

Transcending the Limitations of the Social Sciences: Insight, Understanding, and the Humanities in Educational Administration

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This article provides a rationale for the employment of the humanities in expanding the ways in which those associated with education can come to know educational administration. It does so by illustrating how the humanities can overcome the limitations of the subject-object duality that is a part of most current approaches to the study of administration. The new insights and understandings that will inevitably accompany exposure to the humanities will provide opportunities for administrators to develop a philosophical approach to administration that will assist them in dealing with the moral issues that constitute an important part of their daily regimen.

Cet article veut montrer comment le recours aux humanités peut ouvrir des avenues à ceux qui, en éducation, viendront en contact avec l'administration éducationnelle. Ceci se fait en illustrant comment les humanités peuvent surmonter les limites de la dualité sujet-objet qui fait normalement partie des approches à l'étude de l'administration. Les nouvelles saisies et compréhensions qui accompagneront inévitablement la fréquentation des humanités donnera aux administrateurs l'occasion de développer une approche philosophique de l'administration qui les aidera à composer avec les réalités morales qui constituent une partie importante de leur domaine.

The only genuine joy you have is in the rare moments when you feel that although we may know in part, we are also part of what we know.

Northrup Frye (1963)

Few approaches to the study and practice of educational administration over the past century have been able to penetrate the thick cloud covering we know as social science that envelops the field. Strategies for the exploration of educational administration based in the humanities, for example, are few and far between. Despite the efforts of the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) in the 1960s (Culbertson,

1962, 1963; Farquhar, 1970) and of others in the 1980s (Bauman, 1987; Hoekema, 1987; Payne, 1984; Popper, 1984), to introduce the humanities into preparation programs, the two remain in what Brieschke (1990) refers to as an "uneasy tension." This is unfortunate, for the humanities have much to offer those who seek a deeper understanding of educational administration. We need only acknowledge the reactions of some of Brieschke's students to her use of fiction in her preparation class to get a glimpse of the possibilities that strategies of these sorts can offer.

In what follows, I make a case for the use of the humanities in the study and practice of educational administration. I do so by illustrating how the humanities can offer a perspective on administration not accessible to the standard variations of the social sciences so common in the field today. This is not to say that the social sciences do not have their uses. They do. This article, however, highlights the attributes of the humanities. It demonstrates how they can provide fresh new insights into administration by overcoming the limitations of the Cartesian duality that dogs social scientific approaches, and by extending the opportunity for individuals to alter the ways they experience life and understand themselves. Acquiring insights of this sort can be particularly useful in assisting administrators and others in developing a philosophical approach to administration that prepares them to deal with the moral side of the enterprise. First, I describe the limitations of the traditional social scientific approaches to education administration. Next, the work of Heidegger (1962, 1971, 1977) and Gadamer (1975) is used to illustrate how the humanities can open up new frontiers for those who immerse themselves in these media. Finally, I illustrate how three different sources can accomplish these ends and go on to demonstrate how they can assist administrators in coping with the moral aspects of administration.

The Limits of Social Science

Ironically enough, the very linchpin of tradition social science — subject/object dualism — also constitutes the source of its limitations. While the Cartesian view of the world makes objectivity a possibility, at least in principle, it also limits the ways those interested in the human

condition explore and portray existence, while at the same time, structuring the manner in which readers, for example, experience forms of representation that are based on this rationale.

Cartesian dualism is frequently associated with the work of René Descartes (1968). Although this world view predates Descartes, reaching back to the early Greeks, it was Descartes who formulated it in rigorous fashion, bringing to the surface many of its underlying assumptions. At the heart of Descartes's enterprise was a desire to provide a firm foundation upon which human beings could base knowledge. Towards this end he sought to supply a rationale for the establishment of an Archimedean point to which all knowledge claims could be referred. Bernstein (1983) maintains, however, that Descartes search for such a foundation was rooted in much more than simply an obsession to establish a way to solve metaphysical and epistemological problems. Descartes, he believes, was motivated by a longing for a source of stability upon which we as human beings could secure our lives against the unknown perils that threaten us daily. A fixed foundation for our knowledge would deliver us from "the dread of madness and chaos where nothing is fixed, where we can neither touch bottom nor support ourselves on the surface" (Bernstein, 1983, p. 18). In the end Descartes quest to establish scientific certitude would, so he believed, be underwritten by God and guaranteed by the structure of mathematics.

