around, seeing how things are going... In the morning, she'll pass by the classrooms, she says hi to people- I see her... I don't know how many times a day...(...) It is nice because it feels weird when you don't see the head of your school, then it feels like they are not really part of the school, and it is just like you were listening to a voice, but it is nice to see her. (Member check, April 8th, lines 165-171)

To this student, Maude's presence and her daily attention to students had a positive impact on her life at school. Maude wove positive reinforcement in many of her interactions with staff and students. Even while shadowing her, I often missed many of

the specifics of her nourishing behaviour, because these occurrences were brief, discrete and very specific to each student's reality. I was made aware of the content of these interactions when the student would come back later to thank Maude, or would make a comment alluding to a previous conversation.

Weeding refers to situations where the principal eliminated undesirable elements from the environment. There was some force involved in this action. The emic expression "too bad, so sad" captures the principal's frame of mind when weeding was required. Weeding took place when the values of the school were threatened, when there was a breach in the integrity of the culture, when all the counselling and the educating strategies had been put into action and no positive results had been yielded. I had previously labelled this category *taking off the white gloves*. The suspension of a student falls into this category.

Keeping track refers to situations where Maude took the pulse of the school through daily interactions. This is different from nourishing, because there is no encouragement involved. It is simply a matter of finding out how growth is progressing. Keeping track was both internal and external and took place within a context. Maude kept track of what took place in the world of education to offer her teachers good professional development opportunities, for example. While wearing the instructional leader hat, she continuously took the pulse on courses to know how learning was progressing. In one situation, Maude shared her worries over students not knowing some of the subject matter when the final exam was just around the corner. Learning every student's name at the beginning of the year and studying report cards to keep track of who was improving and who needed more were other strategies used to keep track. The amount of knowledge Maude retained about students' performance often baffled teachers.

Tending to individual needs refers to situations where the principal assessed and took care of individuals' needs. In order to assess an individual's needs, the principal wore the counsellor hat. One example is how she took care of Miss Sarzo, a teacher, who was distraught after a parent had threatened her. Maude listened to Miss Sarzo and provided support. This incident was part of a bigger picture which Maude was already in the process of handling. She relieved Miss Sarzo of her worries. Similarly, Maude gave personal attention to every individual and seemed to strive to address each person's needs

in a personalised fashion, students and teachers alike. For example, Maude assessed what each department needed and fulfilled those needs, not based on a fixed scale where every department was allotted the same fixed amount but rather where departments got what they needed. To put it in the context of the gardening metaphor, she assessed which individuals were flowers needing to stand in the sun and which flowers needed the shade. She responded to needs differently for each individual. There were also situations where tending to individual needs meant taking a stricter stance to promote individual growth, a tough love approach. A teacher had asked for a change in teaching load. She gave him a challenge, a chance to "prove himself to me first" as she put it. Tending to individual needs meant that those needs were assessed, which meant in turn that she, as the principal, had established a relationship and she understood individuals. She used her knowledge to best help the individual. Maude commented at one point that, for this one young teacher, his "thing" was that he had to appear intelligent at all cost; he couldn't lose face. Maude manoeuvred around that fact to transmit the lessons necessary for his growth.

Harvesting refers to situations that Maude brought to fruition. One example refers to her efforts to change her relationship with teachers as an instructional leader. Teachers were resistant, because the person who assumed the instructional leadership role until Maude was brought on board, had created formal communication channels. Maude perceived these channels as barriers in establishing a healthy working relationship with teachers. Maude wanted to have a list of the evaluation tools/events used by the teachers. The purpose of this request was to gain more insight into what was going on in the classrooms, not to evaluate teachers. In the past, her request would have been denied, but since she had fostered a culture of trust, the teachers were more co-operative than they had been.

In real gardens, it is the results that are noticed, not the actual gardening process. Metaphorically, Maude's role was that if a gardener. She made a point of wanting to remain behind the scene. She did not want to run school assemblies. She did not want the focus to be on her. She was there for the students. A gardener has a certain power over the plants, because, he or she can remove the plants from the garden altogether. The gardener

has no power to force growth, fertilisers aside. He or she cannot tug at the shoots in the hopes to promote growth. There is an element of patience. Maude plants the seeds, waters, weeds out unwanted elements and monitors the growth, realising that the harvest may not come until years later.

Maude: A Gatekeeper

Another important element of community building is determining who enters in to the community. There was a four-step process involved in this emergent category: attracting to the gate, negotiating entry, opening the gates and maintaining standards. There were many occasions where Maude wore the public relations hat. She was proud of her school community and rarely missed an opportunity to talk about it. She also felt, on the other hand, that for a student to be part of the community, the fit had to be a good one between the individual and the school culture. It was Maude who decided about the potential fit and who gave permission for entry. Only if she perceived the fit to be a good one would she open the gates and grant permission for someone to join the community.

There were certain standards that had to be met and preserved. These standards are outlined under the promotion policy in the school agenda and read as follow,

- General summative average of at least 70%

- Students with less than 60% in any core subject (French, English, Mathematics) must attend summer school as prescribed by the school

- If a student fails more than one subject, she will be asked to repeat the year or may be subject to non-admittance. (1997-1998 School Agenda, p. 6)

Standards clearly refer to the academic performance of a student, as opposed to her socio-economic and cultural background. The school has a very diverse population and exceptions are made to accommodate students whose religions require a modification to the dress code, or to attendance on holy days.

Attracting to the gate: Public relations hat is a category referring to situations where Maude promoted the school. The public relations hat was a *starting position* from which Maude outlined the school culture. Depending on the position that the newcomer took, Maude assumed another stance in her gate keeping role, deciding whether or not the

newcomer would be admitted, thus changing to the next category, negotiating entry. This category refers both to the formal student selection/admission process and to strangers, much like myself, coming with a specific request. A journalist was not as lucky as I was. Because he wanted to write an article which Maude felt was not in line with the values of the school, she refused him entry. Negotiating entry involved seeking out all the information. When students sought to change schools in the middle of a semester, Maude asked questions to establish the motivation behind the sudden change. There was also an element of compromise involved in negotiating. In one situation, parents came to the school to meet with Maude because their daughter had not been accepted for the following year. Maude had refused the student entry, because she felt that the minimum standards had not been met; however, she was willing to give the student a second chance by letting her re-write the entrance exam at a later date. One of Maude's criteria for acceptance was also motivation and drive. When parents and students demonstrated a high motivation, Maude was more inclined to accept the student. Another example illustrates how Maude sought out more information and did her homework in negotiating the entry of a new student.

> Maude went to a meeting with the mother and grand-mother of a student
> who was rejected in the selection process but who still wants to attend the
> school. They presented a strong case as to why the student should attend
> the school. The grand-parent said that the student has been hoping to come
> to this school for the last three years and that her motivation is sky high.
> She says that the report card will prove to Maude that the student can do
> really well in school. The mother had tears in her eyes. It was clear that
> this has been a longstanding dream and that the student, the mother and the
> grand-mother would do anything to provide extra help and all...Maude
> said that considering the support, the drive and the motivation, she will
> review the case and base her final decision on the student's next report
> card. The women left happy. (Field notes, Nov. 20th, lines 2119-2129)

Unfortunately, after Maude reviewed the entrance exam, got the report card and called the principal of the primary school, she determined that the student would not be able to achieve and maintain the minimum standards.

Opening the gates refers to situations where the principal decided to welcome or accommodate someone in the setting for various reasons. In the admissions process, students who received the highest scores were welcomed. Maude tried to accommodate students needing to come or leave in the middle of the year for special circumstances. She did this cautiously, however, taking the teachers' concerns into consideration.

Maintaining standards was a major consideration in this category. Maude would not admit a student unless the ground was "fertile". It was Maude's belief that students have to be presented with opportunities to succeed. When calling parents after the entrance exam, Maude told parents about their daughter's strengths and weaknesses as demonstrated on the exam. If there were weaknesses, in such subjects as English or mathematics for example, Maude told parents she would send them a letter with the list of suggestions to improve those skills before the student came in to start Secondary I. When the minimal requirements were not met and the candidate was rejected, Maude wore the counsellor hat in communicating with parents. She explained that if the student came in and found herself in over her head in this learning environment, her self-esteem would be crushed.

There were also times when maintaining the standards took place within the setting, where students who did not maintain a certain grade point average were actually put on notice. After report cards came out, Maude visited a classroom and explained that if students did not maintain a 70% average at the end of their Secondary IV, they would not be automatically re-admitted into Secondary V. The message was clear. The emphasis, though, was put on how to get and maintain the 70% average required. She asked the students what steps would be instrumental in increasing their averages. Some answered the tutors could help, others that reviewing the materials daily and going to availability (time when teachers are available to answer questions) would also be helpful.

There is also a part of maintaining the standards that had to do with teacher evaluation. Her expectation was that teachers hired would do a remarkable job teaching students and

would invest themselves personally in the school culture. Maude took student complaints as seriously as she took teacher complaints. There were situations were teachers did not perform up to Maude's expectations and she immediately addressed the issues with the particular teachers. Her interventions were constructive, because she viewed it her responsibility to educate teachers. When the situation did not improve, she took more drastic measures, including putting the teacher on a strict path with precise objectives to teach, precise expected outcomes to achieve in a particular time frame and a self-evaluation schedule to respect. Maintaining the standards was important to her because she felt responsible for the reputation of excellence the school had held up until that point.

