

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE DEPUTY HEADTEACHER - A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

*The High Mistress of the school I attended as a pupil from 1951-58 was tall and austere, and rumour had it that she spoke only in Latin. The worst punishment for any misdemeanour was to stand outside her office, and this only happened on rare occasions.*

*The first Headmistress I worked for, from 1961 to 1967, was more communicative, bigger all round, and for most of these years, seemed to be mainly disapproving. There was much headshaking and jowly looks, especially to young teachers. She had three categories of notes which hinted at the tone of forthcoming meetings. The least worrying was 'Dear Miss So and So Kindly see me at 1.15 pm today. MPF - (signed with a flourish). The next would say, 'Dear Miss So and So. See me at 1.15 pm today MPF (still flourishing) and the really scary one would say, 'Miss So and So, See me immediately - MPF.'*

*She was communicative, but not approachable. She had a deputy who was equally unapproachable and had responsibility for registers. Each week had to be totalled and percentaged and the totals for each day had to balance with the totals for each child. It all had to be done by Friday at 2.15 pm. If you didn't do it right, a child would appear with your register, saying, 'Your register's wrong. Miss S says, would you do it again, please.'*

*It was at this school that I was introduced to fourth year leavers, one of whom, all beehives, lacquer and sullen, dismissive looks, had truanted, following a night 'on the streets'. She was made to stand outside the Headmistress's room on the day she reappeared in school. It seems strange, looking back, to see how little I knew about the school's system of support for students. Was there only discipline, maybe no support at all?*

*I remember little of the support system at my next school, a large, comprehensive, girls' school in London. I recall detentions, and I know the Head got involved with the 'tearaways'. All I remember of her was that she worked with her team of Heads of Department, of which I was a member, and there was always confusion as to whether she was Miss or Mrs X. I discovered later this arose from the time when women teachers who married had to relinquish their posts!*

*I moved to a mixed school in rural Surrey in September 1968, and was cared for by a father figure who drew up the timetable, often rooming more than one form for each room in error (there were no computers to bleep at such an easy mistake); who strongly supported football and cricket; and who promoted the spiritual development of pupils through lengthy religious assemblies which frequently ate up a large slice of period one, and in which the pupils cheerily sang 'Oh Jesus thou hast promised, to all who follow thee, that where thou art in glory, there shall thy children be...'. He was ably supported by Miss N, the Deputy Headmistress, who kept everyone in order.*

*Comprehensivisation swept the County while I was bringing up my family and then the cuts of 1976 were upon us. I lost my part time job.*

*So I started again, full time, in a different school, with a new Headmaster. He was self effacing, and where, when Mr S had come into a classroom, a hush descended and everyone stood up, when Mr Y came in, no-one even noticed. There were no cheery 'Good-morning's, and he was rarely seen at football matches - or at netball matches either. Mr Y was also ably supported by the Deputy Headmistress, Miss A. She kept everyone in order, but was more laid back about it than Miss N. We also had another deputy headteacher to 'share the load' of managing the school. He did a lot of shouting, and had Machiavellian tendencies.*

*1985 saw me moving on to another girls' school and its highly professional, exciting, innovative and well organised Headmistress, who worked hard and played hard. She believed in cultivating her leisure pursuit of golf on Sundays, and of all the Headteachers I have worked with, she was the only one who followed a healthy lifestyle whilst still maintaining high professional standards. She praised people, she enthused about learning, she was kind, she supported her staff, she talked to and got to know children and teachers, she made great demands on them and on herself, and most people responded by doing their best to put in place what she wanted. Sadly, she moved on to another Headship.*

*I found her replacement very different. She took some time to settle in. She often said to pupils, 'You got it wrong last time, let's see if you can get it right next time.' She never discussed with them how they might do this. She insisted on being known as the 'Headmistress', despite the fact that the non-sexist 'Headteacher' was, by now (1987-9), becoming far more common. Her deputy, bequeathed by the previous head, was well meaning but ill-equipped to humanise her. I was fortunate. I found a Headteacher in 1989 who made all the exciting demands on people that I liked and she appointed me to the position of Deputy Head at Roseacre School.*

The purpose of this chapter is to look at the literature on deputy headship in secondary schools and, because I experience my work as a woman, to look specifically at texts that illuminate this. I shall focus mainly on the British, post 1980 literature. My review of the literature suggests that few substantial studies of deputy headship in British secondary schools have been undertaken in this period. Some studies of primary schools are available but they do not illuminate the situation in secondary schools. I have also examined the research on headteachers and been surprised that it contained so few references to deputies.

The chapter contains a discussion of the literature on leadership and management, and I try to locate my own values about school leadership within this. I shall move on to look at studies of deputy headship and headship and finish the chapter with a section on women and educational leadership which picks up some of the issues raised in the earlier discussions.

### Leadership and Management

There is an extensive literature on leadership and management in educational organisations, but this rarely touches specifically on the role of the deputy headteachers in secondary schools. The literature on management is often in a handbook form which offers advice to managers, for instance, Dean, 1985; Everard and Morris, 1990; and Nathan, 1991; whereas other literature on leadership and management tends to be more theoretical, for instance, Hughes, 1985, 1990; and Hughes and Bush, 1991; or relates

theory to practice Hoyle, 1981, 1986; Bush et al 1980; and Bush 1980, 1995. Several works have drawn on the personal experience of the author. Some of the more empirical works have used a case study approach, John, 1980; Paisey 1984.

The recent work of Grace, 1995, is important because he related the notions of leadership and management in an historical study of headteaching, arguing that there has been a change in the role of the headteacher from an educational leader to a manager. He argued that, after the second world war, headteaching moved from an autocratic model, in which the 'headmaster' held a hierarchical position and pursued a 'moral and spiritual mission', to a consultative model. As secondary schools became larger, headteachers began to consult their teachers, and to recognise there was a need to manage them through other people. In the 1980s, headteaching changed again, as schools responded to the demands of the market economy, influenced by Thatcherism. Parents had more choice of schools, and headteachers and their deputies had to manage the resources cost-effectively. This has resulted in the leadership role of the head changing from 'prime relation with knowledge, pupils, teachers and pedagogy' to 'the chief executive' and 'a relationship with a computer and a financial package' (Grace 1995:44-45).

