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WOMEN IN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION IN RURAL MANITOBA

**By
Patricia Anne Thibault**

**A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of**

MASTER OF EDUCATION

**Department of Educational Administration and Foundations
Faculty of Education
University of Manitoba**

May 1995

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| | |
|--------------------------|------|
| Language | |
| General | 0679 |
| Ancient | 0289 |
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| Literature | |
| General | 0401 |
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PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION AND THEOLOGY

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| Biblical Studies | 0321 |
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| Theology | 0469 |

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| | |
|-------------------------|------|
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| Archaeology | 0324 |
| Cultural | 0326 |
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| Economics | |
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| Finance | 0508 |
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| Theory | 0511 |
| Folklore | 0358 |
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| Gerontology | 0351 |
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| General | 0578 |

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|----------------------------------|------|
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| Medieval | 0581 |
| Modern | 0582 |
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THE SCIENCES AND ENGINEERING

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|------------------------------|------|
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| General | 0473 |
| Agronomy | 0285 |
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| Forestry and Wildlife | 0478 |
| Plant Culture | 0479 |
| Plant Pathology | 0480 |
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| Biology | |
| General | 0306 |
| Anatomy | 0287 |
| Biostatistics | 0308 |
| Botany | 0309 |
| Cell | 0379 |
| Ecology | 0329 |
| Entomology | 0353 |
| Genetics | 0369 |
| Limnology | 0793 |
| Microbiology | 0410 |
| Molecular | 0307 |
| Neuroscience | 0317 |
| Oceanography | 0416 |
| Physiology | 0433 |
| Radiation | 0821 |
| Veterinary Science | 0778 |
| Zoology | 0472 |
| Biophysics | |
| General | 0786 |
| Medical | 0760 |

EARTH SCIENCES

| | |
|-----------------|------|
| Biogeochemistry | 0425 |
| Geochemistry | 0996 |

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|-----------------------|------|
| Geodesy | 0370 |
| Geology | 0372 |
| Geophysics | 0373 |
| Hydrology | 0388 |
| Mineralogy | 0411 |
| Paleobotany | 0345 |
| Paleoecology | 0426 |
| Paleontology | 0418 |
| Paleozoology | 0985 |
| Palynology | 0427 |
| Physical Geography | 0368 |
| Physical Oceanography | 0415 |

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| | |
|---------------------------------|------|
| Environmental Sciences | 0768 |
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| Chemotherapy | 0992 |
| Dentistry | 0567 |
| Education | 0350 |
| Hospital Management | 0769 |
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| Immunology | 0982 |
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| Mental Health | 0347 |
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| Pathology | 0571 |
| Pharmacology | 0419 |
| Pharmacy | 0572 |
| Physical Therapy | 0382 |
| Public Health | 0573 |
| Radiology | 0574 |
| Recreation | 0575 |

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|------------------|------|
| Speech Pathology | 0460 |
| Toxicology | 0383 |
| Home Economics | 0386 |

PHYSICAL SCIENCES

Pure Sciences

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------|
| Chemistry | |
| General | 0485 |
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| | |
|-------------------|------|
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Engineering

| | |
|----------------------------|------|
| General | 0537 |
| Aerospace | 0538 |
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| Chemical | 0542 |
| Civil | 0543 |
| Electronics and Electrical | 0544 |
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| Hydraulic | 0545 |
| Industrial | 0546 |
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| Mechanical | 0548 |
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| Operations Research | 0796 |
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PSYCHOLOGY

| | |
|---------------|------|
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| Experimental | 0623 |
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ÉDUCATION

| | |
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| Économie domestique | 0278 |
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| Éducation préscolaire | 0518 |
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| Enseignement agricole | 0517 |
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| Enseignement industriel | 0521 |
| Enseignement primaire | 0524 |
| Enseignement professionnel | 0747 |
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| Enseignement secondaire | 0533 |
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| Enseignement supérieur | 0745 |
| Évaluation | 0288 |
| Finances | 0277 |
| Formation des enseignants | 0530 |
| Histoire de l'éducation | 0520 |
| Langues et littérature | 0279 |

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| Lecture | 0535 |
| Mathématiques | 0280 |
| Musique | 0522 |
| Orientalisation et consultation | 0519 |
| Philosophie de l'éducation | 0998 |
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| Sciences sociales | 0534 |
| Sociologie de l'éducation | 0340 |
| Technologie | 0710 |

LANGUE, LITTÉRATURE ET LINGUISTIQUE

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|-------------------------|------|
| Langues | |
| Généralités | 0679 |
| Anciennes | 0289 |
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| Littérature | |
| Généralités | 0401 |
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| Romane | 0313 |
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PHILOSOPHIE, RELIGION ET THÉOLOGIE

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| Philosophie | 0422 |
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| Généralités | 0318 |
| Clergé | 0319 |
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| Histoire des religions | 0320 |
| Philosophie de la religion | 0322 |
| Théologie | 0469 |

SCIENCES SOCIALES

| | |
|----------------------|------|
| Anthropologie | |
| Archéologie | 0324 |
| Culturelle | 0326 |
| Physique | 0327 |
| Droit | 0398 |
| Économie | |
| Généralités | 0501 |
| Commerce-Affaires | 0505 |
| Économie agricole | 0503 |
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| Histoire | 0509 |
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| Études féministes | 0453 |
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| Géographie | 0366 |
| Gérontologie | 0351 |
| Gestion des affaires | |
| Généralités | 0310 |
| Administration | 0454 |
| Banques | 0770 |
| Comptabilité | 0272 |
| Marketing | 0338 |
| Histoire | |
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|---|------|
| Ancienne | 0579 |
| Médiévale | 0581 |
| Moderne | 0582 |
| Histoire des noirs | 0328 |
| Africaine | 0331 |
| Canadienne | 0334 |
| États-Unis | 0337 |
| Européenne | 0335 |
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| Asie, Australie et Océanie | 0332 |
| Histoire des sciences | 0585 |
| Loisirs | 0814 |
| Planification urbaine et régionale | 0999 |
| Science politique | |
| Généralités | 0615 |
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| Droit et relations internationales | 0616 |
| Sociologie | |
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| Aide et bien-être social | 0630 |
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| Structure et développement social | 0700 |
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| Travail et relations industrielles | 0629 |
| Transports | 0709 |
| Travail social | 0452 |

SCIENCES ET INGÉNIERIE

SCIENCES BIOLOGIQUES

| | |
|---|------|
| Agriculture | |
| Généralités | 0473 |
| Agronomie | 0285 |
| Alimentation et technologie alimentaire | 0359 |
| Culture | 0479 |
| Élevage et alimentation | 0475 |
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| Pathologie animale | 0476 |
| Pathologie végétale | 0480 |
| Physiologie végétale | 0817 |
| Sylviculture et taune | 0478 |
| Technologie du bois | 0746 |
| Biologie | |
| Généralités | 0306 |
| Anatomie | 0287 |
| Biologie (Statistiques) | 0308 |
| Biologie moléculaire | 0307 |
| Botanique | 0309 |
| Cellule | 0379 |
| Écologie | 0329 |
| Entomologie | 0353 |
| Génétique | 0369 |
| Limnologie | 0793 |
| Microbiologie | 0410 |
| Neurologie | 0317 |
| Océanographie | 0416 |
| Physiologie | 0433 |
| Radiation | 0821 |
| Science vétérinaire | 0778 |
| Zoologie | 0472 |
| Biophysique | |
| Généralités | 0786 |
| Médicale | 0760 |

| | |
|------------------------|------|
| Géologie | 0372 |
| Géophysique | 0373 |
| Hydrologie | 0388 |
| Minéralogie | 0411 |
| Océanographie physique | 0415 |
| Paléobotanique | 0345 |
| Paléocologie | 0426 |
| Paléontologie | 0418 |
| Paléozoologie | 0985 |
| Palynologie | 0427 |

SCIENCES DE LA SANTÉ ET DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT

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| Économie domestique | 0386 |
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| Généralités | 0566 |
| Administration des hôpitaux | 0769 |
| Alimentation et nutrition | 0570 |
| Audiologie | 0300 |
| Chimiothérapie | 0992 |
| Dentisterie | 0567 |
| Développement humain | 0758 |
| Enseignement | 0350 |
| Immunologie | 0982 |
| Loisirs | 0575 |
| Médecine du travail et thérapie | 0354 |
| Médecine et chirurgie | 0564 |
| Obstétrique et gynécologie | 0380 |
| Ophtalmologie | 0381 |
| Orthophonie | 0460 |
| Pathologie | 0571 |
| Pharmacie | 0572 |
| Pharmacologie | 0419 |
| Physiothérapie | 0382 |
| Radiologie | 0574 |
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| Soins infirmiers | 0569 |
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|----------------------------------|------|
| Sciences Pures | |
| Chimie | |
| Généralités | 0485 |
| Biochimie | 487 |
| Chimie agricole | 0749 |
| Chimie analytique | 0486 |
| Chimie minérale | 0488 |
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| Chimie organique | 0490 |
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| Physique | 0494 |
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| Fluides et plasma | 0759 |
| Météorologie | 0608 |
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| Particules (Physique nucléaire) | 0798 |
| Physique atomique | 0748 |
| Physique de l'état solide | 0611 |
| Physique moléculaire | 0609 |
| Physique nucléaire | 0610 |
| Radiation | 0756 |
| Statistiques | 0463 |

Sciences Appliquées Et Technologie

| | |
|--------------|------|
| Informatique | 0984 |
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| Généralités | 0537 |
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| Automobile | 0540 |

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|--------------------------------------|------|
| Biomédicale | 0541 |
| Chaleur et thermodynamique | 0348 |
| Conditionnement (Emballage) | 0549 |
| Génie aérospatial | 0538 |
| Génie chimique | 0542 |
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| Métallurgie | 0743 |
| Science des matériaux | 0794 |
| Technique du pétrole | 0765 |
| Technique minière | 0551 |
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| Technologie hydraulique | 0545 |
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| Matériaux plastiques (Technologie) | 0795 |
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PSYCHOLOGIE

| | |
|------------------------------|------|
| Généralités | 0621 |
| Personnalité | 0625 |
| Psychobiologie | 0349 |
| Psychologie clinique | 0622 |
| Psychologie du comportement | 0384 |
| Psychologie du développement | 0620 |
| Psychologie expérimentale | 0623 |
| Psychologie industrielle | 0624 |
| Psychologie physiologique | 0989 |
| Psychologie sociale | 0451 |
| Psychométrie | 0632 |



WOMEN IN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION IN RURAL MANITOBA

BY

PATRICIA ANNE THIBAULT

**A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Manitoba
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of**

MASTER OF EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to obtain the perspectives of six women administrators who work in different school divisions in rural Manitoba and to compare them with the literature on urban women administrators. A survey was sent out to the rural women administrators in June 1993 in order to obtain information about their career in teaching, their current administrative position, whether or not they were living alone, and if they had any children. A participation sheet was attached to each survey and the six women interviewed were selected from the volunteers.

The survey results showed that the majority of the respondents were living with a partner and had children. The majority of women administrators in rural Manitoba were in their forties. Most of them were working in Early and Middle Years schools with student populations of less than three hundred students. Owing to the small numbers of students, the majority of the respondents taught for a portion of the day. Many of the women had been teaching for over ten years but had been in administration for under five years.

The six women who were interviewed spoke about their entry into administration, their work, and how they balanced their work with their home lives. Although there were a lot of similarities between the literature on women in urban administration and the six women whom I interviewed, there were some differences. The majority of women administrators in rural areas, including all of the women whom I interviewed, were married and had children. This does not correspond with the literature on women in positions in urban areas. Also, the six women felt that the community was very demanding on their time not only during school hours, but also in the evenings and weekends. A

number of the women felt that the fathers of the students in their schools did not take women administrators seriously. The women had to become assertive with these fathers and had to spend extra time and energy defending their decisions. The isolation factor was also very prevalent. The distances between schools in rural areas and the small numbers of women in administration made physical contact very difficult. The women also felt that their exclusion from the "Old Boys' Club" was detrimental to their professional growth and added to their feelings of isolation.

The literature states that women make good school administrators. However, they are very underrepresented in the leadership roles. The six women in my study appear to be doing a good job. Others like them may need some encouragement to take that first step. It is my hope that this study will make a difference.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study has been a very big part of my life for the past five years. The work has been rewarding and challenging. As a teaching administrator it has been difficult on occasion to find the time to work on it. However, through the support and encouragement of many people, I have come this far. I extend to them my greatest thanks and appreciation.

I would like to thank the women administrators who took the time to fill out my survey and who volunteered to be interviewed. I especially thank the six women who took the time out of their busy schedules to discuss their lives with me. Their dedication and determination to overcome the obstacles they face in their lives make them very special.

My advisor, Dr. Benjamin Levin, has been very supportive and has allowed me to grow professionally. His flexibility and sense of humor have been characteristics which I have greatly appreciated. I would like to thank the other members of my examining committee. Dr. Jon Young has been very helpful on several occasions. I really appreciated his thoroughness in reading my drafts and his willingness to help me through some hurdles. Special thanks go to Dr. Elizabeth Comak for her advice with my first drafts and to Dr. Zana Lutfiyya for her help and comments with the final ones.

My family has been very supportive in a variety of ways. My parents Michael and Anne Woligroski have always been in the background, helping in a variety of ways. My husband, Gérald, has been my task-master, encouraging me to meet various deadlines. He has always been supportive in my projects and his comments from a male perspective have been very helpful. My

daughter, Andréa, has kept me in touch with the youth and her presence makes me realize the importance of striving for equality.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge a very important person in my life who passed away before this study was completed. My grandmother, Tekla Przednowek, was my mentor from the time I was a young child. Her love, guidance, words of wisdom, discipline, and determination to overcome all barriers in her life have been my inspiration. I will always treasure her memory.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Female administrators in rural and urban schools in North America are a minority in a field in which they dominate (Nixon, 1985; Schmuck, 1975). The preponderance of male administrators is remarkable (Edson, 1988). Even though much work has been done with affirmative action policies and despite the implementation of anti-discrimination legislation, women continue to be grossly underrepresented in the areas of school administration, including the school principalship (Grant & Martin, 1990; Nixon, 1985). How can this be so?

There is considerable literature on reasons why women are so underrepresented in administration. Women are, in fact, a minority in most professions. They usually have jobs which are low-paying and require few skills (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1979). During the past century teaching provided women with one of the few opportunities for professional status, but it is once again becoming a male occupation (Wilson, 1991). The pay in the teaching profession is becoming more attractive. One can see the relationship between pay and segregation in teaching. More women entered teaching with the lowest pay and the highest pay differentials, and more men entered it with the highest pay and the lowest pay differential (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1990). As more men are entering the profession, one can therefore predict that they will take over even more administrative positions.

Various authors have tried to analyze why women are so underrepresented in the job market. Armstrong and Armstrong (1979) evaluate the theoretical frameworks to explain the sexual division of labour. They have three main categories: biological determinism, idealism, and materialism.

The first category, biological determinism, states that the biologically determined characteristics of women make them suitable for certain work in the home and in the labour force. This is the oldest, most persistent, and most pervasive explanation and justification for the division of labour by sex. However, the investigations of the basic physiological differences between the sexes indicate that no simple duality exists and that the opposite sexes are not so opposite (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1979).

The second category, idealism, states that male and female children are encouraged from birth to behave and think differently. Thus, nurture, not nature, is to blame. In idealist analysis, the ideas are autonomous and independent of people. It is felt that ideas which exist outside of people can directly influence and change the behavior patterns of groups and individuals.

The last category which Armstrong and Armstrong describe is materialism. Here, economic factors are looked at first. Materialists look to the ways people provide for their basic needs and how they relate to the production and control of the surplus. The explanation does not lie with the economic structure but with ideas people have about which behaviors are appropriate for men and women. The dominant class benefits from these ideas and is able to perpetuate them (Armstrong and Armstrong, 1979).

Many other viewpoints exist. Liberal feminists believe that the problem of sex inequity results when law and custom divide the sexes into two gender roles which restrict human potentialities. Radical feminists believe that sex is used as a systematic division of social power which is enforced to women's detriment because it serves the interest of the powerful, that is, men. Radical feminists hold that gender oppression is the most profound form of exploitation. Marxist and socialist feminists maintain that class, race, and gender oppression stem from the interaction of capitalism and patriarchy (Glazer, 1991).

Shakeshaft (1987) and Slauenwhite and Skok (1991) cite the barriers which prevent women from becoming leaders. These they classify as: internal factors which are in women themselves, external factors which are outside women's control, and androcentrism, which is the assumption that women are like men and thus function like them. Shakeshaft (1987) states that "the major barrier to women has been a culture characterized by male dominance because all of the specific barriers identified can be traced back to a society that supports and enforces a male dominant system " (p.79). Epp (1993) found that there were two areas which are the basic components of the problem: societal assumptions, and the women's acceptances of those assumptions.

No matter which viewpoint one accepts; the end result has been the same. Women are being denied equal access to positions of power in our society. The beliefs of women's inferior status been reinforced throughout generations. These beliefs must be recognized and dealt with before one can even begin to expect that progress will be made in the whole issue of male and female equality.

The problem of underrepresentation of women is especially acute in rural Manitoba. On the next page are two tables taken from Professional School Personnel (PSP) data analyzed by Manitoba Teachers' Society Welfare Services Research. Tables 1 and 2 show the distribution of Manitoba Public School Principals by gender in 1985, 1988, and 1991.

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF MANITOBA PUBLIC SCHOOL PRINCIPALS BY GENDER IN 1985, 1988, and 1991

School Divisions within the Unicity of Winnipeg

| Date | Male | Female | Total |
|------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| Sept. 1985 | 202 82.4% | 43 17.6% | 245 100.0% |
| Sept. 1988 | 190 74.2% | 66 25.8% | 256 100.0% |
| Sept. 1991 | 175 67.8% | 83 32.2% | 258 100.0% |

Source: PSP data analyzed by Welfare Services Research, *Manitoba 90*

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF MANITOBA PUBLIC SCHOOL PRINCIPALS BY GENDER IN 1985, 1988, 1991

School Divisions/Districts outside the Unicity of Winnipeg

| Date | Male | Female | Total |
|------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| Sept. 1985 | 322 80.7% | 77 19.3% | 399 100.0% |
| Sept. 1988 | 316 77.5% | 92 22.5% | 408 100.0% |
| Sept. 1991 | 312 76.7% | 95 23.3% | 407 100.0% |

Source: PSP data analyzed by Welfare Services Research

The statistics on the previous page do not look very promising for the women who wish to become school administrators in rural Manitoba. During the period 1985-91 there was an increase of 14.6% for female principals in the city of Winnipeg, but only 4% in rural Manitoba. When I looked at the statistics for my own division, the two female principals listed there are actually teachers in small Hutterite colony schools. Below are the tables of the distribution of Manitoba Public School Vice-Principals by gender in 1985, 1988, and 1991.

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF MANITOBA PUBLIC SCHOOL VICE-PRINCIPALS BY GENDER IN 1985, 1988, and 1991.

School Divisions within the Unicity of Winnipeg

| Date | Male | Female | Total |
|------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| Sept. 1985 | 114 71.7% | 45 28.3% | 159 100.0% |
| Sept. 1988 | 114 64.4% | 63 35.6% | 177 100.0% |
| Sept. 1991 | 96 54.9% | 79 45.1% | 175 100.0% |

Source: PSP data analyzed by Welfare Services Research

TABLE 4
 DISTRIBUTION OF MANITOBA PUBLIC SCHOOL VICE-PRINCIPALS BY GENDER
 IN 1985, 1988, AND 1991

School Divisions/Districts outside the Unicity of Winnipeg

| Date | Male | Female | Total |
|------------|-------------|------------|--------------|
| Sept. 1985 | 109 (88.6%) | 14 (11.4%) | 123 (100.0%) |
| Sept. 1988 | 119 (80.4%) | 29 (19.6%) | 148 (100.0%) |
| Sept. 1991 | 112 (75.7%) | 36 (24.3%) | 148 (100.0%) |

Source: PSP data analyzed by Welfare Services Research

One can see an increase of 16.8% of female vice-principals in the city of Winnipeg from 1985 to 1991. There was only a 12.9% increase for female vice-principals in rural areas.

Even though over 60% of the teachers in Manitoba are women, they are extremely underrepresented in administration, especially in rural Manitoba. In the city of Winnipeg, the number of female principals and vice-principals has almost doubled from 1985 to 1991. In rural Manitoba, although the female vice-principals more than doubled in number during the same time period, they still represent only 24.3% of the total number of vice-principals in rural Manitoba. The female principals in rural Manitoba hardly increased in number at all. In 1985 they represented 19.3% of all rural administrators, and as of September 1991, they represented only 23.3%. If this continues, the female administrators in Winnipeg might become quite fairly represented in the foreseeable future.