Joining Metaphors

The three metaphors described above provide a picture of Maude as an educational leader. The metaphors describe, in essence, the roles assumed daily. Maude is an instructional leader who not only puts out fires, waters plants and opens or closes gates, but who pays careful attention to what goes on in the lives of teachers and students. She cares about establishing an environment where everyone thrives, grows and learns. She does not step up on stage to assume her leadership role, rather, she acts "behind the scene" as one student put it. I struggled over this particular analogy, because in a sense, it introduces a paradox. One of Maude's most cherished values is transparency. She invests a great amount of energy to convey this value to staff and students, yet on a certain level, her actions are shielded by an opaque curtain. Another paradox exists in the fact that she promotes team work, yet her closest colleagues are absent from the picture drawn of Maude as an educational leader.

Maude's roles as an educational leader are her means to influence the school culture. She creates the base of the structure so that everyone coming in to the environment has ground to stand on. She works behind the scenes, and as the women in Regan's (1995) study who displayed courage, Maude does not draw attention to herself to take credit for the well-being of the school culture. As opposed to the hierarchical system where principals sit at the top of the pyramid, Maude creates a structure where her role is to foster healthy contexts where people can flourish. There are many of Dunlap and

Goldman's (1991) findings on facilitative leadership which resonate with Maude's ways of leading. She fosters a web of connections while playing the gardener role and she manages tensions while playing a peacekeeper role. Through all her leadership roles, Maude focuses on building a healthy community and she uses her daily decision-making process to achieve her goal.

<u>Maude: A Decision-Maker</u>

> Principals used a range of strategies to enhance teacher empowerment and
> to implement shared-governance structures and processes. Major strategies
> were building trust, encouraging expression, setting limits, hiring,
> encouraging group development, providing information, supporting
> teachers in confrontations, including parents and students, and using action
> research. (Blase, 1995, p. 134)

Once the ground has been prepared, trust has been built, limits have been set and teachers, students and parents have bought in to the school mission, then Maude involves them in her daily activities through the decision-making process.

Decisions are part of Maude's daily routine. The decision-making process is cyclical and fluid. It is fluid, because it evolves with different players participating in different stages of the process, feeding new information into the process. Maude operated according to a five stage decision-making cycle. As was noted previously, the novelty is not in the nature of the process as both problem-solving and decision-making models generally focus on the same elements, but rather in how Maude put the process into application in the daily school life. The five stages are receiving information; offering a critical ear; reaching deeper; analysing and transmitting the decision.

Maude often acted as a receiver, where she merely listened and took in the information transmitted. It was a daily occurrence to have staff, students or parents walk in to Maude's office to express a concern. This category of data refers to instances where Maude did not seek out the information, it was simply offered to her. For example,

> A teacher walked in. It is the computer science teacher. He has had
> considerable trouble with a group and more specifically with a student,
> Geneviève Leblanc. He talked to Maude about Geneviève and her

behaviour in class. He said that it has improved, but he classified

Geneviève as a volcano ready to explode and added that he just doesn't

know when that will happen... He acknowledges that Geneviève is

making efforts. The principal's expression was open. She knows that this

teacher is really trying and that he needs positive reinforcement. The

principal is soft-spoken with the teacher, she is enthusiastic and very

supportive. (Field notes, Nov. 19th, lines 1641-1649)

In those instances, Maude wore the counsellor hat and, through non-verbal cues, encouraged people to expand on their concerns. She let people unload on her and stored the information for later use, in a sense. It was like she kept a bank of pieces of information, like pieces to a puzzle which later she would piece together.

The next stage in the decision-making process was offering a critical ear. This category refers to situations where students or teachers presented Maude with a particular situation. This category refers to situations where several parties were involved in a conflictual situation. In such instances, Maude listened carefully, keeping in mind other pieces of data which she had collected and kept in bank. The category is labelled *critical ear* because Maude does not take sides believing blindly the story offered by one party. In one situation, students came in to complain about a teacher. Maude had already received complaints from the teachers about those students. She listened to the students; and continued to search for more information. In this case, Maude supported the teachers, because many complaints had come from varied sources about the same students. She still developed a forum for the students to be heard and their issues, addressed.

The next step, for Maude, was reaching deeper and actively seeking out information. This was done either through observation, phone conversations or face-to-face interaction. Questions were sometimes asked directly, "Was world history taught properly?" Sometimes, she asked the burning question in a round about way, but still eventually getting to it, "Did you tell the parents that it was not?" Seeking out information was done either internally and externally. Maude did not hesitate to call parents, consultants or other external parties if she thought that their input would provide her with further information. This was also the stage where Maude would seek input from

the counsellor and the vice-principals, if they had not already stepped into the process. Meetings would often be held after all the pieces of information had been sought out, in order to look closer at the information.

The analogy which came to me for the analysis stage of the decision-making process was that of a hologram. I felt Maude had to look deeper and reflect before the picture crystallised before her eyes. The picture emerging was three dimensional; it was comprised of the events and conditions leading to the present situation (EC), the significance and impact of the situation (SI) and the plan to improve the situation (P). She asked questions, she reflected, she tossed the information around to look at it from different perspectives and she made an assessment as to the scope of the situation, both in terms of the events leading to the situation and of their impact. She often analysed the situations with the counsellor and the vice-principals, particularly if the issues involved more than one student and impacted both the academic and the social aspects of school life. Coming up with a plan of action was often done as a collaborative effort. Vignette 3 outlines a conversation between Maude, Iris, the counsellor and Jacinthe, a vice-principal and demonstrates the collaboration in the analysis stage of the decision-making process.

Vignette 3: Mélanie is disruptive, what do we do?

Jacinthe, the vice-principal: "She's manipulative. She's got notes going all around the class (EC)"

Iris, the counsellor : "Sounds like bully city!"

Jacinthe: "She seems to be a passive-aggressive type."

Iris: "The parents seem to care...maybe it is the kid's character. Something's not right."

Maude: "How many demerit points does she have? (SI)"

Jacinthe: "She had 6 when the letter went home, now she has 8."

Maude: "According to protocol, at 10 we suspend (SI). Maybe we ought to push for a suspension, let the teachers know that they cannot take anything at all from this student and make the suspension dramatic."

Iris: "I also think that there should be some counselling... there is something there... she's been here a year and a half and I just feel that there is something wrong. I don't know what

it is... She acts behind the scene. Other students are involved and I don't know what the reason is... (SI)"

Jacinthe: "She's got demerits for her behaviour and for being late, but the teachers don't actually officially complain about her ."

Maude: "There is no action, on the teachers' part. (EC)"

Jacinthe: "Teachers say that she disrupts and then she stops talking and concentrates. She's got an average of 62%!"

Iris: "I think that we need to push this student. She's not getting it. She keeps getting away with her undesirable behaviour...(P)"

Maude: "That's what I mean by dramatic suspension..."

Jacinthe: (looking over report card) "She failed math, religion, and English (EC). She got a tutor."

Iris: "She's failing religion?!? There's a problem!!! She needs to be sent a strong message. What ever it is that is going on, it is insidious. We need to be so tough on her that she will no longer act like this. The dad is not there enough and the mom doesn't know what's going on with her daughter because she's too busy with her job. (EC)"

Jacinthe: "I'll send a memo to teachers to take nothing from this student. (P)"

Maude: "She has to want to be helped... the bottom line is that if she does not have a 70% average, she does not comply to the outlined standards. We have to tell the parents that she's not passing, that we don't like her attitude and that if the situation persists, she's on her way out!"

Iris: "If nothing changes, we'll have a really bad situation here in the classroom"

This was the only suspension which took place during my visits to the site. This vignette reflects a situation where Maude had reached the point of removing the undesirable behaviour, "too bad, so sad", because the staff had attempted to guide and help the student and no positive outcome had resulted from their attempts. Vignette 3 shows the collaboration that took place between the counsellor, the vice-principal and Maude. All situations requiring analysis were complex, because they included many pieces of the

puzzle. A vignette does not do justice to the energy devoted daily to handling of any particular situation.

Hoy and Tarter's (1995) decision-making cycle outlines establishing a plan as a distinct step in the process. For Maude, the analysis was a period where all the information was manipulated and looked at from many perspectives until a plan emerged. In this respect, Maude's decision-making process differs from Hoy and Tarter's (1995) model. Some teachers commented that sometimes, they felt like Maude did not act promptly enough. They did not appreciate the importance of reflection which although outwardly appearing as a passive activity, actually generated a great deal of internal turmoil. For Maude, the process was aimed at maximising rather than *satisficing*; she wanted to find the best possible solution.

The last stage of the decision-making process was sharing the strategies for the implementation of the plan. One student remarked that Maude did not procrastinate when came time to put a plan into action. Maude worked as efficiently as a busy bee. She was often creative in her use of resources. After putting a plan into action, Maude would go back to the people who had expressed a concern in the first place, to see if the situation had improved. After implementing each step of a plan, Maude sought feedback until she had heard from all parties involved that the situation had indeed been resolved. The following vignette not only demonstrates how Maude wove her way through the decision-making cycle, but it also provides a more thorough understanding of her instructional leadership role. This vignette was reconstructed mainly from field notes at the end of the decision-making cycle and as such, is different from other vignettes presented.

Vignette 4: A Decision-Making Cycle in Action

The quality of the academic instruction was very important to Maude. She had hired many new teachers and she had spent considerable amounts of time coaching the teachers. In her daily rounds in the school, she had picked up clues pointing to the inefficacy of a particular teacher, Fred. She had assigned a senior teacher, Sonia, to work with Fred to teach him the ropes and to make sure that the curriculum was covered. Later that term, Maude got a disturbing phone call from a parent complaining about the situation in Fred's classroom.