Of particular interest, given the focus of my study, are discussions about collegiate leadership and its relationship to school management. There are several comprehensive reviews of the literature on leadership which include reference to collegiate or participative models. According to Hoyle (1986:73-124) most theories of leadership refer to the two leadership dimensions of 'task achievement' and 'personal relationships', or what Halpin (1966:39) called 'initiating structure' and 'consideration'. A third dimension which Yukl (1975:162) called 'decision centralisation' was, according to Hoyle, the participative dimension. Hoyle also referred to the well known Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958:3) model on 'how to choose a leadership pattern', in which the continuum of decision making moves from the head 'telling the decision', through to the head enabling staff to function autonomously, but within established parameters. In a discussion on participatory management, Hoyle related this theory to Richardson's (1973) account of Nailsea School, and to the work of Watts (1980:293-303) at Countesthorpe College. Thomas Greenfield (1974) emphasised the relationship between leadership and

values, claiming that it was impossible for either leadership itself or research on leadership to be value free, and this challenged the rationalistic theorising about leadership which had prevailed until then. Bush (1995:3) drawing on work from outside education (Fayol, 1916; Taylor 1947; Weber 1947) pointed to the fact that many definitions of management were partial, although most included goal orientation, where goals were identified and realised through the activities of the participating members. Bush drew attention to the work of West-Burnham (1994:19-20) who has criticised the application of industrial models of management to schools, pointing to seven major differences in management between schools and industry.

It is interesting to note the distinction that West-Burnham (1990:74) made between management and leadership, because it pointed to the importance of the leader being alert to her own and the organisation's values and proactive in seeking a way to realise them:

<u>Leadership</u>	<u>Management</u>
doing the right things	doing things right
finding the path	following the identified path
learning from the organisation	being taught by the organisation

Duigan and Macpherson (1992:4) talked about 'educative leadership' saying that it was concerned about 'right and wrong, justice and injustice, truth, aesthetics and the negotiation of practical ideals in education.' Leadership was about setting up a vision, and the challenge was to encourage 'educators to commit themselves to approaches to administration and professional practices that are, by their nature, educative.'

This view of leadership as being educative fits into the collegial model of management described by Bush (1995:52-72). As much of my research enquiry is about how I have worked with teams of teachers, I was particularly interested in this model. According to Bush, collegial management was one of six theoretical models and his definition was as follows:

'Collegial models assume that organisations determine policy and make decisions through a process of discussion leading to consensus. Power is shared among some or all members of the organisation who are thought to have a mutual understanding about the objectives of the organisation.'

He used two secondary school examples to demonstrate the idea - Countesthorpe College, in which decisions made by teams of teachers were all referred for approval to the 'moot', which was open to all staff and students to attend (Watts, 1976; Bush et al 1980); and Churchfields High School (Smith 1991; Bush 1993), in which, although there was much participation by teachers in the decision making process, the head and senior management team were perceived as having the ultimate power of veto, thereby casting some doubt on the openness of the proceedings. Bush also outlined the limitations of the collegial model of management. One of the most important was the accountability and power of the head, and Bush put the difficulty succinctly when he said, 'the participative element rests on the authority of expertise possessed by professional staff, but this rarely trumps the positional authority of official leaders.'

Hargreaves, (1992:232-5; 1994:195-6) differentiated between 'genuine collegiality' as being spontaneous, unpredictable, developmental and 'feminine' in style, and 'contrived collegiality' which was insidiously imposed, regulated, predictable and 'masculine', and could become a management tool to enable leaders to 'get their own way'. Busher and Saran (1994:7) however, pointed out that 'contrived collegiality' implies that 'the goals and values of leaders and followers are divergent if not actually in conflict', and they did not think that, in professionally staffed organisations, this was always the case.

Fullan and Hargreaves (1992:60-82), gave examples of collaborative cultures in the work of Nias, Southworth and Yeomans, 1989; and Rosenholtz, 1989. Rosenholtz pointed up two distinctive school cultures - 'stuck' or 'learning impoverished' schools, and 'moving' or 'learning enriched' schools. Rosenholtz showed that in 'moving' schools, teachers worked together more, and that they thought that teaching was difficult so they needed to be constantly learning how to improve what they were doing. Teachers supported each other by giving and receiving help, and this formed part of the normal

cultural expectations of the school. The main benefits that Rosenholtz found in the collaborative culture were that it empowered teachers and increased their efficiency. Nias et al (1989) found that, in schools where there was a collaborative culture, teachers worked together to support each other, not so much in the formal organisational structures, but pervasively in day to day encounters. They did not hide their problems or disasters, but talked about them, seeking solutions for them. Nias found that schools with collaborative cultures, despite broad agreement between teachers about educational values, had open debate on those values, the school's purposes and their relation to practice. As might be expected when a range of views was represented, a measure of disagreement frequently emerged, but because of the broad agreement on fundamental values, the staff were able to work through the disagreements without threat to their relationships.

Baldrige et al (1978):45 described the leadership needed to bring about collegial management as 'first among equals'. The leader's behaviour was 'less to command than to listen, less to lead than to gather expert judgements, less to manage than facilitate, less to order than to persuade and negotiate....' W. D. Greenfield (1991:180) pointed out that a key value of heads operating from such a leadership style was that their major duty was to serve the best interests of their pupils, and a survey by Busher and Saran (1994:12) found many heads working in this way, with the result that teachers responded positively and tried to create pupil centred learning conditions for their students. Thom (1994:43) in advocating an educational leadership 'with conscience' model, stressed the need to lead with a sense of 'what was morally right', to include equality and facilitative empowerment amongst colleagues, to recognise spiritual and well as scientific views and to pay increased attention to 'values, emotion and intuition'. This seems to be valuing many 'female', affective dimensions, taking us away from the more traditional 'male' rationalistic and logical aspects of leadership. It is in keeping with the 'collegial' model of management.

