Session Title: **Performativity or Performance? A values-driven approach to delivering both diversity and equity in democratic public education systems designed for social justice.**

Authors: Fergus O’Sullivan, Associate Director, International Institute for Education Leadership, University of Lincoln, UK. [fosullivan@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:fosullivan@lincoln.ac.uk)

Edith Rusch, Associate Professor, Educational Leadership, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. [edith.rusch@unlv.edu](mailto:edith.rusch@unlv.edu)

Session Type: Point-Counter Point/Interactive Session

Topic: Policy/Societal and Cultural Influences/International Issues

Abstract: *This interactive session addressed the issue of competing values in contemporary educational leadership. It commences with a Point-Counter Point presentation of the arguments for, on the one hand, bringing in the efficiency and focus of a marketized approach to public education (Chubb and Moe 1990, 1992, Ball 2001, Lawton 2005) as against the social and moral responsibility of developing the full potential of all learners in an integrated public education system on the other hand (Wragg 2004). The ensuing debate explored the feasibility of a “third way” (Giddens 1998, 2000, Follet, 1949) in bringing together the best aspects of markets and public services whilst living with turbulent change and paradox (Zohar 1997, Wheatley 1999). The Postscript adds the authors’ reflection on the course of the session itself.*

Paper:

Since the passing of the UK Education Reform Act 1988 (ERA) and the introduction of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB 2002) in the USA, governments have increasingly brought choice and variety into the public education system, pushed funding, leadership responsibility and accountability more to school site level whilst, paradoxically, creating increasingly stringent frameworks for curriculum, teaching and management standards, financial deployment and reporting, inspection and audit and school governance (Bush 2003, Bush *et al* 1993. Gamage 1996). More recently, in addition to the dogma of “driving up standards through competition”(Ball 1990, 2001), there has been a strengthening of the
ideology of an entrepreneurial approach to public services in general, and education in particular. This is epitomized by an increase in the involvement of the private sector, both in the alternative provision of charter or magnet/specialized schools and education partnerships over a wide range of provision from the physical structures themselves through infrastructure services (finance, human resources, ICT, substitute teachers etc.) and even to principal and business manager preparation and updating programmes (Bullock and Thomas 1997, Lawton 1992).

1. Issue identification:

With the move to a more market-oriented system, the fundamental value of a free public education, funded by tax dollars, is increasingly at odds with the values of a profit-oriented market system. This can be summarized as a series of polar dichotomies, e.g.

- Teaching/learning vs performance, results and return on investment
- Public good vs organizational and individual autonomy
- Equity/releasing learner potential vs survival of the “fittest”, diversity and choice

The concept of a common good is increasingly lost in the midst of pendulum swing politics, where the unified theory of public service of one dominant political party is reversed by a competing unified theory of the next political party in power. What now seems to be emerging from such “ping-pong politics” in education is a global move towards a more market-based system where there are elements of both the competitive world of the market and the provision of an accessible equitable public service (Whitty et al 1996). How are leaders and managers to discharge their responsibilities in such a context of paradox, dichotomies, turbulence and split accountabilities? This interactive point-counterpoint session explored and debated approaches to leadership preparation that embrace living with fundamental paradox.

2. Conceptual Frameworks:

a) Performativity and the Educational Quasi-Market (Point 1)

The move to a more marketized system was boosted by the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) in the UK and the No Child Left Behind legislation (NCLB 2002) in USA. In the UK, this movement is best exemplified by those aspects which gave schools control over the vast majority of their budgets, introduced open enrolment and the publication of key indicators, enabling schools to be ranked in performance “league tables”. The key principles of the market e.g. quality of service, price competition and choice (BBC Today, 2005) were thus introduced into the education arena in the UK. The US movement included increased emphasis on choice and competition through voucher systems, charter schools and magnet schools (Chubb and Moe, 1990; 1992), this was further strengthened by the passage of NCLB publication of school achievement data, school report cards, loss of federal funding for low
performing schools and open enrolment options for students in underperforming schools. Alongside the gradual move from “soft” reciprocal obligations between partners in the provision of public services, for example school districts, universities and schools to “hard” formal contractual relationships between “purchasers” and “providers”, came the whole raft of concepts and ideologies identified as performativity (Lyotard 1984, Cowen 1996) viz:

A technology, a culture and a mode of regulation, or even a system of ‘terror’ in Lyotard’s words, that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of control, attrition and change. The performances – of individual subjects or organisations – serve as measures of productivity or output, or displays of ‘quality’, or ‘moments’ of promotion or inspection. They stand for, encapsulate or represent the worth, quality or value of an individual or organisation within a field of judgement.