The parent claimed that Fred was actually teaching erroneous material. Maude, still wanting to believe in Fred's ability to teach the material, gave Fred the benefit of the doubt. She quickly went from receiving information, to taking it in critically, to seeking out more information from various sources. She went to Sonia and asked her for a short review of Fred's performance. Having received information which substantiated the parent's claim, she went to Fred directly and asked him when she could come and perform the end of term teacher evaluation. A date was set. Maude went into the classroom. Fred gave a brilliant performance and the students were all well behaved. As Maude was getting ready to leave the classroom, a student burst out "It is not normally like this, you know..." giving Fred great cause for concern. Maude pretended she did not hear and walked away. She later went back to the student and asked for further clarification. She sought out the input from various other classmates and was distraught when she found that "they had all been suffering", as she put it, through this new teacher's learning experience.

Maude wanted the situation to change, rapidly. The students had put up with enough and she really felt Sonia had helped all that she could. Fred still needed help. Maude agonised over this situation. She wanted to do what was best for the students, first and foremost, but she also cared about Fred's professional development. To add another level of complexity, the parents were still calling, asking that the situation be dealt with promptly.

Maude started by giving Fred a performance evaluation, pointing to the strong points and to the challenges to overcome. This was the first of many meetings with Fred. Maude became stricter and stricter as time went on, because Fred was not improving to Maude's satisfaction. Sonia was pulled in to co-teach workshops with Fred so students would be given an additional advantage to pass the term exam. Fred was kept reined in and was given tight guidelines by which to abide, and the situation yielded a satisfactory outcome. Maude knew, though, that the best possible outcome would have been to remove Fred from that setting, altogether. She could not proceed along that route because of legal contract ramifications. The next best thing was to not renew Fred's contract. The implication of the satisficing approach was that students were cheated from the best possible education in one subject matter for an entire year.

In order for this problematic situation to be resolved, Maude listened, gave every party a chance to provide their input, sought out information from silent students, analysed the situation, and applied a solution. She went back to the students and asked if the situation had improved. She used, in a sense, what Hoy (1995) called the incremental decision-making process because she made smaller decisions trying to steer the results towards a satisfactory outcome. There were many situations which arose in the course of the time I spent in the site, but few as taxing as this one, for Maude. She was troubled by the fact that the academic standards were not upheld, but not as much as she was by the fact that students "suffered in silence". The students' well-being, growth and learning was always at the forefront of Maude's mind. At the core of her decision-making were the values guiding her actions.

A Demonstration of Women's Ways: Maude's Values

"Educational administrators work in an environment in which value conflicts are readily apparent. Different generations confront one another; racial, ethnic, and religious groups are intermingled; and stakeholders disagree about desirable policies, procedures, and outcomes" (Ashbaugh, 1984, p. 1). Maude's working environment parallels Ashbaugh and Kaster's description. Although values were not the focus of this study, they emerged throughout the data collection in two different ways. Values were apparent in Maude's communication patterns and in the "battles" she "chose to pick". Cook (1997) wrote that values are deep-rooted beliefs that shape our perception of the world and our ways of being and behaving (Cook, 1997). The following section outlines Maude's values as perceptible throughout interviews, daily interactions with others and battles fought.

The most prevalent value guiding Maude's behaviours and decisions was care. The students' growth and their learning were her top priority. These findings echo those expressed by Grace (1995); he found that "women heads place the child and meeting its needs at the centre of their concern and are therefore more likely to address behaviour from staff which damages that" (p. 182). Maude walked around the school throughout the day to gain some insight as to how things were going in individuals' lives and in the school in general. She stopped her swift stride to congratulate a student for winning a swim meet or to thank a student for volunteering at open house. When came time for

Maude to give her feedback on the school's promotional materials, Maude insisted that the document state that education in the school was synonymous with "the development of the whole person through a strong academic curriculum and a vibrant student life". She made it her business to know who was active and who was not, who was succeeding and who was not, who was home sick and who was healthy.

There were systems put in place in the school to inform Maude and other staff about who was involved in which activities, who was absent from school and why, and who was performing to satisfaction. If Maude found students who weren't involved in activities, she made a point of talking with them to assess the reasons behind the decision. At the beginning of the year, she inquired about new students' adaptation into the school culture; "We try to have nobody fall through the cracks". Maude cared for each individual and for the group as a whole.

Maude's background in educational psychology appeared to influence her interactions with both staff and students. At one point, there was a discipline problem in a classroom and teachers requested Maude's help in dealing with the situation. Sitting at her desk, with her head in her hands, she asked herself out loud "They are 12 and 13 year olds, how bad can they be?". Her thought was not intent on belittling the teachers' distress, but rather on expressing the point that there had to be a way to solve the problem through care rather than force.

Promoting safety could also be interpreted as a demonstration of care. Through her daily interactions with the students, Maude instilled the belief that the school was a safe place to make mistakes. Students interviewed agreed with that statement and knew that the world would not come crashing down on them if they erred. Maude paid particular attention to promoting an environment where the girls would develop their self-esteem. A new teacher used sarcasm in the classroom in a rather inappropriate fashion and Maude heard about it during one of her rounds. She immediately went to speak to the teacher to educate her about other ways to deal with the students. Maude told me about a situation which arose the previous year, where a coach had crushed one student's self-esteem.

> Maude told me that last year, there was this student, Amelia on the
> basketball team. Her team was playing a game and was winning. The

coach never put her once on the court. Amelia felt humiliated and cried for

hours. Maude says that when this teacher is coaching, he is so focused on

winning the game that he doesn't think about anything else, such as

crushing little girls' self-esteem. There were 2 students who weren't

allowed to play. They cried for a week and both felt really humiliated.

Maude asked 'Should victory come at any cost?' (Field notes, Nov. 24th,

lines 2223-2228)

Maude also addressed this self-esteem issue with a teacher during her evaluation, as the
teacher had made a comment which a student had taken exception to and had reported to
Maude. The teacher had not realised that her comment had been misinterpreted. Maude
added,

'The students really take what we say seriously. Don't feel bad if you have

to go back and apologise or explain to them...' and Maude gave some

examples of times when she had gone back to talk to the students.

'Because you know, these young girls' self-esteem bruises really easily.

We have to be careful...' (Field notes, Nov. 27th, lines 2613-2616)

By paying attention to what was going on in the school and by truly listening to what
students were saying, Maude was able to educate individuals who threatened, whether
knowingly or unknowingly, the safety Maude cherished.

Maude also took opportunities to interact with teachers to know what was going on in
their personal and professional lives. She demonstrated the same attention towards her
staff as she did towards students. She wanted to present them with opportunities for
success. She believed that care would foster a trusting environment where the quality of
life would be good. Maude believed in empowering her teachers. She often consulted
teachers. She sought their input at various levels, whether it be on daily events or on the
long-term impact of policies. Teachers reported that if an issue directly impacted
teachers' work, Maude would consult them before proceeding. Maude focused on
empowering teachers, because she felt it would also foster an environment where teachers
would in turn empower students.

There were three types of situations where Maude's values conflicted with other's in terms of power, power being broadly defined as the use of resources. The first two types of situations illustrate battles Maude chose to pick. Her strategy was not to *over*power and coerce, in order to win, but rather to *em*power in order to educate. Maude had a problem with people not taking the power handed over to them. For instance, in an effort to protect herself, a young teacher told parents that "she was only doing what she was told for fear of otherwise being fired". The teacher was playing the role of a victim. Maude's reaction was to state such an attitude could compromise this teacher's job because "if nothing else, I want these teachers to be good role models for the students". There were a few other instances when staff or students would take on the victim role and Maude found creative ways to empower them.

Maude also had a problem with people undermining her authority or taking her power away. During one of my first visits to the site, I attended a staff meeting. When the meeting was adjourned, a teacher announced another meeting to deal with a particular issue in one particular grade level. Maude stormed out of the room to go talk with that teacher. From where I was standing, I saw that the conversation was heated. Maude later explained to me why she had reacted so strongly, and as I realised later, totally out of character. There were two problems with the teacher scheduling a meeting; first, the teacher excluded her from the situation, thus taking away any power Maude had to improve the situation and second, Maude did not trust that the meeting would be directed at a positive outcome, an outcome directed at promoting students' growth and learning. Her fear was that strategies would be put in place to control students, as opposed to positively educating them. In other words, Maude perceived that her power was taken away from her and would, in a sense be used to harm the students. The teacher inadvertently and simultaneously breached two of the values dearest to Maude, empowerment and care. Again, Maude worked on finding ways to empower the teacher to change her way of dealing with problematic situations in the classroom. She created forums for the teachers to come together and discuss issues and concerns, providing the guidance necessary for action plans to be put in place to generate positive outcomes. She

also tried to communicate more with this one teacher on a personal level, sending her a birthday card, for example.

The third type of events relating to power which gave Maude cause for concern were situations where she could not get her hands on power; in her words, she and the school were "sitting ducks". Data in this category refers to situations where Maude and the school were at the mercy of someone. In one situation, parents were threatening to sue the school for not providing adequate education to their daughter. Maude believed that the school was fulfilling its duty; however, she could not stop the parents from taking the course of action of their choice. Her only recourse was to put her energy into providing more support for teachers and more care for students.