Recent studies by Cuttance (1992), Reynolds et al (1989), Mortimer (1988), Smith and Tomlinson (1989), Nuttall et al (1989) have all reported large school effects on pupil performance. Two major studies - Rutter et al 1979 and Reynolds, (1976, 1982) - have looked at school factors which it was thought might determine school effectiveness, and both include firm leadership and involvement of teachers in the

consultative process. Reynolds (1992:10) talked of the strategies of 'coercion' and 'incorporation', and pointed to effective schools using the latter. Rather than forcing pupils to fall in with the teachers' views of what should be done, effective schools sought to 'incorporate pupils into the organisation of the school and their parents into support of the school.' In schools using coercion as a strategy, teachers had a view of pupils that they needed 'character training and control' and that their ability was lower than it actually was.

HMI documents, beginning with 'Ten Good Schools' (1977) and moving on to a study of 185 secondary schools, published in 1988, drew attention to the quality of leadership of the Head. They said that effective schools have 'well qualified staff with an appropriate blend of experience and expertise .....Strengths in this respect were developed through, for example, participation in inservice training.' Caldwell and Spinks (1988), in an Australian study, listed the characteristics that an effective school might have. They defined these in terms of curriculum, decision making, resources, outcomes, climate and leadership, quoting eleven characteristics of a good headteacher.

Bolman and Heller (1995:342) in reviewing the American literature on leadership research, pointed to the irrelevance of it to practitioners in the field, saying 'most who review research about school leadership judge it to be too abstract and detached from practice, or too narrow and disengaged from person and context, and therefore, of little use to those in schools.' They argued that repeated efforts to reform schools through top-down innovation have met with frustration as schools have resisted the imposition of new policies to improve practice. Calling for changes that will shift the block on progress, Bolman and Heller asked for a systems view, in which 'we study the dynamics of leadership and organisation at every level from the classroom to Congress' (op. cit.:350).

If it is the case that research about school leadership is too abstract, I think that the Bolman and Heller suggestion of studying leadership from 'the classroom to Congress' would generate yet more theory to be rejected by teachers as irrelevant. Of far greater value might be the detailed study by teachers of their own practice, from which teachers' theories about leadership could emerge. As Bolman and Heller said (p351), the field of research on educational leadership has borrowed from scientific management and the social sciences which gave it intellectual respectability, but these are now being

rejected on the grounds that theory has lost touch with practice. Of greater significance now could be the development of an epistemology of practice, in which the knowledge base of teaching becomes distinctly educational, making its values explicit.

### Deputy Headship

An early study by Burnham (1968) pointed to the important role of the deputy head in running the school, but since then, little in the management and leadership literature has focused specifically on the role of the deputy headteacher in a secondary school. Most of the studies have been based on survey research concentrating on career routes, job descriptions and selection for deputy headship. For instance, Owen, Davies and Wayment (1983) analysed 30 job descriptions for deputy heads advertised in the Times Educational Supplement (TES) in February and March 1982; Elkins (1987) looked at selection procedures for heads and deputies in an LEA; Flisher (1986) examined time management of heads and deputies who were undertaking a one year management course; and Grant (1989) looked at what she referred to as 'career ambitious teachers'.

The studies by Owen, Davies and Wayment (1983) and Elkins (1987) are particularly interesting because they are so dated. Owen, Davies and Wayment listed the responsibilities, qualities and skills required of deputy heads from an analysis of thirty job descriptions taken from advertisements in the TES in February and March, 1982. Their list included administration, curriculum, outside links, personal qualities, flexibility, to be part of a team, pupil welfare and discipline, teaching load 35-60%, staff welfare and support, professional tutoring, examination officer, deputise for head, chair meetings, fabric of school. Many of these jobs still have to be done, but under a different name, and with different expectations. For instance, the curriculum is still the responsibility of a deputy, but the National Curriculum has been in place since 1988, and the opportunities opened up post-Dearing (1994) are what senior managers are grappling with now. 'Pupil welfare and discipline' is not identified as such, but a holistic approach to pupil progress would include pupil behaviour, and all deputies and the head have some responsibility. For instance, the 'curriculum deputy' is concerned that pupils make the most of the curriculum, and that it is appropriate to their needs; the 'LMS deputy' is concerned about the image of the school and the fabric of the building, so is keen to see that the pupils behave in a manner that



supports the market economy; whilst the deputy with responsibility for personal, social and health education takes a direct interest in the everyday organisation, support and administration of the year groups. Chairing meetings is still a task for deputies, but if one chairs meetings it is because one is responsible for promoting the work of the group, and the chairing is a minor and taken for granted part of a much more significant responsibility. It would not be written up as a requirement of the role of a deputy head today!

Elkins (1987), who also looked at selection of deputy heads, said that 'most deputy headship job specifications are task-defined, yet the role is seen in terms of personal qualities by heads, deputies and aspirants. Social-emotional leadership would appear to be the key to successful occupancy of the role.' He referred to the need for the new deputy to complement the strengths of the remaining deputies in the team and to be responsive to staff and able to empathise with them. Elkins talked in terms of heads and deputies as being male, but in addressing the gender issue, dismissed it quite quickly, saying that male deputies 'significantly outnumber' women deputies, and quoting a respondent as saying 'If you're asking me whether I'd do better applying as Mr Smith rather than Miss or Mrs Smith, I've no doubt of the answer. Mr Smith anytime.'

This was seven years ago; I think that equal opportunities policies have changed aspects of the gender issue, so that comments like the above would not now be made. But I do not think schools have, yet, adequately addressed the issue of women's promotion prospects and their different life experiences. For instance, Elkins (1987:196) said that for a 'recent group 9 headship, of the 127 applicants, two were women.' Yet the NUT/EOC survey (1980), found that it was not true to say that women did not wish to pursue promotion opportunities. Elkins (op.cit.) suggested that women did not achieve a sufficiently high scale post in their earlier experience to give them adequate grounding for onward promotion to more senior posts, and this certainly accounts for my own late entry to deputy headship. Elkins' study concluded that arrangements for selection for deputy headships are not adequate, and in some cases selectors' prejudices make the process unfair.

Since 1990, the results of two important surveys undertaken by the Secondary Heads Association have been published (SHA 1990; 1992) and Litawski (1993) has published the results of an analysis of 378 advertisements for deputy headships of mixed secondary schools in one LEA.