Lee and Bremmer (1991) mention that the largest school division in Manitoba, an urban one, has made a commitment by the local teachers' association, school division administration and the elected board of trustees to an Affirmative

Action policy. In this division, Winnipeg #1, the percentage of females in administrative positions has risen from 20% in 1980 to 42% in 1990, with the majority obtaining jobs as vice-principals. This is a good example of how affirmative action can work, but Lee and Bremmer (1991) also state that progress was not being made across the province, despite the one example where an affirmative action policy was working. The female administrators in rural Manitoba, for example, are not doing well at all as far as increasing their numbers.

Statement of the Problem

My study is about the perspective of six women who are presently in administrative positions in schools in rural Manitoba. These women have been successful in overcoming the existing barriers and have entered the predominantly male domain of administration. The perspectives of the women are shown in three areas--how they entered administration, what their work environment is like, and how they balance their work with their personal lives. In order to obtain a perspective of these women's lives, I needed to know the following: What characteristics do these women have? How did they become administrators? What is it like working as a female administrator in rural Manitoba? What are these women like as people, balancing work and home?

How did these women "defy the odds"? Was it by chance, such as "being in the right place at the right time"? Were they motivated to go into administration because they had some definite plans to obtain a higher, more prestigious position? How prepared were they academically? In other words, did they take university courses or other suitable workshops in administration before applying for an administrative position? Did they have mentors who guided and supported them for administrative positions? If they did have mentors, who were they? Was it their

superintendent, their principal, or some other person who had influence? How old were they when they entered administration? Were they considerably older than their male peers? Had they left teaching for a time to raise their children?

The second element is being a female administrator in a rural area. How does it compare to the literature which deals with women administrators in urban areas? One area is the work experience with male and female staff members as well as peer and higher level administrators. How does the female administrator gain the confidence of others? Do female administrators feel that they have to work harder to be accepted or recognized for their work? Does their high visibility as females in a male dominant administrative system hinder their creativity and ability to contribute successfully to their work environment? Are they plagued by sexism and gender issues? If so, in what way? How do they deal with the fact that their minority status makes them representatives for the upcoming female administrators?

The third element is the woman administrator's way of balancing her work and home life. Do women feel that they have two full-time jobs, one at work and one at home? What are their domestic responsibilities? Do they have children, partners, support from partners? Are they able to compartmentalize their work and home environments as two separate entities or is there a major conflict between them? Although it is difficult to divide oneself into two people, can a woman balance both the work setting and home life so that she feels that she is satisfied with both? What coping strategies, if any, are women administrators using to lead meaningful personal lives?

Methodology

In order to address these questions I used qualitative research methods to determine the perspectives of women administrators in rural Manitoba. I chose this method because I felt that a qualitative study would best meet my need to answer the questions which I had. Six women administrators were selected from six different school divisions throughout the province.

My study has a quantitative component as well. In order to have a data base for women administrators in rural Manitoba, I sent surveys to women administrators in rural Manitoba. More detail on the findings will be found in Chapter IV of this document. Although the statistics for women administrators in rural Manitoba listed women teaching in Hutterite colony schools as principals, I did not send them the surveys. In Manitoba, according to the Public Schools Act, each school must have a principal. Teachers in one or two room schools are therefore automatically given the status as principals. I feel that this inflates the statistics on rural administrators. For my study, I therefore chose to send surveys to women who were responsible for at least two other staff members in their schools.

One other reason that I chose to do a qualitative study is that I have been somewhat disappointed with the literature review. There have been many articles and books which I have read on the topic of women in administration. Most of them have extensive bibliographies and footnotes. Very soon into my readings, I discovered that the same names kept on appearing. It has made me question seriously just how much of the literature on this topic is based on actual research and how much of it is simply quoting others. Gabler's article (1987) interested me because her writing was based on her own experience. I decided to do my own qualitative study. It was important to me to have an actual picture of what some of my peers in other rural areas are doing.

Personal Comments

My interest in women administrators in rural Manitoba stems from the fact that I am a member of this group. I have been in the field of education for over twenty years. All of my experience has been in rural settings, either on small military stations or in a small town. I have been a principal, an interim principal, and an assistant principal. Each time that I have held a position of leadership, I have experienced incidents which I felt occurred simply because I was a woman.

In the early and even late seventies people in rural communities where I worked seemed to be more open in expressing their disapproval of women in the principal's chair. That was several years ago, but the memory of the experience angers me somewhat even today. People may not be so quick in making negative comments about women in administration, but I am not convinced that approval exists.

Statistics, even with the inclusion of teachers in Hutterite colony schools, show that the number of women administrators continues to be low. Rural areas have some definite disadvantages. Because of distances, contact with other administrators is often restricted to phones or fax machines. Mentors, who may guide administrators and encourage them, are scarce. Schools are typically small, and administrators often have to teach as well as do their other administrative duties. As mentioned previously, women administrators in rural areas face great hurdles because of community traditions (Edson, 1988).

Summary of Organization of Thesis

The problem of underrepresentation of women in school administration and its significance have been presented in this chapter. Chapter II is a review of the literature on women in school administration, concentrating on three areas: their

entry into administration, being an administrator, and being a person balancing work and home. Chapter III deals with the research procedures I used, and Chapter IV contains the results of the survey which I sent to the women administrators. Chapter V is an introduction to the six women who were interviewed. Chapter VI contains documentation of the interviews and the women's comments on the three areas of entry into administration, their work environment, and how they balance their home and work life. Chapter VII summarizes the findings and conclusions of my study.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE**Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature on women in administration in order to have a base for comparison with the results of my study of women who are administrators in rural settings. There are few actual studies that have been done on women in the leadership role, whether it be in industrial or in educational settings. In my opinion, the literature is inadequate as it is repetitious and often lacks actual research done by the author. If one looks, for instance, at the bibliographies of many of the books and articles, most of the references state the same authors and studies.

More articles need to be written by women and published in professional journals which are read by a large number of administrators. In the past, women have often been excluded from these articles. For example, Shakeshaft and Hanson (1986) studied ten volumes of the "Educational Administration Quarterly" written from 1970-1980. They found that women appeared either as authors or were recognized in the acknowledgements of only ten per cent of the articles. Two-thirds were written from the perspective that "women do not exist." Things are beginning to change. Individuals such as Young (1994) are starting to write about women in educational administration, using Canadian studies. If we women want to be taken seriously, we must do something about it ourselves. We should therefore do more research on women in administration and publish these findings in the journals to insure that there is a better representation of the experience of women administrators.

If any literature based on women principals and vice-principals in rural settings exists, I was not able to find it. Very few women administrators work in rural areas. For instance, if one looks at the statistics in Chapter One on women

administrators in urban Manitoba and compares them with women in rural Manitoba, not only is there a smaller percentage of women administrators in rural Manitoba, but the rate of increase is much less. It is therefore not surprising that very little is written on and by women administrators in rural areas.

Three areas emerged out of the literature review: entry into administration, the work environment, and balancing work with home. These are also the areas which seem to be a concern for women contemplating going into administration. Therefore the literature review and my study were built around these three themes.

Women's Entry into Administration

According to authors such as Edson (1988), there are several barriers to advancement in administration for women. Cited as examples of these barriers are gender bias, lack of mentors, traditional hiring practices, inadequate job opportunities, perpetuation of role stereotypes, few opportunities to gain practical experience, and limited job availability in a period of enrollment decline. Edson also found that it was hard for women to get into administration because the network of contacts is mainly informal, and for the most part, exclusively male. In spite of these barriers, more women are gaining entry into the male-dominated field of administration. This section will deal with how women administrators first obtained their first position as leaders in their schools.

Many women have become administrators more by external circumstances than actual planning on their part. Although some urban areas have affirmative action committees, many areas do not. Many women lack career plans (Collinson, 1989). They do not see themselves leaving the classroom (Pavan, 1991). They sometimes stumble into administration by some "fortuitous" accident (Ortiz, 1982). Chance remarks, unexpected job openings,

and unsought role re-definitions or transfers sometimes foster changing aspirations for these women. Thus the readiness to recognize and capitalize on unexpected opportunities is often more characteristic than career planning (Young, 1994).

Some women achieve "master teacher" status and expand outward into other aspects of their profession. Porat (1985) found this to be the case with successful female candidates for principalships in Southern Alberta. These women took on leadership roles in areas of education that they found interesting and conducive to personal and professional growth. They were motivated by a commitment to students and learning rather than careerism.

Some women seek entry into administration because of a need for change. They may be bored with the classroom routine (Edson, 1988; Tabin & Coleman, 1991). These women seek outlets from the repetition in their lives. Tabin and Coleman called these women a special strain of teacher who by default almost, became principals because there was nothing else to do.

A number of women who have become administrators, began taking administrative courses simply to further their education. They had not planned on actually becoming administrators until they had obtained their certification in administration (Mertz & McNeely, 1990). Once they had the qualifications, they decided that they might as well go into administration.

The frustration that some women feel with inadequate administrators who are in positions of power compel them to go into administration (Edson, 1988). As teachers they do not have the authority to run their schools. They know that the only way that they can make a difference is by becoming administrators themselves.

In a study done in Manitoba, Lee and Bremner (1991) found that women administrators were more in evidence where the administrator was required to

have a second language ability. In French Immersion schools 75% of the administrators were female, rather than the provincial average at that time of 20%. Thus having an additional or "special" qualification seemed to have helped women to obtain these positions.

Experience and maturity play an important role in women's entry into administration. Women in our society are generally expected to be the care givers of their children, and many stay home for a period of time when their children are young (Lee & Bremner, 1991). This causes them to be out of the work force, while their male colleagues pursue their career paths. Other women continue to teach while their children are young. The heavy demands of work and home, however, often leave no time to contemplate taking administrative courses and applying for leadership positions. It appears that once the children are older, women begin thinking of their own careers. Thus they generally enter administration at a later age than men (Collison, 1989; Ortiz, 1982; Porat, 1985). They have also had more experience than their male counterparts in classroom teaching (Shakeshaft, 1987; Thrasher, 1992; Tabin & Coleman, 1991; Glazer, 1991). These women who enter administration at a later age are sometimes referred to as "late bloomers". They have the knowledge, ability, and time to concentrate on the administrative role.

Mentors are possibly the single most important factor in an administrator's career (Holt, 1981; Ortiz, 1982). They can play an important role to women aspiring to become administrators (Young, 1991; Shakeshaft, 1987; Easton et al, 1982; Pavan & Robinson, 1991). Mentors have experience and are able to guide aspiring administrators, teaching them, helping them to develop skills, and giving them encouragement (Michael & Hunt, 1985). Because of the small numbers of women in administration, mentors are often men. It would be beneficial for more women to be mentors, because having

been in the same situation once themselves, they would have a better understanding of how to help aspiring women administrators. One thing is quite certain. Mentors are essential to success (Edson, 1988). They are an important link to other administrators and their help can overcome the barriers which these women will continue to face once they become administrators themselves.

Women have to overcome hurdles which men do not face before they enter administration. Many authors talk about these barriers. Socialization, which involves the acquisition of norms and values, the learning of roles and the internalization of knowledge about the self and one's patterns of response in a variety of situations (Gammage, 1982), plays an important role in women's hesitancy to enter the administrative field. Systemic discrimination, subtly reinforced and rationalized by traditional socialization, continues to be a major factor in the under-representation of women in Canadian school administration (Rees, 1990). Women have been led to believe since early childhood that men are the leaders of society. Early in life they are taught not to have high expectations for themselves. Whereas boys have been rewarded for attributes such as independence, aggressiveness and competitiveness, girls have been rewarded for dependence, passivity, and compliance (Gaskell & McLaren, 1987; Anti-Sexist Working Party, 1985). As adults, they may thus be less self-confident, less assertive, and more timid than men (Hale, 1987). Many are afraid to take risks (Porat, 1985). Even when women do try to take these risks, they face the barriers of school boards, for although the composition of school boards may have changed over the last number of years, their propensity to hire men has not (Edson, 1988).

A new generation of women, however, is starting to appear in the administrative chair. These women are not staying home for long periods of time

while their children are young. They are taking courses in administration at universities and are actively pursuing a leadership position. Few of them say that they just 'fell into' administration (Edson, 1988).

Being an Administrator

Once a woman becomes an administrator, she still faces many barriers. Some of them are very visible, but many are subtle and can be felt rather than seen. There is a lot of inconsistency in the literature on women in administration. It reflects the rather uneven ground on which women in administration tread.

A big barrier to women in administration is the fact that people perceive the role of the administrator as one where the male is the head (Lee & Bremner, 1991). The realm of male privileges in politics, business, education, and religion was and is justified by arguments that woman's nature makes her inherently incapable of performing those roles (Ferguson, 1980). On top of the workload which administrators normally do, women have the added burden of convincing others that they really are capable of performing well.

Women are a minority in administration. In some school divisions there might be only one woman. That creates a lot of pressure on them. They stand out among their male colleagues and their public performance is thus more open to scrutiny. They are like tokens (Kanter, 1977). It is easier for tokens to find an instant identity by conforming to preexisting stereotypes. Tokens are highly visible as people who are different. At the same time, however, they are not permitted the individuality of their own unique, non-stereotypical characteristics. The attention received from superiors, subordinates, and peers creates performance pressures and exaggerates the contrast between the token and the ordinary personnel. The pressure and perception of social distance isolate the token and her performance is

taken as the basis for generalizations about the token's type (Ferguson, 1984). This makes it very hard for the the female administrator to do something which is creative or different. Others' expectations might be too rigid and demanding, and the attempt to overcome these limits could take more energy and time than what one is able to give. If the female administrator does not meet people's expectations, any female seeking an administrative position in that division in the future would be at a disadvantage. The people in power would recall the past female administrator's perceived faults and might assume that the woman applying for the position would have them as well. On the other hand, if the token female administrator is exceptional, women who follow in her footsteps might have unrealistic expectations placed upon them.

Women administrators might be similar to men in many situations (Bolman, 1992). However, women principals tend to lead in a more democratic and less autocratic style than men principals (Eagly, Karau, & Johnson, 1992). For many women, to lead is to be at the center of a group rather than in front of others (Hartsock, 1987). They often create the image of being nurturing, empathic, and knowledgeable (Tabin & Coleman, 1991). Successful women leaders demonstrate high levels in communication, problem-solving, organizational savvy, team building, instruction, and curriculum (Thrasher, 1992). Women administrators tend to focus more on the classroom than on the system and their top priority is dealing with people (Porat, 1985). It appears that there is little if any significant evidence to support the notion that males are better suited for leadership and educational administration than females (Van Meir, 1975). Studies have indicated that the calibre of performance of pupils and teachers in schools administered by women is of a higher quality than in schools managed by men (Tibbetts, 1980). In fact, it has been found that the women who have been able to obtain administrative positions

have generally performed as capably, if not more capably, than men administrators (Fishel & Pottker, 1977).

Although the studies on women in school administration emphasize the positive outcomes when women are in the leadership role, being one of the first or the only woman administrator in a school division carries added burdens. The few who "make it" experience great pressure to do outstanding jobs --both for themselves and for those hopeful of following in their footsteps. To succeed in administration, it is not enough for women to average, they must be superior (Edson, 1988). Women administrators seem to have to work harder than men to obtain their successes and this puts them under a lot of stress.

Women administrators sometimes experience barriers in their relationships with the people in their work environment. The same words spoken by a man administrator sometimes have different meanings to men and women teachers. Conversely, an interaction between a woman principal and a man teacher is not the same as an exchange between a woman principal and a woman teacher (Shakeshaft, 1989). Women administrators who work with largely traditional female staff members sometimes face less than an enthusiastic acceptance (Porat, 1985). However, men teachers usually exhibit more hostility in dealing with women administrators than do women teachers (Shakeshaft, 1991). Women administrators have to work harder to get male teachers to "hear" them, although men who have had the opportunity to work for a woman administrator have admitted that it was a good experience (Gabler, 1987).

Women administrators often experience the feeling of isolation (Ortiz, 1982; Garson, 1975; Porat, 1985; Epp, 1993). They are not a part of what is known as "The Old Boys' Club". This "club" provides men with the opportunity to socialize, to seek advice and information, and to participate in the informal

decision making of the organization (Young, 1994). This network of contacts in administration is mainly informal (Edson, 1988). Most political activity is carried out behind closed doors, in code, or otherwise masked (Melia & Lyttle, 1986). Women administrators do not have access to this important reserve of information and support and because the numbers of women administrators are small, there are very few "Old Girls' Clubs." Therefore women administrators often have to depend on themselves to resolve their own problems and to make important decisions about their work.

School boards and parents often have a concern about a woman principal's ability to discipline. Discipline is most often given as the major reason for not hiring women in middle schools and high schools (Edson, 1988). If discipline is a problem in a school, board members often assume that a man is necessary to "clean things up" (Epp, 1993). It is difficult for women to convince the school boards and parents of their students that they are capable of improving school discipline, even though they may use methods other than those used by their male counterparts (Epp, 1993).

Balancing Work and Home: Walking on a Tightrope

Balancing both work and home can prove to be a difficult task for women in school administration. The demands on their time in both areas can be overwhelming. Society's expectations of women's home responsibilities are not lessened when they take on heavier work loads. Just as balance is critical to the acrobats who walk on a tightrope, it is also critical to the women in administration. The strain can affect their health and well-being. However, obtaining balance is not an easy task for them.

Women in today's society are still the primary caregivers of their children whether or not they are active in the work force. Although men also face difficult

decisions about career and families, the strain for wives to manage both work and home continues to be greater in this culture than for husbands (Edson, 1988). That is perhaps why a greater proportion of women administrators are single and childless compared to men (Young, 1994). There are, however, many women in administration who are married and have children. These so-called "Superwomen" balance administration and family, often facing a lonely battle at the office and a maximum load at home (Edson, 1988). These are the women who will be discussed in this section.

As stated previously, women often have to prove their capability as competent administrators. This requires a lot of time and energy. Married women administrators do not usually have the luxury of going home, putting up their feet, and relaxing. The pressures with which they deal at work are compounded with those at home (Pavan & Robinson, 1991). They experience what is sometimes referred to as the "double day" (Hartsock, 1987; Wilson, 1991). Women who choose to work and have children end up working an extra month of twenty-four hour days a year. They thus end up having two full-time jobs (Wilson, 1991).

Men have seldom had to choose between, on one hand, achieving all the occupational success of which they are capable, and on the other hand, becoming successful parents (Nuechterlein, 1985). This is not the case for women. Husbands and families could be a hindrance for women who want to "go up the administrative scale" (Hansot & Tyack, 1981; Schmuck, 1975). Therefore a greater percentage of female administrators than men remain single (Ortiz, 1982). Those women who want husbands and children as well as an administrative career, limit the restraints on their time and energy by having small families (Armstrong & Armstrong, 1979).

Married women usually cannot count on their husbands to help them with their household duties. One Vancouver study by Meissner et al in 1975 concluded

that husbands in childless families increased their regular housework time by six minutes a week when their wives joined the labour force; in families with children, their contribution increased by an hour a week (Armstrong & Armstrong, 1979). More recent studies have also confirmed that husbands contribute about the same time to family tasks whether or not their wives are employed (Edson, 1988; Duffy, 1989). Many men have grown up in households where their mothers stayed at home. Their fathers did very little housework, so these men did not have role models which they can now emulate. They are therefore often confused by the demands of dual-earner households (Duffy, 1989).

Childcare facilities are not readily available. For example, in 1991 only thirteen per cent of children of employed mothers in Canada were cared for in regulated day care (Wilson, 1991). Women are usually the ones responsible for finding alternative facilities for their children.

In order to try to balance the "competing urgencies" of work and home, women have found that the key to coping is organization, making efficient use of the available time (Young, 1991). Some strategies which they use are blocking time, scheduling, timetabling, making notes, making lists, calendars, and keeping appointment books. The most important time management strategy is prioritizing. The demands of family, husband, career, and studies are sometimes difficult and pressing, but women with good organizational skills seem to thrive on the activity and challenge. In fact, some women find their myriad responsibilities as matter-of-fact rather than daunting (Tabin & Coleman, 1991).

