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## Values and Leadership: Theory Development, New Research, and an Agenda for the Future

*This article presents an updated account of values and valuation processes as they occur in school settings. A tradition of epistemological and philosophical debate, as well as the dominance of empiricist perspectives in educational administration, have tended to separate the consideration of values as influences on leadership practices from the usual organizational or social collective perspectives common to the field. More recently, however, powerful social forces such as globalization and the increasing diversity of our societies have stimulated increased academic productivity in this sector. A more balanced view of values as an influence on administration is emerging, which combines notions of the personal values manifested by individuals and the professional values of administration with the collective values manifested by groups, societies, and organizations. Discussion and inquiry have now extended beyond the usual expert opinion and academic debate of theorists and philosophers to include practitioners, empirical verifications of theory, and important new research findings. In this article key concepts from theory and a selection of findings from research are reviewed. The application of theory and research about values through reflective educational practice is discussed. Certain methodological problems associated with values research are examined, and the ground-breaking work of several key contributors to the field is identified and considered. The article concludes with some speculations on an agenda for future theory-building and research in the values field.*

*Cet article présente une mise à jour des valeurs et du processus d'évaluation tels qu'ils se manifestent dans les milieux scolaires. Une tradition de débats épistémologiques et philosophiques, conjuguée à la dominance de perspectives empiristes en administration pédagogique, a fait en sorte que l'on a eu tendance à écarter l'interprétation des valeurs selon laquelle celles-ci agissent comme influences sur les pratiques administratives des perspectives collectives organisationnelles ou sociales couramment associées au domaine. Plus récemment par contre, des forces sociales puissantes telles la globalisation et la diversité croissante de nos sociétés ont stimulé une production académique accrue dans ce secteur. De fait, une vision plus équilibrée des valeurs comme facteurs ayant une influence sur l'administration commence à se faire sentir. Cette vision combine les valeurs personnelles qu'affichent les individus, les valeurs professionnelles d'une administration ainsi que les valeurs collectives manifestées par les groupes, les sociétés et les organisations. Les discussions et les enquêtes menées par les opinions d'experts et les débats académiques de théoriciens et philosophes englobent maintenant également les avis de praticiens, des vérifications empiriques de la théorie ainsi que d'importants nouveaux résultats de recherche. L'article passe en revue des concepts théoriques clés et une sélection de résultats de recherche. On y discute également l'application de la théorie et de la recherche portant sur les valeurs à la pratique pédagogique réfléchie. Suivent un examen de certains problèmes méthodologiques associés à la recherche sur les valeurs et une étude du travail révolutionnaire de plusieurs chercheurs clés du domaine. Des hypothèses quant à l'agenda qui guiderait la création de théories et l'orientation de la recherche sur les valeurs terminent l'article.*

Values and ethics are commonly understood as important influences on administrative practices in education. Indeed, as far back as 1938 Barnard's semi-

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nal work *The Functions of the Executive* proposed a definition of leadership that highlighted the moral dimension as essential to administration. More recent works by Simon (1965), Hodgkinson (1978, 1983, 1991, 1996, 1999), Greenfield (Greenfield & Ribbins, 1993), Willower (1994, 1999), Leithwood and Steinbach (1995), Begley (1996, 1999), Strike (1999), Shapiro and Stefkovich (2000), and others have reinforced the relevance of values as influences on administration and education generally. This same literature base has also sustained active debate on a number of thorny issues related to the nature of values and valuation processes in administration. Some of this debate, for example, among Hodgkinson and Evers and Lakomski (Evers & Lakomski, 1996), has been quite contentious and spanned more than a decade. Nevertheless, this often difficult topic continues to be included, however superficially, as a required component of most university-based core courses on educational administration.

This tradition of epistemological and philosophical debate and the dominance of empiricist perspectives in educational administration generally have tended to separate the consideration of values as influences on leadership practices from the more usual organizational or social collective perspectives common to the field of educational administration. It is only relatively recently that a more balanced view of values as an influence on administration has emerged. This increased academic productivity in this sector has been stimulated in no small way by powerful social forces such as globalization and the increasing diversity of our societies. The more balanced view that has emerged combines notions of the personal values manifested by individuals and the professional values of administration with the collective values manifested by groups, societies, and organizations. One significant contribution to this greater integration in the field has been the accumulation of recent work conducted by associates of the OISE/UT Centre for the Study of Values and Leadership.<sup>1</sup> Discussion has now extended beyond the expert opinion and academic debate of theorists and philosophers to include practitioners, empirical verifications of theory, and important new research findings. This article reports on this expanded understanding of values and valuation processes as they occur in school settings.