(Ball 2001:210)

The underlying assumption in the UK (and there are very similar assumptions in the USA driving aspects of educational reform such as the various “voucher” schemes, charter and magnet schools) is that competition in the education marketplace will ensure successful schools thrive and failing ones close. However, a market requires diversity of provision within which customers/clients/consumers have a choice. The mechanism used to introduce this in the UK was to encourage a variety of different types of schools within the state sector¹ and ensure the devolution of funding to the site level through a system resembling cash-vouchers – i.e. parents choose the school which they think is most suitable for their children which is then funded directly from the school district/national government largely according to the numbers of children it attracts. Parental choice is informed through “league tables” created through measuring the performance of children and schools on a range of indicators (such as truancy, attendance and periodic national Grade Test scores – referred to as Key Stage Standard Attainment Tests in UK). In order to run this new type of quasi-market economy, a new leadership skills set has to be acquired where managers need to adopt leadership styles which are more entrepreneurial and market-oriented. This is commonly referred to in the literature as the New Public Management (NPM)

The underpinning axioms of the New Public Management have formed the reform agenda for both right and left wing governments in many countries. Sometimes referred to as the New Managerialism (“a set of ideologies about organizational practices and values related to attempts by western governments to bring about radical shifts in the organization, finances and cultures of public services such as local government, health and education”, Deem 2003:55), the phenomenon of the New Public Management can

¹ Originally these schools were funded directly from the State as Grant Maintained Schools but are now returned to school district control as Foundation and “specialist” schools, focusing, for example, on science, technology, languages, the arts, sports etc. – such schools are also required to teach the full National Curriculum and are subject to targets, inspection and publication of results
be seen globally in developed capitalist and mixed economies and is summarized by Court (2004, pp 173-175) in her account of leadership issues for the principalship in the New Zealand education system. According to Court, the three key features of the New Public Management are:

- **Public Choice Theory**: A market version of accountability underpinned by the notion that competition drives up standards with the consumer being a “rational utility maximizer”.
- **Principal/Agency**: A modified version of exchange theory where interactions and services are governed by contracts between purchasers (principals) and providers (agents).
- **Transaction-cost economics**: A reliance on monitoring the delivery of contracts through systematic and institutional fiscal accountabilities based on outputs and cost-effectiveness.

The implicit assumption here moves beyond the rationale for curriculum and devolved responsibility underpinning the reforms of the 1988 ERA in the UK and NCLB in USA in that it introduces a quasi-market into education. This is designed to improve standards through competition (i.e. using the entrepreneurial market-led approach of the private sector in the provision of education) within the political economy of the public services which utilizes the procurement, contracting and auditing processes of the private sector and then expects significant participation by the private sector (Bottery 1996, Exworthy and Halford 1999, McTavish 2003). Chubb and Moe (1990, 1992), drawing on the ERA reforms of the UK, also argued for the removal of schools from the political arena to ensure future success in the provision of education. In both cases, the rhetoric was against an inefficient, unproductive and bureaucratically state/district/LEA-controlled education system which is blamed for poor standards and international competitiveness and for setting schools free from local control to enable the professionalism of teachers to respond more rapidly to the needs of the immediate community thus the “decision-making power places the clout to make things happen as close to the action as possible” (Holly and Southworth 1989:15). This is a substantial reconfiguration of the institutional and governmental frameworks for the governance of public education, raising issues of competing values and principles, conflicts of interest, probity, accountability and value for money for the citizen’s tax-dollar (as against profit for shareholders or company owners).