Descartes foundation required a framework that would illuminate not only the nature of knowledge, but also the means through which this knowledge could be acquired. To accomplish this end he employed his methodological procedure of doubt to reduce human existence to two distinct realms. By describing the nature and extent of the mind and body, he brought to the surface the underlying assumptions of a view that recognized the separation of subject and object. He maintained "that those things which we conceive clearly and distinctly as being diverse substances, as we regard mind and body to be, are really substances distinct one from the other" (Descartes, 1968, pp. 140-141). On the one hand, we have an external reality that has a static, obdurate, spatial, and determinate nature or essence, and on the other, human consciousness.

The implied relationship between the two realms which Descartes identified has been captured in a number of different metaphors. Rorty (1979), for example, maintains that in this view the function of the mind is to mirror nature. The validity of knowledge depends upon how well consciousness can generate a picture that corresponds to, or mirrors this external reality. Steiner (1978) refers in this case to a process where knowledge is attained in a leap from subject to object — from an internal sphere to an external one — and back again. Finally, Steiner also refers to Cartesian rationality as giving rise to the idea of an "archetypical figure of the eye reaching out to an object along an exploratory light ray" (p. 78). These and other metaphors illuminate Descartes basic theme — that knowledge is acquired as humanity's cognitive faculties lay hold of those substantive objects that constitute the world about us.

In sum, Descartes was able to provide a foundation for scientific knowledge by generating a framework that revolved around one fundamental feature — the mutual autonomy of subject and object. As such, scientific objectivity could only be achieved as long as the subject did not share anything with the object. Descartes legacy and the Cartesian duality upon which he based his ideas would exert considerable influence on those who followed. Even though many philosophers and scientists of various genres failed to wholeheartedly embrace his claim, the problems, metaphors, and questions that he bequeathed have provided a basis for constructing knowledge of the world that persists even today.

Cartesian Duality and the Study of Educational Administration

The study of educational administration, like so many other social sciences, revolves around this Cartesian duality. The more traditional approaches that employ the methods of the natural sciences clearly base their methods on such a rationale. Hoy and Miskel (1982) boldly claim that their desire is to make the study and practice of educational administration "less of an art and more of a science" (p. vii). Social scientists of this persuasion pay rigorous attention to research instruments to cleanse their empirical projects of any and all potential contamination by all too human researchers in their efforts to establish laws, or at least

some kind of regularities that inhere in what they would regard as the substantive reality under investigation. Failure to purify the researchers in this manner jeopardizes the objectivity of the study, and in their view, threatens the credibility of the results. The separation of the subject and object — in this case, the researcher and the researched — becomes not only a basic assumption, but a necessary condition for studies of this nature. Indeed the crusade for control which motivates an approach of this nature requires this sort of framework. To abandon it would threaten the prospects for controlling and manipulating men and women (Ryan, 1988).

Not all researchers today follow this model, however. With the influence of cultural anthropology, critical social science, social phenomenology, and symbolic interactionism, among other such disciplines, different approaches have taken root in the study of educational administration (MacPherson, 1987). As the popularity of these approaches increased the qualitative methods associated with them gradually gained a greater acceptance in the field. Even though various qualitative researchers do acknowledge that the researcher does inevitably influence the outcome of any study, the Cartesian duality continues to infiltrate such approaches. This rationality is perhaps most evident in the efforts of those who sought to promote the credibility of these approaches in the wake of challenges from the dominant school of thought in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Guba and Lincoln (1981), LeCompte and Goetz (1982), and Miles and Huberman (1984), for example, offer guidelines for qualitative researchers to follow that include provisions for trustworthiness, applicability, consistency, neutrality, triangulation, validity, and reliability that guarantee the integrity of the results of empirical inquiry. What these authors are saying is that accepted practice requires researchers to follow steps that will allow them to accurately provide a picture of a partially independent — or at least an agreed upon — reality (Smith & Heshusius, 1986). Miles and Huberman (1984, p. 23) actually go so far as to say that established methods can prevent researchers from falling prey to bias, self-delusion, and deception so they will be better able to discover law like regularities in the social world. All proponents of qualitative research do not, however, ape the traditional approaches to this extent. (See, for example, Eisner, 1981, 1983; Van Maanen, 1988; Barone, 1980, 1983). Even so, any