The first section of this article is intended as a brief orientation for readers unfamiliar with the values literature. Key concepts from theory and a selection of findings from research are reviewed. The second section discusses the application of theory and research about values through reflective educational practice, a process often termed values praxis. The work of several key contributors is identified including Begley (1996, 1999, 2000), Leithwood (1999), Duke (1999), Foster (1999), Ryan (1999), Johansson and Bredeson (1999). The third section of the article reports the findings of several examples of recently conducted research that break new ground. The work of two new scholars is considered: Leonard (1999) and Roche (1999). Research contributions by Begley (1999), Johansson and Bredeson, and Ryan, all mid-career academics, are also considered. The article concludes with some speculations on an agenda for future theory-building and research in the values field.

*An Introduction to Values Inquiry in Educational Administration.*

This introduction to values inquiry is organized in four sections. First a working definition of values is presented. Then a syntax of values terminology is

provided followed by a consideration of the arenas where valuation processes occur in administration. Finally, the potential for misuse of values research and knowledge is considered.

#### *A Working Definition of Values*

A critical first step in assessing the place of values in school administration is being clear about what the term means and adopting a suitably comprehensive working definition. The following is drawn from Kluckhohn (Parsons & Shils, 1962): "Values are a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means, and ends of action" (p. 395). This definition has been around for some time, yet it remains robust. Conceptualizing values in this manner highlights their function in making choices. In administration the making of choices is usually termed decision-making, problem-solving, or dilemma-solving—activities familiar to most administrators. This definition also expands the scope of the term *value* beyond the relatively narrow philosophical domain of the metaphysical (the study of first principles) to allow consideration of several other value constructs relevant to educational administration. This broader scope includes: social ethics (Beck, 1990, 1993, 1999; Cohen, 1982; Frankena, 1973), transrational principles (Hodgkinson, 1996); the rational moral values of administration (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2000; Strike, 1990, 1999; Willower, 1994, 1999), as well as the realm of self-interest and personal preference (Begley & Johansson, 1998; Evers & Lakomski, 1996; Hodgkinson, 1996). It becomes possible, even necessary, to distinguish the values manifested by individuals from the more collective social values of a group, profession, society, or organization. As an outcome the interactive relationship between the formation of personal values and social values becomes highlighted.

#### *A Syntax of Values Terminology*

One of the simplest ways to illustrate a syntax of values terminology is through the adaptation of a graphic found in Hodgkinson's books (1978, 1991). When considering Figure 1 keep in mind that one person is portrayed: one individual, not a collective or social context. Beginning from the outside, the first ring represents the observable actions and speech of the individual. This is the only way by which one can make empirical attributions of the value orientations of the individual. People intuitively know this, relying on the clues provided by the actions and attitudes of others to obtain predictive insights into the nature of values held by these individuals. Of course, this generally sound strategy has some limits to its reliability. As political leaders regularly demonstrate through their speech and actions, observable actions may or may not be accurate indicators of underlying values, particularly when individuals articulate or posture certain values while committed to quite different values.

The next ring or layer of the figure represents attitudes. Attitudes can be thought of as the thin membrane separating values from actions or speech. To illustrate the nature of their influence, consider how a father might say to a teenage son, after some demonstration of adolescent angst, that the son needs an "attitude adjustment." The son might predictably protest that he has not done anything, to which the father could reply, "Yes, but I can tell you are

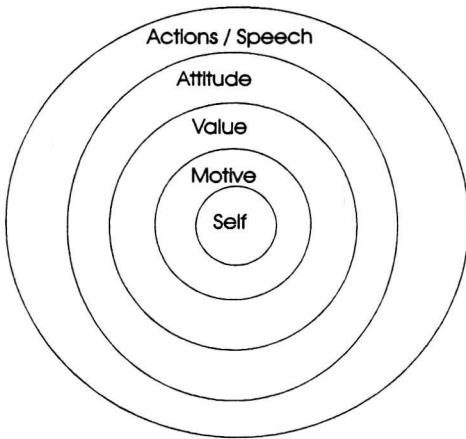


Figure 1. Values syntax.

about to!" The son's attitudes reveal his values and predict his actions. So it is with most people in this world.

The next layer represents a domain or conceptual placeholder for the specific values a person holds or manifests for whatever reasons. At this point it is important to emphasize that identifying these values is one thing, whereas knowing why they are held is quite another. This is because any specific value can be held in response to one or more in a range of potential motivations. For example, a person could subscribe to honesty as a value to avoid the pain of sanction for dishonesty. Alternately, a person could manifest honesty because this is a shared professional or community orientation, or because the consequence of widespread dishonesty is social chaos, or because it is the right thing to do, or any combination of these basic levels of motivation. Furthermore, understanding the motivations of others can become much more complicated when individuals deliberately or unwittingly manifest or articulate one value while committed to another. For example, the actual level of commitment to decisions by administrators that are tacitly justified on consequential or consensual grounds can often be self-interest or personal preference, but also occasionally grounded in a transrational motivational base of will or the transcendental.