*b) Performance and the Educational Commune (Counterpoint 1)*

In contrast, most developed western political economies originally established a largely free open-to-all public education system funded through local and national taxes. Such an education system was designed to draw out the potential of every individual and produce responsible proactive citizens able to take their full place in an empowering and socially just democratic society. However, it must be recognized that these aims are delivered across western developed economies in a wide variety of approaches with contrasting levels of autonomy.
The increasing dominance and popularity of marketization led the authors to a search for a potent term/concept that would be the antithesis of the market. A number of options were considered as what was required was a term which did not necessarily imply a state-led, centralist, top-down education system focusing on equality as might have been the case in the past in, say, France or Japan but one which captured the flavor of freedom, liberty and social justice for all, respect for (and the seeking out of) diversity and which drew from each according means to provide for each according to their needs (with apologies to Karl Marx). Such an antithesis to the market system would build solidarity, brother/sisterhood, have a strong moral purpose underpinned by explicit values, be cooperative and collegial and create self-aware and motivated, socially responsible individuals in a democratic equitable society.

For the purposes of the argument in this point-counterpoint debate, the term “Commune” was chosen as the principles of Communitarianism (Etzioni 1995, Arthur 1998) seemed to best encapsulate the characteristics outlined above. In contrast to the focus on managerialism and performativity in the marketized systems (measured by outputs, results, profit), the act of leadership in the commune becomes more of a “performance” judged by collegiality, mutual obligations, common good. In this context, leadership performance is both a conscious interactive process which produces the self and feelings of self-worth and job satisfaction (Goffman 1959) and something that actively creates and holds together society – a social action perspective (Silverman 1970). It is a cooperative and collegial activity in which respect is earned rather than being the result of an unequal power balance. In summary, as a measure of worth, it is the quality of the day-to-day interaction in the group (for example the success of the teaching team or the enjoyment of the learning set) which is more important than the objective but alienated second or third hand indicators of a market system.

3. Values in Education

a. Values in the Education Market (Point 2)

The rise of entrepreneurial approaches to public services outlined above is underpinned by a clear set of values and mechanisms graphically described in the UK by Ball (1990:60) and in the US by Osborne and Gaebler (19962: 45-6). Whilst Ball focuses on the logical structure and economic aspects of the market system (see Fig 1.), Osbourne and Gaebler identify the market system’s underpinning values and the contexts in which it works best. The elements include a potential for profit for the owners of the organization economic activity which is innovative or moves successful experiments into production and rapid adaptation to change through the performance of complex or technical tasks. In this context, unsuccessful or obsolete activities are quickly abandoned and failing organizations rapidly closed down. It is an oft quoted truism that a third of all start-up businesses fail in their first year of operation.
The motivation of the funder of such enterprise is that of Investor (Fromm et al, 2003: 45) where the maximization of return to owners/shareholders is king, without regard to social context or mission. Such funders prefer large and growing markets which are undergoing rapid change.


- **CHOICE**
  - Falling rolls, publication of results and test, reputation
- **DIVERSITY**
  - Grammer, comprehensive, Grant-aided, grant and voluntary aided, CTCs, ‘star’ and ‘sink’ schools
- **PER CAPITA FUNDING**
  - Inserts a financial exchange relationship on behalf of ‘consumer’
- **COMPETITION**
- **NEW ORGANISATIONAL STYLES**
  - ‘a new culture and philosophy of school organisation’
  - (Coopers and Lybrand)
  - Management systems modelled on Industry

Fig 1: the Logic of the UK Public Education Market (Ball 1990: 60)

**b. Values in the Education Commune (Counterpoint 2)**

In contrast to the values of the market, Osbourne and Gaebler identify a public service focus where leaders implement and manage policy, regulate the service to ensure social cohesion and equity to prevent discrimination and maintain continuity and stability of the service. In the past this has led to a top-down centralist bureaucratic way of organizing education and other services but the model of the commune holds out the hope for a more social activist responsive type of public service built on the above values and the politics of the common good (Arthur 1998).

For the funders of public services, therefore, an Appropriator stance is required where the public good is achieved through the acquisition of funds from the local or state government via taxes and their subsequent disbursement through public agencies, usually for compulsory services such as health,
education, policing etc. Following the structure developed by Ball (Fig.1.), a tentative model can be developed illustrating the relationships between the key features of a public education system (Fig.2.) with a focus on equity and access for all to a standardized public education entitlement managed by trained and qualified public servants.