individual who engages in an empirical enterprise of this sort is obliged to abide by a whole range of rules — both tacit and explicit. Qualitative researchers are constrained by rules that dictate what is to count as data, how data is collected, how long they spend at a particular site, how they document their interactions, the nature of data analysis, the nature of theory they employ, the interaction of theory and data, among many others (Howe & Eishenhart, 1990). Like those employed in the natural sciences, these rules work to remove the hand of the researcher from what is to be produced. By referring research procedures to impersonal rules, accepted practice constrains the actions of investigators in the hopes that what is produced as knowledge is based more on the characteristics of the external world than it is on the idiosyncratic or illusory tendencies of a fallible human being.

The Cartesian rationality also extends to philosophical and theoretical treatments of educational administration. Those who focus their efforts in this area (as I am doing at this moment) attempt to still the perpetual flux of time in which human existence is caught. These individuals venture to step outside of the flux and to capture it in a form that provides some sort of picture or explanation of a now static entity. When Greenfield (1986, 1991) elaborates on the constructed nature of school realities, when Hodgkinson (1986) addresses the issue of value, or when Evers and Lakomski (1991) expound upon the coherentist view, they are attempting to provide a snapshot of human existence, to capture the way the world really works.

Most present-day approaches to educational administration, whether they be traditional, field based, theoretical, or philosophical in nature, display the unique qualities associated with the Cartesian rationality. Social scientists, scholars, and practitioners who operate within these patterns organize designs, methods, and presentations of results of investigations around the assumption that there is at least a degree of separation possible between investigators/informants and the world they live in. Established methods (supposedly) enable scholars to disentangle or distance themselves from what they are investigating and to present a (supposedly) accurate or agreed upon picture of this external world. These procedures generally

demand that social scientists hold back the more personal elements of their experience including, for example, emotional reactions in favor of the more public and hence verifiable elements of the matters under investigation. Consequently, the final texts of such investigations also display this rationale. Because the language scholars use to write research reports, journal articles, and scholarly books is designed to portray the more public elements of situations which social scientists explore (and experience), they are generally unable to capture the spirit of such situations which always carry with them a personal component. The result, naturally, is inevitably a narrow and sterile portrayal of human existence, one that evokes in readers only a glimmer of what it may be like to experience first hand the situation under study. Although these approaches do have their uses, they may well obscure other fundamental aspects of life. By trying to capture the nature of an external world, social scientific approaches drive a wedge between subject and object, closing off areas of human existence to those whom this literature is intended to inform. Overcoming these limitations is a task worth pursuing, and one that Heidegger and Gadamer believe can be accomplished through the humanities.

Acquiring Insight and Understanding Through the Humanities

Heidegger (1962, 1971, 1977) maintains that the humanities possess qualities that allow those who experience these forms of expression to overcome the limitations associated with a "world out there" view of existence. He is convinced that the humanities have the capacity not only to capture life in ways that the social sciences cannot, but also have the potential to attune men and women to elements of their experience which they have either long forgotten or taken for granted. The humanities are able to accomplish this feat by making it possible for us to think of life in fundamentally different terms than we customarily do. According to Heidegger the humanities, as works of art, have the capacity to provoke in men and women an astonishment at their very existence. In other words, they prompt us to question the mere fact that there is an *is* — to stand in the strangeness and wonder of the "isness" of existence. The humanities, according to Heidegger, can extend to men and women new and fresh perspectives on life by transforming our accustomed ties to the world and

transporting us out of the ordinary to a world where everything is infinitely new and uncanny.

Gadamer's interpretation of Heidegger's notion of art provides a way of understanding just how this process might work from an existential viewpoint (Caputo, 1987). He sees the humanities as a vehicle not only for conceiving of existence in different ways, but also as a means for understanding ourselves. For Gadamer, the humanities constitute a transforming experience in which those who partake come to a richer understanding of themselves, others, and their world. The humanities induce such experiences because they have the capacity to permit individuals to "disforget" or remember what has long been forgotten, and in doing so, allow them to renew themselves, and to see everything with fresh eyes. Remembering, however, requires one to embark on a journey that involves both an excursion and return. Those who immerse themselves in works of art depart into the strange and unfamiliar where they eventually become more at home than they were before this experience. What once seemed foreign now becomes not just a new home, but a real home. Gadamer portrays this process in vivid terms.