The fourth layer of the figure is labeled motivational base, and the final layer at the centre of the figure is the self, or essence of the individual—the biological self as well as the existential or transcendent self. As strongly implied by the above paragraph, the motivational base layer of the figure provides the key to understanding the nature and function of values. This is the motivating force dimension behind the adoption of a particular value that, working out through the layers of the figure, shapes attitudes and subsequent actions. Hodgkinson (1996) argues that motivational bases are at the core of the being of individuals and that values held by an individual reflect these motivational bases—hence the limited utility of conducting research that merely describes or lists the values manifested by individuals whether they be administrators, teachers, students, citizens, neighbors, or members of the family. This is a rather important point with implications for research. It may be interesting

and easier to determine what people value, but what is often most crucial is why they do so. Much of the early empirical research on values in the field of educational administration is descriptive of the values held and reveals little that is conventionally verifiable about motivation.

*The Arenas of Valuation: Sources of Values and Value Conflicts*

Figure 2 can be used to illustrate the arenas of valuation—where valuation processes occur and the dynamics that occur among these arenas. The term *arena* itself is helpful in that it highlights the multiple domains of administration (Begley 1993, 1995; Begley & Slater, 2000).

Conceptualizing administration as something that involves multiple arenas, each with potentially competing or incompatible values, is sensible for managers or leaders who wish to reflect on the appropriateness of their own actions as well as those of others.

In this second figure the individual is represented in the center ring as self. Those wishing to emphasize the existential nature of the individual are attracted to the notion of that hard little core in the middle. On the other hand, those who prefer to highlight the social formation of values would probably prefer that the center core of this figure be extended through each of the other rings. The second ring from the center represents the arena of collective groups. This layer acts as a placeholder for collectives such as family, peers, friends, and professional colleagues. The third ring represents the arena traditionally of most concern to academics and practitioners in the field of educational administration, the organization. Indeed much of the traditional literature of educational administration and most of the corporate literature are grounded in this relatively narrow organizational perspective. Moving farther outward in the figure, one encounters the arenas representing the greater community or society, and culture. A sixth ring is used to accommodate notions of the transcendental—God the Holy Spirit. This is an arena of considerable impor-

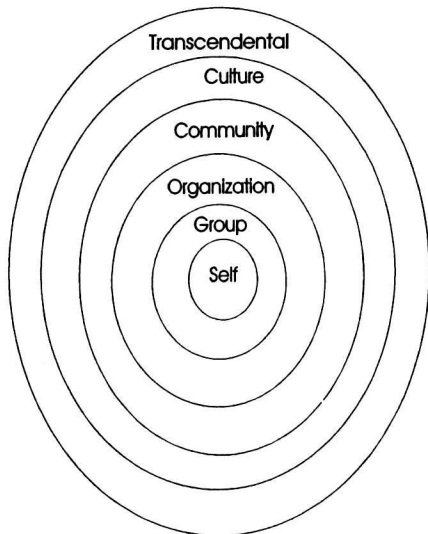


Figure 2. Arenas of administration.

tance to many people although it does not get a lot of attention in the literature of administration.

This second figure serves two important functions. It illustrates the various sources of values, clearly conveying how values can be derived by the individual from multiple external and internal environmental sources. The figure also illustrates the sources of value conflicts. For example, although value conflicts can certainly occur in a single arena of administration, consider how the personal values of the individual might conflict with those of the community, or professional values may conflict with organizational values.

#### *The Dark Side of Values Research*

Given the above, it is not difficult to understand why people, whether practitioners or academics, would be attracted to the study of values and the importance of reflecting on the motivations that underlie particular value postures. Adopting such perspectives has the potential of enlightening administrative practices significantly. However, there is a darker side to the values and leadership question just as there is already literature that addresses the darker side of charismatic leadership (Conger & Kanungo, 1998; Yukl, 1994). That darker side of the values question is the potential for the misuse of such knowledge. An awareness of self, combined with a heightened awareness of the value orientations manifested by others, may indeed be characteristic of expert problem-solvers and good administrators as Leithwood and Steinbach (1995) suggest. However, also raised is the possibility that procedural knowledge selected in pursuit of an end, organizational or otherwise, combined with jurisdictional power, and informed by values analysis processes, might be used for amoral, manipulative, or instrumental purposes. The ethics of using information about personal values collected from individuals and social groups warrants consideration. This extends beyond the usual ethical concerns for personal privacy. For example, does knowing that a teacher is inclined to be compliant in the face of an argument grounded in professional consensus set the stage for manipulation by union officials or school administrators? Does the acquisition of a political spin doctor's skills to posture ethics as a justification for actions or decisions actually motivated by organizational priorities, economic agendas or self-interest constitute misuse? Does the identification through research of particular values conducive or facilitative of organizational learning or transformational leadership create the potential for inequity in selection and hiring processes? These are questions that require more attention and dialogue. They warrant reflection by individuals as well as research by academics. For now raising the issue will have to suffice.