Summary

In this chapter I have concentrated on the literature dealing with women's entry into administration, their role as administrators, and balancing work and home

responsibilities. The literature on women's entry into administration refers often to a few factors. One is the age of entry. Women tend to be at least ten years older than men in the same position as they often fulfilled family commitments first. Whereas men's careers are relatively uninterrupted, there are often gaps in women's careers when they are raising a family.

Women often enter administration by "fortuitous" chance, that is, they happen to be in the right place at the right time, or are told by others that they should apply. There seems to be a lack of planning on their part.

A third theme in women's entry into administration is a mentorship with an individual, usually a male. He encourages, supports, and instructs the woman. The mentor may be the single most important factor in women's entry into administrative positions.

The literature on women and their role as administrators deals with their work experience and the sexism and gender issues which arise. The small number of women who are in administration are very visible and their actions are often seen as representing all women in their position. Their work relationship with colleagues is not always positive. Women are often excluded from the "Boys' Clubs" and therefore do not profit from information and the decision-making which occurs when men gather together informally.

According to the literature, women principals do a very good job in the running of their schools. Although there are some negative comments made about working under female principals by staff members, the literature states that they are made by those who are not presently working with women administrators. Once they do have a female principal, these comments change and become positive.

Women continue to face sexism issues in their work. Statistics show that the chances of women being promoted are very low. School boards and the public in general still have a picture in their mind of a male in the principal's chair.

To balance both her career and home life, the female administrator "walks a tightrope." Women do not have easy access childcare services. Husbands usually do not do their equal share in this area as well. It seems that although a woman may be an administrator who delegates assignments to others, she has yet to overcome the socialized gender roles which place her as the main care-giver to her children and the person in charge of household tasks.

Any woman reading this chapter might become discouraged from contemplating a career in school administration. So many barriers seem to exist--barriers from entering administration, barriers in the work environment, and barriers in balancing their home and work lives. What has not been stressed is that there are good reasons for women to go into administration.

It is true that women have not been encouraged in the past to seek leadership roles. In my opinion, socialization has put women in a secondary role to men. The authors mentioned in this chapter have very few positive things to say about women's attempts to break away from society's mold and to become leaders in the teaching profession.

Women do not seem to have complete control of their own lives. They often stay at home and raise their children, missing several important years in their career development. Mentors are few for women. Once women "fall into" administration by some "fortuitous accident", they continue to face barriers from their male colleagues, the community, staff members, parents, students, trustees, and even their superordinates. They seem to be constantly proving to others and to themselves that they are tough, yet nurturing. In addition, they have to cope with household responsibilities, finding child care, and encouraging husbands to do a little more work at home.

What is not mentioned enough in the literature review is the positive side. These women are like pioneers. They seem to have been pioneers for a few

generations. Like pioneers, they often face many hardships. Also, like pioneers, they are breaking the ground for the benefit of future generations of women. There is some progress being made. Some school divisions have affirmative action committees. The younger generation of women are being brought up with more awareness of equality. However, the majority of women who are presently in school administration are in their forties. Most of them grew up in homes where the father was recognized as the head of the household responsible for the family's finances. The mother stayed at home and took care of the children or she worked at a low-paying job during the day, and did the household chores at night and weekends. Thus the majority of the women administrators and their spouses are still dealing with the radical changes in society, with the dual-career families and the consequent issues of time management and sharing of household duties which have to be addressed. Once these issues are resolved so that all family members take on a fair portion of the responsibility in the running of the household, there will be more time for women to pursue their interests and careers. Also, when the numbers of women in administration increase, there should be more acceptance and less stress on women in their work environment.

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

The purpose of my research is to describe and document the perspectives of women school administrators in rural areas in Manitoba. By meeting with rural women administrators personally and documenting what they had to say, I felt that I would get a better understanding of them. In order to get a profile of rural women administrators I sent each one a survey. Responses were made into tables which are found in Chapter IV. Six women were then selected to be interviewed. An introduction to each of the women is found in Chapter V. Their responses to the three main themes of entry into administration, their work environment, and their ways of balancing their work with their home lives are found in Chapter VI of this document.

Before embarking on my own qualitative research, I read what a number of authors have written about this type of research for two reasons. The first was that I wanted to be sure that qualitative methods of research were best for my study. The second reason was that I wanted to learn how to do that type of research.

I learned that qualitative data are attractive as they are a source of well-grounded rich descriptions and explanations of processes occurring in local contexts (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Chronological flow can be preserved. Words, when they are organized into stories, have a concrete, vivid, meaningful flavor that proves far more convincing to a reader than pages of numbers.

Humans are storytelling organisms who, individually and socially, lead storied lives (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990). Qualitative studies deal with narrative and social contacts. I used the idea of women telling their stories in their own

words. I wanted to convey their lives in such a way that the reader would see them as individuals and would be able to understand the social context of their lives.

Some of my concerns were stated by Miles and Huberman (1984). Because of the small number (six) of women who were being interviewed, I was concerned about making any generalizations. Would the women whom I interviewed be true representatives of female administrators in rural Manitoba? I was also aware of the possibility of researcher bias. As a woman administrator in a rural setting, I have definite concerns and opinions. I had to keep this in mind when I did the interviewing and summarizing of the data which I obtained from the women whom I interviewed.

The bulk of data that is accumulated during qualitative research can be a problem (Miles and Huberman, 1984). Words are much fatter than numbers, and usually they have multiple meanings. With so much data, it is too difficult to study many cases at one time. The question then is, just how much can we generalize our findings to the majority when we study such a small sample of individuals? Would the six women whom I chose really be representative of all the women in administration in rural Manitoba? I decided that I would make no claims to have selected a representative sample, that the interviews would not represent a statistically valid or reliable population and that the women whom I interviewed should not be considered statistically generalizable (Ferguson, 1980).

Selecting Informants

Before selecting the women for my study, I sent a letter to all female administrators in rural school divisions in Manitoba. Because of the small numbers of women administrators in rural Manitoba, I decided to include vice-principals and principals for my study. I obtained their names through the Manitoba Teachers' Society. In this letter I explained briefly what my study was about. I asked them to answer a few questions such as what their current position was, how long they had

been in administration, the number of students in their schools, the grades in their schools, the percentage of the time they taught, their age, and their marital status. In order to assure anonymity, I sent two forms and two self-addressed stamped envelopes. The letters are included in Appendix A. One letter dealt with demographics and the other one was to be sent back to me only if the administrator was interested in receiving more information or was willing to be interviewed.

Over thirty women replied that they would be willing to be interviewed. I selected six women. The criteria I used for the selection were experience, geographic location, willingness, and 'contactability' (Kirby & McKenna, 1989). As stated previously, I had included two envelopes with the letters which I had sent to the administrators. This guaranteed their anonymity for the data which I later compiled. Unfortunately, I was therefore unable to match the demographics of the women with their school position. Rather than phoning over thirty women throughout the province who had agreed to be interviewed to find out their ages, their experience in teaching and administration, and other personal data, I decided to go back to my original list which stated their positions, school size and population, the grade levels, and the school division in which they worked. I chose to interview vice or assistant principals as well as principals who were in primary, elementary, and high schools in six different rural school divisions in Manitoba.

Because of the distances between female administrators in rural Manitoba, I foresaw a problem with face-to-face communication. I was fortunate in my choice of administrators. They were very accommodating. Some of them lived a good distance away from Winnipeg, but they came to Winnipeg a number of times a year. They scheduled me to see them between appointments, family visitations, conference sessions, and other business which they dealt with when coming to the city.

Procedures for collecting data

I interviewed the women in person once and taped the interview. Although it is not recommended to tape a conversation the first time that an interviewer and interviewee meet (Eisner, 1991), I did record the interview. I would have preferred to have met with them a second time, but the distances and schedules of the administrators did not make this a viable option. The women whom I interviewed agreed to be recorded at the first meeting, and with most of the interviews I was able to arrange a long enough appointment with the women in order for us to get to know each other a bit and to become more at ease with each other. During these pre-recorded conversations I was able to form an impression of each woman. If something was said at this time which I felt was significant or interesting, I made sure that it was repeated during the recorded segment of our meeting. Since the interviews were taped, I was able to concentrate on what was being said during the interview without having to jot down notes as we spoke. I spent approximately two hours with each interviewee, although the time varied from about one to three hours. Recorded conversations did not surpass one hour.

The six women were phoned ahead of time (Dexter, 1970) and were given a number of dates times, giving them the opportunity to be interviewed when it was more convenient for them. It would have preferable to meet with the women at a location where we would not have been disturbed. However, since they were willing to be interviewed, I thought that it would be best to allow them to choose the location. I ended up meeting them in a variety of places, and some were not ideal. Three asked me to interview them at their homes. One met me at a hotel in the city. One asked to be interviewed in an open study hall in a school where she was attending a conference. One came to my home.

Each woman was asked the same questions during the interview (See Appendix B) and was given as much time as necessary to respond and to expand

on them (Dexter, 1970; Mishler, 1986). Two of the women were very pressed for time. However, all of them did discuss the three themes of entry into administration, the work environment, and balancing work with home.

The last question I asked each interviewee before shutting off the tape recorder was if there was any concern she had which had not been dealt with in the interview. This allowed her to make a statement about an issue which I might not have considered when creating the interview questions. All interviewees had comments and concerns about their roles in administration.

Several ethical issues had to be addressed. All interviewees had volunteered to be part of the research. They were informed that their responses would be anonymous. Riddell (1989) feels that it is impossible for any one doing educational research to be able to give an absolute guarantee of anonymity. It is true that there are very few female administrators in rural Manitoba. To disguise one's identity is therefore problematic. However, I have tried to take as many precautions as necessary to change key, identifiable aspects of the women's identities. Each woman also signed a letter of consent which stated that anything which she did not wish to be in the thesis about herself would be erased. To ensure this, I sent each woman a copy of the written transcript. If there was any part she did not want mentioned in my thesis, each woman was told to contact me and to tell me which part or parts to remove. Also, each woman was free to withdraw from the study at any time. As the interviewer, I had the obligation to honor all promises and commitments in that agreement (Borg & Gall, 1989).

Data Analysis

One must place value on the dignity, privacy, and courtesy of the interviewee, and interviewers should keep this in mind at all times. Dexter (1970) and Mishler (1986) suggest that the interviewer send the transcripts of the interview

back to be edited by the person interviewed. Errors of fact could then be corrected and disagreements of interpretation could be resolved. As stated previously, I sent transcripts to the women and asked them to contact me if they had any concerns. I did not get any calls about the transcripts.

Once an interview was completed, I listened to the tape and made a "clean" transcript, taking out the pauses and making the transcript grammatically correct. This was done in order to make it easy to read and to allow the reader to concentrate on the the content of what was being said. Also, I felt that a transcript full of grammatical errors and pause marks could embarrass the women unnecessarily when they read it over. Each transcript was single-spaced and ended up being about nine or ten pages long. I made notes in the margins when I printed the transcripts in order to classify and code the categories. I found that all the comments which the women made fit under the main themes, that is, when they entered administration, their experience as administrators, and how they balanced their work with their home life. No other categories were needed.

One of the problems with qualitative data which was mentioned earlier in this chapter is that validity, reliability, and generalization are less clear cut in qualitative research. Therefore, as I have stated previously, I decided to make no claim that the women whom I interviewed represented the majority of the female administrators in Manitoba. However, I found that the women did have many common experiences in spite of their differences in age, years in the teaching profession, and marital status.

The data gathered from the survey were used to compile the tables found in the next chapter. Both Strauss (1987) and Mishler (1986) refer to the compiling of diagrams, matrices, tables, and graphs to make the data more "scientific". I considered a variety of techniques for storage of data suggested by Kirby and McKenna (1989). I put most of the information which I felt important on computer

disks. All transcripts and letters of communication were stored on disks as well. All computer printouts and correspondence were stored in binders.

In order to assure anonymity, I chose a pseudonym for each woman I interviewed. Each transcript was studied and changes were made in small ways to help assure anonymity. Some interesting data had to be left out because the women could have been easily identified. A short biography was then compiled for each woman. The biographies are found in Chapter IV.

I made copies of the original transcripts and worked with them, classifying each interviewee's conversation into three categories: how they first became administrators, their present position, and how they balance their work and home environment. This was fairly simple with the majority of the interviewees' transcripts. However, when I came to the final part of a few of the transcripts where the interviewees were asked whether they had any concerns or comments, a few of their responses were more like post scripts to the first and second categories and had to be incorporated with them. I then organized the data so that all of the responses in each category were put together for comparison.

Concluding Comments

I found the experience of working with the data I obtained to be very interesting and challenging. The qualitative part of my study, that is, the sending out of the surveys, the gathering of data, and the formation of tables was the easy part. It was much more difficult doing the interviews. The time spent on the phone making arrangements, the driving to various homes and meeting places in the country and city, and the frustration of transcribing interviews when the voices on the tape recorder sounded mumbled and had to be played back several times were only some of the drawbacks of choosing to do a qualitative study. Then came the pages and pages of transcripts which had to be coded, categorized, and filed. On top of that was the time spent trying to camouflage each woman so that she could

remain anonymous, and also in making sure that the essence of what each woman said and did was not lost. I soon realized when doing the transcripts that, although the interview questions were categorized, the answers were not always so "cut and dried". I found that I had to do a lot of revisions and rereading of the transcripts.

In spite of all the work involved in doing the qualitative study, it was very rewarding. The women were interesting, ambitious, and stimulating. Their answers were thought-provoking and showed a real concern for their work, their colleagues, and their families. From the statistics found in the next chapter, you will meet six of the women administrators in rural schools who are, in my opinion, making a difference.

CHAPTER IV

SURVEY RESULTS

The literature on women in school administration suggests that women have come to administration with more experience in teaching than men have. Women get appointed to administrative positions later than men do. They are responsible for smaller schools. Although women represent the larger teaching body, a very small percentage of women are administrators. Is this true of women administrators in rural Manitoba?

As mentioned in the previous chapter, a survey was sent in June 1993 to over ninety women who were identified as principals and vice-principals in rural Manitoba. (Women hired as teachers in Hutterite colonies were not sent surveys, although they are listed as principals.) One purpose of the survey was to obtain information about the women administrators' age, their family, their years of experience in teaching and administration, their current position, the number of students in their schools, the grades in their schools, and the percentage of time they teach (see Appendix A). That information was to be used to compare rural Manitoban administrators to the women in the literature who were generally urban administrators. The second purpose was to recruit six of the rural administrators for my study. In order to assure the anonymity of the survey results, the respondents were asked to return the surveys in stamped envelopes which had my name and address. Another form and stamped envelope were included for the women who wished to have more information about my study or who were willing to be interviewed by me.

June is a very busy time for the teaching profession. Owing to a number of unforeseen delays, the surveys were sent during that month. The response was actually quite good. A few surveys were returned because some of the women who had been on the list were no longer or had never been in administration. Sixty-eight surveys were used for the tables in this chapter, except for the table dealing with years of teaching experience. Six of the sixty-eight respondents did not fill in that information.

In order to get a general idea of the women in their home situation, a few personal questions were asked about whether or not they were living with a partner, how many children they had, how old their children were, and how many of their children were living at home. Over 80% of the women were living with a partner. More than 75% had children. While approximately 80% of the respondents were under fifty years old, 56% were between the ages of forty and forty-nine. The majority of them had at least one child living at home.

Below are tables showing the results of the surveys.

Table 5
Women Administrators by School Size

| | <100 students | 100-299 | 300-499 | 500+ | Total |
|------------------------|------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Early (K-4) | 0 (0%) | 4 (6%) | 3 (4%) | 0 (0%) | 7 (10%) |
| E & M | 12 (18%) | 19 (28%) | 6 (10%) | 3 (4%) | 40 (60%) |
| K-12 | 0 (0%) | 3 (4%) | 3 (4%) | 6 (10%) | 12 (18%) |
| Senior | 2 (3%) | 3 (4%) | 3 (4%) | 1 (1%) | 9 (12%) |
| Total | 14 (21%) | 29 (42%) | 15 (22%) | 10 (15%) | 68 (100%) |

For Tables 5 and 6, the left-hand column denotes the types of schools³⁶ in which the women in rural Manitoba are administrators. Although a few of the schools do not follow the exact categories, those schools are placed in the categories which best describe them. The early years schools are usually from kindergarten to grade four. Early and middle years schools are usually from kindergarten to grade eight. K-12 schools are from kindergarten to grade twelve. Senior schools in rural Manitoba usually house grade eight to twelve students.

Table 5 indicates that 60% of women administrators who responded to the survey are working in schools which have kindergarten to grade six or eight students. Over 60% of the respondents are administrators in schools where the student population is less than three hundred students.

Table 6
Women Rural Administrators by Administrative Time

| | <50% | 50-75% | 76-99% | 100% | Total |
|--------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| Early (K-4) | 3 (4%) | 2 (3%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (3%) | 7 (10%) |
| E & M | 13 (19%) | 8 (13%) | 6 (9%) | 13 (19%) | 40 (60%) |
| K-12 | 0 (0%) | 4 (6%) | 1 (1%) | 7 (10%) | 12 (17%) |
| Senior | 2 (3%) | 3 (4%) | 2 (3%) | 2 (3%) | 9 (13%) |
| Total | 18 (26%) | 17 (26%) | 9 (13%) | 24 (35%) | 68 (100%) |

65% of the respondents teach for part of the day. Over 25% of the women have less than 50% of administration time. This indicates that the majority of the women administrators in rural Manitoba not only have the extra responsibility of preparing classes, but that a good portion of their days are spent teaching in classrooms. All schools require a minimum of administrative

duties. These duties, along with classroom preparation, would probably have to be done outside of school hours.

Table 7
Women Rural Administrators by Teaching Experience

| Age | 0-5 years | 6-10 | 11-19 | 20+ | Total |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|------------|--------------|
| 35 or less | 1 (2%) | 5 (8%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 6 (10%) |
| 36-45 | 2 (3%) | 12 (19%) | 21 (34%) | 0 (0%) | 35 (56%) |
| 46-49 | 2 (3%) | 2 (3%) | 6 (10%) | 5 (8%) | 15 (24%) |
| 50+ | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (3%) | 4 (7%) | 6 (10%) |
| Total | 5 (8%) | 19 (30%) | 29 (47%) | 9 (15%) | 62 (100%) |

Six of the respondents did not complete the section on the survey which dealt with teaching experience. Therefore the total for Table 8 is sixty-two. Almost 65% of the respondents have more than eleven years of experience in teaching and 30% have between six and ten years of experience. Less than 10% have fewer than five years of experience as teachers.

Table 8
Women Rural Administrators by Administrative Experience

| Age | 0-5 years | 6-10 years | 11+ years | Total |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------|
| 35 or less | 5 (8%) | 1 (1%) | 1 (1%) | 7 (10%) |
| 36-45 | 26 (38%) | 8 (12%) | 1 (1%) | 35 (51%) |
| 46-49 | 12 (18%) | 4 (6%) | 2 (3%) | 18 (27%) |
| 50+ | 5 (8%) | 0 (0%) | 3 (4%) | 8 (12%) |
| Total | 48 (70%) | 13 (19%) | 7 (9%) | 68 (100%) |

Over 90% of the women have less than eleven years of experience in administration. 70% have been in administration for five years or less. Over 50% of the women are between thirty-six and forty-five years old and 27% are between forty-six and forty-nine years old. Almost 80% are in these two age categories. Thus the majority of the women are in "mid career" in their profession and relatively new to administration. Even women who are over fifty years old do not necessarily have many years of administrative experience. Only three of the eight women have been in administration for more than eleven years.

General Comments

The results of this survey are consistent with those found by Lee and Bremner (1991). Women in rural Manitoba are seldom administrators in the larger schools. Only 30% of the respondents in my study are administrators in schools with more than five hundred students. These women are usually the vice-principals, and not the principals of the larger schools.

Another consistency is that women are older when they take the first step into administration. Twenty-six of the sixty-eight respondents who are between thirty-six and forty-five years of age have five years or less of administrative experience. However, twenty-one of these women have taught for between eleven and nineteen years.

What one can see from the tables is that the majority of women administrators are found in elementary schools. Only 12% of the respondents are administrators of senior schools with students from grades nine to twelve.

Although Lee and Bremner (1991) found that a higher proportion of males were married and had dependent children in his Manitoban study, over

80% of the women who responded to my survey were living with a partner and over 75% had children. Is marriage one of the hidden criteria in the selection of women administrators in rural Manitoba or is it only a coincidence?

What does the data in the surveys mean? The large percentage of women administrators in rural Manitoba are middle-aged teaching administrators in small schools with elementary students. Although they have a fair amount of experience in the teaching profession, they are only beginning their administrative careers as principals and vice-principals.