The 1990 SHA study on deputy headship was based on data from a questionnaire sent to all Deputy Head members in the Autumn Term, 1988. The three main strands of the questionnaire were: (1) 51 questions identifying the responsibilities and duties of deputy heads, (2) a section which attempted to categorise some of those aspects of the deputy's role which lie beneath the surface and are rarely addressed in job descriptions and (3) factors relating directly or indirectly to stress, including falling rolls and the new salary scales and structures.

According to SHA, this was the first time a national survey had been compiled on all the tasks of the deputy head. There is a two page summary of these, but for most deputies, the report is summed up in the statement from a deputy in a 13-18 comprehensive, which was 'If it breathes, moves, advances up the school drive, or complains, it's mine' (SHA 1990:6)

The major stresses on deputies were itemised as lack of time, Government initiatives and management of change, increased workload, staff relations, the LEA, no breaks, staff cover, conflict between teaching and other competing demands. The survey unleashed numerous comments about the impossibility of the work load and people's expectations of the deputy head, and perhaps one of the interesting points is how closely the apparently trivial task sits next to the important task; 'the curriculum' and 'cleaning graffiti from the toilets' were all in the day's work.

In 1990, SHA sent out another questionnaire to capture changes which had taken place since the first study. The difference between the two studies was that the first provided 'a statistically valid analysis' in response to the Interim Advisory Committee's call for a job evaluation exercise 'which might lead to a review for change in pay differentials', whereas the second was 'shorter, broader and designed for a dipstick response, rather than tabulation' (SHA 1992:3). The intention was to give a picture of the deputy head and to give the opportunity for sharing experiences. The results of the second study were

more positive than the first, with satisfaction about the development of a team approach which suggested 'a new and more satisfying future role for the Deputy Head.....A future role that gives greater autonomy and, very often, greater recognition of individual strengths and talents' (op.cit.:19).

The report went on to say that those who were most satisfied with the new roles 'often pay tribute to the good Head who builds a team with the Deputies. Such heads have allowed Deputies to share their role and responsibilities and in doing so have expanded the amount that can be achieved.' (1992:19).

In a memorandum to governing bodies of secondary schools, SHA listed 'the key role of deputies' (March 1995) which were:

'Deputies play a crucial part in motivating staff and enabling them to share and fulfil the school's aims and visions.

Deputies make things happen: they take charge of major initiatives and implement them in the school.....

Deputies devise and manage the systems which support and empower teachers in the classroom.

Deputies share the pressures of headships: they advise and support the Head offering a second opinion and a conscience.

Deputies lead the school when the head is away, whatever the length of the absence.'

Recently there has been an increase in the number of small scale studies of deputy headship produced by deputy heads themselves as Masters' dissertations, mostly unpublished but available in University libraries. These cover a range of aspects of the role of the deputy headteacher, with data to support the study being collected over a short period of time. These practitioner accounts are important in showing the process of doing the job and many of them describe deputies learning to manage change effectively, with maximum involvement and co-operation from staff. Although many of the studies are from primary school deputy headteachers, there are some examples from the secondary sector. For example in his study of 'the deputy head and strategic planning', Weeks (1994:252-264) described how he adapted marketing methods from the commercial world to inform his planning strategies, and drew up school objectives and action plans, involving the staff and pupils as much as possible. Another study

by Hunt (1993) was an action research study into how the implementation of computer registration improved her practice in that specific job, and one by Page, (1994), was 'an action research approach to developing management roles in a large comprehensive school.' All these studies were about improving the practice of the researcher in collaboration with other teachers in the schools, so there were benefits not only to the researcher, but also to the schools in which they worked. They also highlighted specific aspects of the job of deputy headteachers and provided some insight into the processes involved.

It is clear that the large scale studies on deputy heads have concentrated on the mechanics of selection for the job and the descriptions of the many tasks that deputies are expected to manage. The most recent SHA study (1992) however, showed there had been a movement towards a more collegial approach to managing the school, and stressed the professional satisfaction that senior management teams achieved from this. Although the study indicated that this was happening, there was no research evidence to show how this works in practice. The small scale action research studies provide some evidence of the link between job satisfaction and involving others in developing aspects of the job, but tend to be of too short duration to reach firm conclusions. I decided to look at the more extensive literature on headship to see whether the studies were of a more qualitative nature which would throw light on how leaders work effectively with teachers to achieve their visions.

### Headship

Leadership is an important dimension in establishing the culture and ethos of a school, but individuals may see and experience it differently, dependent, perhaps, on where they stand in relation to it. My experience suggests that how leadership is constructed and lived out in practice in a school by the head both constrains and empowers teachers in leadership positions, such as deputy heads, who can only operate within the parameters defined by the head. The practice of leadership is dependent initially on the headteacher's view of it - as the formal leader - and on the teachers' response to that view through their willingness to collaborate together to achieve the agreed goals.

There are more studies of headteachers than of deputies, for instance, Morgan, Hall and Mackay 1983; Hughes 1984; Hall, Mackay and Morgan 1986; Weindling and Earley 1987; Jones 1987; Ball 1987; Earley, Baker and Weindling 1990; Evetts 1994, Mortimer and Mortimer 1991; Bolam et al. 1993; Ribbins and Sherratt, 1992; Ribbins and Marland 1994; Wallace and Hall 1994; Grace 1995; and there are more qualitative studies that describe the process of working as a headteacher than as a deputy head. For example, Hall, Mackay and Morgan (1986) used observational methods to describe what heads did during the school day. They supported this with interviews to find out how heads perceived themselves and how others saw them. Ribbins and Sherratt (1992:151) described their proposed research as a 'dialectic of biography and autobiography' where researcher and headteacher acted as co-researchers of headship. These methods contrast with the more mechanistic approach of Elkins (1987) whose study of selection procedures in an LEA pointed to the need for more valid criteria to be used. The NFER has also funded studies of headship (Weindling and Earley 1987 and Earley, Baker and Weindling 1990) but not studies of deputy headship. Of interest also is an earlier study by Lyons (1974), who identified the administrative tasks that heads reported in their everyday work.