#### *Value Praxis and Educational Leadership*

Praxis has to do with the intersection of theory and practice. It is usually associated with the notions of reflective practice promoted by Schön (1983, 1987) and Hodgkinson (1991, 1996). It is also an indicator of administrative sophistication. Administrative sophistication has always been a desirable trait for educational leaders. What has changed, however, is the nature and extent of that sophistication. Not so long ago schools in Canada tended to reflect the relatively stable cultural homogeneity of the communities they served. Administrators performed their roles using a fairly limited repertoire of largely

managerial processes. There was seldom much need to reflect on the suitability of these established practices as guides to action, although such reflection has always been the mark of a wise leader. In the North American context at least, the school was an arena for professional activity, the community stayed at a comfortable distance, and professional expertise was a sufficient warrant for expecting and enjoying the trust of the community.

However, social circumstances have changed, as they inevitably do. Societies have become more pluralistic and the demands and needs of interest groups in communities more diversified, as well as increasingly vocal and insistent. These are social forces that have dramatically altered the nature of school administration. One obvious outcome is the increase in value conflicts that occur in school environments. Always present to some extent, if only as a consequence of the generation gap between adult faculty and younger students, value conflicts have now become a defining characteristic of the school leadership role. The working conditions for educational leaders in many jurisdictions have become less predictable and more conflict-laden. For example, in Canada there is considerable social pressure for greater stakeholder involvement in significant decision-making in school organizations. However, at the same time the achievement of consensus on educational issues, among even the traditional educational stakeholders, has become more difficult. School administrators increasingly encounter value conflict situations where consensus cannot be achieved, rendering obsolete the traditional rational notions of problem-solving. Administrators must now sometimes be satisfied with merely responding to a situation when there is no solution possible that will satisfy all.

Value conflicts become particularly apparent when administrator perspectives run across the organizational boundaries that traditionally separated community from school, school from district office, and district office from department or ministry. These social thresholds have become increasingly transparent organizational boundaries in a postmodern world. This is a more open, but less trusting environment.

A number of scholars have begun to explore these new relationships through their research and interpretations of theory. For example, Duke (1999), Leithwood (1999), and Johansson and Bredeson (1999) have presented particular organizational perspectives that clarify and in some cases challenge the function of values as influences on administrative practice. Duke offers an approach to thinking systematically about what is desirable in an organization. The central concern is captured in his simple question, What is a good organization? It is a question that, as he points out, has attracted relatively little attention. He argues convincingly that such matters should be given priority given the ubiquity and importance of organizations in our society. As he asserts, we ought to be moved as much by ideals as by concern for inputs and outputs. He proposes a conception of the good organization around three conditions. A good organization intends to accomplish good ends, attains a reasonable degree of success in achieving these good ends, and exercises care to prevent negative side effects. In these three conditions he also identifies several issues that need to be addressed in the process of constructing a philosophy of organization. These include the requirement that a good organization

satisfy basic human needs, contribute to the healthy development of individuals and the well-being of society, promote democracy, and minimize harmful side effects.

Leithwood (1999) is not as convinced of the relevance of a values perspective on school leadership practices. He questions the practical utility of much scholarly inquiry about values in educational administration. This is a fair criticism, especially when one considers the epistemological wrangling that has dominated the field of inquiry for a decade or more. He proposes a system of values to guide the work of educational leaders, but one based on the organizational needs of future schools and the processes required to develop those schools. These alternatives include taxonomies of values rooted in moral philosophy (Hodgkinson, 1978) and those emerging from empirical efforts to describe the values of practicing educational leaders (Leithwood, Begley, & Cousins, 1992; Walker & Shakotko, 1999). To illustrate what might be required to accomplish this goal, Leithwood argues for an incremental orientation in the process of transforming today's schools and the need to identify some of the more critical values to support such an orientation. He proposes three sets of values that underlie incremental orientations to change in the practices of educational leaders: carefulness and a constructively critical perspective as opposed to utopian schemes, respect for the capacities and commitments of past and current educators as opposed to historical ignorance, and a commitment to continual improvement.