In the next chapter, the reader will be introduced to six of the women who responded to the survey and volunteered to be interviewed.

CHAPTER V

SIX WOMEN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS IN RURAL MANITOBA

Thirty-three of the sixty-eight respondents to the survey agreed to be interviewed. Although my first impulse was to interview them all, I soon realized that it would be too cumbersome to contemplate taking on such a task. I decided that six would be a manageable number to interview and that the perspectives of these women would give the reader enough of an idea about what it is like being a school administrator in rural Manitoba.

In the selection process I chose six women who worked in different school divisions and districts throughout rural Manitoba. I interviewed them in the fall of 1993. Four were principals and two were vice-principals at the time. Their school populations ranged from less than one hundred to over five hundred students. Their schools contained a variety of grades: elementary students, junior high and high school students, and even students from kindergarten to grade twelve.

The purpose of this chapter is to attempt to "acquaint" the reader with the women whom I interviewed. In order to maintain their anonymity, slight changes have been made about their home and work situations. Pseudonyms were used for their names and their school divisions. However, a conscious effort has been made to represent the women as closely as possible without revealing their identities. The intent of this chapter is also to help the reader formulate a picture of the women in order to be able to relate to them when specific themes and issues in these women's lives will be discussed in the next chapter.

Laura

Laura is a vice-principal of a high school in a little town in the Northern School Division. Her school has fewer than three hundred students and Laura teaches half time. Although the division is large in area, there are only about a dozen administrators. There are no female principals and Laura is very discouraged about that fact.

Laura is married and has four children, all under ten years of age. She feels that she and her husband, Bill, work well together at home. There is fairly equal involvement with the household chores and child care in the evenings. Laura feels that Bill ends up doing more than she does with the children because of their work situations. Laura travels a greater distance to work and it is more convenient for Bill to attend to the children's after school activities.

Laura and Bill try to lessen some of their household chores by having a cleaning person in their home on a weekly basis. They both take evening classes on different nights and they are also away from home one other evening each week. Their children are also heavily involved with a number of activities such as hockey and skating, and therefore it is hard to find time when they can relax and be together. Laura and Bill have decided to try scheduling in some family time to address this problem.

Laura finds herself in a dilemma at the moment. She has been in the same position at work for over ten years, and she is ready for a change. Laura would like to be an assistant superintendent one day, because she feels that that position holds a lot of potential for her creativity. It does not look too promising for her in her present division, for there are few openings even for the principalship. There is always the possibility of finding a more challenging position in another division, but she does not want to do that just yet. Her children are still young, and she feels that she should remain fairly close to

home. There have been many cutbacks in education in recent years. In her present division, Laura has seniority. Even if her position as a vice-principal would be eliminated, she would still be guaranteed a job as a teacher in her division. If, however, she obtains a position in another division, she would lose the seniority which she now has. If that division would cut back, she would probably be one of the first to be released. She is concerned that she would risk losing her job, and feels that it would be too much of a burden for her husband to support them all. Therefore, she remains in her present school division and takes courses to improve her classification, hoping that a principalship opens up in her own division. She is almost forty years old, and she does not want to wait too long.

Gladys

Gladys is the full-time principal of an elementary school in the Western School Division. The school has a student population of around four hundred students. Gladys will soon be fifty years old, and although she has been an educator for over two decades, she has been an administrator for only a couple of years. She had never considered going into administration until recently. Always an active member of various professional development committees, Gladys gained a lot of skills and became more confident in herself. When she became a chairperson on one of the committees, she realized that she enjoyed doing the administrative tasks which were part of that position. With encouragement from her colleagues, she applied for and obtained a principalship in her school division.

Gladys was raised in a very traditional family where the wife was the person responsible for the household duties. Her husband, Walter, had the same kind of upbringing, and when they married, Gladys was the one who took

over the responsibility for cooking and cleaning. This has continued throughout their marriage. They have two grown sons who are living at home and attending university. Even though she is very busy with meetings and does a lot of administrative work at home, her husband and children do not help much at home. Gladys feels that her husband, who has an administrative position at work and also has many evening meetings, is even busier than she is. Gladys says that it is her "choice" to do most of the work around the house for although she does not like cleaning, she has not considered hiring extra help.

Gladys would like to be a principal in a high school setting. She has had a lot of experience teaching at that level and really enjoys working with teenage children. She has been taking courses for over twenty years and feels qualified for such a position. Although she feels that she has been doing a good job in her present school, she does not think that the trustees would hire her for a high school principalship. There is some political unrest and changes occurring in her division and she does not know how these will affect her job. Only time will tell.

Susan

Susan is a full-time vice-principal in a high school with a population of over five hundred students in the Eastern School Division. She is in her early fifties and has held administrative positions in a number of schools during the past fifteen years. She commutes over an hour every day. Susan has chosen to live outside of the community where she works. She feels that rural communities are very demanding of one's time and finds that she needs to separate her work life from that of her private life at home.

Susan is married and has three adult children who are no longer living at home. Her husband, Jeff, has a disability and is limited in the chores he can do.

Susan also has to do most of the driving and shopping. Like Gladys, Susan has not considered hiring someone to help with the household duties.

It is very important to Susan to have a balanced life. She works very hard at school, but she makes a conscious effort to find time to do things which she enjoys at home. She is an active member of her church choir and finds singing a source of relaxation. She plans activities with her husband, and takes every opportunity she can to visit with her grandchildren.

Susan is certain that she has proven her ability to do a good job at work. She feels that it is time that she had her own school to run. Positions are not plentiful, but she has already informed her superiors that she is interested in a more challenging position. She has the experience and qualifications and is ready. If she does not get the next principalship in the division which interests her, she says that she "will be asking a lot of questions." However, she did not say what she would do if she did not like the answers.

Francis

Francis is what one could call a 'new kid on the block' in administration. She is still in her thirties and has been the principal of a small elementary school in the Southern School Division for about three years. Francis is married to a farmer and has three small children at home. Her husband is very occupied at the farm, especially in the spring and fall. It is Francis who usually has the responsibility of getting the children to their baby-sitter several miles away before she goes to her school and picking them up after work. Her days are very long.

Francis is a perfectionist. She puts in a lot of time and energy both at work and at home. Because her school is small, she ends up teaching for a good portion of the day. She is the kind of individual who has a hard time

relaxing, and is usually busy at all times. Her staff lets her know in subtle ways that she looks 'stressed out' and they are very supportive. Francis feels that the good relationship which she has with her staff is due in part to her leadership style. No major decisions are made in her school without the staff's input. Every staff member is an integral part of the school team.

One of Francis's major concerns is her children. At the present time, things seem to be going well with them. They are content and healthy. They will be attending school in a short while, and Francis feels that she will have to spend more time with them, especially if they experience any problems in school. She does not know how she will do this, because her days are already too full.

Francis still finds administration very new and challenging. She is not yet ready to consider applying for a position in a larger school. Her work and school and home keep her very busy. She wants to gain more experience in administration and wants to see how things go when her children begin school before making any decisions about her future plans.

Madeleine

Madeleine is a full-time principal of an elementary school in the North East School Division which has a population of around three hundred and fifty students. This is her first principalship and she has been in this position for five years.

Madeleine is approaching fifty years old. She is married and has two children, both living at home. Her son attends university and commutes each day. Her daughter is presently completing her last year of high school. Madeleine's husband, Jack, has an administrative position in his job, and she finds that he understands the expectations and demands of her work. Each

member of her family helps with the household duties. Madeleine and Jack go out for breakfast each Saturday and then go grocery shopping together. She is happy with the way things are run at home and does not feel a need to hire outside help.

Madeleine does not like to make long-term commitments at work. She says that she enjoys change and hates stagnation. Thus she has not remained in the same position more than a few years. Her attitude is that one should be happy and positive about what one is doing or seek something somewhere else. At the present time, Madeleine is happy where she is. However, she states that she will not hesitate to go back to teaching full time if administration becomes too time-consuming and the balance between home and school is threatened. In the same way, if a position should open up where she felt that she could make a difference, Madeleine would not hesitate to take it. She knows that she can count on her family to support her in whatever she does.

Donna

Donna is the principal of a Kindergarten to grade twelve school in the South Western School Division. Although there are several grades in her school, there are less than two hundred students. Donna thus has to teach for twenty-five percent of the day.

Donna happened to fall into administration quite by accident. Her principal became ill two years ago. She replaced him as an interim principal. When he did not come back, she applied for and got a permanent position. The timing was not quite right. She had thought that perhaps she would look into becoming an administrator one day, but she had not considered going in that direction while the children were still young. She knew, however, that if she did

not take the position when it came up, another one might not come for a long time.

Donna is close to forty years old. She is married to a farmer in the community where she works. She and George have two children who are six and thirteen years old. From the time her children were very young, Donna has had hired help in the home. At first she had a housekeeper who did the washing, cleaning, and cooking as well as looking after the children. This enabled Donna to come home to her family after work without having to worry about household chores. She was also able to belong to many clubs and be involved in many activities in the community. Now that the children are in school, the housekeeper does not come as often. Donna's husband has taken over the responsibility for the meals and helps a lot with the children.

Donna does not foresee any big changes in the near future. Administration is still new to her and she feels that she has a lot to learn yet. It would not be easy for her husband to relocate to another farm, so she would have to commute. There are large distances between schools in her division and Donna would therefore have to spend a lot more time on the road than she does now if she wanted to be an administrator in a larger school. She is content to have things remain as they are for awhile.

Concluding Statements

The introduction of the women in this chapter is purposely brief. One can see that the six women have a varied background. Their ages, work experience, and home situations are quite different. However, there are several common threads which link them together. These commonalities and differences will be addressed in the next chapter. Issues and themes will also be discussed in more detail. Then one will be able to get a better

understanding of these rural female administrators and compare them with the literature on urban women administrators.

CHAPTER VI
THEMES AND ISSUES OF SIX WOMEN SCHOOL
ADMINISTRATORS IN RURAL MANITOBA

Introduction

The women whom I interviewed were unique, with their own personalities, goals, successes, and failures. While interviewing them on how they entered administration, what their work situation was like, and how they balanced their home and work life, both similarities and differences arose in their responses. Certain themes and issues kept appearing on the transcripts of the interviews. They were often identical to what I had read previously in many journals and books on women in administration. However, these six women administrators did have some comments about their work which appear to be special to rural women administrators. These issues, themes, similarities, and differences will be discussed in this chapter.

Because this chapter is quite long, it has been numerically broken into headings. The three main headings are: entry into administration, women and their work environment, and how these women balance their home lives with their work. Each of these headings will also have sub-headings. At the end of the chapter another heading will address some of the areas of concern mentioned by the women whom I interviewed. These appear to be more problematic in rural areas rather than urban ones.

1 Entry into Administration

1.1 Preparation for administration: Or lack of it

According to a number of authors in the literature on school administration (Collinson, 1989; Ortiz, 1982; Pavan, 1991) women have not been well prepared for the leadership role. Often, administration was not even considered by them and these women either "stumbled" into it by some "fortuitous" accident. If women lacked career plans (Collinson, 1989), then one could assume that women, in general, would not take the necessary academic training to prepare them for an administrative position. Young (1994) found that it was chance remarks, unexpected job openings, and unsought role re-definitions or transfers that fostered changing aspirations for some women. Thus the readiness to recognize and capitalize on unexpected opportunities was more characteristic than career planning.

In my study, the three women who were under forty (Laura, Francis, and Donna) gave me the impression that they had been more open to the idea of taking on an administrative role than the three women who were over forty (Gladys, Susan, and Madeleine). Of the six women, however, only Laura made a conscious effort to prepare for administration before obtaining her present position.

Laura had only five years of teaching experience when she became a vice-principal. After her third year of teaching, she began applying for administrative positions in her school division. She also began taking administrative courses and had almost completed her pre-masters in educational administrative studies when she obtained her position.

Gladys had had fifteen years of experience as what she termed a designated teacher. She was the acting principal when her principal was away.

Although she had continually taken courses throughout her teaching career, the courses were not administrative ones. It was only upon becoming a principal that she began taking courses in the administration.

Susan began taking administrative courses after she experienced some problems with a principal in her school. His lack of support with a problem student angered Susan. It was because of this negative incident that she began taking courses in administration and began applying for an administrative position.

Madeleine made no plans to become an administrator. She obtained a staff position as a language consultant and when she decided that she wanted a change, her superintendent encouraged her to apply for a principalship.

Francis became discouraged while teaching in a high school. She was very interested in 'Whole Language' and found that she was having disagreements with her principal about what it was and how Language Arts should be taught. She began taking some leadership courses and when a position for a principal in an elementary school became available, her principal encouraged her to apply for it.

Donna had always been interested in Resource and Special Needs and had taken courses in these domains. When her principal became ill in the middle of the school year, she agreed to take over for the interim. When he did not return, Donna applied for and obtained the position.

One can see that the majority of women whom I interviewed did not have any intention of going into administration when they became teachers. Thus their academic preparations often came after they obtained the administrative position.

1.2 Reasons for entering administration

The women had a variety of reasons for becoming administrators. One can see that five of these women had no real plans for a career in the administrative field. They had often taken courses in reading, mathematics, and other areas where they could use what they had learned in the classroom. The actual reasons for their entry in the administrative field reflect the haphazard way that many women enter administration.

As stated previously, Laura was the only woman whom I interviewed who had a goal to be an administrator right from the time that she entered the teaching profession. She contributes her drive to get ahead to her upbringing.

I grew up in a place where you were encouraged to figure out what your boss did and how you could get his or her job. That was a work ethic that was ingrained in all of us by our mother, not father.

Laura was very active in school councils and other events as a child and became very interested in organizing and being responsible for a number of activities. She enjoyed being the leader and when she began her teaching career, she began to take administrative courses and to start looking for openings for administrators in her division.

Gladys was very active in professional development in her school division and was always taking courses and working on divisional committees. Her co-workers saw her potential in leadership, and encouraged her to apply for an administrative position. Gladys was reluctant to apply. "I really enjoyed teaching. It wasn't in my plans to become an administrator. My husband was in administration, and I said that there was no way I was going to get into this." When she became a chairperson on a divisional committee, she realized that she was capable and enjoyed doing administrative work. "I think that what

happened was that my whole range of self-confidence changed, and when I became more confident, I then realized that I could do it." When a position arose in her division, she applied for and obtained it.

Susan became interested in becoming an administrator after a negative experience with a former principal. She had been teaching for a number of years when she encountered problems with a student and was unable to receive the support she needed from her principal to help the child.

He (the child) gave me a 'good run for my money', one that I had never had even in the particularly rough school that I had been in before. I didn't get the support from my administrator. It almost saw me ending my career or going on stress leave. From that point on I made a commitment. I now realized that administrators were important and that I was going to head in that direction. It's kind of ironic. I went into administration because of a bad experience instead of a good one.

Francis also went into administration because she was frustrated with what was happening at her school. She had been teaching for just under ten years and during this time she completed a pre-masters in Reading. Francis was very interested in the concept of whole language and tried to incorporate it in her school at the grade eight level. She tried to discuss whole language with her principal and ended up getting discouraged.

More and more I felt that my principal didn't really understand whole language. We talked lots and we "fought" lots. I think we probably liked each other, but really got on each other's nerves. He professed to know what whole language was. He believed in it, but also knocked it, so

I was a very frustrated person. I made a comment one day. I said that I had to either get into administration or get into an elementary school class, because I just had to make a change. He heard me say this, and so when this elementary school principalship came up, he said, "Why don't you apply for it?" He gave me all kinds of good recommendations in order for me to get the job. I did.

Madeleine became an administrator because of her superintendent's encouragement and support. She had been a classroom teacher in a small community for several years when a new superintendent came into her school division. He wrote a memo to all the schools which stated that staff members were expected to come to work on days when there were unexpected closures due to inclement weather. "For some reason, I took offense to that. I lived close to the school and had a key. I would often go to work in the evenings or the weekends. I just felt that I had a really good work ethic, and I felt really hurt that we got this type of treatment. I put it in writing."

A month later the superintendent visited Madeleine in her classroom. "We chatted a bit. He said that he had received my letter. He had gone through my file obviously and had realized that I had been doing a good job. He apologized to me if I had been offended by it."

The superintendent visited her a second time when he wanted to have language consultants in the division. He "invited" her to apply and she obtained a position as a language consultant. When she wanted a change a few years later, it was the superintendent who encouraged her to apply for a principalship.

Donna went into administration because of what one might call a 'fortuitous accident' (Ortiz, 1982). She agreed to be an interim principal for part of a year when her principal became ill. When his illness prevented him from

returning to work, his position became open. "It was something which I had thought about, but the timing was not what I wanted. My family was still quite small, but I felt because it was a rural area, if I did not grab the chance at that time, I might not find another opportunity which was suitable." Donna was the successful applicant.

1.3 Barriers to entry

Epp (1993) found that many women teachers have never considered the possibility of becoming administrators. There are two areas which are the basic components of the problem: societal assumptions, and the female acceptance of those assumptions. Women, for instance, sometimes claim that they are not interested, not qualified, or do not have the time. Perhaps this is true to some extent, but Young (1994) found that statistics support contentions that systemic discrimination, subtly reinforced and rationalized by traditional socialization are a major factor in the under-representation of women in Canadian school administration. The barriers that the women face are sometimes obvious, but very often they are such a part of a person's upbringing that even the woman who faces them is almost oblivious to their existence. The women in my study faced a number of barriers as they began their careers in administration.

Laura, who wanted to be an administrator from the time she entered the teaching profession, faced a number of barriers. Two were her age and her lack of experience. She had been a teacher for only three years the first time she applied for a vice-principalship in her division, and all the administrators at that time were middle-aged. A male applicant who also did not have much experience obtained that position. She felt that she would have a better chance at becoming an administrator if she were more academically qualified. "I began

working on my masters' study in administration at the university, because I felt that if I had a little more under my belt, that it would be better."

The next year a position became available and she tried again. A man who was a science and math teacher obtained that position. He did not have much experience in teaching either. Laura continued studying and was one course away from having a pre-masters in administrative studies when another position became open. This time she was successful. Although she had only five years of teaching experience at that time, Laura was more academically qualified than any other applicant. She felt that had she not taken all those courses, she would never have obtained the position. She was also certain that if a male applicant had had the same qualifications as she did, her chances of obtaining the vice-principalship would have been minimal. From her own experience and from discussions with other teachers and administrators who had been in her division for several years, she concluded that the trustees did not encourage women to become administrators.

Gladys faced a number of barriers before becoming an administrator. One was her lack of confidence in her capability. "I was really too scared to go into administration." When she became involved in professional development committees and became a chairperson, she gained more confidence in herself. However, other barriers still existed. One was that her husband was already an administrator in her division. She was aware of the difficulties and responsibilities that came with an administrative position. "I had always said that my husband was a principal and there was no way I was going to get into this!"

When she finally overcame that barrier and was encouraged by her co-workers to apply for an opening in her division, Gladys faced another barrier. This time it was with the trustees and others involved in the hiring process. "In

that school there had always been men principals. They weren't too keen about having a woman. They were worried about discipline and things like that. I was just about ready to pull out." However, some of the trustees were convinced that she was the best applicant, and she did obtain the position.

Donna had been encouraged by her principal to apply when an opening became available for the principalship in an elementary school. She did not have any difficulty obtaining the position. "I was the only applicant for the job, so in that sense I got a job that nobody wanted."

The barriers she faced were personal ones. "Barriers in terms of changes to my life.....I had a baby at home and plans for another one. My husband runs a farm and was planning to expand acreage. We did a lot of talking about how that was going to affect us." There was concern about day care for the children and the fact that the new position was several miles in the opposite direction from the day care facility. This would mean a fair amount of extra time spent on the road. "There was a lot of struggle in my own mind about taking the job. I knew that it was going to take more time."

Susan, who decided to go into administration after a negative experience with her principal about a difficult student, faced a strong barrier during her first interview for a vice-principalship. "I didn't feel too hopeful because one of the people on the interview team had one of his golfing buddies applying for the job as well. I didn't make it." The man obtained the position.

This negative experience discouraged Susan and seemed to reinforce the misgivings which she had about herself in the first place. "I didn't know why they would want to take me seriously. I had this strong delusion that I would never make it because of this strong buddy system. That's why I never gave it another thought." If it had not been for the superintendent who had been

impressed by her interview and who encouraged her to apply for another position, Susan would not have tried again. "I had given up."

