

But The Emperor Has On No Clothes

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English's (2000) critique of prevailing practices, texts, and teachings in education leadership (EdL) has encouraged us to attempt a similar feat. Our commentary is less a critique of English's work than a statement of a differing view. We do however, use "Looking Behind the Veil: Addressing the Enigma of Educational Leadership" both as a foil in the riposte and as a common platform for a shadowy Harlequinade. In addition, by connecting and contrasting our conceptualizations to his foray "Behind the Veil," we hope to encourage readers of Education Leadership Review to enter the discussion and shine their light on the mysteries that the first two commentaries may have bared.

Introduction

In following his path to a conclusion that seems to be compatible with our own, English (2000) drew heavily from diverse fields and writings on "leadership in general" and attended to theory and movements such as feminism, modernism, post-modernism, and critical theory. We prefer a simple, focused approach to education and to education leadership or EdL. In this discussion, we consider education as a profession whose practitioners deal with people and "people problems" as they seek to improve the conditions/contexts, processes, and outcomes of education itself and of education's clients, the pupils and students.

Our perhaps less traveled path has side trips and excursions to draw in and combine Achilles' interests in such topics as the "humanities" in preparing administrators, communication, change processes, and prior speculations about education leader preparation as set forth in many writings from 1987 to 2001 and Mitchel's interests in spirituality, values, and vision as central to EdL. We concur with English that many EdL programs are preparing large numbers of aspiring principals with curricula that would delight Fredrick Taylor and Max Weber. They include skills or competencies more closely related to managing the status quo of schools efficiently rather than effectively leading the current sterile bureaucracies toward tomorrow's learning communities.

Efficiency is a management paradigm; effectiveness

is a leadership paradigm. Efficiency is about competency; leadership is about character. An efficiency curriculum is about processing skills, organization, planning, evaluation, technology, and school law. A straight "A" efficiency student is, at best, an informed, educational manager (Creighton, 1999). We contend, however, that the education administration curriculum must also include leadership that embraces personal principles, values, passion, character, commitment and courage, or what Mitchel refers to as the *spirituality of leadership*. Knowledge without spirit is impotent to transform education. A central question that EdL persons need to ask is: "How does who we are—our personal values, character, and integrity—affect our performance and to what degree can those personal characteristics be taught, learned and further developed? Only a knowledgeable leader illuminated by spirit has the potential to lift the veil covering current EdL programs. Those educating educational leaders must realize that competency alone, without a spiritual direction, is like the sound of one-handed applause.

Let's begin at the end of the journey, where we perceive that both paths arrive at a consensual goal after wending awhile in different parts of the thickets of EdL and along "The Calf Path—The Path of Beaten Men" (a poem by Samuel Foss). Like English (2000) we lament that in education practice we see as a major problem that schools continue to be

"under-led and over-managed. And we must face the fact that professors are part of the problem instead of its solution" (p. 7).

In arriving at conclusions similar to those offered, we agree on some elements of leadership that English expressed: leadership as stories, the role of communication, and "dynamic interactions" between and among humans. We agree less heartily with other steps proposed for peeking behind the veil and offer some different reasons and strategies to "unenigmatize" EdL.

A Couple Points of Departure

English (2000) quickly moved from his title and promised discussion of "educational leadership" to a discussion of "leadership in general." He did, however close his speculations with some implications about EdL practice. This approach is suitable if the premise is that "leadership is leadership is leadership," and that situation, purpose, and goals are not especially important in leadership.

Here our paths diverge. To address the education leadership enigma professors and practitioners must march resolutely on the path of education leadership. A detour to "leadership in general" may be instructive and intellectually challenging, but it hardly improves education or makes schools better places.

If leadership is leadership, then a General with generic leadership skills can just as easily run schools as can a school superintendent with generic skills run the army. Price and Achilles (1999) questioned this idea in "Doctor, Lawyer, Military Chief: Superintendents for the New Millennium." Not only must EdL heavily emphasize contexts and goals of education while building upon tenets of leadership theory, but the concept of leadership in a profession such as education is substantively different from "leadership in general", or of leadership in other specific settings such as business, an army, a gang, the union, hospital, prison, ship, church, etc. Leadership lessons may be learned from "studies of the B-29 bomber crews over Korea" and from "the lives of those who challenged the organizations of their times" (English, p. 6), but specifics of EdL derive from studies and stories of successful leadership in schools, or from those who challenged the schools of their times (e.g., leaders of privatized education, such as charter, vouchers, or in "alternative" schools).