Federal and State Education Laws

\[ \text{EQUITY} \quad \text{STANDARDISATION} \]

“A place for all” in Grade School, public report cards, managed School Board system

\[ \text{COLLABORATION} \quad \text{LOCAL TAX/SCHOOL DISTRICT FUNDING} \]

Between schools, parents, community, business, colleges & higher education

Local taxes, citizens’ votes, democratic rational - legal authority

\[ \text{INCREMENTALLY DEVELOPED ORGANISATIONAL STYLES} \]

A professional class of qualified administrators trained for public office

**Fig 2: the Logic of the US Public Education Service**

2. An emerging Counter-census

From this dialectic of point-counterpoint, there is a need to develop a synthesis as the one key feature of this emerging *zeitgeist* is the introduction of the for-profit sector into what was previously a public system largely funded by tax dollars supported by, in most countries, some not-for-profit or charitable input. One of the characteristics of post-modernist explanations is the willingness to live with paradox and tension, hence the authors have developed the term “counter-census” to illustrate a synthesis which has competing values and systems, as opposed to the more commonly used “consensus” which implies agreement and harmony. The conceptualizations of Osbourne and Gaebler and Fromm, Hentschke and Kern bring into stark contrast the presumed benefit to society of the differing sector approaches and the underlying motivation of the funding authority or organization. That there are fundamental tensions in
the values and expectations of these different sectors is demonstrated in the *Fig 3: Tensions in the Values and Expectations of the “3-sector education economy”*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Societal Benefit</th>
<th>Funder</th>
<th>Motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Policy management, regulation, ensuring equity, preventing discrimination, ensuring continuity and stability of services and ensuring social cohesion</td>
<td>Appropriator</td>
<td>The Public Good: through acquisition of funds from state/government, disbursement to public agencies usually for compulsory services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not-for-profit</td>
<td>Performing tasks that generate little/no profit, demand compassion and commitment to individuals, require extensive trust from customers or clients, need hands-on personal attention and involve moral codes and individual responsibility for behaviour</td>
<td>Donor</td>
<td>Mission Fulfilment: Provision of promised services to a specified population; prefer projects for targetable populations with compatible missions funded through pump-priming for the short to medium term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For-profit</td>
<td>Economic tasks, innovating, replicating successful experiments, adapting to rapid change, abandoning unsuccessful or obsolete activities and performing complex or technical tasks</td>
<td>Investor</td>
<td>Maximising Returns: Significant financial returns on investment for shareholders without regard to social mission; prefers large growing markets undergoing rapid transformation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Adapted from Osbourne and Gaebler 1992:45-6*  
*Adapted from Fromm, Hentshke and Kern 2003:297-8*

*Fig. 3. Tensions in the Values and Expectations of the “3-sector education economy”*

In addition to the potential confusion introduced by the juxtaposition of public, not-for-profit and for-profit sectors in the education system, there is also a fundamental tension perceived by school leaders between “the postmodern assumptions about change (flexibility, professional autonomy, flat organizations and diversity) … [and] … imposed modernist solutions (line management, hierarchy, standardization and the increase in administration)” (Blackmore *et al*, 1996).

The focus on performativity, thus, tends to lead to increasing the use of positivist managerialist techniques as a way of coping with the government mandates, a reductionist approach firmly located in the modernist tradition. Administrative preparation programmes, similarly, are faced with a dilemma: do they prepare technicists with “how to” and “knowledge about” skills or work toward the development of leaders who have strategic understanding at the point of delivery and a high level of personal and professional responsibility in the taking of leadership decisions. There is some evidence of the appreciation of this issue in the UK in the move to a “light touch”, short notice, inspection strategy for the vast majority of schools, thus potentially diminishing the centralization aspects of the control mechanisms but this is not well developed across the public services either in the UK or in the other countries examined by Whitty *et al* (1996). The US Department of Education has also retreated somewhat from the heavy-handed approach, inviting states to apply for flexibility to follow individual growth rates rather than look at standardized grade level improvements, but only 10 states will eventually be approved for the
flexible approach. Forty other states will continue to face the original NCLB performativity standards, an approach that only compounds the equity and diversity issues inherent in a top-down reform movement.