Johansson and Bredeson (1999) expose through their research on the work of superintendents in the United States and Sweden what they consider the myth that the policy community has the capacity to govern the learning community, and that policy decisions influence the values of educational leaders and those of the educational process. Using illustrations from the Swedish and US context, the authors advance a reverse position. Their claim is that it is in the educational community that educational values are created and subsequently transferred to the political policy community. They argue that the policy community seldom has the knowledge and information that would allow it to confront and convert a prevailing school culture to the benefits of various reform initiatives being advocated. Successful reforms tend to be those that are formulated by, and out of needs articulated by, the learning community. Furthermore, prevailing educational values are rooted in the particular functional roles of administrators and teachers, and as a result the degree of commitment to particular educational activities is governed by the local school culture.

Ryan (1999) presents more critical postmodern perspectives of educational organizations. He argues that the increasing complexity of the choice-making process associated with educational organizations has begun noticeably to impede decisive and sure-footed action by administrators, a position consistent with earlier commentary on the greater frequency of value conflicts in schools. He asserts that in a postmodern world there is more uncertainty than sureness, more ambivalence as opposed to faith. Philosophy and science have played an important part in promoting what Ryan argues is the illusion of an orderly existence. In recent decades the belief in the possibility of fashioning a universal moral order has dissipated, and the veil has lifted on a rather chaotic world. At least two unanswered or open questions relating to values are implied:



What is, or should be, the purpose of ethical inquiry in the field? And how does it, or should it, relate to the moral nature of administration and organization of schools in an increasingly fragmented, ambivalent, and uncertain world? Ryan's answers to these questions are that inquiry in the field needs to be organized around efforts to help administrators provide the conditions that will allow all individuals and groups in school communities and in the wider community to search out, understand, critique, and create moral forms of life.

*The Special Challenge of Values Research*

Ontological (nature of reality) and epistemological (nature of knowledge) issues have often been central sources of debate in the literature of educational administration. These debates also spill over into discussions of the methodologies employed to conduct research in the social sciences and in particular research on the values of administration or the valuation processes that occur in various administrative contexts. Guba and Lincoln (1994) present an excellent analysis of the function of values in the distinctive systems of inquiry associated with competing paradigms of research methodology. Four alternate inquiry paradigms are identified: positivism (the objective or "received view" that has dominated the discourse in physical and social sciences); postpositivism (a contingent positivism that attempts to accommodate the most problematic criticisms of the former); critical theory (a blanket term used to describe neo-Marxism, feminism, materialism, and participatory inquiry); and constructivism (relativism, subjectivism, and locally constructed realities). The main outcome of Guba and Lincoln's analysis with respect to the function of values in research inquiry in the four paradigms is the observation that values are either specifically excluded or of central importance to methodology. In the case of positivist and postpositivist research the function of values is excluded from methodology because of the epistemological posture of the paradigm. Although values might well be the object of inquiry (Rokeach, 1973), positivist methodologies are aimed at objective inquiry in the sense of traditional scientific inquiry that makes a virtue of the claim that they are value-free. The methodological focus is on the empirical and technical. In fact the bulk of research on leadership and administration conducted in this paradigm remains blind, in the case of postpositivists consciously so, to what Barnard (1938) proposes as the moral dimension of leadership. An essentially rational view of the educational administration process is presented: that is, one devoid of feelings, emotions, or affect and full of unexamined values. Gordon (1984) conveys this notion by suggesting that the institutional norms recommended by such research are at best the "trappings of thought" (p. 46) that must be used by real people who think in radically different ways depending on how they perceive situations. In an effort to identify an objective generalized truth, positivist research methodologies regularly strip away the details associated with specific contexts. These are often the very details that give meaning or reveal the intents and motivations of particular administrative actions.

Although values are explicitly excluded from research methodologies conducted in the positivist and postpositivist modes, values are an elemental component of the research methodologies grouped by Guba and Lincoln (1994) in the critical theory and constructivist paradigms. In critical theory, values, those conceptions of the desirable with motivating force, manifest themselves

in an a priori manner. Particular articulated value sets virtually shape research findings at the outset, because the outcomes of such research are aimed at recognizing or promoting particular social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender values. Research findings are in effect consciously value-mediated. Shining examples of such orientations might include Gilligan's (1982) and Shakeshaft's (1987) work on gender issues, or Apple's (1990) writing about equal access to educational opportunity and other equity issues. Following a similar pattern, research conducted from the constructivist paradigm also champions the interests and values of the individual, the powerless, or socially unempowered minorities. However, with constructivism the particular stress is on giving voice to alternate viewpoints and promoting the right to existence of locally constructed and specific realities, rather than championing a particular minority group or repressed social viewpoint.