Although English (2000) claimed that "structures are not an important aspect of educational leadership," (p. 6), we demur. Leadership is a process that helps people reach desired goals within some structure (e.g., schools) and is typically considered along two dimensions: a) people-oriented or the human dimension and b) outcomes, initiation of structure,

or products. According to Ogawa and Bossert (1995):

Leadership is an organizational quality. The medium of leadership and currency of leadership lie in the personal resources of people. And, leadership shapes the systems that produce patterns of interaction and the meanings that other participants attach to organizational events. (p. 225)

But, Ogawa and Bossert discuss just leadership, the path that English (2000) chose for most of his article, even though the article title, beginning, and conclusion seemed to promise "educational leadership."

We narrow the field and focus directly on education leadership, or EdL. This distinction is important because institutions, in the anthropological sense, have defining purposes that are carried out by the organizations, groups, and individuals who are part of the institution and committed to its goals. Education has (broadly defined) schools and educators; Economics has businesses, industries, (etc.), and business people. As Henry Ford is reputed to have said, "The business of business is business." An education goal is to guide the growth, development, and knowledge acquisition of people: "The business of education is education." Business deals in dollars and education deals in sense.

With goals of the institution firmly in mind, (e.g., to improve the functioning and outcomes of schooling, or to make education efficient and effective, or to make schools better places for kids, etc.) the leader has three driving questions. Concerning education, the education leader must know WHAT to do, HOW to get the job done, and WHY something should, or should not be done. Leaders in business, military, politics, religions, etc. have similar driving questions, but different answers, at least to the WHAT and WHY questions.

The WHAT dimension is the professional knowledge base (KB). Elements here differ based upon the institution's or organization's purposes.

The HOW dimension (which also includes responses to questions of how much, when, where) is the leadership KB that may include common sense, political and financial savvy, communications, etc.

The WHY dimension adds morality, ethics, policy, group dynamics, and the ideals of moral imperative and rectitude: The educator as "oughtitor." Table 1 provides a schematic view of the three driving questions. (Achilles, 1999/2000; 1994; 1986).

English's notion that important "concepts are diametrically opposed to most of the dominant introductory texts to the field of educational administration today. . ." (p. 6) strikes home in our construct of EdL, too. Culbertson (1990) identi-

fied the same detrimental phenomenon, but linked the text issue to a weak and questionable KB, not to "interiority."

First, borrowed concepts tend to enter textbooks before they are adequately tested in school systems. The result is that such concepts may be used *indefinitely* in training programs even though their actual relations to school management and leadership practices remain unknown. (Culbertson, 1990, pp. 102-103. Emphasis added)

Consider common admonitions to education leaders. For example, to increase instructional leadership, principals might increase "visible presence," a concept reminiscent of the business concept of management by walking around (MBWA), or the idea of "site-based management" (SBM) another panacea driven by the business "bi-polar" disease of alternatively merging and spinning off, restructuring activities seemingly promulgated to produce profits without new products. Education leaders might combine visible presence with SBM to generate "sight-based management," a new concept for education administration professors to put into texts and teach (see Culbertson above).