Morgan, Hall and Mackay's (1983) POST Project looked at selection for secondary headship and how women compared with men in being appointed. Hughes (1984) and Jones (1987) investigated headteachers' perceptions of themselves and Jones found that only 27.5% saw themselves as 'leading professional and chief executives', (op.cit.:63), whilst most thought of themselves in terms of the teacher in charge of other teachers. Bolam et al (1993) investigated the perceived characteristics of effectively managed schools, claiming that the 'leadership styles were democratic, collegial, open, consultative and team oriented'.

Weindling and Earley (1987), studied the first years of headship through survey and case study methods. They investigated the amount of support and preparation needed by new headteachers, and whether this was being provided. The study found that deputy heads had too little experience of, for instance, standing in for the head, attending governors' meetings, attending substantial management courses, rotating job responsibilities. It recommended that induction for heads should be improved,

and a mentoring scheme and a system of 'consultant heads' to support headteachers should be established.

The first major study of headteachers to use observation, rather than questionnaire or interview methods was that of Hall, Mackay and Morgan (1986), although the observational study of Nailsea Comprehensive (Richardson 1973) had shed light on the work of the head. Hall, Mackay and Morgan (1986) described what heads do during the school day; how the observed heads related with others, how they perceived themselves and how others saw them.

Ball (1987) used data from case studies to explore how heads and deputies did their jobs. He used his own study of Beachside Comprehensive (1981), Riseborough's (1981) of Phoenix Comprehensive, Woods' (1979) of Lowfield Secondary Modern, and Richardson's (1973) of Nailsea Comprehensive. He pointed to discrimination and prejudice against women in the selection process for promotion (Ball 1987:194-195), but 'women's issues' take up only one and a half chapters of his work whilst the rest is presented unproblematically as androcentric.

Mortimer and Mortimer (1991) asked for in-depth written responses from a small sample of secondary headteachers about their roles and responsibilities. Ribbins and Marland (1994) reported the autobiographies of seven headteachers, including three women heads amongst their 'cast' of seven. Wallace and Hall (1994) studied three male and three female headteachers and their senior management teams, narrowing the study down to two schools. Research methods used included non-participant observation of meetings, semi-structured interviews with heads and other staff, and work shadowing members of the senior management teams for at least half a day, with some further interviewing as well.

Grace (1995) used data from eighty eight headteachers, to illuminate the changing nature of headship in both primary and secondary sectors. The data were collected from semi-structured interviews. Much of the study explored how heads felt about their new relationships with the governors since the 1988 Act. The changing role of the deputy head did not arise as being an issue; indeed, heads and deputies were

spoken of as if there were no distinction between them, (op.cit:82). Women headteachers were asked to comment on whether there was a female style of management and whether women have significantly different ideas about educational leadership than those held by men (p75). I am not clear why only women were asked to comment on these questions.

In an action research enquiry, Bone (1993) investigated his practice as a headteacher in a Special School. His intention was to develop a collegial management system in order that the staff worked together in the best interests of the children, and also, that through involving teachers more in planning and decision making, they would be empowered to gain greater professional expertise and satisfaction. The study presents a fascinating account of the development of a headteacher who, at the outset, felt that he was realising his educational intentions in his practice. As the weeks went by, he was confronted by Inspectors, teachers in his school and critical friends who reflected back to him the mismatch between his actions and what he intended. It is interesting that Bone used his deputy head as a critical friend and also a woman teacher who was not a member of his senior management team. The study highlighted self reflection as an important process in improving practice and in this respect is similar to the accounts in 'As Leaders Learn' (Donaldson and Marnick 1995). These stories reveal strongly reflexive studies of leaders learning from practice, and bringing about change in their school, but are limited by their disregard for the literature which might have informed their thinking.

In some of the more recent literature on headship an attempt has been made to recognise a female perspective on leadership. This contrasts with those studies that have presented their discourse androcentrically, which Hough (1986) has defined as seeing the world and defining reality through a male lens. Studies by Evetts (1994), Wallace and Hall (1994), and Ribbins and Marland (1994) all used a balanced gender cohort and provided interesting ethnographic accounts of headship. Wallace and Hall made a significant contribution to exploring the workings of senior management teams, but only Bone (1993), in his action research enquiry, gave an insight into the complexities of improving his practice of management through self study. Some of the studies touched on the working relationship of the head with the deputies, but the leadership role of the deputy, which is dependent on the beliefs, values and actions of the head, is not considered. In my continued search for research studies which could inform

my own perspective as a woman deputy head using action research to bring about change in my school, I moved on to the literature of women in educational leadership.

#### Gender and Educational Leadership.

The studies of women in educational leadership since 1980 in the United Kingdom include those of NUT 1980, Cunnison 1985, Evetts 1986, 1987, 1991 and 1994, Johnston 1986, Byrne-Whyte 1987, Ball 1987, Gray 1987, Grant 1989, McBurney and Hough 1989, Jayne 1989, Weightman 1989, Al-Khalifa and Mignuiolos 1990, Jones 1990, Powney and Weiner 1991, Acker 1992, Lyons and West 1992, Adler, Laney, and Packer 1993, Wallace and Hall 1994, and Ribbins and Marland 1994. In America, the literature is more extensive (see Shakeshaft, 1993:47-63) and in Australia, Blackmore, 1989, offers some interesting insights into the use of power by women. Outside education, Marshall (1984) working in the field of organisational behaviour, makes a significant contribution to the debate.

The studies that interest me fall mainly into two categories, firstly, the 'difference' factor; whether women lead and manage in different ways from men, and secondly, the issue of under-representation of women in senior positions.

#### The 'difference' factor

Hall (1993:38), in commenting on management styles and whether there are differences between men and women, said that 'some comparative studies and discussions since 1980 hint at differences but the empirical base is thin'. She criticised studies by Cunnison 1985, Johnston, 1986, Weightman 1989, Jayne 1989, Jones 1990, Powney and Weiner 1991, because they are 'based on questionnaires or interviews, not observation'. She hopes that a study which is currently being undertaken by the National Development Centre for School Management and Policy at Bristol University, in which observation and interview will form the basis of an exploration into some of the tentative claims which are emerging from earlier studies about women headteachers, will fill this gap.