The crux of the matter in the context of considering the relevance of values to educational administration is that most of the research on school leadership has tended to be positivist and not particularly informative on the intents of administrative action or the underlying and motivating values of the actors. The prevailing domain of research has been focused on the publicly and logically verifiable world of facts. Values resist empirical verification. Like the wind they are unseen forces. One may easily discern the impact of values on the empirical world, just as one can observe the movement of waves on the sea or the swaying of trees, all manifestations of the wind. Furthermore, the presence or influence of values cannot be reliably or explicitly tracked by scientific methods alone. A final complication that arises in the thorny context of methodology is potential divergence among several research perspectives: the value intended by the acting first person (e.g., the administrator), the value perceived by a recipient or participant second person (e.g., a teacher), and the value interpretation assigned by some third-party observer (the researcher).

There are a number of obvious implications. First of all, qualitative research methods are those most appropriate to this type of inquiry. Accordingly, researchers increasingly tend to collect data in face-to-face situations, through stimulated recall activities and case problem analysis. In order to avoid the problem of relying on the accuracy of third-party or researcher value attributions of observed actions or speech, researchers such as Begley and Johansson (1998), Leonard (1999), and Roche (1999) develop a partnership with the participants or respondents as a component of their studies. Action research strategies (see Hossack, 1997, for a concise description) seem highly appropriate to these circumstances. An ideal research partnership for work in this area is characterized by mutual trust, good faith, and a commitment to deliberative dialogue about the value situations being examined.

#### *New Research on the Influence of Values*

Begley and Johansson (1998), Campbell (1999), and Walker and Shakotko (1999) are examples of scholars conducting ongoing values research studies who began their careers during the mid 1980s. These researchers, along with others such as Lang (1986) and Campbell-Evans (1991), were among the earliest Canadian researchers to begin exploring values as influences on administrative action. Whereas their earlier research focused on initial empirical verifications of values theory such as that proposed by Hodgkinson (1978), they now write

and conduct research with increased confidence and conviction that values are important influences on leadership and administration. Furthermore, their work has now been augmented by that of several new scholars, a new generation of researchers who are beginning to generate some interesting findings. This new generation of researchers includes Leonard (1999) and Roche (1999).

Leonard's (1999) research considers the influence of personal and professional values on the decision-making of teachers and administrators working in an urban Canadian elementary school. This study produced rather startling results in that they illustrate what appears to be a myth of value consistency in individuals and organizations. The investigative approach employed by Leonard was shaped by Hodgkinson's (1991) notions of the layers of values that comprise society—conceptions similar to the arenas described above in the discussion accompanying Figure 2. In Leonard's view it is also important for educational leaders to have knowledge of members' values at various levels of the organization. Accordingly, this study made the assumption that school organizations are best studied by examining them from multiple perspectives. Leonard's case study of one school staff involved an analysis of the value orientations of individual teachers, teams of teachers, the administrative team, as well as the formally stated school and district mission statements. She illustrates some quite remarkable variations in value orientations among individual teachers, teams of teachers, and the administration staff. In several situations teachers did not perceive value conflicts despite significant variations in their manifested values regarding the purposes of education, pedagogical style, and school or community values. Yet there were also other situations where variations in values, often of an apparently minor nature, caused the same teachers to identify significant personal value conflicts. The key to predicting whether a variation in value orientations would generate an actual perceived value conflict for the individual seems to be the extent to which a value held by a person is a personally defining or core values orientation. Otherwise teachers, at least in this school setting, seem to have a high tolerance for variations in value orientations in their teaching practices, those of their peers, and the articulated values orientations of the school as an organization. In this respect value consistency in organizations would indeed appear to be a myth.

Begley (1999) and Roche (1999) report the findings of research on the valuation processes of school administrators. Begley's findings (see also Begley & Johansson, 1998) are derived from multiple studies focused on the personal and professional values of school administrators. Two general themes were employed as conceptual organizers for the research: the influence of personal preference and transrational principles on the problem-solving actions of school administrators, and the value conflicts that administrators experience in their work. One study was conducted in Sweden in collaboration with Johansson, the other in Canada. A conceptual framework was employed that integrates Hodgkinson's (1991) values theory with information-processing theory (Begley, 1996). Action research methods were adopted as a way of overcoming the special problems associated with conducting research on values. The findings of these studies highlight the value orientations of skillful principals and illustrate which value types predominate in principals' problem-