At one blow, the power of artwork rips the person experiencing it out of the context of his life and yet at the same time, relates him back to the whole of his existence. (In Weinsheimer, 1985, p. 88)

In other words, artworks transport us not to another world, but to our own. Artistic experiences do not constitute an adventure that produces temporary intoxication, dreams, or hallucinations, but a journey that carries us to a world that we recognize as our own. The joy of recognition occurs, so Gadamer believes, when we are in a position to claim that "Yes that is the way it really is." Such a condition can be characterized by immediate and far-reaching insight into situations in which we had previously only a tenuous grasp or understanding of. Now they are seen in a much clearer light and often from a very different perspective. This recognition becomes possible because we are now better able to recognize ourselves as part of our world. The humanities provide the medium, according to Gadamer, through which men and women are presented with the truth of their world

and in which they can recognize themselves more profoundly. This accomplishment stands in marked contrast to most genres of social science that actually work to produce a separation of the self and the world out there.

To sum up, the humanities have much to offer those concerned with the human condition. First and foremost, works of art have the capacity to pervert or side step the dominant social scientific discourse that induces and legitimates the rift which men and women experience between themselves and their world. In doing so, literature, among other forms of art, has the power to evoke in consumers an experience of felt strangeness, a feeling of awe or astonishment at our existence in ways that science cannot do. As such, these forms of expression can reorient men and women to give them a fresh new outlook or perspective on their day-to-day lives. Aspects of individual's lives that have been forgotten, or more likely merely taken for granted, emerge from their hidden domains to take on new significance. Works of art can also extend to men and women the opportunity for self-understanding by giving us a chance to understand ourselves in ways which we had not done before. As we lose ourselves in a work of art we are often prompted to reflect upon our relationship with, and our responses to, the world about us from perspectives that are entirely new. In the final analysis the humanities extend to us the opportunity not only to critically reflect on the human condition, but also, and perhaps more importantly, to gain valuable insight into ourselves.

The Humanities

The humanities can provide educators with useful knowledge of themselves and of the human condition. Teachers, administrators, and social scientists alike have much to learn from forms of expression that transcend the rules and the philosophical bases of social sciences. This does not mean that such works be confined to exclusively evoke images of inschool phenomena, although such efforts are not to be ruled out. Rather educators ought to be exposed to a wide range of sources that provide insight into the human condition in general with the assurance that the features of interest will inevitably surface in classrooms and schools.

Slipperjack's (1987) *Honour the Sun*, Orwell's (1965) *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, and Eco's (1990) *Foucault's Pendulum* represent three such literature sources. Although these works do not focus exclusively on the school, they nevertheless provide precious glimpses into the worlds of special people. Not only teachers and administrators of schools, but all those interested in education, have much to learn from these works. Needless to say, these fictional treatments do not follow the rules of social sciences. And because they do not, endow readers with special insights that cannot be conveyed through traditional social science.

In contrast to many social scientists who as much as possible try to remove themselves from the final product, these artists attempt to put as much of themselves as they can into their works. Ironically, it may be this very factor that extends to consumers their special dimensions. Such is the case with Slipperjack. Her presence is very apparent in *Honour the Sun*, and as such, she is able to convey the experiences of the Owl, a young Native Indian girl, in such a way that it is virtually impossible for readers to distance themselves from the community situation described here. Slipperjack transports the reader to the community. We are there. We feel the light evening breeze on our face and listen to it rustle the leaves. We can smell the grass, the wood smoke, and sense the special quality of the air after a rain. But this is much more than merely a sensual experience — it is also an emotional one. It moves us. We feel sad, desolate when the Owl makes her last visit to the community, fear and anger when she and her family are threatened, and amusement and joy at the lighter and more pleasant moments. Slipperjack opens up a world for us. She provides us not with a one dimensional objective view of a Native Indian community that requires distance from the object of interest, but one where readers can experience this world as they experience their own world — complete with emotions, senses, and thoughts. As Slipperjack spins her tale we become part of the community, just as the community becomes part of us.

Slipperjack also extends to readers a chance to understand themselves in ways they had not done before. She is able to do this by portraying the experiences of the Owl in such a way as to allow us to identify with her.