The key issue, however, for EdL goes deeper than texts or processes and foci. A leader of substance must know and use the KB of the field. The substantive KB of a field is what the leader exerts leadership skills to get done. Without a

substantive KB, knowledge of that KB, and leadership skills (e.g., spirituality, communication, visioning, human relations), EdL will wallow in the slough of despair and be at the mercy of each project peddler, for as a former president of Harvard said to the education faculty there:

Because they have neither a strong profession nor *distinctive body of knowledge* to impart, education faculties have *no firm anchor* for their programs or curricula. Instead, external forces *push them first in one direction, and then in another*. (Bok, 1987, p. 46. Emphasis added)

Biography, as suggested by English (2000; 1995) can be a useful and challenging way to consider leadership efforts and put the personal touch back into EdL. Those in EdL with long memories recall the "values and humanities" emphases in administrator training in the 1960s – 1980s, an idea nurtured by one continuing interest group of the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) from 1950-1992 (see Farquhar, 1970; Popper, 1995; Achilles, 1990; 1981). The vehicles of biography and the humanities, and the current consideration of "stewardship" and spirituality in preparation programs all address the WHY element of "leaderships in general". According to Gutmore and Mitchel (2000), the two parts of a pair of scissors needed to cut out an effective educational leader are Competence and Character.

Table 1: Summary of the Three Legs Required for a Complete Concept of Education Leadership

<u>Driving Questions</u>	<u>Defining Elements</u>	<u>Research Method (s) *</u>	<u>Required Skills & Instruction</u>
WHAT?	Rigorous, Reliable, Replicable Research on Successful Schooling as Defined by Outcomes.	Quantitative	Research Methods Analysis and Critique Professional Knowledge
HOW? HOW MUCH? (WHEN, WHERE)	Competition for Resources: Finance and Economics Diversity, Change, Progress, Outcomes. Local Knowledge	Qualitative and Quantitative (Q ²)	Program Evaluation Research, Communication Problem Analysis, Consensus "Leadership" in General
WHY?	Inner Space (Achilles & Duvall, 1995, p. 133), Humanities. Lacan's Interiority (English, p. 5) Spirituality (Mitchel)	Qualitative	Ethos/Ethics/Policy Legal Requirements Group Dynamics Critical Analysis

* See Achilles (1994) for a detailed discussion of the Knowledge Base and research methods nexus.

Competence in terms of the KB, but equally important Character...the source of the EdL direction, strength, and courage. In fact, this part of the leadership scissors, what Mitchel calls the spiritual side of leadership, provides the leader with a sense of stewardship to become resources and coaches rather than bosses and cops. Any EdL preparation program that neglects the spiritual (character) side of leadership may certify persons without a sense of stewardship who inevitably will fail to evolve into agents for worthy goals, purposes, and causes (Covey, 1992).

If Bossert (1985) as reported in Glasman and Heck (1992) is correct in arguing that much of within-school and between-school effects on student achievement and outcomes can be traced to how valuable resources are allocated in the schooling enterprise, then it seems clear that the education leader must know what to direct those resources toward. The WHAT element, the substantive and technical-core KB of a field, is what separates "leadership in general" (HOW) from leadership in the specific field, that is, in this discussion, EdL. If we follow English's (2000) advice, we'll look behind the veil and address not the enigma of EdL, but perhaps we'll see the leader.

Concluding the Conceptual Argument

Understanding the enigma of education (or business, or military, etc.) leadership is not complete without consideration of the WHAT dimension, the KB of the technical core of the field. Understanding the WHAT dimension does not diminish the need to the HOW and the WHY (or WHY NOT) dimensions of leadership. Omitting the WHAT dimension, as is currently done in EdL texts, lectures, preparation programs, articles, and research is like building a tripod (or milk stool) with two legs or a triangle with two sides: Likewise, studying the leader (education or otherwise) and "leadership in general" without studying the contextgoals for that leadership will be incomplete and of little value in providing avenues for improvement (e.g., assessment of outcomes), for research to advance a field, or for aligning the preparation of leaders with the technical core of the field. "Looking behind the veil" (English, 2000) or even "under the carpet" (Edel, 1981 as cited in English, 1995) may sound exciting and venturesome, but such elective peeking only gets part way to understanding why "the schools are under-led and over-managed".

Importantly, English (2000) affirmed the notion of "humanitas," of the human element in all leadership. Leaders have success stories and the ability to excite followers by their skillful telling of tales. Biography, developing a sense of Buber's I and Thou as the first and second person in dialogue is far different from "we and they," a relationship that relegates oth-

ers as third persons being spoken to or about. All of these elements, plus the skill of synthesis to meld potential areas of conflict surely fit into Lacan's "model to re-establish interiority as the locus of leadership" (English, p. 5), where "interiority is a label given to leadership as rooted in language, culture, and context" (p. 4). So, are schools better now? No. The English (2000) representation of leadership, although intellectually challenging with its meta-narratives and marginalizing, is still incomplete, at least in the case of education, and probably in the case of "leadership in general".