solving processes. Personal values in general are shown to be significant influences on decision-making by principals. Predictably, rational values grounded in consequence and consensus (e.g., best interests of children, conformity to policy) generally predominate in the valuation processes of administration. However, personal preferences grounded in self-interest are also evident, but infrequently articulated openly by administrators. Ethics or transrational principles are avoided when possible and tend to be employed only in particular circumstances, that is, when the more familiar terrain of rational valuation is not a practical path. Examples of this might be matters relating to the role of the arts in education, racism issues, or language rights. However, by far the strongest finding across multiple studies conducted since 1988 is that rational values reflecting a concern for consequences and consensus appear to be the primary currency of the administrative decision-making in Canada, Sweden, and Australia (Begley, 1988; Begley & Johansson, 1998; Campbell-Evans, 1991; Leithwood, Begley, & Cousins, 1992; Leonard 1999; Roche, 1999). These findings are also consistent with three other studies that did not specifically focus on the practices of school administrators (Ashbaugh & Kasten, 1984; Lang, 1986; MacPhee, 1983).

Roche's (1999) research was stimulated by his belief that the ambiguities of the postmodern world present a complex dilemma for school administrators acting in the face of increasing moral confusion and ambiguity. Roche notes that confusing and conflicting values often preclude the determination by administrators of any clear choice, action, or decision. Yet school administrators routinely confront moral and ethical dilemmas that demand a response. Roche's inquiry moved beyond the more usual preoccupation of empirical research on valuation processes to an investigation of how school administrators actually respond to moral and ethical dilemmas, the most difficult value conflicts they encounter. He identifies four primary ways principals respond to moral dilemmas. Listed in order of frequency of use by the administrators in this study these are: avoidance, suspended morality, creative insubordination, and taking a personal moral stand. Avoidance was the most frequently employed response among the administrators in his study. Suspended morality as a response illustrates the ability of administrators to operate from a single arena, usually the organizational one, as a professional strategy. This is the same phenomena that Campbell (1999) identifies as common administrative practice and condemns as immoral when student needs take second place to organizational imperatives. Creative insubordination as a strategy refers to an opposite response where organizational perspectives are blocked out or dismissed in favor of other more humane orientations. Taking a personal moral stand was the least frequently employed response, usually adopted only when the administrator assessed a high likelihood of success in getting away with openly challenging the competing demands of the profession, organization, or society.

As tempting as it might be to use the findings from these various research studies as a basis for developing a prescriptive guide to value-added leadership—a catalogue of correct values and moral strategies that principals ought to adopt without question—the processes of valuation in school leadership situations are much too context-bound to permit this quick fix. Furthermore,

although something may be known about the problems currently confronting schools, it is difficult to predict with any degree of certainty the nature of future school leadership beyond the certainty that there will be more problems to solve and new dilemmas to confront. As a result, it is not enough for school leaders merely to emulate the values of other principals currently viewed as experts. Leaders of future schools must become reflective practitioners in the sense that Schön (1983), Barth (1990), Sergiovanni (1992), and Hodgkinson (1991) have advocated for some time. The first step toward achieving this state is, predictably enough, to engage in personal reflection—familiar advice to anyone who has kept up with the leadership literature. However, the adoption of a values perspective on school leadership can transform this perhaps vague advice into something specific enough for school administrators to act on.

#### *An Agenda for the Future*

One could still ask, why study values? Or why connect values and educational leadership at all? Willower's (1992) answer to the values question is, "Because a significant portion of the practice in educational administration requires rejecting some courses of action in favor of a preferred one, values are generally acknowledged to be central to the field" (p. 369). Similarly, Hodgkinson (1991) states,

educational administration is a special case within the general profession of administration. Its leaders find themselves in what might be called an arena of ethical excitement—often politicized but always humane, always intimately connected to the evaluation of society ... it embodies a heritage of value on the one hand, and is a massive industry on the other, in which social, economic, and political forces are locked together in a complex equilibrium of power. All this calls for extra-ordinary value sensitivity on the part of educational leaders. (p. 164)

Other voices have since joined these pioneers of the field, and although it would be safe to say that many agree on the importance of values as a topic for inquiry, beyond that some quickly part company. Leithwood (1999) is not convinced that values inquiry is properly focused if it strays from the future needs of organizations. Lakomski and Evers (1999) propose coherentist perspectives as a comprehensive and epistemologically justifiable foundation for a philosophy of educational administration. Willower (1999) is more in favor of Deweyan pragmatism. Hodgkinson (1999) believes scholars should be studying the problems of emotions, ethics, and ego. Ryan (1999) and Foster (1999) remind us that it is a postmodern world, whereas Campbell (1999) is critical of moral relativism. Finally, those with practitioner orientations (Begley, 1999; Grogan & Smith, 1999; Leonard, 1999; Roche, 1999; Walker & Shakotko, 1999) prefer a situated problem-based approach or to focus on the resolution of value conflicts in specific contexts. The overall effect is to illustrate that theory and research about values and leadership are still works in progress. The field remains fragmented at this time, and although many academics are actively engaged in dialogue with each other, there is only the beginning of consensus on the nature and function of values as influences on administration.