Gray (1987) described secondary schools as environments where the predominant culture is one of control, and primary schools as characterised by their nurturing qualities, and he ascribed masculinity



to control and femininity to nurture. Jayne (1989), in a small scale study of primary school managers, claimed that 'men tell, women only use coercion as a last resort' (p111), and that because women have less power in society, 'they are less likely to abuse it when they have it' (Hall, 1993:41). In a larger study of 'managing women', Adler, Laney and Packer (1993:16) quoted a woman head of department in further education as using 'male tactics':

'I am authoritarian. Women have to be tough. The reality is that the buck stops here and participation is an ideal.'

Aspects of these reports can be criticised. For example, Hall (1993:40) pointed out that the Gray study is not research based. The Gray and Jayne studies could be criticised because they have presented the very complex issue of masculine and feminine styles of leadership simplistically. Stereotypical masculine and feminine characteristics are not simple concepts, and may co-exist in the practice of both men and women. To equate secondary schools to being masculine and controlling, is a generalisation which takes us back into history by about twenty years.

Al-Khalifa and Migniuolos (1990) took a similar view to that of Gray, in that they said that 'the association of masculinity, male authority and school leadership is pervasive in the life of the school,' and they related management to task orientation, rationality in problem solving, and emotional detachment, after management theorists like Getzels and Guba (1954), Halpin (1966), Fiedler (1967) and Maslow (1954). Lyon and West (1992) in higher education, and Marshall (1984), also noted the association of management with masculinity. Hall said (1993:p36), there was 'no firm research base to support empirically the association of one set of qualities (such as detachment, task directiveness and rationality) with men or women'. However, there is a commonly held view that maleness and management go well together. Are women capable of breaking successfully into this cycle? When they do, what qualities do they bring to the role? Do they, as Marshall said, 'bring their femaleness with its connotations and status in society with them when they enter organisations' (1984:4), or do they as Ball (1987) suggested, have to behave 'like men' in order to succeed? Marshall found that women managers prefer what she called a 'communion' approach, in which power 'is used co-operatively, based on joint

ownership, directed towards influence and expressed in the individual's quality of being rather than it being competitive and controlling,' (Hall, op.cit.:41) and this power-sharing approach ties in with 'leadership styles that are democratic, collegial, open, consultative and team oriented' (Hall 1993:41) which Bolam (1993) found in effectively managed schools.

Byrne-Whyte (1987) supported an 'innate differences' standpoint by suggesting that women prefer to avoid competition and conflict, and called this the 'moral superiority view'. Cunnison's ethnographic account of career women in a school (1985) showed how they felt the need to deny their female life experiences (collecting the children, doing the domestic tasks), and that they had worked out alternative (and maybe more effective) ways of disciplining pupils, 'who were more used to the literally heavy handed approach of their male colleagues'.

There seems to be considerable research that suggests that men and women take different leadership roles, but I think the 'essentialist' view that women are naturally different from men is problematic, as there are too many exceptions to the 'rule'. According to Hall (1993:37) women's different life experiences may influence the way in which they undertake the job of managing. She said research is needed into the characteristics that women demonstrate in leadership positions, whether these are exclusive to women and whether they promote effective management.

Wallace and Hall's study of senior management teams (1994:38) suggested that schools have changed considerably recently. The study showed that, in the schools involved in the research, the stereotypical role of the female deputy had gone, and that the men and women who made up the teams 'had made a commitment to teamwork. It emerged that they shared common professional values about collaboration, equity and collective responsibility, that dominated their separate private beliefs about men's and women's behaviour at work.'.

Wallace and Hall found that teamwork promoted collaboration rather than competition, and that the 'androgynous manager' (derived from the work of Sandra Bem 1977), was one who could draw on a range of strengths, from stereotypically female ones to stereotypically male ones. It was not thought

helpful to define the qualities of collegiality and co-operation as either male or female ways of working. Wallace and Hall said that leadership in a senior management team approach had shifted into an androgynous model, in which it was possible for leaders 'to exhibit the wide range of qualities which are present in both men and women.' (Wallace and Hall, 1994:39), and to draw on traditionally male or female qualities as and when the situation demanded. One of the dangers of the debate about male/female qualities or ways of behaving has been that stereotyping of sex roles has led people to think of extremes of behaviour, whereas there has always been a huge overlap of male/female skills and qualities, and it is these that an effective leader should draw upon. This suggests that senior management teams should work towards identifying unnecessary gender stereotypical behaviour, and changing it. Wallace and Hall gave an example of a team in which male values were accepted as the norm, and the one female member needed to fit into this environment. The female SMT member said

'And the jokes, the wit and the repartee are pretty male, I think. Whereas there is a total awareness that I am there and nothing offensive is ever said, and there is nothing I can take exception to, men use patterns of language and modes of behaviour socially that are very different from those that women use. And sometimes I feel at a disadvantage. On the whole, women don't shout jokes at one another across the room, which is what men tend to do. And I find it difficult to join that sort of repartee.' (op cit. p39)

I would take issue with several aspects of this woman's thinking about her experiences. Whilst Wallace and Hall advocated an androgynous approach through senior management teams, I do not accept that being excluded, as this woman plainly was ('I find it difficult to join that sort of repartee') represents effective leadership of the team. The leader should be sensitive to the needs of all members, not just the ones who have numerical advantages; such leadership behaviour as is shown here reinforces stereotypical male, dominating behaviour. However, I think the woman SMT member was also showing stereotypical female characteristics when she said 'there is nothing I can take exception to' in that she had a limited conception of what was offensive. Had she been so socialised to accept that when men get together it is 'natural' for them to behave in this manner? I do not think it is the case that 'men use patterns of language and modes of behaviour socially that are very different from those that

women use'. It is probably true that some men do, and the ones she worked with evidently did, but my experience suggests that it is not so much 'men' who do this, but 'some men'. The ones I work with have only occasionally excluded me through language or behaviour, but if they did, I would confront them with how their behaviour seemed to me, we would talk it through, and I would expect some changes! Unless, that is, they were able to persuade me that I had overreacted to what they had done or said.

I think this highlights an important issue for me. My theoretical standpoint, derived from reflecting on my experiences and discussing them with my colleagues on numerous occasions, is that there are considerable differences between people, some of which might be due to their gender-role socialisation, some to their personalities, some to their experiences and so on, but these differences are not innate, and they are not gender specific. If that is the case - that differences between leaders are not due to their gender, I might go on to argue that therefore there would be no significant difference in whether female voices are heard in leadership positions in school or not, and it becomes an argument that might support the view that it doesn't matter if women are under-represented in 'top positions'.