We can see part of ourselves in this young native person. Her compassion, her sense of humor, her inquisitive nature, and her courage are all things that we recognize to a greater or lesser extent in ourselves. It is quite possible, however, that we have never taken the time to think about or reflect upon ourselves in this way. Entangled in the press of daily life, it is more than likely that we simply pass by, or take for granted these dimensions of our existence. As Slipperjack prompts us to take a step back from the rigor of our day-to-day lives these characteristics become visible as they take on a significance that they did not previously have. An immersion in an experience of this nature highlights our commonly taken for granted daily activities, it gives us an opportunity to look at ourselves in ways we had not previously thought of, and it extends to us an opportunity to acquire additional insight into who and what we are.

Slipperjack also provides a us with a view of a component of life from a novel perspective — a view of a Native Indian community through the eyes of a young Native girl. As such it becomes much more than a description of conditions that the reader may have been exposed to before. Here we cannot simply detach ourselves from this situation, an effort that would have been easier had the account been part of an objective research report of Native Indian conditions. We are intimately involved. It is not just the Owl who is hurt, saddened, and offended, it is also we who are hurt, saddened, and offended. We take very personally what happens to the Owl because in a sense it is also happening to us. It does not matter whether these things really happened — it is up to the reader to make the connections to his or her life experiences. More than likely, however, this book will give new meaning to many of the things readers have simply taken for granted about Native people or have recognized as part of a natural occurring phenomenon. Slipperjack, in a way that no social scientific study can do, makes visible a difficult situation that many North Americans too often overlook or ignore.

Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is another source which can provide readers with insight into life and administration. This well known piece is both different from, and similar to, *Honour the Sun*. On the one hand, it shares with the latter the ways in which it interacts with readers. Like

Honour the Sun, Nineteen Eighty-Four has the capacity to overcome rifts between the readers and the text, and in doing so, provide readers with fresh opportunities to understand themselves and others from different and novel perspectives. Like Slipperjack, Orwell transports us to the novel's setting. With great skill, he presents us with images that we can almost see and feel — a desolate and decaying city, cold, stark living quarters, gin that burns your insides, the terrible crunching of bones, and the frenzied hysteria of a mob gone mad. But Orwell supplies us with much more than the capacity to experience vicariously physical sensations. He also finds ways for us to apprehend those less tangible impressions. For example, his words let us experience as many do in Oceania, the relentless, incessant, and oppressive surveillance. With Orwell's help, we can easily imagine what it's like to live under this perpetual scrutiny. Finally, we have the opportunity to emote as Winston would. We feel with him smug satisfaction as he resists authority, the joy of intimacy as his relationship with Julia blossoms, absolute terror when he is discovered, and total despair during his interrogation.

Nineteen Eighty-Four differs from *Honour the Sun*, however, in the positions it sets up for us and the types of issues it lays out for us to explore and confront. Winston's character and the circumstances in which he finds himself are very different from that of the Owl. Winston's situation also differs from that of most readers. Many people who read this book — at least those who live in Western democracies — will not have experienced the kind of oppression described here by Orwell. Even so, there are quite likely elements of the situation and of Winston's character that we can identify with. The unique position that Orwell sets up for readers will prompt many to reflect on themselves and their situations from perspectives that are either unfamiliar or long forgotten. This may be particularly true for administrators who will generally view their institutional habitats from perspectives and positions that differ radically from Winston's. To what may seem to some as an exaggerated institutional presence will be enough to prompt administrators to reflect on issues fundamental to their own experiences, such as the nature and effect of institutional commitment, the inhuman and dehumanizing tendencies of institutions, the political nature of organizations, the effects of power, the

intrusive quality of institutional life, and the morality of resistance and transgression. Like *Honour the Sun, Nineteen Eighty-Four* will quite likely encourage many of us to probe our feelings about issues and arrangements that we had previously taken for granted or believed to lack significance.