Nevertheless, several questions have been answered by the recent work of scholars working in this field. In particular the historical roots of the field have

been clarified and the key players identified. Certain perspectives and approaches to research have emerged as most promising at this time, and the problems and challenges associated with inquiry are being confronted. There is increased clarity about appropriate next steps. The remainder of this article is devoted to summarizing what has been achieved and considering directions for the future of values inquiry.

#### *Key Players and Promising Approaches*

The most important and highly recommended scholarly work that focuses on values and leadership inquiry is that by Hodgkinson (1978, 1983, 1991, 1996) and Willower (1992, 1994, 1999). These two individuals have probably done more to promote and advance inquiry into the moral aspects of administration than any other academics in North America. Willower's intuitively practical Deweyan tradition of reflective inquiry still holds considerable appeal for those attracted to the more rational modes of pragmatic inquiry. Hodgkinson's values typology, and the derivative models generated by his disciples, is still perhaps the most comprehensive of frameworks for examining values in administration in that it incorporates the rational values of consequences and consensus as well as subrational emotions and transrational ethics. Greenfield (Greenfield & Ribbins, 1993), another giant of the field, also deserves mention, although his direct commentary on values is quite limited.

More recently Evers and Lakomski (1991, 1996) entered the arena with their two important books. Their commitment to developing a philosophy of educational administration based on holism and coherentist perspectives has promoted significant debate and will continue to shape the direction of inquiry in educational administration for some time. Research by Leithwood (Leithwood & Steinbach, 1995), Begley (1988; Begley & Johansson, 1998), Leonard (1999), and Roche (1999) makes useful contributions to our understanding of the nature and influence of values on problem-solving. In particular, this research highlights the predominance of rational valuation processes in administration, begins to confront the limitations of ethics as guides to practice, and unveils the inevitable influence of personal preferences and self-interest as influences on administrative actions. A final encouraging trend pertains to situated learning approaches to research and professional development. These include problem-based learning (Bridges, 1992; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2000); context-specific inquiry through action research (Begley & Johansson, 1998); and cognitive apprenticeships (Begley, 1995; Hallinger, Leithwood, & Murphy, 1993; Prestine & Legrand, 1991). These are all perspectives that readily embrace the consideration of values as influences on leadership and administration and make contributions toward addressing the special problems associated with researching values.

#### *The Problems and Challenges:*

Some would still dismiss values as a concept too abstract for practical inquiry. These include those scholars who adhere to the notion that scientific inquiry requires the separation of fact from value. This orientation is common to those academics who consider values from an organizational perspective, as well as those whose work is representative of mainstream or dominant social perspectives. Clarifying values and the motivations behind them becomes important

when one needs to be clear about intent and purposes. If one's view of society is that "it ain't broke," then there is little need to "fix it." Those scholars whose work reflects the interests of socially marginalized or minority groups of any sort are clearly attracted to the adoption, or critiquing of, particular values postures, for example, the ethic of care familiar to feminist perspectives (Grogan & Smith, 1999). Others, such as Robinson (1996) treat values as one of many potential contextual influences, or "constraints" on problem-solving. This is in sharp contrast to scholars such as Begley (1999) who proposes values as antecedent and intrinsic influences acquired through formative experiences. The latter is more characteristic of postures emphasizing individual perception, constructivism, or existentialist orientations.

Finally, there is the challenge to values inquiry presented by the prevailing pluralistic circumstances of our social communities. The persistent climate of upheaval characteristic of our schools and communities and the increasing diversity of our societies are having a profound impact on schools and leadership practices. Increasingly, value conflicts have become a defining characteristic of school administration, thereby promoting interest in the study of values and ethical decision-making. However, at the same time administrators are discovering that some of their most cherished ethical foundations, especially those derived from a Western Judeo-Christian tradition, must be carefully reexamined in terms of their appropriateness to changing social circumstances.

#### Note

1. The Centre for the Study of Values and Leadership is based at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE/UT). This centre is affiliated with the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) Program Center for the Study of Leadership and Ethics at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville. Both centres were established in 1996. Paul Begley is Head of the OISE/UT Centre for the Study of Values and Leadership and co-director with Margaret Grogan of the UCEA Centre for the Study of Leadership and Ethics.

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