#### The under-representation of women in senior positions

I believe it does matter that women are under-represented at senior management level. In 1992, the last year for which DFE figures are available, 21.8% of secondary schools were headed by women, and 78.2% by men; figures given by SHA in June 1995, showed 25% of their headteacher members are female, 75% male; and of the deputies, 37% are female, 63% male. The quotation from the SMT member above is evidence which suggests to me that if there were more 'aware' women in these positions, they would be better able to moderate the stereotypical male behaviour which, if not challenged, may not even be recognised. If there is no such moderation, then the androgynous manager runs the risk of becoming the stereotypical male manager. In fact, Riley (1994:90-1) warned that there is already a move away from the 'sharing -consultative' mode of leadership to a new image in which 'leaders are tough, abrasive financial entrepreneurs managing the new competitive education markets', and this will inevitably disadvantage women as the 'male-competition' view of leadership dominates and overcomes the 'female-caring' view.

In their study of senior management teams Wallace and Hall (1994:38) found that many women in senior positions did not recognise the influence of gender on their working environment, and this finding was supported by those of Grace (1995:189) and Evetts (1994:90-91). Researchers trying to account for the under-representation of women in influential positions in education have investigated career paths. For instance Evetts looked at men and women headteachers' careers, equal opportunities policies, women's 'career breaks' and whether there were gender differences in leadership styles. She found that the career break added a positive dimension to women's career experiences and that although it was difficult to 'demonstrate conclusively that there are consistent gender differences in styles of leadership, it is not difficult to show gender differences in the experience of headship,' (Evetts 1994:89). Powney and Weiner (1991) used in-depth interviews to uncover strategies used by women and men in combating problems such as stereotyping, patronage, tokenism and exploitation once they had achieved senior positions.

Ozga (1993) talked to one female head and one deputy head about their career path autobiographies. Adler, Laney and Packer (1993) collected information from eighty five women in management positions, and engaged in some in-depth interviews. They concluded 'we found.....many significant differences as well as some similarities.....we aimed to give these women in education a voice and make them more visible' (p xiii).

Grant (1989) researched 'career ambitious teachers', to see whether women's career routes to the 'top' were structured and planned like those of men in research carried out by Lyons and McLeary (1980) and in Ball's (1987) case studies. Grant thought that women deputies had not followed a 'career ambitious route' but had been responsive to numerous external influences, resulting in complex career structures. She noted that with an increase in the numbers of women deputies in post their marginalisation should become a thing of the past. She also said that the women in her survey were not interested in exercising power for its own sake, but felt they could use it democratically for the good of all. Grant (op.cit.:121) quoted a woman deputy as saying 'yes, power motivated me. Power in terms of scope, ability to change the world, ability to influence institutions to be more just, fair and caring.' The

problem in this argument is to distinguish 'good' power, and 'bad' power. I think it should be recognised that power is important in schools and it is traditionally associated with maleness, which is why women need to be strong in asserting their fair share of it, so that they are heard alongside and equally with their male colleagues. One of the reasons why women have been marginalised in school hierarchies is that their voices were not heard in important and influential debates (Ball, 1987:208). According to Litawski (1993), one quarter of the advertisements she analysed described 'low level operational tasks' and indicated that a woman was needed to fulfil them, and McBurney and Hough (1989:118) warned aspiring women deputies that stereotyping indicated in the job description might well lead to expectations which could restrict women from playing a full part in a senior management team. Weightman (1989) pointed to the middle management posts often held by women as being cross-school responsibilities, rather than as preparation for deputy headship through straightforward heads of academic (important) departments, posts often held by men.

Research studies by Turner and Clift (1988) showed evidence of 'gender stereotyping' in appraisal reports, which might indicate that women do not get the active support they need to pursue careers at a senior level, and studies from outside education showed the need for female mentors to support potential leaders (McKeen and Burke 1989; Arnold and Davidson, 1990), but that there were not sufficient highly placed women to go around. This all perpetuates the difficulty of women's voices being heard at a senior level, and must apply equally well to schools, where, even in the latest study by Wallace and Hall (1994) although the researchers found six schools in which the headteacher roles were held by three men and three women, the senior management teams were heavily male dominated.

On the grounds of fairness it matters that women are so under-represented in senior management positions. Why should the opportunity to fulfil themselves in leadership roles be denied to 49% of teachers in secondary schools? Why should only 1% of women teachers become heads, when 3.6% of male teachers become heads? And at the other end of the scale, 36% of women have no incentive allowance compared with only 22% of men (these figures are taken from the DFE, 1992).

What is the significance of being a woman and being engaged in this action research study? A simple answer would be that my action research enquiry turns on its head the androcentrism associated with some other studies on leadership. I am looking at my experiences through a female lens, and I am doing my best to recognise and challenge institutional sexism and disadvantages to women and girls.

One of the difficulties of seeing through my female lens is in interpreting what I see. Feminist theory (Jaggar 1983, Eisenstein 1984, Griffiths 1995) talks of the different kinds of Western feminism - liberal, Marxist, radical and socialist. Radical feminists believe in the theory of difference from men - that women are different - they have different values and abilities, and that they are dominated by men. There was a time when I would have agreed with all of that - and the time was around 1980-5, when I felt dominated by men and by the unequal opportunities I saw in the workplace i.e. the school. Because I am in a different position now in relation to my role in a different school, and in relation to my colleagues in school, I feel differently about it. So it is sometimes difficult to untangle whether I feel different because I have entered a man's world and am playing the game by the men's rules (see Ball 1987:207), or whether, because I am now in a position to influence men's thinking, I feel I am playing a proactive role in improving female experiences throughout the system.

In this connection it is interesting to see that in his study of headteachers, Grace found that of his twenty four women heads, most did not comment on gender relations, thereby indicating that it was not a relevant issue to them. Wallace and Hall also found 'little evidence of a feminist discourse among women headteachers' (Grace, 1995:189). Evetts recorded a range of views amongst women heads, from gender not being an issue at all, to women heads feeling harassed by sexist comments and behaviour towards them. One woman head for whom gender was (apparently) unproblematic is quoted as saying, ' I am very much not a feminist except that I totally believe in female equality.....I like clothes, I like perfume, I like jewellery, I like men. Apart from that I live my life as a man.....' (Evetts, 1994:90-1).