Madeleine did not seem to face any real barriers in her entry into administration. Her superintendent encouraged her to apply for a staff position as a language consultant. When she felt she needed a change a few years later, he was the one who suggested that she apply for a principalship in the division when it became available. Madeleine does not appear to have any external barriers. In fact, she would probably have remained in the classroom if her superintendent had not made her aware of her capabilities and had not encouraged her to try administration. Madeleine gets very good evaluations from her present superintendent and therefore appears to be doing well as a principal. However, it is uncertain whether she will remain in administration. Her barrier is more internal, for her attitude is "I always take it one year at a time. While I'm enjoying it, and while I feel that I am having some positive input in the job, I will continue." Had someone not encouraged her, Madeleine would most likely still be a classroom teacher.

Donna did not seem to face any barriers when she became an interim principal. When her principal became ill, she agreed to replace him for the rest of the year. Donna felt that she had done a good job at that time. When the principal was unable to return, Donna applied for his position. She did obtain it, but felt that many of the questions which were asked during the interview were redundant and unnecessary. In her opinion, she had already proven that she was a capable administrator. She considered the interview as being a kind of barrier. "I felt that I had to go through a more stringent interview. I felt that I was almost principal at the time and I was good enough to be the principal when they were in a bind. If I was good enough to take it on as an interim position, then I felt that I should have been allowed to continue doing it." She seemed to

feel that had she been a man, that she would not have had to go through such a thorough questioning.

Donna also had some personal barriers to taking over a principalship. Her children were still quite young, and she would have preferred to have delayed taking on the extra responsibilities and time which administration entails. The fact that the position was an interim one in the beginning gave her the opportunity to try administration without any long-term commitment. Had the position been a permanent one right away, Donna might not have been so willing to try it at that particular time.

Thus one can see that all six women had some barriers when they entered administration. Some were more obvious than others, such as Susan's experience of competing against one of the interviewer's 'golfing buddy.' Other barriers were more invisible, but just as strong. Francis's and Donna's family responsibilities were somewhat in conflict with the time and effort needed in an administrative role. Madeleine's insistence that she take things 'one year at a time' is a barrier to future prospects in a higher administrative position. Had it not been for her superintendent, Madeleine admits that she would never have considered becoming an administrator. Gladys had a number of barriers to overcome before entering administration. One was her own lack of confidence in her ability and the other was her school board's attitude that women were less capable than men when dealing with discipline problems. Laura, who began making plans toward becoming an administrator almost as soon as she became a teacher, had a number of external barriers--her lack of experience in teaching, her young age, and a school board that seemed to prefer hiring men. In spite of these women's barriers, they became administrators. However, the barriers did not stop once they became administrators.

1.4 Age and experience

Women are often older than men when they first become administrators (Lee & Bremner, 1991). In the survey which was sent by this writer to women in administration in rural Manitoba in 1993, seventy per cent of the respondents had five years or less of experience in administration. Only eight per cent in this category were thirty-five years of age or younger. Sixty-two per cent of these women had over ten years of teaching experience. Thus the majority of the women had been in the classroom for over a decade before taking on a leadership role.

The six women who were selected to be interviewed can be regrouped in two categories--three women under forty and three over forty. In the first category, Laura was thirty when she became an administrator and had been in administration for almost ten years. Francis was thirty-one when she obtained an administrative position and had held it for three years. Donna had become an administrator when she was thirty-six and she also had been in the position for three years.

In the second category of women who were over forty at the time of the interviews, Gladys was forty-four when she became a principal. She had been in administration for four years. Susan was thirty-nine when she obtained her first vice-principalship. At the time of her interview, she was in her early fifties. Madeleine was forty-one when she became a principal and had held that position for three years.

The women who were under forty years old at the time of the interview had been in the teaching profession for under ten years when they first became administrators. Those who were over forty had each had closer to twenty years' experience in the classrooms before contemplating going into administration.

1.5 Mentors

The literature states that mentors are possibly the single most important factor in an administrator's career development (Holt, 1981; Ortiz, 1982). I therefore asked each of the women whom I interviewed if they had mentors. The only woman who said that she had no mentor was Laura. "None, none whatsoever." Although the other five women did say that they had mentors, their mentors were not people who sought these women out, guided them and trained them, encourage them to apply, and then helped them when they obtained their administrative positions. Rather, the mentors these women had seemed to come into their lives for short periods of time and often came into existence because the women themselves sought them out.

Both Susan and Madeleine named their superintendents as their mentors. Their superintendents saw something in these women which made them believe that Susan and Madeleine would be good administrators. Susan's superintendent was impressed by the way which Susan responded in an interview for a position which she did not get. When another opening was available, the superintendent asked her to apply again. Madeleine's superintendent came to see her when Madeleine had sent him a letter expressing her displeasure at a new policy which he had placed in her division. He remembered her when a position for a language consultant became available in the division and asked her to apply. He also encouraged her to apply for a principalship when she wanted a change from her role as a consultant. Although the superintendents played an important role in Susan's and Madeleine's lives in becoming administrators, the superintendents had left their divisions by the time the women were interviewed. The women no longer had mentors.

Gladys referred to her husband as her mentor. An administrator himself, he has had a lot of experience and has been supportive. However, Gladys is rather vague as to how he has actually helped her as an administrator. In fact, she spoke more about learning about administration through others when she attended administrative functions as his spouse. "I met a lot of people, a lot of administrators, and so a lot of our talk was often in administration. So I guess my husband would be my mentor."

Francis named her previous principal as her first mentor. They did not really get along very well. In fact, they had several disagreements about the concept of Whole Language which was very important to Francis in her teaching. He overheard her one day when she said, "I've got to either get into administration or get into an elementary school class, because I've got to make a change here." When there was an opening for an elementary principalship, he encouraged her to apply. "He gave me all kinds of good recommendations in order for me to get it. I went to him and he gave me some things from his file, lent me books and that kind of thing. So there was support in that way." However, her principal was not supportive in public. "In conversations around the principals' table I felt more of a struggle in my first year as an administrator." Rather than encouraging her and helping her through that first year, he often did the opposite. "He was a principal and I was a principal. He chose to disagree with things which I was saying that I don't really think he disagreed with inside, but for power purposes or whatever." Francis decided to get a different mentor. "My sister, who is also in education, is somebody to whom I look toward bumping ideas upon and support, probably she more than any one else."

Donna also ended up seeking her own mentors. She had not taken any administrative courses when she became the interim principal. Donna had taken a course one summer from a woman who was an administrator in the city

and had been impressed by her. She sought her out. "We seem to have a bond and I have referred to her on a number of occasions for various things." Donna has also asked her assistant superintendent for help and guidance on a number of occasions. "Most of the time I have two mentors."

Thus one can see that the women in my study did not seem to have the benefit of a mentor in the 'true' sense, that is, someone or sought them out, guided them, trained them, encouraged them to apply for positions, and then helped them in their administrative positions. Instead, they had people involved and helping them during few, if any, of the steps into leadership roles.

2 Women Administrators in Their Work Environment

2.1 Important and interesting aspects of the job

Each of the women who were interviewed was asked what she felt was the most important and interesting aspect of her job. What was it about the administrative position which gave her the most satisfaction? The answers were quite varied, although they had a number of things in common.

Laura is a vice-principal of a high school and she teaches for fifty per cent of the time. While the principal deals with budgetary items and anything dealing with the running of the school building, Laura has the freedom to do what she refers to as "the creativity stuff". She brings new courses into the school, deals with things like Peer Counselling, Peer Mediation, extra-curricular activities, parent evening sessions, and most things which involve social services. She enjoys finding new projects for the school and carrying them through to completion.

Gladys, who is a full-time principal in an elementary school, likes the fact that every day is different. "I can plan my day, and I usually do, and at the end of

the day, I can look at the plan and it's not at all what happened. There are all kinds of unexpected things that can happen; parents can come to the school, and things like that."

Gladys enjoys being with other people. "When you're a teacher, you're basically in your classroom and you're isolated, whereas as an administrator, you're meeting all kinds of people. I like the team work, and having meetings with the psychologist and others who come into the school. It's interesting."

Francis is a teaching principal in an elementary school with less than one hundred students. She feels that the most important aspect of her job is "in learning and in quality education in terms of quality instruction." Susan, a full-time vice-principal in a high school, also stresses learning as being important and feels that it is important that she help facilitate learning in her school.

I feel that the most important part is running a school with a good learning environment, a good climate to make kids feel wanted, accepted, and to make it a safe place, and to motivate the teachers to use strategies and to help the teachers, to back them up and support them so that they can run their classes in the way that they would like to.

To Madeleine, the little challenges and successes of each day are important. They make her days interesting and enjoyable.

The relationship, the interacting with students and staff and parents and the creative problem solving that you have to do on the spur of the moment, how many times in one day, I don't think you can count, trying something and finding out that it works....

Donna, a teaching principal in a small kindergarten to grade twelve school, enjoys working with the public and organizing various events in the school.

I probably enjoy meeting with the parents on a different level than a teacher-parent interview, working in various groups or advisory councils, not just discussing their child. I don't mind the book work. I'm good at time management.

I have good organizational skills. That part is easy for me, to run that or to set that up.

I don't find that difficult. I get satisfaction out of seeing it completed.

Porat (1985) found that women administrators tend to focus more on the classroom than on the system and that their top priority is dealing with people. The women whom I interviewed found those two areas, learning and relationships with people, to be the most interesting and important aspects of their job.

2.2 Relationships in the work environment

In our society people perceive the role of the administrator as one where the male is the head (Lee & Bremner, 1991). All the women in my study had to deal with this perception in the relationships they had in their work environment. Some of them had a harder time, depending on their assertiveness and school and community climate. The relationships which the women had with their staff, parents, students, and their superordinates will be discussed in more detail.

Laura experienced a lot of difficulty during the first year with some of the male members on her staff who had also applied for her position. "Four of the

men who had applied for the job were on staff at the school. One was extremely antagonistic until Christmas time, constantly calling me down and blaming me for everything at staff meetings, always on my case." Laura is an assertive individual who does not accept such treatment. "I counteracted that. For every mistake he made, I pulled him into my office and put him 'on the rug'. I tripled the time that I spent on him than he had on me. It was kind of 'do or die'." The man who gave her the most problems has a good relationship with her now, and a few of the others have left.

Laura is very interested in curriculum development and in bringing new programs into her school. She has changed her role and has become more involved in those areas. Relationships with staff members is better now. "I don't experience the same sort of antagonism. It is directed more towards the principal. He has the 'numbers stuff' and I have the 'curriculum stuff'. So when they are upset about things like absenteeism in the high school, it's the principal they see, not me."

Laura feels that women administrators have to prove themselves more than men. People expect women to fail more because they feel that females do not have the stamina. Laura has found, however, that there is also a positive side. "As a female, people will often tend to be more inclined to give you second chances about things, whereas with men, they'll get uptight really fast. Women tend to smooth the corners a bit."

Laura finds that both she and her principal have to deal with treatment from the staff which she refers to as 'often exclusionary'. "It's the role. They are sometimes hesitant to talk. It's still very much a 'Them' and 'Us' kind of thing. 'Them' is the administrators and 'Us' is the teachers of the school." She handles these situations with humor and tries to make the staff feel more at

ease. She finds that this often works, and the staff members are more willing to let her know what is troubling them.

The first year that Laura became the vice-principal she was tested by some high school students in the area of discipline. "I had to be like a fighter. I had to prove myself, so I had to be very strong and to follow through. With the boys in the high school, when I first got there, they'd say, 'What are you going to do about it lady? You can't push me out of this school.'" She sometimes had to use drastic measures, such as having the police remove those boys from the school and then suspending them, in order to convince students and parents that she was serious and that she would follow through.

Laura is comfortable with the relationship which she has with the parents in her school. "Parents sometimes prefer to talk to me rather than the principal just because of the way that our personalities run. And there are people that won't talk to me, but only the principal. There is a balance that way." If there is a problem with parents or others, Laura deals with it immediately. "I have a strong enough personality that people are not condescending, and if they are condescending, I'll challenge them on it."

Laura feels that the relationship with her superordinates could be a lot better. She would like to become an assistant superintendent one day. The assistant superintendent in her division seems to be aware of her goal, and the atmosphere is sometimes strained between them. "He feels like I'm in competition with him." The superintendent is not at ease with women administrators. He cannot relate to Laura's sense of humor. Her directness unnerves him somewhat and his attempts to joke with her are not very successful.

He has difficulty dealing with direct, forthright women. He is very old-fashioned in his upbringing and believes that

women need to be protected and watched over. When he's dealing with someone who is very forthright and blunt, he is not quite sure how to take it.

Thus Laura feels that the relationship between her and her superordinates is a bit "strained".

Being a teaching administrator, Laura has a special relationship with the students she teaches. Laura often finds herself torn between the two jobs. On one hand, she wants to have a good relationship with the students in her classroom. On the other hand, she wants to be able to deal with any emergencies which occur in the school office. She finds that her students are sometimes resentful that she is called out of the classroom. Also, some meetings which she is asked to attend as an administrator are held during the time which she would normally be teaching. She then has to choose between her duty as a teacher and her duty as an administrator.

Porat (1985) states that women administrators receive a less than enthusiastic acceptance from largely female and very traditional staff members. Gladys found that to be the case when she became the principal of a school that had always been run by men. "When I got there, there were basically only females. Now there are more males. The women found it more difficult to accept me than the men. The men have no problems at all." The women on staff seemed to associate Gladys with their mothers. "The women would sometimes see me as a mother figure and, depending on the relationship they had with their moms, it causes some problems."

Gladys feels that the relationship which she has with parents is quite good. She finds that parents are often concerned about discipline and whether or not she has any problems in that area. The students in her school seem to

like her. "When the kids come into the school, a lot of them come to me for a hug, especially those with broken families."

Gladys says that her relationship with the head office is fine. However, she did experience some problems when she first obtained the principalship. "I had to assert myself with the people from the head office. They figured that just because I was a woman, they could just 'fluff things off'. I'm a people pleaser, so I tried the usual way at first. I found out that it didn't work." When Gladys voiced her displeasure and followed through in a more direct manner, she obtained good results. "Sometimes you have to use male tactics with some people to succeed."

Susan feels very positive about the relationship which she has with the students in her school, especially with the girls. "I feel that the high school girls come much more readily to me with problems, particularly when it is sexual harassment." Susan feels that she has a good rapport with the parents as well. "I feel that parents find me very approachable."

Susan finds that the male members of her staff do not come to her immediately to enlist her help when they have discipline problems. "They watch and when they're desperate and they see that you are effective, they will come with their problems to a female. Many of them do now, but at the beginning they were hesitant to do so. Perhaps they feel that it is a challenge to their ego, or their 'macho'."

Throughout the last few years, there has been what Susan refers to as a "real state of flux" in the board office. "There have been a lot of personnel changes. This year I find it much more open and much more encouraging for women. But a couple of years ago, it was the exact opposite. We (women administrators) were looked at in a way as if to say, 'Are you sure you can do the job?' We were not taken seriously."

Madeleine stated that the relationships, the interacting with students, staff and parents were among the most important and interesting aspects of her job. She says that she enjoys a good relationship with her staff. "Things are working well." She did, however, comment on the male staff members. "But the first year, it was male staff members. They had to get used to a different leadership style and the way that I have of interacting with students. That might be personality, too, not necessarily male-female. My very nature is more nurturing and I think they had to get used to that."

Madeleine has a good relationship with the women on staff. "I always read that females are more competitive with each other. Yet the females with whom I work have made me sense that we work as a team. Teachers on staff are very, very supportive."

Madeleine feels that she gets along well with the students in her school. She finds that she has had to develop a certain assertiveness with some of the fathers. "I feel that certain fathers think that...well, she's just a woman...just in their demeanor or the way that they talk... that my decision would be overruled by somebody else or that they could in fact get me to change my mind. I've been here a few years now and I feel pretty much established."

The assistant superintendent in Madeleine's division is quite young. "I find that he will very often come to me to get the 'pulse' of things. For instance, after a meeting, he will come up to me and say, 'Well, Madeleine, what did you think about the meeting? Why did it go that way?'" She feels that she also has a good rapport with the superintendent, who was her immediate supervisor when she was a consultant. However, she finds that he relates better with the men administrators and that he "bonds" with them more than with the women administrators.

Francis is very happy with the relationship that she has with her staff which is comprised mainly of women. "I have what I consider to be a luxury of having a very supportive staff, people who go that extra mile. I have never experienced anything like a 'knife in the back' or anything like that. I feel that we have an excellent relationship."

The relationship which Francis has with the students and parents seems to be quite good now. However, it was not that way when she first took over the principalship. 'The first year I was there it was just 'hell on wheels.' Before being accepted by the students and the parents, I went through an extremely tough time."

Francis feels that the relationship which she has with her superintendent is good. "I feel that the superintendent has a great deal of confidence in me. I think that he has a lot of respect for what I do. I get excellent evaluations, so I know that he thinks of me as a competent person."

Donna finds that the relationship with her staff is very good. "I'd say that ninety per cent of them are just excellent." She had been a teacher in the school for a number of years and felt that the rapport which she had built with them contributed to their acceptance of her as a principal. "I came from being a staff member to being a principal, which is sometimes a difficult step. I think that they had trusted me because I had been in their classrooms. I did not talk about what they told me and so on. This trust was very important when I went into the principalship."

Donna was also very positive about her relationship with the parents. "I think that the parents feel more comfortable with a female principal than a male principal in the advisory council. I'm not going to knock any suggestions which they may have." She finds that the parents come to see her quite frequently about their children. "I find that parents will come in with concerns about their

child's emotional development. They might feel that a woman is more compassionate."

Donna did not talk too much about her superintendent. "The superintendent and I don't see each other that often because our division is so rural and wide-spread. It is quite difficult to travel around to all the schools. We talk more often on the phone."

The relationships which the women in my study had with staff, students, parents, and subordinates were quite different in many aspects, but there were similarities as well. Gladys spoke about some of the women on her staff having problems accepting her as the principal. Laura, Madeleine, and Susan, on the other hand, expressed some problems with the men on staff. Francis and Donna did not mention any negative relationships with their staffs.

All of the women spoke fairly positively about their relationships with their superordinates, although Laura felt that the atmosphere was a bit strained between her and both the superintendent and assistant superintendent.

Although Donna was very positive about her relationship with parents, the other women had some concerns. Most of the concerns were with the fathers of the students in their schools. It appeared that fathers needed some assurance that the women administrators were competent, especially in the area of discipline.

The women seemed to get along well with the students in their schools. Laura mentioned that she had to be quite assertive with the high school boys at the beginning, but no longer had a problem in that area.

Relationships among the women administrators were very important and they spent a lot of time and effort in trying to keep all relationships positive and productive. Many of the women felt that they been men, they would not have had to put in as much energy to obtain the acceptance of staff and parents.

2.3 Sexism at work

All of the women experienced sexism at their work environment. They felt that many of the problems which they faced in their relationships with staff, parents, students, and superordinates were due to the fact that they were women. It seemed that the community sometimes had a harder time accepting women principals because there had been only male administrators in their schools. As mentioned previously, the women often had to work hard at convincing the fathers of some of the students in their schools that women administrators are just as capable as men in dealing with discipline and in making good decisions in running their schools. Sometimes staff members had difficulty at first accepting the women as the leaders in their schools. There were also a number of comments which the women made about the sexism which they faced with their colleagues.

Laura felt that she was being tested on a number of occasions during her first year as an administrator. Some of the men on her staff who had also applied for her position gave her what she termed as a 'hard time.' Some of the high school students tested her ability to follow through with discipline problems. She felt that a lot of these experiences were due to that fact that she was a woman. "You always have to prove yourself more. People expect you to fail more because you do not have the stamina or whatever."

Gladys found that she faced sexism in her work. "A lot more at the beginning. I had taken assertive training and I would call people up on it. Now it doesn't seem to be a problem." In Gladys's school, the people in the community were used to having a man in the principal's chair. "When people come into my school and I am standing and talking to a male staff member, they'll assume that he is the principal and I am his secretary because he is a male."

Madeleine sometimes gets annoyed with the maintenance supervisor in her division. "If the maintenance supervisor comes in and if our local maintenance person is with me, they will begin discussing maintenance things and the supervisor will only make eye contact with the maintenance person." His attitude makes her feel very small and unimportant. "It might be some decision that I would want to be involved with and should be involved with, and yet I feel that it's just like 'men talk' the way they see it. I feel it too, especially with some of the fathers with whom I've had to establish a certain rapport and a certain assertiveness."

Susan thinks that women have to work much harder than men in order to be accepted as administrators. "I think that I have to prove myself. I often said that I would have to prove myself one hundred and fifty per cent to make it, whereas a man just has to be a male and do his job."