Maude's efforts to promote teacher empowerment support Hall's (1994) and Hurty's (1995) use of power. Both researchers found that the women in their studies used their power as a means to empower others, communicate a vision and shape the school culture in such as way that trust, openness and a sense of self-worth prevail. Empowerment was also a central concept in the research conducted on both facilitative leaders (Conley & Goldman, 1994; Dunlap & Goldman, 1991) and transformational leaders (Bass, 1998; Lashway, 1995; Leithwood, 1992).

Another important value in both Maude's life and the school culture is order. Anyone setting foot on school property will immediately marvel over the impeccable grounds. Stepping inside the building, an outsider will also notice the students wearing uniforms. Peeking into a classroom at recess, one day, Maude commented to me "See, they're smiling, they're laughing and having fun and when the bell rings, it is quiet and they are working". Order was present in all activities; general assembly, school outings, masses and lunch in the cafeteria. Students were taught how to behave in different settings. Maude commented one day,

> with the new teachers coming in, they [the teachers]are looking around
> too, to see how people do certain things... like even going to the mass this
> morning, we [the vice-principals and herself]were taking care of
> discipline. It wasn't just for the students, it was also for the teachers, I
> wanted them to see that that's what we expect here. It is part of educating

them as well. That's how we do things- very nice family, it is pleasant, it is

enjoyable, but it is got to be respectful. So today was a good example of

how we are training the teachers to transmit the culture. We do things with

order, we do things respectfully, and we do things that are correct. It was a

warm mass, nice songs, it was pleasant- even for a child from a different

religion. It is fine. We have to teach kids from any religion how to behave

in a respectful manner in a religious setting. That's all part of it. It is all

planned. It is part of the culture that we want to transmit. (Interview data,

Sept. 18th, lines 1254-1282)

Students interviewed also commented that the rules in place are respected. One student

noted,

you have rules in the school- you have a bunch of rules and they're there

and she [Maude] will enforce them nicely. She doesn't upset people or

anything. You know that she is nice, but that she expects the rules to be

followed. So you respect her for that. Some people [teachers] they see you

with the earrings and they don't say anything, so you feel 'Who cares?' -

like there's less respect after- but Maude will tell you nicely or jokingly-

well I mean seriously, but in the form of a joke so that you don't feel

upset... She has a nice way of dealing with people. (Member check, April

8th, lines 180-186)

The value which is associated with order is respect. In order for everything to run

smoothly in the school, order is necessary and it promotes respect between

individuals. Another student commented that

the school really emphasises respect, (...) towards the teachers, the other

students, and towards the school itself, the physical building- that's really

important. I'm sure that students will be leaving the school and will still

follow those rules. There is also pride in yourself. When I walk in this

uniform, I feel proud to walk in this uniform. (...) Respect is a big thing

here. I've been in other schools and I've seen lots of disrespect. First of all,

you can't swear in this school. If you say something that may be hurtful,

you are asked to apologise, you have a meeting with the people to work

things out. (Member check, April 8th, lines 202-210)

Teachers also supported this value and stressed its importance in the school culture. One teacher pointed out, that

the first value that comes to mind is respect- respect for themselves

[students] and for others- (...) in the sense of other than yourself, but also

in the sense of being from different ethnic backgrounds and so on- I think

that it is one thing that is stressed a lot in the school. (Member check,

April 8th, lines 444-447)

Respect is an important constituent of the school culture. Disrespectful behaviour whether directed at staff or students was immediately corrected by a number of different people in the setting. Maude did her part in instilling respect amongst the staff and students through role modelling.

Maude also advocated excellence. As an instructional leader, she put a lot of effort towards achieving excellence through selecting students, hiring of teachers, monitoring students' academic progress and advising parents on support strategies. The academic standards were high and strategies, such as tutoring, were in place to ensure that students did succeed. Pride went hand in hand with excellence, as did hard work. When talking about her mentors, Maude stated that the most important value they transmitted to her was hard work. She added, "These were all people who worked very hard, who gave the best of themselves, and certainly, I try to do that, I work as hard as I can and do the best that I can."

For Maude, the guiding force behind her educational leadership was the desire to educate young women who will stand proud and go through life achieving the goals they set for themselves. She modelled care, respect, empowerment, trust, hard work, excellence, order, fairness and pride. She stood her ground and fought for what she believed. Maude is a woman of integrity who follows her values.

An Educational Leadership Framework

Circles, cycles and wheels have been used as metaphors to describe women's leadership styles in various contexts (Helgesen, 1995; Irwin, 1995; Smith, 1992). Through her study

of women in leadership positions, Helgesen (1995) had the opportunity to talk to Frances Hesselbein, chief executive of the Girl Scouts, who explained her new organisational system.

> The new system is circular; positions are represented as circles, which are then arranged in an expanding series of orbits. I use circles, because symbolically, they are important. The circle is an organic image. We speak of the *family* circle. The circle is *inclusive*, but it allows for flow and movement; the circle doesn't box you in! I've always conceived of management as a circular process. (p. 44)

Figure 4 (p. 92) assembles the findings from this qualitative inquiry into a three-circle framework, the outer circle representing the leadership roles Maude played in her school, the middle circle, her decision-making patterns and the inside circle, her demonstration of women's ways through the use of values. The use of circles represents the inter-connectedness of values, decision-making and leadership. Figure 4 (p. 92), although presented in circles because of the connectedness, the cyclical and non-linear nature of all elements, differs from other models in the metaphors it joins and the concepts it unites: leadership, decision-making and values.

In this educational leadership framework, values are placed at the centre because they constitute the core of Maude's leadership and decision-making; they permeate all layers of administration and represent her demonstration of *women's ways* of administering. These findings, although presented in a different perspective, echo Regan and Brooks' (1995) double helix metaphor where values of collaboration, care, courage, intuition and vision prevail.

Decision-making is influenced by certain internal and external factors, as Trider et al.'s (1988) and Wiber's (1995) studies emphasise. Values were presented by these authors as one influential factor. As is evident in the place values hold in the educational leadership framework, the findings of this study support Trider et al's (1988) and Wiber's (1995). Both of these studies also point to such factors as experience, knowledge, context and personal interactions and relationships as influential factors in the decision-making process. It could be argued that these factors not only influence decision-making, but also

leadership. Decision-making is thus found within the leadership circle in the educational leadership framework, because the cyclical process takes place within all the leadership roles Maude plays in the school.
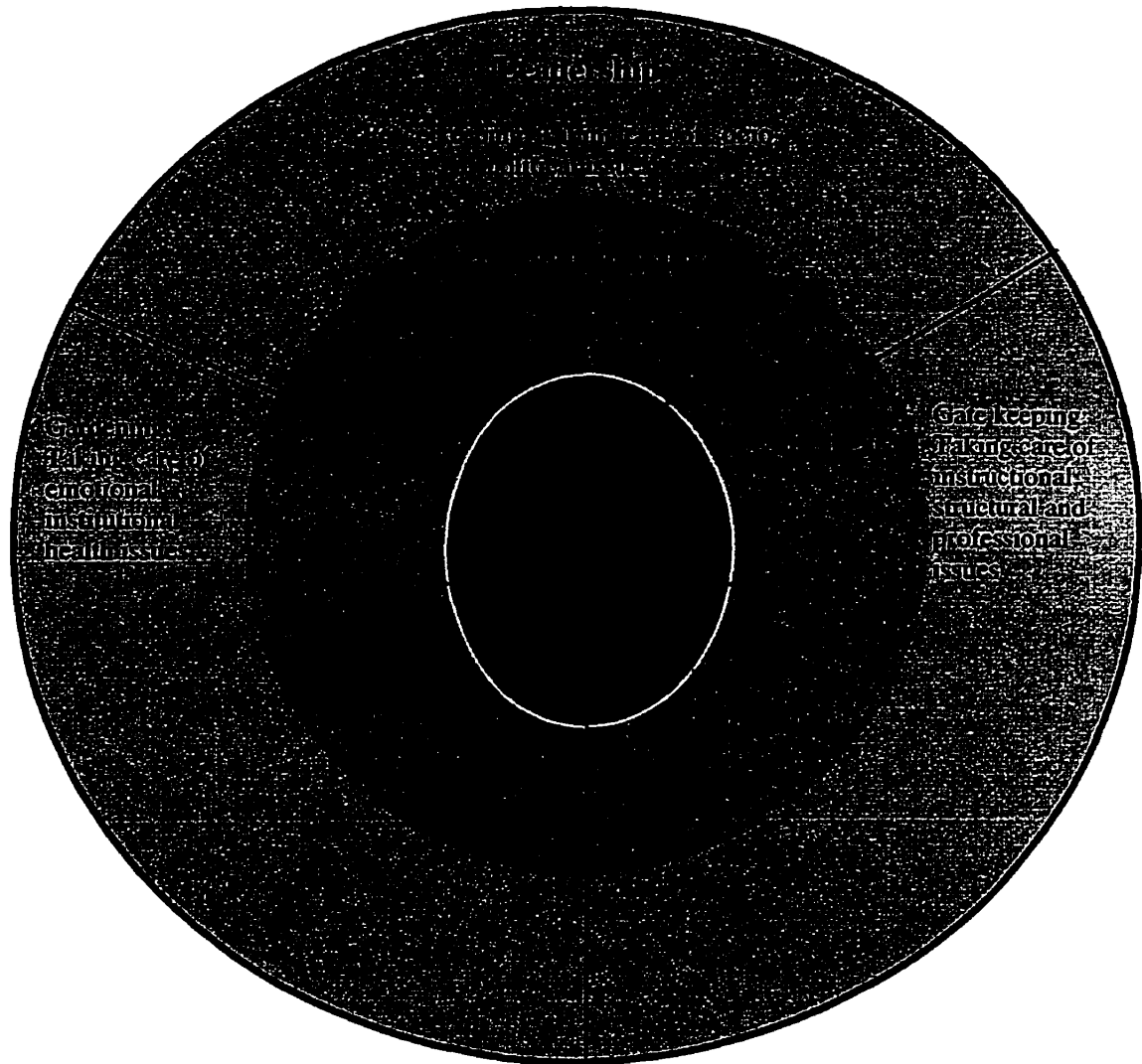
Figure 4: An educational leadership framework

Leadership encompasses all daily activities and as such, assumes the larger circle in the framework. The three types of leadership roles which Maude assumed in the school exemplified certain of the behaviours and traits described in association with facilitative (Conley & Goldman, 1994; Dunlap & Schmuck, 1995), transformational (Bass, 1998; Lashway, 1995; Leithwood, 1992) and symbolic leadership (Reitzug & Reeves, 1992).

Empowerment is a common denominator of these three leadership models and one of guiding forces in Maude's leadership. Beyond empowerment are other values, such as vision and collaboration found in Maude's leadership supporting the findings of the leadership studies mentioned above.

Maude's leadership differs in where she positions herself to lead. Empowerment does suggest, at some level, that the leaders provide the setting for others to assume leadership roles. The concept of empowerment, however, does not convey the deep sense of care Maude devoted on a daily basis to monitoring her environment and tending to the needs of others. Her stance was simultaneously one where she was proactive in finding information which would inform her decisions, but also one where her work and her presence were very fluid, permeable and intangible. There are elements within each circle of the educational framework influencing elements present in other circles. The interstices are not finite and clearly delineated, to the contrary, they are organic and dynamic. Two themes are found within these interstices, namely Maude's counsellor role and her habit of tracking and obtaining information.

The counsellor hat was often worn to manage the tensions created within the various roles Maude played and within the school context as a whole. Tension management was a behaviour which Conley and Goldman (1994) attributed to facilitative leaders. Maude wore the counsellor hat while playing her leadership roles, which was evident through her emphasis on establishing a caring environment, maintaining a peaceful climate and upholding instructional standards. Maude also put on her counsellor hat throughout the decision-making process as she used her listening skills in creating settings where people felt comfortable sharing their lives and realities. While acting as a counsellor, Maude enacted certain values which she felt promoted a healthy school environment.

Reitzung and Reeves (1992), using Sergiovanni's definition of symbolic leadership behaviour, suggest a taxonomy of symbolic leadership that classifies behaviours according to four forces: technical, human, educational, and symbolic. The symbolic force which represents the modelling of desired values and beliefs through action, language and artefacts, represents the base of symbolic leadership (Reitzug & Reeves, 1992). Other forces radiate from this base, much like values stem at the core of the

educational leadership framework to influence both decision-making and leadership. One example of how values permeate decision-making and leadership parallels Marshall et al. (1996)'s findings, which suggested that in order for principals to make decisions sustaining an ethic of care, they had to establish connections, integrate contextual realities and respond to needs. Maude achieved these goals while wearing her counsellor hat.

The second behaviour permeating the interstices of the educational leadership framework is Maude's tracking of information. Keeping her fingers on the pulse of the school was important not only to establish and maintain a peaceful environment, but also to reach insightful decisions. There were many communication systems put in place to enhance this strategy. For example, Maude's rounds allowed her to have face-to-face interactions with both staff and students. Through her rounds, she obtained information. The reciprocal of this behaviour was to provide information, which she often did by phone or by way of written memos. She insisted on having a phone system put in place which gave each teacher a voice mailbox. The school did not possess an intercom system for communication; however, Maude devised and relied on other means of communication. Keeping track was her way to monitor individual and institutional health and to evaluate whether solutions to particular situations were being implemented successfully.

The interstices present in the three circle educational framework indicate the multi-dimensional nature of the framework. With such complex concepts as leadership, decision-making and values, there is no doubt that more layers can be found, depending on the setting studied. Little attention has been devoted, in the literature, to the interconnectedness of such concepts. Analysing grey areas and the fluidity of elements is not a simple matter.

The educational administration framework displays three levels which although well-defined still allow room for organic and dynamic movement. Within the interstices are other levels, where Maude wore her counsellor hat and devised strategies to obtain and transfer information. At the core of the educational framework is Maude's ethic of care, influencing her decision-making to act as a leader who tends to the emotional health of both individuals and the organisation by establishing connections and responding to needs

and as both a socio-political and an instructional leader who not only integrates contextual realities in establishing instructional standards, but who also aims at establishing a peaceful and harmonious school culture.

<u>Summary: Portrait of a Female Leader and Decision-Maker</u>

Like Russian dolls that nestle one within the other, the heads' different *personae* in their headship role were revealed, as they told their stories. Unlike Russian dolls, the identities they revealed were not identical. At the centre was each head as a person; her values, beliefs, ingrained responses that had developed over the years. Then there was the kind of head she thought she should be, some aspects of which were in conflict with how she was as a person. Finally, there was the head she was allowed to be, in the context of the school. In each case, their leadership style, manifest in their behaviour as heads, reflected the constant dynamic between these three personae, in which one or other would dominate until it was challenged, or the context changed. (Hall, 1996, p. 149-150)

Maude is not the tall, strong charismatic leader described as the stereotypical leader in the patriarchal world. She does not stand in centre stage. She does not have prescriptions ready for diagnosed problems. She does not rule by intimidating, threatening or by slamming down a gavel. Instead, she sets goals for instructional and institutional health, she steers clear of socio-political obstacles and she fosters a caring school culture where students and teachers can grow and learn. These are some of the attitudes and behaviours which Maude also cherished in her personal life.

The *personae* conflict expressed by Hall was also present in Maude's life. These conflicts were evident in the data, data put in category labelled *dual* because they did not seem to belong to any one finite category. One piece of data was a question uttered by Maude: "Why can't they see who I am?" Maude believed that she was perceived by some teachers and students and "Maude", a person filling a position and not as Maude, the person. Maude commented that some teachers do not trust her and it has nothing to do with who she is, but all to do with her role and how the person before her fulfilled the

position. There was evidence of discrepancy between who Maude wanted to be as an administrator and who others wanted her to be.

Another interesting discrepancy was found in *where* Maude wanted to be and where she thought she should be or was allowed to be. One aspect of her physical presence in the school was the location of her office. The school was divided into two sections and the administrative offices, including Maude's office, were located in the middle of the school, on the second floor. Maude wanted to be with the students, in the middle of the action which took place mainly in the left wing of the school. She reported at one point,

> I don't like to be in my office here, I'd like to be more over there
>
> [pointing to the left wing], I like to be with the kids (....)You know, at
>
> lunch time, I go down [to the cafeteria] and I talk to them. Every day, to
>
> make myself feel good, I go down and I talk to them. (Interview data,
>
> Sept. 12th, lines 595-601)

It was part of Maude's personality to want to spend time with "kids", as she put it. Part of the historical structure of the school was, on the other hand, that the directress' office was located in the core portion of the school. Maude could not change the location of her office and she had to develop strategies to enable her to be both who she was allowed to be and who she really wanted to be.

As indicated earlier, another place where Maude did not want to be was on stage. During an interview, she stated her position.

> I don't like to be on stage. I'd rather be behind the scene and working the
>
> crowd. Mrs. Bogdonoff doesn't really like that. From the beginning, she
>
> has been telling me to 'take the leadership' and 'take the spotlight!' It is
>
> not me- I want to be behind everyone- I want them to know that I support
>
> them. I want to be everywhere, but I don't want to be on the stage. I don't
>
> want to be the big... star... When I get up to talk, people are quiet- I can
>
> *command* their attention- but here (in the school), I feel like there is no
>
> discipline to do- so I feel that I can relax and build with every person...
>
> There was a teacher in here yesterday and I told her 'Oh- Julie's marks
>
> went up, a? and Maggie's marks went down?' and she looked at me and

asked me how I could remember all that... but that's what I want! I want
to know each person and what they are doing. I want to see them in the
corridor and just say quietly to them 'How is it going today?' and touch
them on the arm. I feel that a few little touches add up to something!

(Interview data, April 8th, line 1919-1981)

Maude was aware that some of her staff wished for her to be present at the top of the
ladder and more autocratic in some situations. One teacher stated that "there are times
when I feel that she could be stronger and more forceful on certain issues". Maude did not
believe in a control-driven model of administration. She embraced model of
administration based on care, empowerment, respect, trust and reciprocity and what these
values fostered and facilitated. In this respect, Maude displayed many of the values
attributed to transformational leaders in Lashway's (1995), Leithwood's (1992) and Bass'
(1998) studies. She did not want to be found at the top of an organisational pyramid, she
wanted to be present in the middle of action, much like the female leaders participating in
Helgesen's (1995) study. Despite the fact that some people were resistant to the change in
models, Maude had persisted in implementing an ethic of care (Marshall, Patterson,
Rogers, & Steele, 1996) because the values associated with that model were such an
integral part of who she is as a person.