3. Leadership Practice in Complex Times:

The point-counterpoint arguments described above are strikingly parallel to arguments heard at the turn of the 20th century. The world was a rapidly changing environment, moving from an agricultural economy to an industrial economy. Nations lost and gained extraordinary numbers of people as emigrants flocked to new lives. Emerging policies and laws, driven by the new market economy, dramatically affected who came to school, how long students stayed, and what they expected beyond a rudimentary education. Then, as now, school leaders and policy makers struggled daily with a complex mix of old and new values and practices (Deem, 2003:55) that frequently appeared to make no sense. History provides many accounts of the struggles develop a 'one best' educational system (Tyack 1974) and the vivid point-counterpoint arguments that eventually evolved the educational system so highly criticized today (Tooley 2000, Wragg 2004).

As educational leaders sit at the interface between the values and practices of the three-sector economy mapped out in Fig 1 above, the contexts of NPM and NCLB lead to mixed messages to leadership preparation programs, as well as school districts. Each is expected to deliver performativity as part of the contract of public practice with an increasing number of government agencies and funding imperatives, (i.e. government mandates) as well as pay attention to the day-to-day acts of performance characterized by the interaction chains of co-workers, with and for their clients and customers with the expectation that schools will foster an educated citizenry committed to and skilled at democratic practices. The task is described by Gleeson and Husband’s (2001) in a delightful series of images (e.g. lion tamers and jugglers, high-wire artists and acrobats, ringmasters and big tops) as the authors map out the tensions and challenges for leaders in schools in “delivering performance management”, one of the essential building blocks of the performativity paradigm. The image becomes more humorous (or sad) as one imagines the new work of university faculty who must attempt to prepare these performers. To some extent such critical analyses either argue for returning to a more stable and understood past or illustrate management’s frustration in trying to implement the apparent simplicity of target- and results-led NPM/NCLB in the face of active or passive opposition from co-workers or subordinates (Deem 2003). Either response may assuage some stakeholders and investors in the educational system, but neither response attends to the needs of the larger society or the common good--the future of our learners. The point-counterpoint positions presented above represent a social and political struggle that appears to have less to do with the achievement of the children on both continents than it has to do with control of
ideology of schooling. Based on these two potent competing forces/positions, one option is to find a third way (Giddens 1998, 2000; Follett, 1949) that promotes social justice, respects the potential and the contribution of the individual, attends to the needs of the larger society, seeks out and promotes diversity, and has at its roots a celebration of achieved performance.

Counterpoint to the Point-Counterpoint

In developing such a third way, once again, history provided a guide, a social activist from the early 20th century, Mary Parker Follett, who current scholars call “a democratic hero” (Barber, 1998), a thinker ahead of her time” (Mansbridge, 1998), “a swashbuckling advance scout of management thinking” (Bennis, 1995), and a “first-rate doer” (Drucker, 1995, p. 6). While Follett began her work with new immigrant communities in the US (Roxbury Massachusetts), later in life she delivered invited lectures to businessmen the U. S. and England, extolling leadership and management theories based her studies of democracy in action. Just as Follett travelled across oceans to work with both nations, we believe her theories provide insights across the divide of market performativity and communitarianism. Her perspectives may provide the bridge that takes full advantage of the deeply held values of both sides.

Her theories for community development, laid out in three highly acclaimed books2, spoke to civic engagement, group processes, leadership, industrial relations, and democratic deliberation. Her work emerged and was influenced by many other fields e.g. psychology (Gordon Allport) scientific management (Frederick Winslow Taylor, Herbert Gantt, John Galbraith), adult education (Eduard Lindeman), black activism (W. E. DuBois), and pragmatism (John Dewey, James). We also suggest that her concepts are the centrifugal forces needed for leadership preparation in these increasingly dynamic and chaotic times.

Follett had a passion for public life and democratic engagement which, she argued, were governed by the principle of unifying. Her experiences with group processes in the community centers led her to posit that skills for “unifying” or “integrating” multiple ideas was a “secret that would revolutionize the world” (p. 97). Unifying, in Follett’s (1919) view, was a dynamic process based on the notion that the “self is always in flux weaving itself out of its relations” (p. 577). She was committed to the notion of collective thought, but in contrast to some of her intellectual counterparts (for example, Giddens), she believed collective thought must be “evolved by a collective process” (Toth, 2003, p. 275). She was convinced that the actions of unifying were dependent on education, which included practice in interdependence, genuine discussion of differences, collective thinking, social consciousness, and self-direction. Like Dewey, Follett wanted schools and centers to promote an “attitude of learning to make them see that education is

2 For readers new to the work of Mary Parker Follett we recommend The Speaker of the House of Representatives (1896), the New State (1918) and Creative Experience (1924)
for life” (p. 370). She proposed that teaching be centered on the concept of “social discipline,” which she believed included every possible form of group work and cooperative methods. Long before David and Roger Johnson’s work on cooperative learning, Follett was advancing the importance of guided classroom experiences with cooperative learning, group responsibility, and group investigations, all leading to “a gradual plan of self government” (Follett, 1918, p.363).