Finally, in *Foucault's Pendulum*, Eco is able to achieve similar ends by also making it possible for the reader to become personally involved in his account. Like Slipperjack and Orwell, he presents what he has to say in such a way that we are able to identify part of ourselves in the character(s), feel what they feel, and see what they see. We are also able to recognize in the text various situations that we confront from time to time. But these situations often vary from those we are used to in that they are frequently presented from very different and revealing perspectives. In this novel Eco parodies a topic that concerns both administrators and social scientists — metaphysics, or very broadly speaking, theory. He constructs his tale in such a way as to provide a unique perspective from which to understand the desire for, the construction of, and the effects of theory. We experience with Casaubon and his confederates their obsession with constructing an overarching explanation of major world events from a number of unique assumptions. We work with them as they assemble isolated bits of information, seemingly irrelevant events and a range of disparate threads, give them meaning, and eventually incorporate them into their emerging theory. We also experience with them their fascination, and later horror, as those who are desperately seeking refuge in such explanations breathe life into their fantasy and eventually bring their theorizing to an abrupt and terrible end. This unique view of theory, its construction, and effects, will prompt both practitioners and social scientists to reflect upon and question both the nature and role of theory and the empirical investigations that accompany these respective world views. Eco provides us with a sobering glimpse of an aspect of life that is increasingly being taken for granted by both practicing administrators and social scientists.

There are an infinite number of other literature sources that may provide insight into an administrator's world. Popper (1990), for example, provides a guide for the use of various classics in understanding and

dealing with administrative dilemmas that center on such phenomena as leadership, control, power, and authority, among others. In doing so he refers to such works as Sophocles' *Antigone*, Dante's *De Monarchia*, as well as the *Vicar of Bray*, *Mutiny on the Bounty*, and others. Brieschke (1990) also provides insightful instruction in the use of fiction, including novels featuring school principals (Calitri, 1958; Hawley, 1983; Ozick, 1983), in preparation courses for educational administrators.

The works of Slipperjack, Orwell, and Eco, like all other forms of art, display varying degrees of what Eco (1989) refers to as "openness." In other words, the symbolism that is embedded in figurative language requires that the work be completed by the addressee. And because the work demands a substantial input on the part of the addressee, it continues in a sense to be a work in progress. In contrast to social scientific products that exhibit static natures by attempting to step outside of time, artistic endeavors move in time with contributions from viewers/listeners/readers that continue to change as their worldly perspectives change. Administrators, or for that matter just about anyone who participates in a work of art, whether it be as a creator or as an addressee, has access to an unending source of inspiration that can continue to generate insight into the human condition as long as they are able to bring their own horizons to bear.

The Humanities and Educational Administration

What then do the humanities have to offer the field of educational administration? In particular, how can they assist administrators (and social scientists) to do the things that they do? Perhaps where the humanities might best contribute to the field is in an area that has recently been the focus of increasing attention — the moral domain. Indeed Hodgkinson (1978, 1991) Greenfield (1986), Foster (1986), and Maxcy (1991), to name a few, steadfastly maintain that the most significant aspect of educational administration is its moral rather than technical nature. In this view, administrators are constantly faced with value issues that cannot be resolved through technical means. An important concern of the field then becomes not necessarily one of providing administrators with technical

expertise (although such expertise may be put to use from time to time), but of finding ways to assist them in coping with these value issues. Accordingly, Hodgkinson (1978) and Maxcy (1991) declare that it is to philosophy rather than science that administrators must turn if they are to come to terms with the moral side of the administrative enterprise. Acquiring philosophical skill requires, among other things, developing what Maxcy, following Smith (1956), refers to as a "philosophical mind." But unlike the technical side of administration where support systems abound, there are few resources to which administrators can turn for developing such skills. It is here that the humanities can provide invaluable assistance.

The humanities have the capacity to assist administrators in developing philosophical skills that will help them cope with the moral questions that they face day in and day out. In particular, the humanities can play an important role in nurturing philosophy's critical and reflective functions (Maxcy, 1991) and promoting philosophy's capacity to enhance communication (Burbules, 1989). Novels like the ones mentioned above can go a long way in cultivating what Maxcy (1991), following Smith (1956), believes to be the vital dimensions of a philosophical approach to administration: comprehensiveness, penetration, and flexibility. These and other such sources have the capacity to foster various qualities associated with these dimensions, including an ability to view particulars in relation to a larger field, questioning what is taken for granted or self-evident, and seeing issues as many sided. As noted above, the humanities extend to administrators opportunities to view not only educational organizations, but life itself from new and exciting perspectives. Practitioners may have occasion to see and approach their day-to-day hurdles in ways that they had not previously thought of, and to explore in earnest fresh ideas that would assist them and others in understanding the complexities of educational organizations and wrestling with the frequent value issues that arise. Exposure to the humanities may also encourage these individuals to reflect on and perhaps to question the professional values and mandates of the institutions of which they are a part. Stimuli of this nature may prompt administrators to ask themselves not only who and what they are, but why they do the things they do. Slipperjack (1987), Orwell (1965), and Eco (1990) provide administrators with the chance to critically explore and

to reflect on themselves and their situations in ways that may well assist them in coming to terms with the many moral issues which they are continually forced to confront.