The values Maude used as beacons to follow decision-making paths and to play certain
roles in the school all contributed to painting a picture of Maude as a leader and decision-
maker. She believed in respect, care, collaboration, hard work, order, fairness and
excellence. The decisions she made on her own or in concert with others were based on
those values and aimed at promoting harmony and growth in both staff and students. The
three metaphors forming Maude's leadership patterns portray values in action. At one
level, she is an gardener, taking care of the emotional needs of staff and students and also
promoting institutional health. On a different level, she is a gatekeeper establishing and
maintaining instructional and professional standards for the school. Throughout all,
Maude is a socio-political leader who demonstrates courage and respect and who
promotes order and fairness to maintain peace in a school where both students and staff
want to learn and grow.

Chapter V

Conclusion and Implications

Educational leadership represents a complex endeavour strewed with daily decisions. Principals are required to make decisions which affect school life, curriculum and the growth and learning of both students and staff. The school mission represents one guiding force; however, principals must rely on their past experiences and judgement to reach decisions. The educational leadership literature may also provide a guiding light for a principal, although the perspectives offered have focused principally on the White Anglo-Saxon male way of leading.

> Leadership theory was primarily developed by observations of White
> males working in leadership positions in bureaucracies. The behaviours
> and values of women, minorities, and others were excluded from
> leadership theory and research. Behaviours, backgrounds, appearance,
> language, and values that were different or atypical were simply dismissed
> as nonleadership-like, deviant, or deficient. Diversity, alternative models,
> or any variations from the norm were seen as signs of incompetence.
> (Marshall, 1996, p. 275)

The literature on women assuming leadership and decision-making roles is scarce. The purpose of this study was to provide an example of a women's ways of administering a school. Through a qualitative inquiry, this study delineates and reveals patterns in leadership and decision-making. Furthermore, the study outlines the female perspective on educational leadership, focusing on some of the values grounding both leadership and the decision-making process. This chapter summarises the research findings and suggests grounds for further research.

Summary of Findings

In the last twenty years, researchers have attempted to complement the classical leadership theories by adding the perspectives of *others*, others being defined mainly as females and minorities (Brunner & Cryss, 1998; Irby & Brown, 1993; Young, 1994). Studies were conducted and findings communicated through non-traditional means; metaphors were created and frameworks took on new shapes (Hall, 1994a; Regan &

Brooks, 1995). Researchers expressed the need to provide women with a forum where they could regain their voice (Gilligan, 1982; Shakeshaft, 1989b). This study provides an example of a female principal's way of leading and deciding.

When I first entered my research site, I took with me all my preconceptions of educational leadership, which echoed the dominant perspective, namely that of the top-down model of leadership. I must admit that I was intrigued with some of Maude's ways of leading. Maude would often tell me what her goal was with respect to certain interactions, prior to handling a particular situation. Then, I would follow her and observe *how* she handled certain issues. I would inevitably create scenarios in my mind in anticipation of her actions and at first, always found the patterns pre-established far removed from Maude's ways.

> The psychologist Carol Pearson, writing in *The Hero Within* (...) proposes that our culture move beyond them (the archetypes of Warrior and Martyr) to acknowledge a new kind of hero that unites the qualities of both: the Magician. The Magician incorporates the Martyr's emphasis on care and serving others with the Warrior's ability to affect his environment by the exercise of discipline, struggle and will. The Magician knows how to sacrifice and give care without losing personal identity, and how to work hard to achieve something without getting caught up in an unceasing competitive struggle. At the Magician's level, Pearson writes, dualities begin to break down. Magicians see beyond apparent dichotomies of male, female, ends and means, efficiency and humanity, mastery and nurturance, logic and intuition. Instead, they focus on the interconnections that bind all human beings and relate events to one another; they take the long view because they see the relation of the present to the future. (...) It is this awareness of interconnections that enables Magicians, in Pearson's words, 'to move with the energy of the universe and to attract what is needed by the laws of synchronicity, so that the ease of the Magician's interaction with the universe seems like magic'. (p. 5 in Helgesen, 1995, p. 256)

I had been used to seeing leaders as "warriors" and was introduced, through the course of this study, to a magician. Helgesen (1995) further reports, that

> Pearson notes that Magicians in all cultures are associated with circles. They draw magic circles and put themselves in the middle, structuring the world around them as a web. From inside they act as magnets who attract and galvanise positive energy for change by identifying places where growth can occur for individuals, institutions, or social groups, and then, fostering that growth. Taking opportunities as they come, they build up power by empowering others, valuing connections instead of competition. (p. 257)

Maude was indeed a magician, who structured a web of connections, fostered a positive learning environment and jumped on opportunities to empower others. Through her role as a socio-political leader, metaphorically labelled the peacekeeper, she displayed and encouraged such values as respect, courage, vision, order and fairness. As a gardener who cared for individual and institutional health, she nurtured care, collaboration, humility and hard work. Assuming her role as an instructional leader, wearing a gatekeeper hat, Maude promoted values of excellence.

In each of the leadership roles that she assumed, Maude reached decisions supporting the school mission, promoting the integral development of young women. As a peacekeeper, the decisions supported an environment where channels for discussion are kept open and where paths leading to win-win conflict resolution were well paved. As a gardener, Maude reached decisions which best promoted the growth of each individual. She paid particular attention to the students' self-esteem. As a gatekeeper, the decisions Maude reached aimed at establishing standards of excellence and making sure that the standards were upheld for students, staff and visitors.

Maude used particular strategies to inform her decision-making process. She kept her door open and both staff and students reported that they felt welcome to discuss issues with her. This particular strategy allowed Maude to merely be a recipient, a vessel for information. She accepted the information offering a non-judgmental arena for the transmission of the information, while still maintaining the ability to discern facts from

fiction. She was not gullible! She stored away the pieces of information which would later be used to solve the puzzle. One of Maude's most effective strategies was walking through the school. Her walks provided her with opportunities to congratulate students for winning a basketball game, to remind teachers about meetings and most of all to keep her fingers on the pulse of the school. This strategy, as well as the daily communication with her closest colleagues allowed Maude to gather information, identify issues and prevent conflicts from even taking place, as part of her peacekeeper role. Maude also took time to reflect on everything taking place in her school, to look into the depth of the hologram in order to see the picture crystallise before her eyes. Reflection was an on-going process, which Maude could not stop when going home. She cared deeply about the school and the individuals constituting her learning community and wanted to foster an environment where both staff and students would learn and grow.

Maude's values were an expression of *women's ways*. She wanted to be found in the middle of things, supporting all activities and creating a web of connections between students, teachers, and parents. Maude's use of power supported the findings expressed in Hurty's (1995) and Hall's (1996) studies about women in educational leadership positions. Both authors expressed that the participants used power to empower others, according to a model of *power with* as opposed to the use of *power over* others. Empowerment was also expressed in leadership literature as a distinguishing component of facilitative (Dunlap & Goldman, 1991) and transformational (Leithwood, 1992) leadership, which were not *per se* associated as *women's ways*. However, the studies outlining empowerment as a viable strategy often did so in concordance with promoting change in the education system (Fennell, 1996; Leithwood, 1992; Pounder, 1990), again suggesting *other* ways of leading than what had been promoted in classical leadership studies (Lunenburg, 1995).

Also a demonstration of *women's ways* were Maude's vision, courage and collaboration. Maude had particular views on what young women's education should be about and how it should take place. As was pointed out in Klenke's (1996) leadership metaphor, context plays an important role in shaping education. Maude had worked several years at the Ministry of Education and had solidified her vision of education,

grounding it in the Quebec context. Expressed in the member checks were puzzled thoughts about *how* Maude knew all that she did about what went on in the school. There was an element of intuition at work in Maude's daily activities. She was quick to pick up cues and to solve puzzles. Courage came into play in Maude's decision-making. A principal in Ashbaugh's (1984) study stated that "making the decisions is not difficult, living with the consequences is" (Ashbaugh, 1984, p. 197). Decisions reached about the daily running of a school impacts the lives of both staff and students in the short and long term. Maude used reflection to carefully select the path of action which would prove to be the most beneficial for all parties involved and in doing so, she often sought everyone's collaboration.

Hall (1996) reported that:

> In their view [headteachers'], leadership was about having a vision,
> knowing where they wanted the school to go. It lay in the inspiration, the
> *let's go for it* attitude, setting the excitement and the pace. Managing was
> the means for making it happen, making it work and getting it right. It
> involved using resources effectively, getting the right people in the right
> jobs, making sure they were trained appropriately, fulfilling their needs,
> facilitating all the things they were doing. As heads, they saw themselves
> responsible for having a managerial overview within a framework of
> values about professionalism, development and equity for staff and pupils.
> Their leadership and management styles reflected the values they
> expressed about the use and abuse of power, the virtues of collaboration
> and the minimisation of conflict. (p. 147)

Maude is a woman of integrity whose goal was to build a community where both staff and students would grow and learn. She worked hard at anticipating conflicts, acting to prevent or to resolve them in a constant effort to maintain a peaceful and harmonious learning environment. In doing so, she emphasised values of order, fairness and respect. At a different level, Maude wore a public relations' hat to attract people to her school. She put in place strategies to allow her room to negotiate entry into her sanctum. She opened the gate when she perceived, after careful examination, a good fit between the

prospective student, teacher or visitor and the school culture. Maintaining standards was important to Maude, her the counsellor-workers and the students, who all shared pride in what the school had to offer young women, both at the academic and school life levels. Maude spent a good portion of every day preparing the grounds, planting the seeds, nourishing, tending and keeping track of growth and responding to individual needs, all in an effort to nurture growth and learning. Her stance as a gardener was invaluable in establishing and maintaining individuals' emotional health, as well as the overall institutional health. Values of hard work, humility and care transpired from Maude's ethic of care.