The model we propose for discussing EdL is conceptually simple, but phenomenally complex (apologies to Getzels and Guba, 1957!). It helps explain why and how professors are part of the "problem that schools are under-led and over-managed" (English, p. 6). The model provides a clear, cogent, concise, compelling and useful framework to structure corrective actions that will help educators lead in education and revitalize public confidence in public schooling.

Implications for Research, Preparation, and Practice

Sparks (1995) of the National Staff Development Council (NIDC) has argued for a paradigm shift in staff development driven by at least three forces: a) results-driven education (learning v. teaching); b) systems thinking (inter-relatedness), and c) constructivism (competing with logical positivism and other theories). Sparks continued, "While the knowledge, skills and attitudes of individuals must continually be addressed, quality improvement expert W. Edwards Deming estimates that 85% of barriers to improvement reside in the organization's structure and processes, not in the performance of individuals" (p. 3). Structure and processes reside in the WHAT dimension of leadership, the things to which one would allocate valuable resources, and the heart of the technical core of a field or profession; herein lie many of the WHAT issues that the education leader must know and address to improve schools and the outcomes of schooling for kids.

Although many recommendations could be generated from the three-legged conceptual model, we offer only a few under each heading: Research, Preparation, and Practice. Others should add to the list and share their ideas.

Research

- a) Adopt a professional research model that combines quantitative and qualitative approaches that will inform WHAT to do, HOW to do it, and WHY. Achilles (1994, p. 168) called it Quali-quantitative, or Q².

- b) Establish substantive professional education KB that leads to improved schools and conditions for kids, and that helps students achieve in the ABCD's of schooling: Academics, Behavior/discipline, Citizenship and participation, and Development. (The WHAT). This will start with careful reviews (meta-analyses) of current knowledge on such variables as: school size, group size for learning, class size, early childhood education, homework, retention-in-grade, motivation, grouping, organization for learning, use of time, multiple intelligence theory, etc.
- c) Establish research stratagems to determine HOW to implement the KB of the WHAT. This may be policy studies, research on change, dissemination, implementation strategies, program evaluation.
- d) Add to the WHAT KB with outcome studies with variables, such as use of time, leadership styles, parent influences, group size, retention, homework, teaching methods, etc.

Preparation

- a) Part of every EdL preparation program must emphasize the professional KB (Imagine preparation for medicine with no work in anatomy, immunology, etc.). Some EdL professors must know, preach, and teach this KB.
- b) Any certification or "standards" must require a knowledge test of the professional KB. No graduate should be licensed without a demonstrated grasp of the WHAT dimension: What makes schools "better?"
- c) The HOW dimension seems well served by any number of existing "standards" that emphasize popular leadership ideas: visioning, facilitating, communicating, etc. Preparation will include elements of spirituality, stewardship, humanitas.

Practice

- a) Administrator contracts should depend upon successes in implementing and using the established professional KB (The WHAT) with competence and character.

- b) Emphasis in practice should be on student outcomes in four areas of achievement, the ABCD's, with careful monitoring in all four areas. This will balance the current testing craze with important assessments of schooling outcomes.

Conclusion

Leadership in a profession requires that a professional knowledge base be known and applied. In education, the proper concern is EdL, not "leadership in general". Unless education administrators know, know how to use, and then use the professional KB, no amount of "looking behind the veil" or even "under the carpet" will unenigmatize EdL. Unless the administrator knows and uses the KB in a compassionate way, all one can expect is to have schools over-managed and under-led. And, if they generally do not know, and thus cannot teach the professional KB, professors of education administration are part of the problem. Thus, at the end of a trail through the thickets of EdL, English and the present authors arrive at about the same place, but by following different paths. So, professors, and practitioners, ~~put on your real clothes!~~ come on and get dressed up!

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