Many of the women felt that they were not completely accepted by their colleagues. They expressed their concern that they were not really a part of the administrative team in their divisions, that they were excluded at times when important decisions were being made which affected their schools. Although some felt that they had made headways and were being listened to more, most of the women still felt that they still had far to go.

The average number of years of experience in administration of the women in rural Manitoba is less than five years. Susan has been a vice-principal during the last fifteen years in four different schools. She has therefore worked with a number of principals and unlike the other women in my study, Susan was able to make some comparisons and comments based on actual work experience.

I feel that male principals and administrators want a male partner, some more than others. I have worked

with four different ones at this point. Some had a preference to being with a man, even if it was going out for a coffee to discuss issues. They sometimes felt uncomfortable being with a woman.

Susan is also very aware of "The Boys' Club." She was the woman who became very discouraged the first time that she interviewed for an administrative position. She competed against a 'golfing buddy' of one of the interviewers. The golfer got the position. Since that time Susan has seen the same scenario occur on a number of occasions.

The "Boys' Club" does exist; it certainly does. I'd have to be blind and deaf to not admit that totally. In fact, I heard a male administrator mention who some potentially good partners and new recruits would be. They were all buddies. None of them had taken any administrative courses. They had not shown any interest or had experience at different levels and so on to prepare them for administration. So why would they be named as potentials, except that they are social buddies? I know that for a fact. So certainly, that network is there.

Madeleine also mentioned "The Boys' Club". She feels left out at times when the superintendent and the men administrators get together without her and the other women administrators.

For instance, during our principals' fall conference there was that whole male bonding kind of thing.

They'd go to the bar afterwards for a drink. You just sense that. It's very obvious, too. The superintendent is very supportive, and I've always felt that he respects me and my views on things, my values. But I feel very strongly that I'm not part of "The Boys' Club".

Gladys's husband has been an administrator for several years and she is very aware of the existence of "The Boys' Club". During a number of functions which she attended with him throughout the years she has been able to make a lot of observations. "I've heard people talk in informal meetings. A lot of decisions are made, and women are often not at these informal meetings."

Francis commented about some of her frustrations when she became a principal and attended the monthly principal meetings in her division. She recalled one particular incident during the first year. At that time she was the only woman administrator in her division.

Once at a principals' meeting I made a suggestion. It just went right by everyone and nobody commented upon it. A fellow across the table heard me say it and he said it shortly after in a conversation. The superintendent's comment was, "What a good idea!" I know full well that that kind of thing happens.

Donna has also experienced some frustrations during principals' meetings. At times she feels that her input at these meetings is not always considered. "Sometimes I make a comment and I am not taken seriously. Suggestions are not taken as important sometimes."

2.4 Disillusionments in administration

The women whom I interviewed appeared to be very dedicated to their schools and were willing to put in a lot of time and effort, especially during the first few years in administration. They therefore entered administration knowing that the responsibility of running a school would affect their home lives as well. They knew that meetings at night would take time away from their families and that some sacrifices would probably have to be made. Most of the women said that they had discussed the pros and cons with their families before making the decision to go into administration. However, there were some specific disillusionments which some of them had.

Donna knew when she became a principal that a lot of time would be spent on administrative work, but she did not realize just how much time it entailed. "Sometimes I think that I should have stayed teaching because it wasn't as much work. It didn't demand as much of my time."

Laura has a few disillusionments. One is that she has a difficult time accepting criticism from parents. As an administrator, she seems to hear more negative comments than when she was a classroom teacher. "I get disappointed when I get negative feedback from parents or something because I personally take it to heart, and I have to take a day or two to remove myself bodily from that and not take it as a personal insult."

When Laura became a vice-principal, she thought that the principal would encourage her to learn all the different aspects of administration. This has not happened. Although he gives her complete freedom to bring in new programs and run various activities and events in the school, there are certain things which he will not allow her to do. "Another disillusionment which I have is that the principal won't give me any of the real responsible jobs. He won't ever give me the budget; he won't ever give me the timetabling. He'll say, 'This

year I'm going to let you do the budget.' Then after twenty minutes, he says, 'I've changed my mind.' Laura becomes very frustrated, because she really wants the opportunity to learn how to do those things. "It would be nice just for once to see how ugly it really is to do the timetabling and that, just for the experience of it."

Gladys also expressed a few disillusionments in administration. One was her misunderstanding about the amount of authority that administrators have.

As a teacher, I had always assumed that principals had a lot more power than they actually do, a lot more control. You're really limited by law and by divisional policies, and by everything! That really surprised me. Actually, I probably have less control now and more responsibility. I'm responsible for every teacher's behavior, but I have less freedom than I did in my classroom. When I was in my classroom, I closed the door and did whatever I wanted. Now I'm accountable for everything.

Gladys has been very active in professional development. When she became an administrator, she thought that her enthusiasm in this area would enable her to convince her staff that professional development was very important. She soon found out, however, that the majority of her staff were content to do things as they had done in the past. "In my school I have a staff of veterans. Three-quarters of them have fifteen years and more, so it's very difficult. I'm helping the younger ones, the ones who are less experienced. With the other ones, it's sort of like, 'just don't get in our way'." She has tried to change the policy about failing students, and she has been bringing computers

into the school. "I've brought in a lot of changes which they don't like. When you have staff which has been there with an average of fifteen years' teaching experience, it is very difficult."

Susan has found that her administrative work requires so much of her time and energy that she is unable to finish her masters degree. She had completed her premasters before becoming a vice-principal and started working on her masters. The first year as an administrator Susan completed two courses. She then experienced health problems. "I was so busy, I was stressed out. It came up in my neck. My disks went out of place and I was down for June and into the summer as well." She cancelled the courses which she had registered for that summer did not seem to find the time to try again when her health improved.

That was the end of any university courses after that. I liked being a student. I enjoyed studying; I enjoyed research, and I had a high grade point average. That was my frustration, if anything, that I couldn't juggle my education, and particularly when I would approach my superintendent and ask what there was in store for me, and I would get an answer such as, "Well, you don't have your masters," or "Have you taken any courses?" I thought, well, I'm putting everything into my job. If I was taking my masters, then I would not be doing as good a job for them in the division. It really is taking all of me.

2.5 Future Prospects in Administration

A number of factors appear to be preventing the women whom I interviewed from gaining upward mobility in administration. These factors are both internal and external, depending on each woman's situation and also in the manner in which she was raised. Some of them had every intention of taking on a more challenging position, whereas the others were more unsure about what they wanted to do in the future for two reasons; one was a lack of career planning, and the other was the home situation which prevented them at that time from making definite plans for their future advancement in administration.

Laura really wants to become an assistant superintendent. She appears to be very ambitious and is taking courses toward her masters' degree in administration with future advancement in administration. A number of factors are interfering with her plans. One is the division in which she works. There is little mobility among administrators and there are no foreseeable openings even for a principalship. When asked what prospects she saw for future advancement in her division, she replied, "Here? Absolutely none. Someone would have to die first. That's pretty sad. Or retire? Or how many are going to leave?" There are presently no women principals in her division. "I'm not sure that the board is ready to hire a female principal yet. There are a few people on the board whom I see as being very 'antiquated'." Also, Laura feels that she needs more years of experience. "I'm not old enough yet. By the time I'm forty, I will."

Another factor which Laura has to consider is her family. Working in a rural community, Laura commutes approximately two hours a day. She has four young children and feels that she should spend as much time with them as possible. If she were to leave the school division and go into a neighboring one, the distance would be that much greater, and she would be away from her

children even more. Her husband is in a position where he would not be able to transfer easily and with a large family, financial security has to be considered. That is the second reason that Laura does not want to leave her position at this time.

In Manitoba, tenure follows an educator to other divisions. That does not apply for seniority. If Laura were to take on an administrative position, she would be at the bottom of the seniority list. With the cutbacks which are occurring in education at this time, if Laura took a position in another division, she would probably be one of the first to be laid off because usually the last one hired is one of the first to go. That would put Laura and her family in a very bad financial state. " You're often torn. You're making such good money, you couldn't possibly quit. We have a mortgage and kids whom we want to put through university one day. When you're making more money than your husband, you can't ever quit." Laura therefore feels that she cannot take the risk of leaving her division at this time, even though she knows that advancement in her present division is unlikely to happen in the near future.

Donna and Francis have a number of things in common. They both work in small schools. They both have young children who are still living at home. They are also married to farmers. Donna and Francis feel that it would be very difficult for their husbands to relocate and find different jobs. Distances between schools in their communities and the desire to spend more time with their families are also factors which they say prevent them from considering changes in their careers at this time. When asked what prospects she saw for herself in the future in her career as an administrator, Donna replied, "My husband farms. It ties us down to the area where we are at. It is a little more difficult than having someone who has a job where he can get up and go for another job elsewhere. I don't want to have to travel, so right now I'm not looking for a different position."

Madeleine does not seem to have any definite plans for her future. Her philosophy seems to be that a person has to enjoy what she or he is doing. She would rather go back into teaching than be unhappy in administration.

I always say that I take it one year at a time. While I'm enjoying it, and while I feel that I am having some positive input in the job, I will continue in administration. But the day that the balance isn't there, when it becomes too stressful and takes too much of a toll, then I would see myself going back to the classroom, and be very happy about it. I think that I would be that much better a teacher for having had these experiences.

Gladys is faced with a different kind of situation. Her division is making some big changes because of the creation of a French school board. A number of schools in her division will become francophone school, and hers might be affected. She is guaranteed a job, but she did not know at this time if she would remain in her school or be transferred to another one. With large distances between schools, this could create a big problem for her. She is quite concerned. "Once they have the French governance, I'm really going to get the screws." She has had a lot of experience working with older children and would like to have the opportunity one day to be an administrator in a high school. "I'm good with older kids. I'd like to go to a bigger school, a high school probably, or a junior high." Right now there is a lot of uncertainty about her future in administration.

Susan is certain about one thing. She feels that she is due for a promotion and is ready after fifteen years as a vice-principal to run a school of her own.

My goal is to be principal of a high school. I don't know....maybe I've hit the glass ceiling. I've been in administration for a long time. I feel I'm overdue. I've worked hard and diligently. I've been faithful to the division for a long time. I feel that if that time doesn't come soon, then I'll have been overlooked. And then, I really don't know what the reason would be.

Susan is just as certain that she would not like to be in the superintendent's chair. "No, I wouldn't want that. I like working in buildings with kids. I enjoy the students, the teachers, the action. I think I would miss that element."

The women in my study do not seem to be too optimistic about promotions in the near future. The four principals (Gladys, Madeleine, Francis, and Donna) have each been in administration for less than five years. Gladys is the only principal who is currently taking administrative courses at a university and who will probably be experiencing some change in her position because of the creation of a French school board and the consequent restructuring of some of the schools in her division.

The two vice-principals (Susan and Laura) are actively seeking promotions. They have been in administration for over a decade and they want a new challenge. Laura is currently working on her masters degree, but she sees no promotions in the near future because of the lack of mobility in her division and the school board's apparent hesitancy to hire women for the principalship. Susan feels that she deserves a promotion and that she has proven to the division that she is a loyal and dedicated administrator. She does have the same concern as Laura about the trustees in her division. "I think that

we have a very open-minded superintendent right now. Almost all of the trustees in the division are female. Just because they are mostly female, does not give me the sense that they're going to be very open-minded for the females. I'd like to be very optimistic at this point."

3 Balancing Work With Home

The women in my study are all married. Laura, Francis, and Donna have young children who must be looked after when their parents are not at home. Gladys and Madeleine have adult children who are still living at home. Susan's children are on their own and are themselves raising families. Also, Gladys and Susan have parents who are aging and who require their daughters' help on a regular basis. The women's families and their administrative responsibilities are often like two full-time jobs. Both are very demanding on their time and energy. The women sometimes feel like they are performers walking on a tight rope, trying not only to maintain their balance, but to do some fancy steps so that the audience can see that they are really capable. Balancing acts may look easy, but they are not.

The women in my study are all well aware of the importance of maintaining well-balanced lives. However, knowledge is one thing and performance is another. For some of the women, maintaining a balance between work and home has been very difficult. On one hand they want to advance in their careers and they love their jobs. On the other hand, societal expectations that they take responsibility for raising their children causes them to feel guilt. The pull between work and home responsibilities, sometimes referred to as 'competing urgencies' (Young, 1994), often take their toll.

During the interviews with the women, they discussed how they tried to balance their work and home life. They talked about household responsibilities, the school work which they do at home during the evenings and weekends, their hobbies and interests, as well as their involvement in the communities where they live.

3.1 Household responsibilities

The three women who were under forty (Laura, Francis, and Donna) have people come into their homes to clean. The women over forty (Susan, Madeleine, and Gladys) do not. While it is true that the women with younger children might require extra help with household chores, the three women with adult children did not have anyone come in to clean their homes even when their children were little.

Laura has four children and she has always had a person come in once a week to do the general cleaning and laundry. "I figured that I made enough money and that it was stupid to spend all day Saturday cleaning and whatever." She and her husband Bill split the laundry and cooking duties during the week.

The whole family helps in various ways. "I take the youngest children to the baby-sitter. Bill is responsible for getting the other two ready for school. The kids have to make their own lunches and get their own school bags together and practise piano before they leave for school." Things are pretty informal at supper. "Whoever's home first starts supper. Hopefully, someone remembered to pull something out in the morning or it's 'off the cuff' whatever we make for the evening."

Both Laura and Bill take university courses in the city on different nights. Their children are involved in a number of extra-curricular activities after school. Their schedules are pretty full. However, they try to do things as a family. "Now

every night after supper we play a game together such as 'Sorry' or 'Chinese Checkers', an activity where we all do something together before the scattering of the whole night life goes with baths and pianos and all the rest of that." Bill is able to take over a month off for summer holidays. "Summer seems to be the time when we recoup and become a family again. Then we start up again all over."

Francis has three pre-school children. She usually takes them to the baby-sitter every morning and picks them up after work. The sitter lives a number of miles in the opposite direction of her school. Sometimes her husband Jim picks the children up in the evening. Her days are long. She goes to work around eight o'clock in the morning and does not get home until six. "My evening is with my kids until bed. Then if I have something to do, I do it or I go to bed early." On Fridays she usually goes grocery shopping. Francis and her husband share some of the household chores. "My house is pretty much always a mess. Jim and I share laundry duties and we have somebody come in once a week to do the basics." Francis is quite happy about her home situation. "All of my kids are still young. One is starting kindergarten and the other two are two and three. It's as good as it can get. I have happy kids. I have well kids. I'm lucky."

Donna decided when she had her children that she would not take them out to the baby-sitter.

I've always had somebody come inside my home, even when my children were small. I hired her as a housekeeper and paid her benefits and stuff like that. She took it as an actual job. I felt that it was worth the extra money to have my children in a home environment. While I'm at work, she can

do the housework, have the meals cooked, the laundry done, and that kind of thing. When I came home after work, I did not have that pressure. Even though it was a financial cut, it was outweighed...I enjoyed coming home to my family with the supper ready. Now, even though my children are older, I still have her come in.

Donna's husband George is a farmer. He shares the household chores. Donna usually does the grocery shopping locally in her small community, but she gives a list of things to purchase to George when he needs to go to the larger town some distance away. "He makes the breakfast every morning and the lunch for the kids and things like that."

Gladys does all the cleaning and most of the cooking by herself.

My husband has even more meetings than I do, if that's possible. He helps as much as he can but it's pretty difficult. He was raised in a 'chauvinistic' manner. The men didn't do anything in the house. But he enjoys making bread and things like that. As far as cleaning is concerned, I don't get much help. I keep telling my family that it's like three versus one--three people messing and one cleaning up. One of the things which I have had to do is to accept things to be more messy than I would like them to be and to push the kids to help me a little bit more.

Gladys has never really considered having a person come in and do some of the cleaning. "It's my choice. I really don't enjoy housework that much. I like cooking, but housework..... We also have a cottage, which means that I have two houses to take care of."

Susan has never wanted anyone to come into her home to do the cleaning.

I've never had anyone come in. I tend to be a bit of a 'clean freak' and feel that I can do just as well myself in a few hours. I work on weekends. I juggle it in between nights and weekends. I got my husband to help me sometimes, but I wasn't satisfied with his quality. I end up doing a lot of it myself. I can't be a perfectionist; I have to let things go.

Susan's husband Jeff has a physical disability. "That puts a little more pressure on me as well. I have to do most of the driving."

Madeleine gets her whole family involved in household duties.

The deal kind of is....whoever is here first and sees that something needs doing is supposed to do it. That's pretty much how we balance it. The kids have all kinds of different schedules, but if they come in and see that the dishwasher needs unloading, they do that. If one of them comes in early from classes and knows that we'll all be home for dinner, that one will get the dinner started. My husband is excellent, too. We try to do housework on Thursday nights.

If we're here together, we both do it. If I have a meeting or something on Thursday night and I'm not going to be home, he'll do it.

We pretty much all try to do it, but as a mom, you're still the coordinator and planner and that kind of thing.

Madeleine and her husband also share the grocery shopping. "We go together on Saturdays. We might go out for breakfast and then go to the bank and go for groceries."

3.2 School work at home

Laura, Francis, and Donna are teaching administrators. They therefore have to prepare for their classes as well as their administrative work. Donna, Gladys, and Susan are full-time administrators. Although they have no classes to prepare, they also do some work at home. Each woman has her own working style and is very individualistic in the way she fits in school work during the evenings and weekends.

Laura has joined a carpool and does marking to and from work when she can. She also does some at home. "Usually after nine I take an hour and I'll either be marking or preparing. During the summer time I take home some course materials and prepare them for the fall. Usually I over plan. I'm happy because I don't have that much work to do later."

Laura does not have to take administrative work home. "It's just easier to do it at home, unless you get there at seven in the morning to get it done. You're so interrupted during the day that you get nothing done in the office. I bring the computer home and do a lot of my letter writing to parents and activities on it. I have the secretary proofread it and get the good copy done."

Laura found that she was attending too many meetings at night and decided two years ago that she had had enough. She began delegating others to attend them if possible, and now she is able to spend more time with her family. "To be honest, if it looks like a good political move for me to be at a meeting, I'll be there. But if there's nothing which I will gain too much out of, then I won't." Laura still attends all school functions which take place at night. "When it comes to my school, I'm there....the band concert, parent evenings, I'm there. There's no question about that. But other more divisional kind of things, I don't volunteer to go."

Gladys spends a lot of time in the evenings on school-related work. "Meetings....there are a lot of meetings. There are the preparations for meetings, and depending on what happened during the day, I'm finishing reports and things like that. A lot of reading, too. I find that the only time that I can do professional reading is at night."

Francis teaches for most of the day.

I take an awful lot of school work home with me. I always have school work to do. There isn't one moment of time when I couldn't have something to do. I plan out when certain deadlines are and I teach seventy-five per cent of the time, so I'm constantly with that homework. My preference is to stay at school as long as I can or else go to school early so that I don't have to do it at home. I also have a number of evening meetings.

Susan brings administrative work to do at home. "There's certain work that I like to do without interruption. That's impossible at the school. I have an

open door policy. I like to be on hand for any crisis or problem. Anything that requires non-interrupted time, I take home." Like Laura, Susan sometimes brings home the computer and types in letters to be proofread by the secretary the next day. She also has evening meetings. "It would average out to once a week, with your orientation nights and concerts. I don't miss a concert or any performances of our kids."

Madeleine sets a time during the weekend to do school work. "Sunday afternoon and evening I like to go over my week and make sure that all my correspondence is up to date and I plan my week out. I also do a fair amount of professional reading and try to do a little bit of that every day." She also finds that there are peak periods during the year where she does a fair amount of school work at home. "I read all the report cards the weekend before they are issued. That's a pretty heavy weekend where I'm pretty much involved." She is also involved in a fair number of evening meetings each month.

Donna has some teaching responsibilities which require that she bring school work home. "I try to limit it. I'll try to take something and do it all evening instead of doing a bit here and there, and I found out that that would work better for me. Or I'll work all day on Saturday and then I won't have to work as much at night."

All of the women do school work at home. They all talked about having an 'open door policy' or too many interruptions to do any work which required all of their attention during the school day. They try to do the work later on in the evenings after the children are in bed or during the weekends when they have more time. Meetings before school, after school, and at night also interfered with family time. The women administrators who teach have the extra duty of preparing classes every day on top of their administrative work. Many of them found it difficult to fit everything they had to do each day into twenty-four hours.