As she analyzed the actual work of unifying, she developed the theory of circular response, based on her view that individuals and environments were constantly creating and recreating each other. She argued cause and effect were limited descriptions of moments in time, suggesting that the relationship and interaction among various elements, overtime, was a much more powerful method for understanding human behavior. Follett proposed three principles:

1. the response to a situation must be based on a belief that an environment is always changing – don’t be rigid.
2. the response must be governed by a belief that you are now interacting with the environment, and
3. that interaction changes the environment you are observing.

She argued that nothing was fixed noting, “when we go to a conference, we have to compare the idea we bring to it, not with the idea we find there, but with what is being developed there” (Follett, 1924, p.138-139)

Follett’s engagement in discussions & debates with newly arrived and emergent citizens, led to the formation of her theory of integration, in which she disavowed compromise as a useful strategy in dispute resolution, proposing that opposing ideas be integrated into a third way: “The core of the development, expansion, growth, progress of humanity is the confronting and gripping of opposites” (p. 302). Follett promoted active discussion as a tool for unifying diverse ideas but cautioned that discussion as argument or struggle would not support social progress. She saw discussion “as an experiment in cooperation. . . [or] intellectual teamwork” (Follett, 1918, p. 97). Her early schooling experience fostered proficiency in debate and she was regarded as a master of reasoned argument (Toth, 2003), but as she worked with very diverse immigrant groups, she openly challenged the notion of debate as a quality practice for advancing ideas. She began to promote discussion as a tool for looking at multiple and diverse ideas and facts, suggesting that an opposing idea had the possibility to enrich your own view,

Follett believed the genuine development of power would enrich individuals and the society. She saw power as “co-active” instead of coercive, proposing “power-with” as opposed to “power over.” Her views of power also influenced her theory of leadership, which was termed law of the situation. In her view, common purpose was the invisible leader, and the best executives acted as teachers so both leaders and followers could find the law of the situation. Follett (1970) saw leadership as a reciprocal experience
that included partnership in following. In her lectures to businessmen, she described leaders as teachers who developed leadership among others and thereby release the power of the group to transform experiences. She explained leadership as a highly interactive in reciprocal process between a leader and the group. “The leader guides the group and is at the same time himself [sic] guided by the group” (Follett, 1918, p. 229). Citing the dangers of a hierarchical viewpoint, Follett argued that loyalty to a group was more important than loyalty to an individual. She also challenged leaders to be the eyes and ears of a group, the interpreter of differing events and perspectives, the adjuster of conflicting needs, and the sorter of ambiguous situations. Using language often found in today’s tomes on vision, Follett charged leaders of groups “to lead the group to an understanding of its needs to a unification of its purpose” (p. 229). She warned against imposition of leader decisions, even if wise, noting “we need leaders, not masters or drivers” (p.229).

4. Lessons for Leadership Preparation

So, in this search for leaders who empower their group towards an understanding of its needs and purpose, what might be the implications for leadership preparation programmes? Firstly, there should be a recognition that the role of professors needs to change. It is evident that a number of influential individuals and organizations are critical of the status quo. The National College for School Leadership in England is currently undergoing a restructuring as its relationship with the Training and Development Agency for teachers and the Department for Education and Skills is redefined and renegotiated. Similarly, leadership preparation programmes in US universities are under attack for losing sight of the needs of practitioners (Levine 2005) with UCEA itself is going through a significant period of rethinking in the pursuance of a “Signature Pedagogy”. In the UK, a great deal of the leadership preparation process has been taken over by recently retired ex-practitioner principals working on contract to the NCSL, marginalizing university professors into a research and evaluation ghetto. Surely this admirably illustrates Follett’s notions of circular response and self-in-flux: that the self arises from and in turn contributes to the group? Many leadership programmes are using action research journals, diagnostic inventories, group workshops and internships in order to respond to the practice/theory flux; such techniques are likely to be a more successful way of promoting leadership learning in times of rapid and turbulent change than the more traditional knowledge transfer model.

Secondly, the notion of co-action and power-with rather than power-over redefines the dialectic of leadership preparation and reinforces the need for strong partnerships amongst the various stakeholders in the public education field. Follett’s concept of integration embracing confrontation and the gripping opposites as part of the continuing dialogue has resonance with the “new science” writings of Wheatley (1999) and Zohar (1997) in the notion of “both/and” as against “either/or” and the acceptance of the
inevitability of paradox in any human endeavor. The exploration of the 3-sector education economy in this paper graphically illustrates the need for education leaders to be able to work willingly and comfortably in a dynamic of tension, stress, challenge and conflict (understanding why and how) rather than being led to believe increased technical expertise (knowing what) will bring successful solutions. Understanding Follett’s concept of the Law of Situation which places both leaders and followers in a complex mix of dynamic relationships will raise the level of debate and the possibilities of constructive co-action.

Finally, the challenge for the future is to introduce, as endemic to all human endeavor, more strategic and values-based approaches in training programmes, particularly for senior leadership, embodying postmodernist concepts and “new science” ideas which mean the acceptance of holistic approaches, paradox and “both/and” rather than “either/or” thinking. This will involve attention to the cultural aspects of entrepreneurial leadership and, in the doing of this, make professional life enjoyable, fun and fulfilling through

- decreasing what Crawford (1997:115) styles as hyper or bad stress(distress) in favor of eustress (good stress – challenge, innovation, excitement);
- re-emphasizing the act of performance itself rather than merely the outcomes of a performativity culture; and
- the acquisition of the skills of living in dynamic tension and in communities of practice with innovation and challenge seen as a positive focus but with a strong underpinning of core values and a customer-needs focus.

What is often missing in the NPM literature is this recognition that living with tension, challenge and paradox is inherent in the human condition and, possibly, the way the Universe works (Zohar 1997, Wheatley 1999) and that the day-to-day performance (or interaction) takes up the vast majority of the time spent at work. It is at the very least unfortunate if this performance is not fulfilling and enjoyable to the practitioners. One way of reducing the feeling of frustration and helplessness in times of anomie would be to use the analysis of the three-sector economy presented in Fig 1 above to surface values, imperatives, funding mechanisms, beliefs so that practitioners appreciate “what game they are playing”, with whom and to what intended end. This does not mean slavishly adopting managerialist New Public Management techniques but a wider set of understandings that it is the taking part that forms the future rather than merely the abstracted indicators of a results-driven economy.

Postscript: Follett’s Theories in Action
Like all good authors, we selected a title for our session that, in our eyes, clearly stated our point-counterpoint arguments. Midpoint into our presentation, several members of our audience openly challenged our perspectives by arguing for their “values-driven approach to delivering both diversity and equity in democratic public education” – prayer in schools and more Christian religious instruction. At first, caught off guard by the redirection of our well-prepared argument, we responded as all good academics do, restating our arguments in an attempt to clarify our positions. But our responders, all local educators in small rural Tennessee communities, persisted. In their eyes, diversity and equity in a democratic environment meant their position should have an equal voice. It was one of those moments when an academic is tempted to use his/her knowledge base and command of esoteric language to squelch a less-academic viewpoint. Each of us had a nano-second of choice to either pursue our intellectual insights or to relate to the sincere concerns of these members of our audience. To buy time, we raised the question: “How would Mary Parker Follett advise us to approach this argument?”

The next segment of our session was spent navigating our way through Follett’s theories, trying to engage in unifying thought, to practice the work of integration, and to better understand the current law of the situation. The discussion moved along in fits and starts, gradually engaging more of the audience in idea-finding and generative listening. We solved little in that late afternoon session, but each of us went away realizing that the effort to dialogue rather than debate, to consider oppositional views rather than dismiss them, and to open ourselves up to influence rather than maintaining rigidity had resulted in individual and community growth for a moment. As the session leaders, we learned the challenges of intellectual teamwork. In reflection these two educational leadership professors have a renewed sense of respect for the work of school leaders in these complex times and some new-found humility for the preparation task.

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