> I guess that the most important thing for me is that we care for the
> students, I sort of touch them all. I want this to be a place where they are
> cared for, where they are pushed academically but always in a caring
> environment. I want the parents to see the school as a school that stops and
> takes care of the problems and follows through- that it is a nice experience,
> a caring and growing environment, I guess- that would sum up how I view
> my mission in the school. (Interview data, April 8th, lines 1435-1442)

Maude's top priority in her educational leadership was the well-being, the learning and the growth of students. In order to achieve her goals, she played certain roles, reached certain decisions and did so in resonance with her values. Her focus was never on being perceived as the strong charismatic leader sitting at the top of the ladder. To the contrary, she worked her magic behind the scenes to guide staff and students on an educational journey in such a way that they were empowered and believed in their own abilities.

> With the best of leaders,
> When the work is done,
> The project completed,
> The people all say
> 'We did it ourselves.'
> (Tao, 17 in Dreher, 1997, p. 1)

Recommendations

This qualitative study explores how a female principal leads her school and reaches her decisions. Her leadership roles are described, as well as the strategies used in her decision-making process. Values, although not part of the research design, emerged as guiding forces behind both Maude's leadership and her decision-making. Although Maude's closest colleagues, teachers and students were interviewed as part of the member checks, little attention was paid in this study on their perception of Maude's leadership and decision-making. One recommendation offered is that a study be conducted which would take into accounts the perceptions of followers, namely, vice-principals, teachers and students on educational leadership and the role values play both in fulfilling the school mission and in shaping the school culture. Considering the changing nature of the school system in Quebec, a second recommendation would be to conduct a similar study in both anglophone and francophone settings. I believe that my study does provide another way of talking about leadership in education. Other studies of particular settings, values and populations could help to build an understanding of the complexities of leadership.

Conclusion

School is the place where students develop their personality and form their identity. What they study, whom they meet, everything that goes on in a school contributes to this process. But the atmosphere that exists in the school is also a key factor. In fact, it often conditions students' academic performance. It is in school that students learn to interact with others and respect their differences. Life in school is therefore and introduction to life in society. This mini-society will allow each individual to fully express his or her own potential only if it has the following features; each school must be a vibrant community; each school must be a small-scale democratic society; and each school must be a network within which teachers and school administrators communicate openly. (Inchauspé, 1997, p. 108-109)

This concluding statement of the report of the task force on curriculum reform presented to the Minister of Education of Quebec on June 16, 1997 expresses the expectations

principals must fulfill in assuming their leadership roles. Maude, assuming her three leadership roles, making her decisions and living according to her values of care, trust, respect, excellence and pride tended to the needs of students and teachers to ensure that what students studied, who they met and how they behaved contributed to generating a school culture in which all could develop their personalities, form their identity and become young women who would stand proud on their feet.

Educational leadership is about more than building schedules and meeting governmental instructional requirements; it is about motivating teachers to give the best of themselves to the students so that they will, in turn feel motivated to learn and to participate in the school community the way they should participate as citizens in society. Educational leadership is about creating an environment where values of care prevail. Leading a school is indeed accompanying individuals on the educational journey of life.

References

Allison, D., & Allison, P. (1991, April 1991). *Experience and expertise in administrative problem solving*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Conference, Chicago.

Allison, D., & Allison, P. (1993). Both ends of a telescope: Experience and expertise in principal problem solving. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 29* (3), 302-322.

Allison, D. J., & Nagy, P. (1991). *A Study of principal problem solving: An introduction to the study*. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 333 581.

Allum, K. F. (1991, April 5). *On conducting educational research in the field: The evolution on an ethnographic experience from passive to active to participant observation*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL.

Anderson, G. L. (1987, April). *Toward a critical ethnography of educational administration*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, Washington, DC.

Ashbaugh, C. R., & Kasten, K. L. (1984). A typology of operant values in school administration. *Planning & Changing - a Journal for School Administrators, 15* (4), 195-208.

Bass, B. (1998). *Transformational leadership: Industry, military and educational impact*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Beck, C. M. (1984). The nature of values and implications for values education. *Nature and influence of values in principal decision-making* (Vol. 37, p. 167-178). Perth: Alberta Journal of Educational Research.

Beck, L. G. (1994). *Reclaiming educational administration as a caring profession*. New York: Teachers' College Press.

Blase, J. (1995). *Democratic principals in action: Eight pioneers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. (1992). *Qualitative research for education*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (1991). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice and leadership.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Brunner, C., & Cryss. (1998). "Back talk" from a woman superintendent: Just how effective is research? In C. C. Brunner (Ed.), *Sacred dreams: Women and the superintendency* . Albany: State University New York Press.

Campbell-Evans, G. H. (1991). Nature and influence of values in principal decision making. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research, 37* (2), 167-78.

Chomye, D. D. (1996). *The place, nature and influence of values in professional decision-making.* Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB.

Conley, D. T., & Goldman, P. (1994). Facilitative leadership: How principals lead without dominating. *Oregon School Study Council Bulletin, 37* (9), 52.

Cook, B. (1997, April 21st 1997). *Pour le développement d'une compétence éthique.* Paper presented at the AIES Annual Meeting, Trois-Rivières, Quebec.

Corral, N. E. (1994). *Dealing with complexity and ambiguity: The nature and influence of educational values and beliefs on administrative decision-making.* Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. University of Arizona, Phoenix, AZ.

Dreher, D. (1997). *The Tao of personal leadership.* New York: Harper Business.

Dunlap, D. M., & Goldman, P. (1991). Rethinking power in schools. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 27* (1), 5-29.

Dunlap, D. M., & Schmuck, P. A. (Eds.). (1995). *Women leading in education.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Fennell, H.-A. (1994). Women principals as leaders: A case study. *Journal of School Leadership, 4* (6), 672-707.

Fennell, H.-A. (1996). Leadership: Creating a positive environment for change. *Education Canada, 36* (1), 17-19.

Fullan, M. (1996). Leadership for change. In K. Leithwood, J. Chapman, D. Corson, P. Hallinger, & A. Hart (Eds.), *International handbook of educational leadership and administration* (Vol. 1, p. 701-722). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Grace, G. (1995). *School leadership*. Bristol: The Falmer Press.

Greenfield, W. (1991, April 1991). *Rationale and methods to articulate ethics and administrator training*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL.

Hall, V. (1994a). *Making a difference: Women headteachers' contribution to schools as learning institutions*. Paper presented at the British Educational Management and Administration Society Annual Meeting, Manchester, UK.

Hall, V. (1994b, April 4-8). *Making it happen: A study of women headteachers of primary and secondary schools in England and Wales*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA.

Hall, V. (1996). *Dancing on the ceiling: A study of women managers in education*. London: Paul Chapman.

Harding, S. (Ed.). (1987). *Feminism and methodology*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Helgesen, S. (1995). *The female advantage: Women's ways of leadership*. New York: Doubleday Currency.

Hodgkinson, C. (1983). *The philosophy of leadership*. Oxford, England: Basil Blackwell.

Hord, S. M. *Facilitative leadership: The imperative for change*. ERIC Document Reproduction Services No. ED 370 217.

Hoy, W., & Miskel, C. (1996). *Educational administration: Theory, research and practice*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Hoy, W., & Tarter, J. (1995). *Administrators solving the problems of practice*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Hurty, K. S. (1995). Women principals: Leading with power. In D. M. Dunlap & P. A. Schmuck (Eds.), *Women leading in education* (p. 380-406). Albany: State University of New York Press.

Inchauspé, P. , Beaulieu, M., Berger, J.-P. , Lalonde, C., Derome, J.-R., Levy, C., & Vachon, P. (1997). *Reaffirming the mission of our schools* (Report of the task force on curriculum reform 97-0362). Québec: Ministère de l'éducation du Québec.

Irby, B. J., & Brown, G. (1993). Constructing a feminist-inclusive theory of leadership, *Women as school executives: A powerful paradigm*. Huntsville, TX: Texas Council for Women School Executives.

Irwin, R. L. (1995). *A circle of empowerment: Women, education, and leadership*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Klenke, K. (1996). *Women and leadership: A contextual perspective*. New York: Springer.

Lakomski, G. (1987). Values and decision-making in educational administration. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 23* (3), 70-82.

Lashway, L. (1995). *Can instructional leaders be facilitative leaders?* ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 381 893.

Leithwood, K., & Steinbach, R. (1995). *Expert problem-solving*. Albany, NY: SUNY.

Leithwood, K. A. (1992). The move toward transformational leadership. *Educational leadership, 49* (5), 8-12.

Lipham, J. M. (1983). Leadership and decision making for effective educational change. *Executive Review, 3* (8), 6.

Lundsteen, S. W. (1986, February 28). *Ethnographic perspective: From beginning to final product*. Paper presented at the Midwinter Institute of the National Association for the Gifted Children, Dallas, TX.

Lunenburg, F. C. (1995). *The principalship: Concepts and applications*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.

Marshall, C. (1992). School administrators' values: A focus on atypicals. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 28* (3), 368-386.

Marshall, C., Patterson, J. A., Rogers, D. L., & Steele, J. R. (1996). Caring as a career: An alternative perspective for educational administration. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 32* (2), 271-294.

Maykut, P. , & Morehouse, R. (1994). *Beginning qualitative research: A philosophic and practical guide*. London: Falmer Press.