The humanities also have the potential to develop the communicative possibilities inherent in a philosophical approach to administration. In particular, they can assist administrators in establishing what Burbules and Rice (1991) refer to as a dialogue across differences, a skill that is crucial for meaningful democratic leadership in an increasingly diverse society. Through its role in constructing more flexible identities, broadening our understanding of ourselves and others, and fostering more sustainable communicative practices — benefits that Burbules and Rice note actually derive from such dialogue — the humanities are able to lay the groundwork for administrators to conduct this important dialogue. In other words, these faculties can make it easier for administrators to communicate meaningfully with others who may either be different or subscribe to different positions or values.

Slipperjack (1987), Orwell (1965), and Eco (1990) all provide the resources that can assist readers with their dialogue across differences. Slipperjack leaves room for the reader to shape a more flexible identity by making it possible for us to identify with a young aboriginal girl. We see part of ourselves in her, and as such, are much more likely to incorporate in our identity elements of an aboriginal perspective rather than characterizing ourselves by virtue of the differences we see in it. In doing so, Slipperjack fosters a broader and more inclusive sense of one's self and one's relations to others. Closely associated with a more flexible identity is the capacity to broaden our understandings of ourselves and others. Placing readers in new and different situations, such as a Native community from a child's perspective, gives one cause to pause and reflect, providing as Burbules and Rice (1991) declare, opportunities for deeper understandings and a "release from the commonsense assumptions that typically frame our daily existence" (p. 405). Orwell and Eco also provide opportunities for administrators to develop more flexible identities and deeper understandings. The former does so by allowing the reader to experience life from the perspective of an oppressed member of an

institution, while the latter provides a glimpse of what it feels like to be caught in a madcap race for a nonexistent truth. These qualities can in turn assist administrators in fostering reasonable and sustainable communicative practices. Those administrators who are able to identify with a number of positions and groups, possess insight into how and why others do the things they do, and understand their own reactions to a variety of situations are more likely to develop the "communicative virtues" of tolerance, patience, and a willingness to learn that Burbules and Rice (1991) cite, than those who do not possess these qualities. Those who are in command of such virtues will find themselves equipped to develop the communicative skills necessary for establishing relations of negotiation and cooperation, and pursuing common interests. Such qualities and skills cannot but help administrators improve their dealings with various interest, community, and teacher groups, as well as individual parents, teachers, students, fellow administrators, and school board officials, among others, and assist them to confront the value issues that inevitably accompany these relationships.

Conclusion

It is perhaps time for the academic field of educational administration, an area dominated for so long by scientific practice, to acknowledge the potential contribution of the humanities. As the prospects for a social science capable of controlling men and women continue to dwindle, administrators may do well to consider these forms of expression to assist them in dealing with the many seemingly intractable problems that are part of their day-to-day activities. Indeed the humanities can help men and women face with dignity, courage, and nobility those problems that cannot be factored away through scientific means (Stunkel, 1989). They can provide us with tools to arm us against those difficulties that constitute a part of any administrator's hourly regimen by supplying the where-with-all not only to confront the imponderables of given situations, but also to act upon and to transform those unfavorable circumstances that are not consistent with our perpetually evolving visions.

I have illustrated in this article that the humanities have a legitimate claim to knowledge, even though the form that this sort of knowledge takes may be quite different from that produced within a scientific framework. The humanities however, like science, do have their limitations. Their ability, for example, to supply detailed knowledge of situations that would ordinarily be beyond our immediate experience is decidedly limited. Science, on the other hand, need not be written off on the basis of its limitations, for it has the capacity to open up a perspective on life not accessible to the humanities. Humanity has much to learn from both science and the humanities. It may well be that a blend of science and the humanities can provide a more rounded view of the world of educational institutions. Inclusion of both humanistic and scientific sources in educators' intellectual diets can only enhance their ability to provide meaningful education for all.

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