This quotation gives some very mixed messages, which indicate an ambiguity of values, and it ties in with what Wallace and Hall said about their SMTs which were headed by men and women in equal

numbers - 'We would be naive to accept the almost total denial by most respondents (women and men) of the influence of gender on team behaviour as evidence that gender differentiation did not exist.' (1994:38). My recent experiences suggest that gender is an issue that is raised often in discussion with my senior colleagues, in relation to many different aspects of school life, but that the gender differentiated behaviour within the team shows itself mostly in our ways of communicating. This is outside the scope of my study now, but a considerable literature on the subject is reviewed by Susan Case in 'Women in Management', edited by Davidson and Burke, (1994:144 - 167).

Returning to the theme of radical feminism, and the differences between males and females, there are continua of maleness and femaleness, and because society is used to stereotyping behaviour, some behaviour is closely associated with one or the other gender. Griffiths (1989:290) talked of the need to re-value femaleness, to re-value the qualities associated with 'female' - dependence, emotions, nurturance. She questioned the superiority of independence, and the bipolarity of independence-dependence, claiming that dependence can act to free people: '.....these dependent close relationships often feel as though they increase freedom more than they diminish it. I would argue that this feeling reflects the truth of the matter. Only by being able to become dependent on others can most people (perhaps all people) conduct their lives freely and happily.'

So, if femaleness is to be re-valued, where better to re-value it than in a position of influence within a school? For most feminists the association of hierarchy with power is one which raises conflicts of values, but for me, I see my position as offering opportunities for setting in place the culture of change.

#### Research from abroad

In concluding this section, I want to refer, briefly, to the work of Charol Shakeshaft in the United States, and Jill Blackmore in Australia, both of whom have been very influential in this field of study.

Shakeshaft reviewed research on women leaders in educational settings in the 1980s, and she claimed that, on the variables studied, the following synthesis (Shakeshaft, 1987, Driver, 1990, Ortiz and



Marshall 1988) indicated some gender differences between men and women (taken from Shakeshaft, 1993:46-63):

- women spend more time with people, communicate more, care more about individual differences, are concerned more with teachers and marginal students, and motivate more than men
- women administrators are more engaged in teaching, and show greater knowledge of teaching methods than men
- women co-ordinate, monitor and evaluate more than men
- women are more likely to help new teachers
- women are more likely to develop a more orderly, safer and quieter school climate
- academic achievement is higher
- women show a more participatory, democratic style of leadership, that encourages inclusiveness
- their staff are committed to the goals of learning, and share their professional goals

Shakeshaft's central thesis was that women managed in accordance with a female culture of democracy, participation, caring, relationality to others, and the expression of feelings. She gave detailed explanations as to why there were not more women school administrators, including the devaluation of women in selection procedures, women's lack of self confidence, their lack of high profile roles in schools and their family responsibilities.

Blackmore (1989:93-129) asked for a much more radical shift of thinking in reconceptualising leadership in schools. From her feminist perspective, she argued, power and control over other people needed to be redefined, so that leaders empower and facilitate from the centre, rather than use power over people to lead from the front. Blackmore discussed the trait theory of leadership, referring to 'masculinist' characteristics, and behaviourist theory in which boys learn to be rational, logical, objective and to suppress their feelings, whilst girls learn to cultivate their emotions at the expense of their rationality, to be nurturing, dependent and passive. Blackmore referred to Hartsock (1983), Noddings (1985) and Ferguson (1984) in her exposition of the feminist view of power, arguing for 'a different type of leadership in a caring community, to recognise that individuals can and do act in a powerful manner but with good intention for the community.....' (p122). She called for leadership to be redefined as 'the

ability to act with others to do things that could not be done by an individual alone. Leadership, therefore, would be a form of empowerment and not of dominance or control (Ferguson 1984:206). Hartsock took up this point when she claimed that 'to lead is to be at the centre of the group, rather than in front of the others' (Hartsock, 1983:8). (Blackmore, op.cit.:123)

This concept of leadership interests me particularly as it has close affinity to how I wanted to work with teachers in school, involving them in reflecting about teaching and learning situations, encouraging them to contribute their views and to take responsibility for enabling change to take place. My intentions have been to involve teachers in a collegial form of management. This thesis traces my development in enabling this to happen through establishing learning communities in my school.



*My headteacher at Roseacre believed in teamwork - and this was the first time in my long professional history that I experienced the real intention of the Head to create and work through teams, and I found this incredibly stimulating. The Head and three Deputies were a team, drawn together by a common philosophy, and I had responsibility for a team of Heads of Year, who had also been selected to support this philosophy. So I was a member of a team and leading a different one, but one team interlinked with the other, and the Heads of Year and I spent much time working out how we could put into practice the values and standards which had been exposed in discussions between the Head and Deputies.*

*Yet in the early stages of my deputy headship I was concerned about the support I was offering for both teachers and pupils. As I became more proficient at my job, I knew I was using my knowledge-in-practice and my intuitive knowledge increased substantially as a result of my experiences and my thinking about them. But my concerns were major issues which did not respond immediately to my initial thinking and actions - they remained a source of value conflict.*

*What I was doing, in fulfilling the demands of my role, and in collaboration with the rest of the management team, was not yet empowering colleagues as I would have wished.*

*Looking at what was going on in the school after about six months in the job I was unhappy that the children behaved inconsiderately towards each other and towards their teachers, and that they failed to study seriously thereby denying themselves the opportunity to succeed. I saw how disappointed they were with failure, but I recognised that they did not put the necessary effort into what they were doing. I was distressed that the teachers suffered because of the behaviour of the pupils, and because they have been forced to confront the lack of success of the children in public examinations. They were perplexed about how to make improvements, and they said it was the children's fault and that they did not work hard enough. There was an impasse, as the children were not motivated to 'work harder' - and what do we mean by this anyhow? - so neither children nor teachers experienced success.*