3.3 Hobbies, Interests, and Community Work

Besides their work and family responsibilities, the women in my study were asked what they did to relieve stress and relax. Interestingly, Laura, who is an administrator and teacher, who is taking courses at the university, and who has four young children, has a lot of hobbies and interests. She and Bill have a small business. They produce honey. Laura likes to sew and gives sewing classes several evenings each year in a community center. "It's really relaxation time. The nice thing is that the friends I meet with on those nights...none of them are teachers. So we can't possibly talk about work whatsoever." She and her family also do some cross-country skiing together. Laura is involved in a church group, but does not belong to any community organizations.

Gladys has a number of interests. "We have a cottage where we go pretty well every weekend and we do a lot of ice fishing and skidooing. I curl. I was involved for several years with Guides and Scouts. I read a lot. We go to the theater." Gladys was more active on committees when the children were younger. She has recently moved into another community and is just beginning to become involved. "I help out in church in different committees, but not in any position of leadership, more just helping."

Francis is interested in sports. "I have decided that one night a week I'm going to take off and curl. What I really wrestle with is am I going to do this? So far I have always curled." Francis is not really involved in any community groups, although she has been in a few dinner theater productions.

Susan's home is filled with pictures she has made. "I love knitting, crocheting, and needle work. I used to do a lot of needle point. Just about everything on my walls was done by me before I went into administration." She

does not find time to do those things any more. Susan is, however, involved with the choir. "The choir is my therapy. It's my relaxation, my night out. There was a lot of pressure on me to direct the choir. I simply would not give in. This was my night of therapy and I was not going to be in charge there as well, because it wouldn't be any fun any more." Susan was more involved in community work when the children were small. Now she will do things like collecting for cancer research or for the heart foundation.

Madeleine enjoys doing things around her home for relaxation. "I love to read and in the summer I like gardening. I like cooking, and believe it or not, I like cleaning my house. I'm pretty much a home-body after work." She also takes tai-chi and water aerobics during the winter. Madeleine has always been active in her community. She is a volunteer mediator for Child and Family Services. She has been a coordinator for the Heart and Stroke Foundation and other such organizations for several years. "I've always had one thing going that's a little different from work, putting something back into the community."

Donna has a number of interests. "I really like crafts. I find some time to do them, but not as much time as I would like. I enjoy curling. I have made a commitment to go back to aerobics. Otherwise, a lot of things evolve around my children because of clubs they are in." Donna is actually involved in several committees. "I did cut back on quite a few of the executive positions which I was in when I became a principal. I found that I couldn't handle it. I started to say no. I said that I would belong to the club, but that I wouldn't be treasurer, or the like in the larger ones." She coaches a volleyball team. Donna feels that her heavy involvement in the community is good for professional relations. "I feel that it is important for other people to see me doing that. It's a way of seeing parents at an equal level. When I'm working beside the parents making french

fries, the grease splashes up on us equally. It makes it easier when they have a problem to come to the office."

These women handle stress differently. One of the things which most of them have in common is that since their appointment as administrators, their involvement in the community and the time devoted for interests and hobbies have diminished considerably.

3.4 Concerns about balancing work with home

Although the women in my study appear to be quite content in general with their work and their home environments, they do have concerns that their work often requires a greater amount of energy and time, and that the choices which they are making conflict with what they feel they should be doing. This is particularly evident with Laura and Francis, the two administrators who are also teaching at least fifty per cent of the time and who have children under ten years of age.

Laura's ambition to be a senior administrator seems to be in conflict with her role as a parent. "My greatest concern is making sure that my kids turn out OK." However, the choices which she is making do not always reflect her concern, and this bothers her. "When you have this authority, this responsibility....when you have to choose between something, and that something always ends up being the work I'm choosing rather than my kids.... You're often torn."

The same sentiments are reflected in Francis's comment. "My major concern is that my family is my number one priority, but if you look at time spent, it probably doesn't look that way."

Both Laura and Francis appear to be trying to justify to themselves that while there are no major crises in their home environment, they will continue doing things in the same way as they are now.

When Laura's children were preschoolers, she felt very guilty about the small amount of time which she spent with them. She therefore decided to remedy the situation by taking them with her every day to the town where she worked. That solution had its drawbacks.

When the kids started coming, I became overwhelmed with guilt, that I wasn't spending enough time with them, and I was dealing with that. I think that that wore away more at me than the actual physical work of doing work at school and work at home, feeling guilty about it all the time. I was thinking, how were we sorting this out?

One of the things I did was that I drove the kids to a baby-sitter in the town where I worked. So I had the time in the morning with them which brought me to school at twenty to nine totally rattled because of the non-stop chatter of children in the back seat of the car. At four-thirty when I picked them up, we were together until I got them home. This was when we'd have 'chatter time.' We'd sing or listen to tapes on the way home and things like that.

This has changed now that they are a little older. Laura has since joined a carpool. Her husband has taken on most of the responsibility of getting the children ready for school because they go to school in the

community where they live. Bill works in the community where the children go to school.

Laura felt that she had to be present at all her children's activities. This was stressful, especially when one of her children's events was scheduled at the same time as an important meeting. Laura was raised in a home where her parents did not attend school functions. She remembered the sadness she felt as a child at those times and she did not want the same thing to happen to her own children. "So it was really important for me to be initially at my kids' everything. I want to be a part of their education. But I don't want to stick my nose in too far. I try to strike up an equal balance. As long as they're doing fine, that's the main thing."

Laura credits one of her friends for helping her get rid of some of the feelings of guilt that she had about not spending enough time with her children.

The guilt is gone. It used to be there. I had a friend. I was bemoaning to this friend about how guilty I felt about what I wasn't doing with my kids. She just looked at me and said, "You're a stupid woman. There are women crying in Ethiopia because their children are starving in front of them, and you have the nerve to sit and whine about not spending enough time with your kids. They're fed; they're clothed; they're loved.....What more can you give them? At least I have some sympathy for the women in Ethiopia. I have none for you."

It made me stop and think that she was

right.

Francis is not sure what will happen in the near future when her children will be in school. She foresees the possibility of having to find more time to spend with her family.

I would really have to do something if I thought that my family were suffering. I have very happy children. One is just starting kindergarten. I'm hoping that he's successful at school. If it works out that he's not successful at school, a lot more time would be given toward that. I think that the next few years will be much more difficult than the last couple because of the age of the kids.

Donna also has children in school. Although she says that she feels guilty about the lack of time spent with her children, she thinks that it is a concern that all mothers who work out of the home have. She feels that she does spend quality time with them. Also, the money she earns allows her children to participate in activities which the family would not be able to afford without her salary.

I think that every working mother's concern is the guilt she has to put up with of leaving her children... and that's every working mother's concern...

I feel that I probably spend more quality time with my children than someone who stays home all day and watches her kids while the soaps are on. I have always made a point of doing things with the kids, but there's still that guilt. Financially, I don't have that choice. We'd have a very

different life style if I didn't work. I'm not sure if I could give that up.

Gladys has an ailing parent. She also has adult children living with her who are going to university. She sometimes feels that she is in the middle generation and that she is needed by both the older and younger family members at the same time. On top of that, as an administrator, she is expected to attend several evening meetings related to her work. Her work and family responsibilities are so demanding that she has difficulty finding time for herself.

I think what bothers me the most is that I feel that my family is cheated. There's a lot of guilt attached to that. I'm also sandwiched between taking care of my kids and taking care of my dad. I worry about that. Last week, for example, my father had an operation, and I had a meeting. I couldn't be there for him. It's mostly those kinds of things. One of my friends is a psychologist. One of the things which she told me is to plan something for myself one night a week and to code it. Then I would say that I am sorry, and that I have something else that night. I've been trying to do that, but I find that what happens is that someone will tell me that they can't do something except on that night and I end up giving it up.

Susan became an administrator when her children were older. She therefore did not have the concern which Francis, Laura, and Donna have about spending enough time with their young families.

My children have grown up and gone. However, when I did go into administration, they were at home going to high school. Thank goodness they were in high school, because once I got into administration, I found that it was extremely demanding of my time. I often wondered how women could manage who had younger children. I knew that I couldn't have. I'm glad that my kids were at the stage they were, so that I could continue on with my career. I felt that I was fortunate because I had my kids when I was in my early twenties. They grew up and then I carried on with my career. I was still young enough to pursue the administrative route.

Susan and her husband spend a fair amount of time together on weekends.

We simply do because there's just the two of us. We look forward to the weekends when we're off by ourselves. Many evenings are taken up with meetings or paperwork or other commitments. So it's not during the week as much as it is the weekends.

Susan, like Gladys, has aging parents who are requiring more and more care. With work and family taking up a lot of her time, finds that her social life suffers. Some of her colleagues entertain a lot, and she does not understand how they are able to do it.

Socially, I'd say that something has to go when you have a busy career. We don't do that much entertaining other than having family in from out of town or going to see the children and grandchildren for a long weekend or Christmas holidays. Other than that, we're either catching up or looking after parents who are aging. We're the sandwich generation where we have kids on one end to look after and parents on the other end. I know that my some of my fellow administrators entertain a lot, and they are the same as we are. They have someone in to clean house, but I don't know how they manage it. I guess both of them are interested in cooking and entertaining. Both of them work. I often wonder how they do it, because at the end of the week, I don't have much energy left to entertain.

Susan is very concerned about balancing her work and home life. She is very aware that her job as an administrator is very demanding and that she is always at risk of allowing her work responsibilities to take up a disproportionate amount of time.

You have to be careful that your career doesn't take over your whole life. Being an administrator of a school, it can if you let it. There's enough work there. You can be in the school for half of your life. I think that you have to be careful that you don't, because I think that a good administrator is living a balanced life, having your recreation time and your social time, and spending time with your family. I have to make sure that it doesn't creep into my life. Even if I spend time with my family, I have to make sure that I'm not 'talking shop'.

Madeleine is very conscious of balance in her life. She, like Susan, feels very fortunate that her children have not been a concern to her and have therefore allowed her to devote more time to work when necessary. Her husband Jake is also very supportive.

In the school year there are peaks and valleys. I think that I have to be very work-orientated at certain times of the year, for instance, start-up, evaluation time, concert time, times when I feel that my staff is at an all-time low, when I need to boost morale, or just be more visible and that kind of thing. So there are times when I feel that I need to put more energy and more of my time into my professional life. I'm very lucky, I think, because I have kids who have all been great. We've never had a lot of home stress

where kids are getting into trouble or that kind of thing. So they've really allowed me to have those peaks and valleys. My husband is also very work oriented and has a very demanding job also, so he can respect the expectations and the demands that my job have on me. We try very very much to keep weekends for family and each other, although on most Sunday evenings we will be planning our week, listening to music and working in our books. But we're still together on Sundays, Saturdays, and Fridays with family and friends.

Very often she feels that she is walking on a tightrope. "Oh yes, often. It seems that sometimes everything is just coming at you; there's so much to do and how are you ever going to get it all done?" However, she is adamant that one must keep work and home in proper perspective. "I wouldn't want one role to conflict with another. I wouldn't ever want to feel that my personal life was suffering because I was spending too much time being involved with my work. On the other hand, I wouldn't want my work to suffer because I was dealing with a major crisis at home." The importance of balance in her life is always there. "It's a concern to keep that balance. I work quite hard at trying to keep that balance that one doesn't take away from the other." If she would have to make a choice between being an administrator or going back to teaching and being able to spend more time with her family, her choice would be to let the administrative position go. "The day that the balance isn't there, when it becomes too stressful and takes too much of a toll, then I would see myself going back to the classroom."

One can see that the balance issue is very important to all of the women whom I interviewed and that there is a big concern with most of them that if they have to choose, then in most cases, the family responsibilities would take priority to the job. The question is, does this choice reflect the socialization of women, or is it simply that these women do have husbands who are in the work force and that the women's financial status is not entirely dependent on their own salaries? None of the women, however, stated that they would give up their jobs as teachers if their roles as administrators became too stressful.

4 Women in School Administration in Rural versus Urban Areas

Many of the concerns which are expressed in the literature about women in school administration are the same for urban women and the six women whom I interviewed who are working in rural settings. There are, however, many similarities among the six rural administrators which seem to indicate a pattern which is more common to women administrators in rural areas in Manitoba. I have not been able to ascertain whether or not my findings are reflected in the lives of women administrators in rural areas in the rest of Canada. My feeling is that they are.

According to the literature on women in administration, a larger percentage of women than men are living alone. The vast majority of the women who answered my survey were living with a partner and had children. All of the six women whom I interviewed were married and had children. Is this a coincidence or do the rural school boards prefer to hire

married women who appear to have stable home lives rather than single women who might actively seek a fuller social life?

Isolation is another problem which women administrators face. Those who work in rural settings seem to be even more aware of the isolation which they experience as administrators. In my study, for example, some were the only female administrators in their divisions. Their isolation was more than simply the physical distances which separated them from other administrators, male or female. It was the mental isolation which these women often felt. They were not a part of the 'Boys' club'. During retreats and conferences where all the rural administrators got together, women like Madeleine and Susan experienced being excluded from the men administrators while they went out for drinks together or for rounds of golf. Francis experienced the feeling of isolation during principals' meetings when her suggestions were belittled by a fellow principal, the principal whom she considered to be her mentor. On one occasion, a solution which she offered for a problem seemed to be ignored by the superintendent and the other principals. A short while later, when another principal made the same suggestion, it was received with a lot of praise. Francis felt very alone.

Most of the women in my study also mentioned discipline and how parents, especially the fathers, in small communities often feel that women administrators are not good disciplinarians. Laura mentioned how she had to deal with high school boys the first year that she was in administration. She had the boys removed from the school by the police and then suspended them. "Those were the kinds of things that were proven to parents."

Gladys finds that she is often questioned about discipline.

Parents will ask if you have any problems in discipline. But the discipline in our school is really good. I was able to help a girl who used to bite people. The male principal before me ignored that case. Now we have another little boy who has some serious disorders. They see that and they say it must be because there is a woman principal."

Francis refers to her first year as a "hell on wheels" before she was accepted by the students and parents. She still experiences some problems with them. "I had a parent come in one day before school who started to 'rip a strip off me' as parents sometimes do. This man came into my office yelling and screaming. I think that he felt that he had set me straight and put me in my place."

Susan has had to prove several times that she is a good disciplinarian.

I think that at the junior high and senior high level, the general population thinks that to run a school, to be in control of the students who are a little bigger, you need a bigger person or a man. I don't agree with that. I think that I've proven that to be false. You don't have to be big; you don't have to be a man. I think it's how you present yourself. There are still a lot of false perceptions out there that we have to change, and not just among the community, but among professionals as well...our

colleagues.

Madeleine mentioned fathers and the need to convince them about her ability to be a good disciplinarian and to have control of the situation.

With some of the fathers I have had to establish a certain rapport and a certain assertiveness. I feel that certain fathers think thatwell, she's just a woman....just in their demeanor or the way they talk that my decision would be overruled by somebody else or that they could in fact get me to change my mind.

Some of the women in my study made sure that they did not live in the same rural community where they taught. Only Donna lived and worked in the same community. The women felt that rural communities were very demanding of their administrators. Susan finds this to be very true "It's a very demanding community. The parents have high expectations of the school. If I'm there till five-thirty, the phone doesn't stop ringing. I worked at the school for the first few days in July for the first two summers. So if you were in the school, the job would never stop."

Susan feels that there are certain things one has to consider in a rural area which are not as visible in an urban setting.

The rural community seems to be more demanding. It takes more effort than the urban, and you have to consider things like being fair when you're dealing with discipline. You've got bus problems. We have many students on buses and that takes a

big chunk of our time. I like to live away from the community so that I can be more objective when I'm dealing with people. I find there's a problem when you're in a community where there are lots of relatives. I feel that the people respect you more when you can remain distant. If you are not a part of the community, you can do a better job and treat each person equally and fairly.

Laura and Donna both commented on how parents in a rural community do not hesitate to call them at any hour of the evening if they feel that they have any concerns. Parents in their rural communities seem to feel that they should be available at any time.

Laura has tried to convince the parents in her school to call her when her children are in bed. "I tell them to phone me after nine o'clock. I say that they can phone me before nine if they want, but they'll only have one ear because the other one will be one kid on me all the time. It's getting easier." She has even tried to delegate some of her work to others in order to cut down on the phone calls. "I had a summer program set up and I delegated one of the teachers to do the presentation at the board meeting. She went and did it for me. She knew all about it and could do it. But I still got the phone calls later."

Donna is very active in her community and finds that the parents sometimes have to be reminded that she has a life other than the administrator of their school.

Parents sometimes call me too much at home.

In a rural community it is very hard to separate

your home life from your work. I went on a weekend with the girls curling and they kept on bringing up school topics. So I had to tell them that this was my weekend off and that I didn't want to 'talk shop'. You almost have to say that you don't have your books here to look up what you wrote down and that you'll look it up tomorrow. You have to tell them politely.

One can see that the women in my study have many concerns which are similar to those which women administrators have in urban areas. However, the characteristics of rural communities add to the hurdles which women already face. The summary and conclusions of the study are dealt with in more detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The women whom I interviewed in rural Manitoba corresponded well with the literature about women in administration in urban areas. There are some obvious differences such as physical isolation from other administrators which might not be a factor in cities. There are fewer female administrators in rural areas and this compounds the isolation.

In this chapter I will summarize my findings and compare them with what has been written by other authors and researchers about women's entry into administration, the work experience, and the balancing of work with home life. I will conclude it with some of my own personal comments, recommendations, and suggestions for future research.

Entry into Administration

Many of the women whom I interviewed became administrators by some 'fortuitous' accident (Ortiz, 1982). Of the six women whom I interviewed, only Laura stated that her goal from the time she went into teaching was to go 'up the ranks.' None of the others had given administration much thought until they were older or happened to be at the right place at the right time. Laura, Francis, and Donna are still in their thirties, but Madeleine, Gladys, and Susan did not enter administration until they were in their forties. The three latter women would be what Young (1991) refers to as 'late bloomers'. They were well established as teachers and had had a lot of experience.

The reasons for going into administration were quite varied. Laura is a very forthright and outgoing individual who needs stimulation and new challenges. Ever since she started teaching she has had her eye on an

assistant superintendent position and has been working toward it. Francis also seems to be outspoken and believes that her principal told her to apply for an administrative position in the division in order to 'get her off his back'. Francis spoke about the constant disagreements which she had with her former principal about curriculum and teaching methods. Susan applied for an administrative position the first time through sheer anger. She was not getting the support for a student which she needed from her principal and had to go above him to get it at the divisional level. It was only then that she realized the important role that the principal plays in the school. Gladys, after several years in the teaching profession, realized that if she was capable enough to run divisional professional meetings, she was good enough to run a school. Madeleine wrote to her superintendent about a policy which she thought was unnecessary and belittling to the teachers in the division. She got his attention. Donna happened to be in the right place when her principal became ill and she originally took the position on a trial basis. Thus the majority of the women whom I interviewed got into administration by either doing something which was recognized by someone in a higher position or by sheer luck.

Many authors refer to the importance of mentors in one's career (Young, 1991; Shakeshaft, 1987). The women whom I interviewed did not really have mentors who were with them before their entry into administration and who continued to guide them once they became. Laura and Gladys had none. Susan and Madeleine were encouraged by senior administrators to apply for their positions. However, these administrators have left their divisions. Francis's former principal, who encouraged her to apply, gave her some materials to read and gave her advice, but he was not supportive at principals' meetings. Once she became an administrator, Donna sought her own mentors.

She approached people whom she had heard about and respected for help and guidance.

Being an Administrator

Most of the women whom I interviewed had had quite a lot of experience in teaching before becoming administrators. Laura had taught for about five years, but the rest had been in the teaching profession for ten years or more. Most of them had a good knowledge of the curricula and were very active in their divisional committees in professional development areas.

Half of the women I interviewed stressed the importance of team work and group decision-making. The two vice-principals, Laura and Susan, did not discuss team work during the interviews. Neither did Donna. However, Francis repeatedly spoke about her staff working as a team and was adamant that no important decision in her school was made by her alone. Madeleine and Gladys mentioned how closely they worked with a number of teachers who were their core teams.

Many people perceive that males are the administrators of schools (Lee & Bremner, 1991). The women experienced this in a variety of ways. Francis, for example, found that some fathers of the students in her school were disrespectful when speaking to her about issues concerning their children. When Gladys applied recently for a position in another school division, one reason given to her for not being chosen was that the discipline in that particular school was difficult and that perhaps a male would be more capable in dealing with that area. People coming into her school for the first time sometimes address one of her male teachers as the principal if they see him and Gladys standing together in her office. Madeleine finds that her maintenance

supervisor will address only her male cleaner when discussing repairs, seemingly forgetting Madeleine who is standing at his side.