Mertz, N. T., & McNeely, S. R. (1993, Nov. 10-12). *Gender and administrative decision-making*. Paper presented at the Mid-South Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA.

Mies, M. (1991). Women's research or feminist research. In M. M. Fonow & J. A. Cook (Eds.), *Beyond methodology* (p. 60-84). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Mishler, E. G. (1986). *Research interviewing*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Mitchell, C. (1998, May 31-June 1). *Women in the educational administration canon: Reclaiming Lillian and Mary*. Paper presented at the Centering on the margins: The evaded curriculum. Second Bi-annual Canadian Association for the Study of Women in Education International Institute, Ottawa.

Noddings, N. (1992). *The challenge to care in schools: An alternative approach to education*. New York: Teachers' College Press.

Northouse, P. (1997). *Leadership: Theory and practice*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Patterson, J. A. (1994, March 25). *Shattering the Glass Ceiling: Women in School Administration*. Paper presented at the Women's Studies Graduate Symposium, Chapel Hill, NC.

Pounder, D. G. (1990, October 26-28). *Educational megatrends and increased female leadership in schools*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the University Council for Educational Administration, Pittsburgh, PA.

Regan, H. B. (1990). Not for women only: School administration as a feminist activity. *Teachers College Record, 91* (4), 565-77.

Regan, H. B., & Brooks, G. H. (1992, November 13). *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.

Regan, H. B., & Brooks, G. H. (1995). *Out of women's experience: Creating relational leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Reissman, C. (1993). Narrative analysis. In L. Butler-Kisber (Ed.), *Qualitative research methods: Course packet*. Montreal: McGill University. 78-121.

Reitzug, U. C., & Reeves, J. E. (1992). "Miss Lincoln doesn't teach here": A descriptive narrative and conceptual analysis of a principal's symbolic leadership behavior. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 28* (2), 185-219.

Restine Nan, L. (1993). *Women in administration: Facilitators for change*. Newbury Park: Corwin Press.

Reynolds, C. *Schoolmarms and tokens: Outdated images for women in education*. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 300 863.

Reynolds, C., & Young, B. (1995). *Women and leadership in Canadian education*. Calgary, Alberta: Detselig Enterprises.

Riehl, C., & Lee, V. E. (1996). Gender, organisations, and leadership. In K. Leithwood, J. Chapman, D. Corson, P. Hallinger, & A. Hart (Eds.), *International handbook of educational leadership and administration* (Vol. 1, p. 873-919). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Rusch, E. A., & Marshall, C. (1995, April 18-22). *Gender filters at work in the administrative culture*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA.

Seidman, I. E. (1991). *Interviewing as qualitative research*. New York: Teachers' College Press.

Shakeshaft, C. (1986). A gender at risk. *Phi Delta Kappan, 67* (7), 499-503.

Shakeshaft, C. (1987a, April 20-24). *Organizational theory and women: Where are we?* Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, Washington, DC.

Shakeshaft, C. (1987b). *Women in educational administration*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

Shakeshaft, C. (1989a). The gender gap in research in educational administration. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 25* (4), 324-37.

Shakeshaft, C. (1989b). *Women in educational administration*. Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press.

Shakeshaft, C., & et al. (1984). Preparing women school administrators. *Phi Delta Kappan, 66* (1), 67-68.

Shaw, M. E. (1981). *Group dynamics: The psychology of small group behavior.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Short, P., & Rinehart, J. (1993). Reflection as a means of developing expertise. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 29* (4), 501-521.

Smith, F. (1992, Sept. 27-28). *Women in educational administration: Moving from a paradigm of power and control to empowerment and equality.* Paper presented at the Women in Educational Administration Annual Meeting, Lincoln, NE.

Stogdill, R. (1974). *Handbook of leadership.* New York: Free Press.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques.* Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

Tannen, D. (1990). *You just don't understand: Women and men in conversation.* New York: William Morrow.

Waddell, A. M. (1996). *A female in the elementary school principal's office: A beacon for women.* Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Virginia, Blacksburg, VA.

Walker, K. (1991). *Ethical choices: The nature of ethical decision-making in educational administration.* Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon.

Walker, K. (1993). Values, ethics and ethical decision-making. *Adult Learning, 5* (2), 13-14,27.

Wiber, S., Sue. (1995). *Decision-making frameworks of female superintendents.* Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Kansas, Kansas City, KS.

Young, B. (1992, April 20-24). *Not "there" yet: A Canadian perspective on the knowledge base in educational administration.* Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA.

Young, B. (1994). An other perspective on the knowledge base in Canadian educational administration. *Canadian Journal of Education, 19* (4), 351-67.

Appendix C
Site Visit Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
September				
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	■	■ 12
15	16	17	■ 18	19
22	23	24	■ 25	26
29	30	1	■	3
October				
6	7	■		■
13	■ 14	15	16	17
20	21	■ 22	23	24
27	28	29	■ 30	31
November				
■	■	■	■	Professional Development Day
■	■	■	Professional Development Days	
■	■	■	■	Professional Development Day
■	■	■	■	■
December				
1	2	3	■	5
■	9	10	11	12

Note 1: Member checks and final interviews were conducted on April 8th 1998. Note 2: Shaded areas represent days spent in the research site.

Appendix E
Protocols for Interviews with Maude

INTERVIEW 1: Sept. 12th 1997

1-How would you describe your school to someone who as never set foot in it?
2-How did you come to work in this school?
3-What educational training did you have before you came to work here?
4-What are your duties, here, exactly?
5-What are some of the challenges?
6-What are the joys?

INTERVIEW 2: Thursday, September 18th 1997

1-I'd like you to think back as far as you can remember and think about the people who have shaped your life or who you are and who they were and what kind of values they might have transmitted to you and that you have taken as your own..
2-What do you think were some of the values that you took from these people that you might have chosen to integrate into your life?
3-How much does your family background or values do you apply to the school?
4-How would you describe the school culture, in both the strengths and the weaknesses?
5-From the students' perspective, how do you think that they would describe the school culture?
6-How do you make sure that there is harmony?

INTERVIEW 3: April 8th 1998

1-How would you describe your mission in the school?
2-I've heard you say in the past that you give certain people some leeway because you know that she is going to do a good job... have there been times when teachers have not acted the way you wanted them to and how did you deal with that?
3-As far as performance evaluation, you were saying that this one teacher will not be rehired- what is the bottom line? What makes it such that she will not be rehired?
4-With this person, you have played a number of different roles....have you tried all the different approaches with this person?
5-In terms of instructional services, how much time do you devote to each teacher?
6-So one way you get feedback is that you ask the students?
7-If you had to use a metaphor to describe your leadership style and the way that you ARE in the school what would come to your mind?
8-What I see is that there is something very circular about what you do?
9-I've heard people say that you were "silent" in your leadership style, can you comment?
10-What are the different roles that you play?
11-We've had many conversations about spirituality- how does it connect to the way you are in the school?
12-What are some of the challenges?
13-You have strategies to deal with them, right?
14-How did you feel during this research process?

Appendix F
Protocol for Interviews with Alumni Members

1- Can you tell me a bit about the history of the school?
2- Tell me about your life in this school.
3- You were here as a student and as a teacher, tell me, what do you feel are some of the important values transmitted in the school?
4- What are some of your most memorable moments spent in the school?

Appendix G
<u>Protocol for Member Check Interviews</u>

1- How would you describe your school to outsiders?

2- Can you describe a typical interaction between you and Maude?

3- How often do you see her or interact with her any given day?

4- Can you give me a description of Maude's leadership style?

5- Are you happy at the school? (Why or why not?)

6- Can you please describe a day in Maude's life? What do you think she does all day?

7- Describe what you will be taking away with you when you graduate? (question for students)

8- How does Maude help or hinder your work in the school? (question for teachers)

Appendix H
Artefact

- Absences- Monday 97-09-29 Day 5

1B	Student A	E	10:45 am
2A	Student B	A	ill, mother reported
2A	Student C	E	10:10 am
2B	Student D	E	2 pm
3A	Student E	A	ill, spoke with grand-mother
3B	Student F	L	reported in at 9:05 am
4A	Student G	A	allergies, mother reported
4B	Student H	A	dental & medical appointments, mother reported
5B	Student I	A	ill, father reported
5C	Student J	L	will report in at 10:10 am

Daily Announcements

1. Attention students in Sec 3, 4 & 5: Miss Sarzo needs 25 girls to volunteer their time to help with the Breast Cancer Run on Sun. Oct. 5th. In exchange for being generous with your time, you will receive breakfast, a T-shirt and a cap. To sign up and for details, see Miss Sarzo.

2. Attention all students: Computer lab is now open at lunch on days 1, 3, and 5 and after school on days 2, 4, and 6. Sign up with Mme Gaudette at 8:15 am on the morning when you wish to reserve a computer. Pass required.

3. ALL D.J. Members: Compulsory meeting tomorrow at lunch in D-366.

4. Library: Will re-open on October 6th.

5. Attention sec. 3, 4 & 5: Amnesty Conference on Sat. Oct. 25th at the local CEGEP, for students and adults.

6. STUDENT COUNCIL: Meet today at 11:15 am SHARP.

7. GENERAL ASSEMBLY: Wednesday at 10:55 am SHARP in the Grand Hall. Lunch bags ONLY, please.

8. ALL STUDENTS: who wish to volunteer at Beth Booth must see Mrs. Bell, Monday Sept. 29th at noon in room E-284 for a brief meeting.