Staff members, both male and female, sometimes have a hard time accepting female administrators. Francis, Madeleine, and Donna seem very positive about their staffs' acceptance and cooperation. Laura, however, had a very difficult time with a few of her male teachers and had to be very assertive. Susan finds that the male staff in her school find it hard to accept that she is very good at dealing with discipline problems and will only ask for her help when they are desperate. Gladys experiences some difficulty at times with the female staff in her school. She is a mother figure to them, and she finds that this can be negative if those teachers do not have a good relationship with their own mothers. She has few male staff members, and they seem to be more supportive.

Authors such as Shakeshaft (1991) mention that the fear of failure drives women to work harder than men to be successful. All of the women talked about the extremely long hours they had worked during the first year in administration. Susan referred to having to work one hundred and fifty per cent harder than male principals to get recognition. Some of the women felt that they had no support from their colleagues and had to constantly prove themselves. Francis referred to her first year in administration as a 'hell on wheels'. A number of them saw little of their own families when they first went into administration, and quite a few of them still feel that they have to work extra hard and attend a great number of meetings to be accepted.

Melia and Lyttle (1986) stated that for males, the person of greatest value is the one who overcomes the obstacles to get the goal. This, to men, is interpreted as working hard. They say that women interpret working hard to mean putting in more time and working longer hours. The women whom I

interviewed gave me the impression that this was the case. However, having been in administration for a few years, they have come to the realization that they could work day and night and yet never satisfy all the people around them. The majority of them have therefore come to the conclusion that they will wear themselves out physically and mentally if they do not change their way of life. They have started seriously thinking about getting more balance into their lives and are working hard to maintain it.

Only Laura appeared to have the attitude that in order to get something, she had to try various angles to obtain it. She was not afraid to 'tread on toes' in order to pursue what she wanted. Her lack of effort in seeking to get higher in the administrative hierarchy is not fear of reproach by others above her, but the position in which she finds herself. Her concern for the financial security of her family at this time makes her pause and slow down. One can be sure, however, that her plans for her future are only put 'on hold' until the right opportunity unveils itself.

All of the women mentioned the feeling of isolation (Ortiz, 1982). They have little contact with other administrators. Part of it is probably due to the long distances between schools. Almost all of the women I interviewed had to drive for more than half an hour to get to their schools and the majority of them are in school divisions that have few female administrators. It is not only the physical distances that cause these women to be isolated, however. They also feel isolated from the other administrators in their divisions by what they refer to as the 'boys' club. Donna, for example, knows a lot about fishing and hunting. She is never given the opportunity to discuss these topics with her male colleagues, for they tend to block her out of the conversation. Susan becomes frustrated at times when her male counterparts start discussing future potential candidates for principalships. On a number of occasions, the men in question

had taken no courses and had shown no interest in administration. These men were golfing or curling 'buddies'. Madeleine has attended conferences where her superintendent has gone with the male principals to a bar in order to debrief about the day, leaving her alone in the hotel room. Thus the isolation is more than a physical distance. It is more like a mental blocking of a certain part of the male colleagues' lives, where women's opinions and feelings are not considered. Whether or not this is intentional, the feeling of isolation and rejection is there for these women.

Balancing One's Work With One's Home Life

I referred earlier in this paper about women often 'walking the tightrope', trying hard to stay on the rope by balancing their work with their private lives. This balance is more difficult to maintain for the women in rural communities. The women whom I interviewed spent a lot of time on the road traveling to and from work. Some of them also had the extra burden of taking their children to day care centers or private baby-sitters who were also some distance away. The hours lost each day on the road could have been spent doing other things, although a few of the women felt that this time was not completely wasted. They used the time alone in their cars for planning and going over what had happened during the day.

Household duties are often said to be women's responsibility. Donna shopped for groceries, but she was the only one who had hired a housekeeper on a full-time basis when her children were young. She did not worry about cooking or cleaning the house. Even now that her housekeeper is not there every day, Donna's husband has taken over the job of preparing meals. Laura has a regular cleaning person come into her home once a week, and her husband and she split the cooking and laundry duties. Her husband also takes

over the major portion of child care. Francis has someone come in weekly to clean the house. She is responsible for shopping and cooking. She usually drives her children to and from the day care. Madeleine is the organizer in the family and they are all old enough to do their share of the cleaning and cooking. Susan and Gladys do the majority of the housework and cooking in their homes. They feel that they are more capable of doing the job than the other members of their families and they do not want to hire someone to clean for them. Thus the women whom I interviewed were not very alike in this area.

Most of the women had other interests and hobbies and tried hard to have some balance. Some sewed, curled, took courses, knitted, did aerobics and other things. Many did community work and belonged to a variety of clubs. These interests were often relaxing to the women and gave them a different perspective on things. Some felt that their visibility in the community was important for their positions as administrators and would be a positive aspect for future promotions. Others felt that they owed it to their communities to put something back into them, such as canvassing for the Heart Foundation.

Overall Similarities and Differences

One can see that although the six women whom I interviewed have unique characteristics, they appear to have a lot in common. They may not be in the same age category or have the same amount of experience in teaching or administration. Their children are of different ages. Some of the women are more active than others in their communities and their household duties. While some are very pleased with their relationship with peers and superordinates, others feel that there is room for a lot of improvement.

These differences do not stand out as much as how the women are similar. They are hard-working individuals who have a real desire to make the

climate of their schools conducive to learning. These women are under a lot of pressure from society to be 'superwomen' at work and at home. In their work environment they face sexism, sometimes hidden and sometimes very visible. At home, these women are the organizers of the household, and the majority of the women interviewed are also the ones who actually do most of the household duties in their homes.

The women whom I interviewed fall into two distinct groups: those who are under forty years old and those who are over forty. The younger ones, Laura, Francis, and Donna, had less experience as teachers before becoming administrators, but all had taught for at least five years. The other group, Gladys, Susan, and Madeleine, had been in classrooms for about twenty years before applying for an administrative position. The age factor seemed to play an important role. Laura, Francis and Donna still had younger children at home who required childcare services during the day. Madeleine, Gladys, and Susan had children who were adults.

The three younger women had hired help to clean their homes. On the other hand, the three other women had never had outside help. Gladys and Susan did most of the housework themselves and Madeleine had to organize who was to do what.

The younger women had husbands who were quite involved with meal preparations and laundry duties. These women mentioned their husbands' participation in the household more often, especially Laura and Donna.

The two groups of women also had different 'competing urgencies.' The younger women still had small children who needed their attention. These women spoke about their feelings of guilt when they had to leave their children with others not only during the work day, but also while they went to meetings or retreats which sometimes lasted for a few days. Because they are relatively

new to administration, they are under a lot of pressure to prove their ability to do a good job.

The other three women, Gladys, Susan, and Madeleine, have been in education for many years and have already proven themselves as good teachers and administrators. Their 'competing urgencies' are different. Although Madeleine did not mention her parents during the interview, Gladys and Susan both felt that they were sandwiched between two generations, their children and their parents. Susan has children and grandchildren who want her to be with them. Madeleine and Gladys still have children whom they have to support through university. On the other end these women have aging parents who require help and care. As daughters, the burden of worry and care for elderly parents falls on their shoulders. The workload which these women have as administrators is also very demanding of their time. They are often torn between family matters and work.

Women administrators in rural schools in Manitoba appear to have some definite characteristics. Whereas the literature (Ortiz, 1982) states that more women than men administrators tend to be single, it is the opposite for the women whom I surveyed in rural Manitoba. The vast majority of women were married and had children.

The rural women administrators in my study had to contend with parents in the community not only at work but also in the evenings and during the weekends. Laura felt that she had to tell the parents to phone her after nine o'clock in evenings so that she could have some uninterrupted time with her family. Donna also received phone calls from parents during the evenings when it was convenient for them, rather than during Donna's working hours. Even when she was curling with some parents during a bonspiel, they spoke to her about school matters. Gladys and Susan felt that the rural communities

were very demanding of their time, and both women decided to live in communities other than those where they worked.

Another point which a number of the women whom I interviewed mentioned was the fact that fathers in their communities seemed reluctant to accept that the women administrators actually meant what they said. Francis, Madeleine, and Gladys felt that when the fathers came to see them, the men seemed to think that they would be able to convince these women to change their minds about some decision. The women said that they had to be very firm and assertive with these fathers.

This study about women in school administration in rural Manitoba is also about me. I see myself represented in each and every one of the women whom I interviewed. There is a link of commonality for all of us who work in the same profession. We are separated by many miles and we do not have the time to visit each other or discuss what is happening in our lives, but there is an unmistakable link which nevertheless connects us.

Women are extremely underrepresented in school administration. Over sixty percent of the teaching force are women, yet less than twenty-five per cent of principals and less than twenty per cent of vice or assistant principals in rural Manitoba are women. This includes the female teachers in Hutterite colonies who are statistically considered as principals. One might understand the majority of males in administrative positions in jobs where there is a greater percentage of men in certain companies, but there does not seem to be an excuse for the lack of female administrators in schools. Asper (1974) stated that women teachers in Manitoba did not aspire to become administrators. Today statistics seem to imply that women in rural Manitoba still do not aspire to go into administration.

I have been in the teaching profession for over two decades and I have met a lot of teachers throughout my career. Although I have been an administrator on a number of occasions, I have to admit that I have not really done my part to enlist other women to try administration. We women in administration are so busy with our work and homes that we often do not find the time to promote the concept to our women staff. Also, our busyness is very visible and discourages others from aspiring to the role. One woman on my staff, for example, stopped me at the hallway and said with complete sincerity that she did not know how I did it and that she "wouldn't touch administration with a ten-foot pole."

More women are visible at principal conferences. They are just as qualified as men to take on administrative roles (Eagly, Karau, & Johnson, 1992). Both younger and not so young women are finishing up their degrees in administrative studies and are knowledgeable about current issues in education. The bonus that I see that these women have is their experience and the attitude that we are all partners in education. The team-building and group decision-making skills which are often apparent in these women can only enhance any position which they take.

There is no doubt in my mind that society's view of women is one of child-rearing and maintaining the home. My generation grew up in the 1950's with the working dad and stay-at-home mom who cooked, cleaned, and sewed. That style of life no longer exists, but traces of it keep on resurfacing in our present lives. Very few families can afford to have one spouse stay at home, yet somehow our expectations of each other have not always changed. Many woman are trying to juggle careers with household duties. Husbands might be helping a bit more, but the responsibility still lies mainly with the women (Meissner et al, 1975; Chafetz, 1990) .

There must be a conscious effort by parents to be role models for their children. Married men cannot be expected to suddenly become equal partners in household duties and raising children when they have had no previous experience or training. Women have often been encouraged as young girls to practise playing house and playing with their baby dolls. They learn from their mothers how to cook and clean and help around the home. Men have not had this advantage when they were boys. They have often been denied this training and have been discouraged from learning how to cook and clean. They are therefore at a great disadvantage when they become spouses and fathers. Their wives are often too busy to start teaching them what to do. These women find it easier to have their spouses do the more pleasant tasks in the home, such as playing or bathing the children, rather than show them how to do the more unpleasant household chores. If males were more involved with the household duties from the time they were young, this problem could be eliminated and women would spend less time in this area.

Young children need to learn from an early age that boys and girls are equally important and that both men and women are productive members in society. Role models need to be visible. These role models should convey that both men and women are equal parents with equal responsibility for the upbringing of their children.

Teachers have an important role to play. Boys and girls need to be treated as equals. Not only do girls need to be more active in team sports, but boys need to be encouraged to become more nurturing individuals. This is not easy to do, because people have been socialized into believing that girls and boys should be brought up differently.

Superintendents and other senior administrators, along with trustees, have a lot of power. They are the ones who decide who obtain the

administrative positions. They must therefore be not only informed, but convinced about the necessity of equal representation of males and females in administration. Women need advocates for support and encouragement to take on positions of power. They must also make a conscious effort to help themselves. Women in administrative positions must seek and mentor females who have the potential to become administrators.

More research needs to be done on how people can be educated to believe and practise equality in our society. How can parents and teachers be convinced that children learn these roles very young in life and that the early years are critical ones? Francis is making the effort to do something about it in her school.

Kids are getting a wrong message in not seeing female administrators. I think that the violence that we see in society right now and the competitiveness that we see is wrong. Kids get the message very early about 'maleness and femaleness'. Maleness and femaleness needs to be acknowledged and valued. I am working really hard to make sure that the kids that I touch realize that there is value in other people.

More research needs to be done on women and guilt. All six of the women whom I interviewed talked about guilt. In our society it is the mother who is basically responsible for raising her children. Even though some of the women in my study had husbands who helped a lot, they worried that perhaps their children would be missing out somehow because they were not with them more often. Women with aging parents feel guilty when they cannot attend to their needs because of meetings and other work-related commitments. What

can be done to lessen these feelings of guilt for women who are already in administration or who might otherwise consider becoming administrators?

My purpose in writing this thesis is to show that although there is a great shortage of women administrators in rural Manitoba, they do exist and they do make a difference. They are leading full and productive lives. These women need the support found in numbers. We must make a conscious effort to increase the proportion of women in administrative roles to reflect the number of women in the teaching profession. Women must not be discouraged, and must find renewed energy to celebrate the small individual victories (Edson, 1988). Each small step forward is important.

Recommendations for Further Study

This study was done on six women administrators in rural Manitoba. One recommendation is that the study be done again to a larger group to see whether or not the women whom I interviewed do represent the perspectives of the larger population of women rural administrators.

Another recommendation is that the study be done again with the same women in five years to have an update on their location and position. A number of the women had definite plans for their future. It would be interesting to find out if these goals were achieved.

At the time of this writing the Manitoba School Divisions/Districts Boundaries Review Commission has made some recommendations concerning the restructuring of the administration of the public school system. One recommendation is to redraw the boundaries of fifty-seven school divisions to reduce them to twenty-one larger boards. The February 4, 1995 issue of the Winnipeg Free Press stated that it has been recommended that

the thirty-nine rural divisions be reduced to thirteen. If this does occur, it would be interesting to do a study on women in rural Manitoba a few years after the recommendations have been implemented to see what kind of effect it would have on their positions.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Box 505
Beausejour, Manitoba
ROE OCO
May 1993

Ms.

Dear Ms.

My name is Pat Thibault. I am presently working on a thesis entitled "Women in School Administration in Rural Manitoba." I am an assistant principal in a rural school division, Agassiz #13, and am working part-time on the thesis at the University of Manitoba. One of the reasons that I am writing this thesis is my concern that there are so few women in administration, especially in the rural areas. Although over 60% of the teachers in Manitoba are female, according to statistics, 23.3% of the principals and 24.3% of the vice-principals in rural Manitoba are female. By being an administrator you have certainly beaten the odds!

For the past year I have been reading on the subject of women in administration. Most studies have been done on women in urban areas. My study will focus on rural Manitoba and have two parts. Part I is the survey. I would appreciate it if you would fill out and return the survey which is enclosed with this letter within a week. With the information which I receive from you, I will be able to have a clearer picture of the characteristics of the women who are administrators in rural Manitoba. I will compile the information as quantitative data and refer to it in my study. To assure the anonymity of the sender, I ask that you do not use your name on the survey.

In Part II of the study, I would like to interview six female administrators in rural Manitoba on two occasions (initial and follow-up) for approximately one hour each to talk to them about how they got into administration, what their work experience is like, and how they are balancing their work and home life. All information would be treated in confidence and would be reported in the thesis in a manner that assures anonymity for all respondents. Furthermore, all participants would read and give approval of the transcript of their interviews before I would include them in the study. They would have the right to withdraw totally from the study at any time.

I have enclosed two self-addressed envelopes. One is for the survey and the other is to indicate an interest in the interview stage or to request information about the study. This will assure the anonymity of the survey results. If you have any questions, please feel free to phone me at home and leave a message at 1-268-3619 or at work at 1-268-2664. My fax number at work is 1-268-4256. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours truly,

Pat Thibault

**SURVEY RE: WOMEN IN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION IN
RURAL ADMINISTRATION**

I would appreciate it if you would complete the survey below and return it in the self-addressed envelope within one week. Thank-you for your response.

I. Your career in teaching:

Please complete as fully as possible the chart below, describing your teaching career up to the present:

| Years (Date) | Position (Teacher, Specialist, Administrator) | Level (Early, Middle, Senior) |
|--------------|--|----------------------------------|
| | | |

II. Your current administrative position:

1. How long have you been in your current position? _____
2. How many students are there in your school? _____
3. What grades do you have in your school? _____
4. What percentage of the time do you teach? _____

**III. Balancing your professional and private life:
Demographics**

1. What is your age?_____
2. Are you currently living with a partner?_____
3. Do you have any children?_____
4. If so, what are their ages?_____
5. Are any of your children currently at home?_____

Please note: If you do not wish to answer any of the above questions, simply leave them blank. Thank-you for your input.

Pat Thibault
Home
Work

FURTHER INFORMATION AND/OR PARTICIPATION

If you would like more information on my study or are willing to participate in the interview stage of the study, please fill in this form and return it in one of the self-addressed envelopes.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: (Work) _____

(Home) _____

Please check one or more below:

I am interested in the results of your survey. _____

I would like to know more about your thesis. _____

I am interested in being one of the administrators whom you will interview. _____

Other. _____

Pat Thibault

Home: ()

Work: ()

Appendix B

WOMEN IN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION IN RURAL MANITOBA

Open Ended Interview Schedule

Introduction:

Thank you very much for agreeing to this interview. The study that I am conducting for my Masters thesis has four main purposes:

- i. to develop a brief profile of female administrators in rural Manitoba,
- ii. to examine women administrators' career paths into administration,
- iii. to examine their experiences of administration in their present position, and,
- iv. to examine the ways in which they strive to balance their professional/work and private/home lives and demands.

The first of these objectives was covered by the questionnaire that you received. In this interview I would like us to focus on the other three areas.

Do you mind if I tape the interview? No-one but myself will have access to the tape and it will be destroyed as soon as I have completed the thesis. Taping will allow me to concentrate on the interview rather than trying to scribble down notes as we go along. I will transcribe the tapes and send you a copy for clarification and approval. **I should remind you that you can withdraw from this study at any time in which case I will destroy all information collected from you.**

Can we then start the interview by talking about your career in teaching and how you came to move into administration?

Interview: Part 1: Women Administrators' Career Paths.

QUESTION #1: I am interested in hearing about how you became and administrator. Can you tell me about this?

PROBES: Years in teaching prior to administration
Motivation to become an administrator - careful plan or chance etc.
Professional development activities and strategies in preparation
What role if any did mentors/sponsors play?
How old were you when you first became an administrator
What, if any, barriers did you face?

Interview: Part 2: Women Administrators' Professional Experiences in Administration:

QUESTION #2: Can I shift the focus a little now to talk about "being a female administrator".

2.1: What is your current administrative position?

2.2: What do you feel are the most important and interesting aspects of your job?

2.3: What do you feel are some of the special experiences of women administrators? (How, if at all, is the job different for women?)

PROBE: Relations with staff
 Relations with superordinates
 Status and sexism (overt and systemic)

2.4: What prospects do you see for yourself in developing your career in administration?

PROBE: Barriers to promotion
 Aspirations/disillusionments.

Interview Part 3: Balancing Professional and Private Lives.

QUESTION #3: I would like to address the issue of how working women balance their professional and private lives.

3.1: How do you try to balance your work with your private life?

PROBE: Spending time with family
 Household duties and responsibilities
 Hobbies and interests
 Walking a "tight rope"
 Community involvement
 School work at home
 Meetings
 What do you feel is your greatest concern, if any, in this area?

QUESTION #4: Are there other issues that you think I should have covered?

Thank you very much for your time. I will get a transcript of this back to you as soon as possible.

Appendix C

LETTER OF CONSENT

I hereby give my consent to be interviewed by Patricia Anne Thibault for her thesis entitled **Women in School Administration in Rural Manitoba**. I understand that what I say will be treated as confidential and that only Mrs. Thibault will have access to the tape.

When Mrs. Thibault will have transcribed the taped interview, she will send me a copy. At that time, I will inform her whether or not the transcription is what I have said. Also, if I so desire, I will direct her to delete any portion of the transcription which I do not want mentioned in her thesis.

I am aware that I will be assured anonymity, and that I may withdraw from this study at any time. If I choose to withdraw from the study, all information collected from me during the interview will be destroyed.

I thereby give my consent, based on the above stipulations.

Date:

