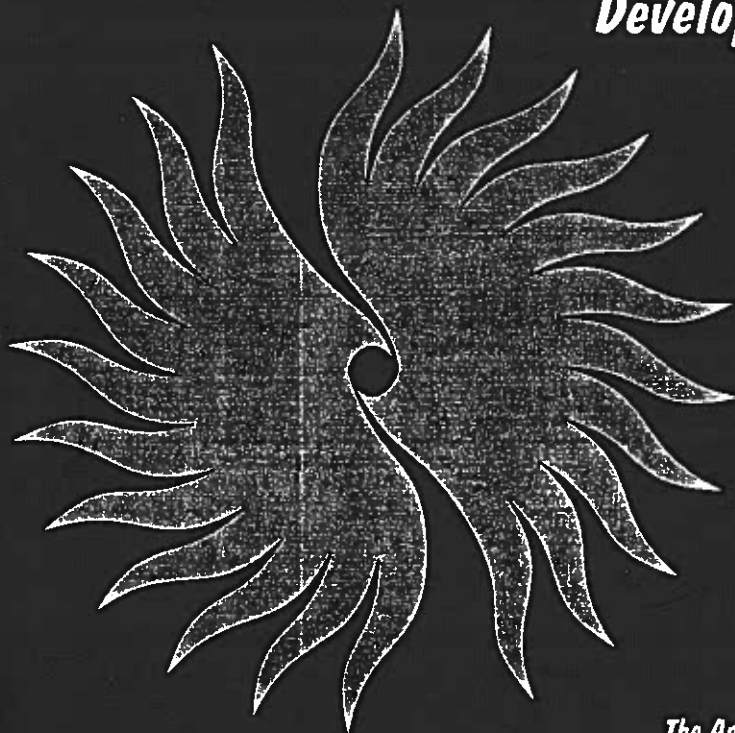


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Table of Contents

Foreword	3
<i>David O. Stine</i>	
A Note from the Editors: Focus for the 1999 Edition	5
<i>Linda C. Orozco, Marilyn Korostoff, & Mary K. McCullough</i>	
Leadership: Images, Ambiguities, and Beliefs	
Images of Principals in Film and Television: From Mr. Wamake to Mr. Reville to Mr. Woodman	7
<i>Jeffrey Glanz</i>	
The Terrain of Educational Leadership: Ambiguities and Answers	25
<i>Dennis L. Evans</i>	
Career Planning for Women in Educational Administration: The Secondary School Principalship	35
<i>Reene A. Alley & Suzanne MacDonald</i>	
Teaching: Principles, Dilemmas, Retrospectives, and Tools	
Educational Leadership and Judicious Discipline	47
<i>Paul Henry Gathercoal, Jr.</i>	
More Action Less Talk: Simulations and the Preparation of School Leaders	59
<i>Sheryl Boris-Schacter & Sondra Langer</i>	
 <i>Fall, 1998</i>	 1

Kottkamp, Susan Sullivan, and Rich Jacobs and to prepublish their manuscripts on the CAPEA website, <http://www.gse.nci.edu/capea>. Although the journal always accepts articles on topics other than the year's focus, we strongly encourage prospective contributors to access the website to read and review the four manuscripts, and to respond (complying with regular submission guidelines) either directly to the work presented, or to submit their own research related to the symposium's theme.

We are looking forward to combining our efforts and to exploring different approaches of presenting scholarly thought and inquiry.

Special Thanks

As editors, we want to give special recognition and thanks to Ms. Karen Krause from Coastline College for her assistance in every phase of producing this volume of the CAPEA Journal.

—Linda C. Orozco, Senior Editor
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Images of Principals in Film and Television:

From Mr. Wamcke to Mr. Reville to Mr. Woodman

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Kean University

ABSTRACT: Some principals have been depicted unfavorably in film and television as insecure autocrats, petty bureaucrats, and classic buffoons. The article advocates a reconceptualization of the theory and practice of administration based on an "ethic of caring" as a means of countering such negative images.¹

Television, film, and other forms of popular culture serve as the first images that children and the lay public have about principals. These images form powerful influences on the way we think about principals and their work. Images of principals represented by popular culture also serve as a stimulus for self-introspection. Popular culture can serve as an important vehicle for understanding the professional identity of principals and how others may perceive that identity. A cultural studies approach examines the dynamic interaction between cultural images of principals in film, for example, and perceptions that the lay public may have of principals. Various forms of media often portray principals in less than complimentary ways. Recent images of teachers in film and television suggest that they, in comparison to principals, are sophisticated high fliers and are competent in managing incredibly complex learning

environments (Farber & Holm, 1990; Farber, Holm, & Provenzo, 1992). Principals, on the other hand, are dullards, simplistic, petty bureaucrats who haven't the foggiest notion of what teaching is all about.

This article will explore how some principals are depicted in film and television and explain how an "ethic of caring" can reconceptualize traditional ways of conceiving the principalship. This article, a thought piece, essentially documents certain images of principals that have persisted over time and argues that these negative cultural images can be changed.

Mr. Wameke in the Blackboard Jungle

Perhaps the foremost image of a principal embedded in many people's minds, especially for those of us over the age of thirty, is encapsulated in Richard Brooke's 1955 classic film *Blackboard Jungle*. As the title implies, the school as the context in which this drama plays out is nothing less than a jungle. Aroused by the pounding rhythms of Bill Haley and the Comets' "Rock Around the Clock" and images of rowdy urban teens milling aimlessly, but sometimes threateningly, around the schoolyard, the audience senses the trouble that lies ahead. Capitalizing on racial stereotypes of the Irish and Puerto Ricans (especially, this film uncovers an image of urban schools that is characterized by deplorable physical conditions, overworked and burnt-out teachers, and occupied by hopeless uneducable delinquents. The film essentially portrays an idealistic teacher, Richard Dadier (played by Glenn Ford), who having returned from a stint in the Korean War decides to pursue his dream of becoming a teacher. After a rather inauspicious interview, Mr. Dadier is given his first teaching assignment. Cautiously optimistic after hearing about "the discipline problem" in the school, the new teacher proceeds nonetheless to struggle to "save" the children from a life of indifference and prejudice. The images of teacher-as-savior and urban students-as-avengers are among the film's major cultural messages.

Perhaps less significant and certainly more subtle is the image portrayed of the principal, Mr. Wameke. Stern, aloof, and humorless, the principal is depicted as the classic principal-as-autocrat. Our first glimpses of Mr. Wameke indicate his conservative dress, staid manner, and privileged position in the school. Perhaps the most memorable image is of the ruler he clasps, as a king might hold his scepter. At the start of the first faculty meeting, the vice-principal announces, "Ladies and Gentlemen, your principal." In walks Mr. Wameke to greet his faculty before the start of a new year. Prior to this scene our hero, Mr. Dadier, experiences first-hand who the boss of a school really is. After offering Mr. Dadier a

teaching position, Mr. Wameke asks, "Any questions?" Hesitatingly, the neophyte says, "Just one question, sir, the uh... discipline problem here." Incredulous, Mr. Wameke says, "I beg your pardon?" "Well, I understand..." Mr. Wameke interrupts and inches closer to Mr. Dadier: "There is no discipline problem in this school, Mr. Dadier, as long as I am principal!" The message is clear.

Other scenes that demonstrate the principal's authoritarian style include the time when he chastises a veteran teacher, Mr. Murdock, for slapping a student. Raising his voice in anger and frustration, Mr. Wameke admonishes the aggressive teacher in front of other teachers: "If you can't control yourself..." "Yes, sir," responds Murdock sheepishly. "Dadier!" shouts the principal. As Mr. Dadier approaches the principal's office door, Murdock whispers, "He's rough today." The principal proceeds to accuse Dadier of racial prejudice based on a report he received from a student whom the principal refuses to identify. "You listen," shouts the principal, "I don't care if a boy's skin is black, yellow, or purple, he gets the same teaching, the same breaks as any white boy. Do you understand? Do you?" In this unforgettable scene, Mr. Wameke, at this point in the diatribe, threateningly raises his ruler nervously shaking it at Dadier and shouting, "There's enough immorality in the world without your adding to it, enough hatred, enough blind stupidity."

Despite numerous messages this film imparts such as the struggles and travails of teaching urban students who are at-risk (Ayers, 1994), the images most relevant to this analysis are those that viewers receive about the demeanor and leadership style of the principal, Mr. Wameke. Dictatorial, aloof, and antagonistic, the principal represents an image that has been reinforced several times in other films such as *Dead Poets Society* and *Lean on Me*.

In *Lean on Me*, classic despot Joe Clark communicates clearly who's in charge of the school. Upon his arrival during a faculty meeting, a representative from the teacher's union welcomes the new principal. "We want to welcome Mr. Clark to Eastside. We've heard so much about you and we want to tell you what we've done in anticipation of your arrival..." Interrupting the teacher, Clark bellows, "You may sit down Mr. O'Mally! Think you could run this school? If you could, I wouldn't be here, now would I?" Clark paces about the room and thunders, "No one talks at my meetings—No one. You take out your pencils and write." Clark continues, "This is an institution of learning. If you can't control it, how can you teach?" After demoting the football coach, Clark tells him "and if you don't like it, Mr. Darnell, you can quit—the same goes for the rest of you." Clark ends his diatribe by explaining that "this is not a damn democracy... my word is law.... There's only one boss in this place and it's me!"

W. Rivelle in *Teachers*

Nearly thirty years after the appearance of *Blackboard Jungle*, the 1984 film *Teachers* shares many of the same features of its predecessor. The movie portrays a teaching and administrative staff coping to survive amidst a chaotic school environment characterized, in part, by student, teacher, and parental apathy. The film stars Nick Nolte as Alex Jerrel, a caring hero-teacher trying to motivate his students despite enormous odds. Mr. Jerrel's efforts are hampered by administrative forces that encourage conformity to organizational mandates. Jerrel's chief protagonist is the principal, Mr. Roger Rivelle (played by Judd Hirsch). Although Mr. Rivelle, not unlike Mr. Wameke in *Blackboard Jungle*, is not afraid to use intimidation as a means of coercing compliance, he does represent a unique image of a principal. Mr. Rivelle can best be characterized as principal-as-bureaucrat.

The scene in which Mr. Rivelle chastises the physical education teacher for getting a student pregnant is illustrative of this penchant towards emphasizing organizational exigencies over individual needs. "Do you know what this is going to do to the school? Do you know how this is going to look?!" In the final scene of this popular movie, Jerrel, after averting attempts by the principal to resign for not complying with administrative demands, lectures Mr. Rivelle about placing frivolous administrative concerns above the interests of students. "The damn school wasn't built for us Roger. It wasn't built for your unions, your lawyers, or your other institutions—it's built for the kids!! They're not here for us, we're here for them."

Virtuous, ethical, moral, and humane, Mr. Jerrel stands in sharp contrast to the image portrayed of the administration. Disingenuous, petty, if not corrupt, and uncaring of student needs and more concerned with maintaining the status quo, the principal-as-bureaucrat is embedded in viewer's minds.

The image of principal as primarily interested in organizational exigencies over students' interests and needs remains a consistent theme. In the updated 1996 version of the original classic, *To Sir With Love*, Sydney Portier returns to America to teach in an urban school beset by many of the typical problems facing many inner-city schools. Promising not to disclose information about an incident in which a gun is confiscated from one particular student, the teacher inevitably confronts the principal over the issue. Portier's character explains that the school's priority should be the welfare and care for this particular student. The principal retorts, "That's easy to say from where you stand, but I have to

think about the stability of the whole school, not just one isolated student or another." Surprised and perhaps disappointed by the principal's insensitivity to students, the teacher responds, "But that's what a school is, Horace, one kid—and another, and another."

A recent movie, *Dangerous Minds*, typifies the principal-as-bureaucrat stereotype when a new teacher (played by Michelle Pfeiffer) enters the high school principal's office without knocking: "This is an office, we knock before we enter," explains Mr. George Grandey, a stodgy African-American administrator sitting behind a desk. Stern, humorless, stoic, an ombudsman for the school's curriculum policy, the principal cautions the young teacher not to stray from the prescribed curriculum. "Follow the curriculum dictated by the board of education.... You must go along with our policies."

Mr. Woodman in *Welcome Back, Kotter*

A third image emerges from popular culture as represented this time in television and, certainly, reinforced in many movies. The principal-as-numskull is perhaps the most popular and hilarious image of a principal. Ridiculed and easily manipulated, Mr. Woodman in *Welcome Back, Kotter* is a typical example of principal-as-buffoon. *Welcome Back, Kotter*, a hit television sitcom in the late-1970s, depicts (fake) Kotter (played by comedian (fake) Kaplan who created the series) as an unorthodox teacher who works with a group of academically unmotivated students known as "Sweetahogs." Kotter is continually harangued by a pompous, overbearing principal who no one takes very seriously.

The image of principal-as-dimwit is evidenced in nearly every episode of this hit sitcom. In one scene, Freddie "Boom Boom" Washington, a black student stereotyped in not very favorable ways, joins Horsack, simpleton and scapegoat of the "Sweetahogs," in selling school supplies. In comes Puerto-Rican-Jewish "Sweetahog" Juan Epstein to complain about a pencil he bought from "Boom-Boom" and Horsack. "I got a complaint against this pencil you sold me—it don't work." Horsack, looking at the small pencil, moans, "Ohhhhh... what seems to be the problem?" Epstein replies, "Every time I write with it, it gets duller and when I sharpen it, it gets shorter. What we have here is a vicious cycle—duller, shorter, duller, shorter, I don't know what to do?" Along comes Mr. Woodman, as "Boom-Boom" says, "You know what they say around here. Any time something keeps getting duller and shorter, they make it the PRINCEPAL!" The boys laugh uncontrollably as the principal shouts, "Hennast! You are all hennas!"

Mr. Woodman, typical of this genre of principal, is further character-

ized as totally unaware of what is really transpiring in the school, frequently unfamiliar with student culture and language, and possessing no sense of humor. In the premiere episode of the series, Woodman, played by John Sylvester White, is described "as someone who drinks prune juice because he loves the taste of it." Although Woodman is both autocratic and bureaucratic, he doesn't engender the fear and respect of other such principals. Instead, the students throw paper at him (as he responds "animals, you're all animals!") and is told on numerous occasions, "Up your nose with a rubber hose!"

A more recent popular sitcom, *Saved by the Bell*, reinforces the image of principal-as-dimwit. Mr. Belding represents the classic buffoon-type principal portrayed in many films and television programs. Almost every episode reveals the naiveté and silliness of the principal in this popular sitcom of the 1990s. One representative scene shows Mr. Belding substituting for Mr. Johnson, the teacher-in-charge of detention. Screech, a nerd-type character, tries to get into the detention room to speak with his buddy, Zach, who is serving detention at the time. Mr. Belding, trimming a banai tree at the desk while making karate-type yells, refuses to let him enter. Screech calls Belding a "doofus." "What did you say?" "I called you a doofus, you big dork." Screech is placed in detention and once again outsmarts the principal, who apparently is easily and frequently duped.

Autocrats, Bureaucrats, and Dimwits

Occasionally, a single television show or film depicts all three of these aspects of principals—as autocrat, bureaucrat, and dimwit. A recent made-for-TV movie, *Kidz in the Woods*, highlights a dedicated history teacher (played by Dave Thomas) who takes eight academically and emotionally troubled high school students on a summer class trip during which they retrace the Oregon Trail via wagon trains. The object of the exercise is to "show how yesterday's events can help solve today's problems." The principal, against this unorthodox experiment, is portrayed as autocrat, bureaucrat, and, ultimately, dimwit. The vice-principal, playing a vital role in the movie, is also depicted in various negative ways, at least during most of the movie. This film also demonstrates an interesting and not uncommon relationship between a male principal and a female vice-principal.

Mr. Henry Dunbar, a middle-aged conservative high school principal, confirms his role as petty bureaucrat when he chastises renegade history teacher, Mr. Foster, who is the main character in this amusing made-for-TV movie. Dunbar calls Foster into his office and demands that he follow the prescribed curriculum. "What's obvious to me is that you

blame me because I insist you follow my standard curriculum." "Your standard curriculum," Foster retorts, "is sub-standard and I blame you for not accepting the responsibility for teaching these kids more than is in their books." Foster proceeds to leave Dunbar's office as the bell rings. "I gotta go... unless of course you want to teach my class." Dunbar remains silent. The principal's incompetence is not too subtly inferred. The image as incompetent bureaucrat is effectively communicated. In a later scene the vice-principal is similarly portrayed as having little, if any, teaching experience. At a school board meeting, Vice Principal Felicia Duffy defends her experience by asserting, "I did teach... for several semesters, that is."

Mr. Dunbar, determined to waylay Foster's efforts at succeeding with his innovative strategies, demands that his vice-principal, Miss Duffy, videotape the class trip as students inevitably get into trouble. Armed with this documentation, Dunbar can convince the board that he was right. Miss Duffy, aghast at the principal's deceit and unethical behavior, tries to convince her boss not to pursue this campaign. Relying on his superordinate position in the school hierarchy and employing an autocratic tactic, Dunbar tells Duffy, "You, unlike Foster, don't have tenure." Duffy reluctantly is coerced to comply. Interestingly, Duffy, as vice-principal, complies with the ethical standards of behavior. The image integrity by adhering to more ethical standards of behavior. The image of the principal as dimwit is ultimately imparted as Dunbar's plan is foiled. Once again, principals are portrayed negatively as compared to more idealistic, intelligent teachers.

One of the early views of a principal that demonstrates all three tendencies, autocrat-bureaucrat-dimwit, is seen in the classic 1950s series, *Our Miss Brooks*. Mr. Conklin, played by Gale Gordon, is portrayed as a stern conservative principal who is continually lampooned by Miss Brooks (played by Eve Arden), the wisecracking high school English teacher. In the premiere episode, Miss Brooks hurries past the principal's office. "Halt! charges Mr. Conklin, as the audience gets its first glimpse of the principal. "I was just on my way to the cafeteria," explains Miss Brooks. Chastising her, he says, "May I remind you that you are traversing the hallway of a public high school, not the cinder path of the colosseum." "I'll slow down, Sir." The principal continues, "Before you go there is something I want to talk to you about. Would you mind toping into my office," he says sarcastically. "But Sir." "In girl!" he shouts. Conklin's autocratic image is buttressed numerous times by his proclivity to support school regulations, at all costs. Yet, despite this serious image, Mr. Conklin is continually outwitted by the clever teacher and more often than not becomes the recipient of her ridiculous and some-

times hair-brained schemes. Very annoying and mischievous, Miss Brooks in the premiere episode, for instance, accidentally squirts ink all over Mr. Conklin's suit. *Our Miss Brooks* clearly illustrates the image that principals can act authoritative and official-like, yet should not be taken too seriously.

It should also be pointed out that a recent spate of sitcoms during the fall 1996 TV season reflect tendencies to portray principals as autocratic dimwitted bureaucrats. See, for example, characters in leadership positions in the WB's *Nick Freno: Licensed Teacher* and *The Steve Harvey Show*. Two recent movie releases reflect the principal as autocrat and dimwit, respectively: *Matilda* and *High School High*.

Discussion and Implications

Despite burgeoning literature that acknowledges the importance of the principalship in achieving and maintaining school effectiveness, principals, to the extent indicated in this thought piece, have been depicted unfavorably in film and television as insecure autocrats, petty bureaucrats, and classic buffoons. What can we learn from this analysis? Surely we cannot dictate to television and cinema executives what types of images to portray of principals. Moreover, inaccurate and exaggerated negative images are depicted of virtually every profession: politicians, lawyers, doctors, nurses, and teachers. So what can we learn from examining images of principals in popular culture?

Why are principals portrayed as "buffoons"? At first glance, such depictions may serve simply as means of comical entertainment. After all, television and film also poke fun at authority figures in many other professions. Having a sense of humor about the portrayal of such images may be warranted. Yet, the unique nature or form of such satiric entertainment may point to some other insights.

A cultural studies perspective reveals that various forms of popular culture serve, in part, to critique established dogma and practices (see, e.g., Appelbaum, 1995; Giroux & Simon, 1989; Spring, 1992; Weber & Mitchell, 1995). Comedic satire is a method employed by popular culture to transmit subtle and, often, not too subtle messages about, for instance, principals as figure heads representing the school establishment. Portraying principals in such comical ways communicates, in part, that even though they occupy more prestigious positions in the school hierarchy and earn more money than teachers, they are fallible and should not be taken too seriously.² Teachers and students, often disempowered in the school hierarchy, are able, in a manner, to circumvent their subordinate status and demonstrate their autonomy by making the principal seem

foolish. Outrageous satire at the expense of principals essentially conveys a notion that hegemonic relationships, although perhaps appropriate in business settings or factories, may be ill-suited for schools.

What about images of principals-as-autocrats and bureaucrats? Schools, by and large, are organized bureaucratically. Principals and other supervisors serve to support and maintain organizational rules and regulations. Images in popular culture that portray principals as autocrats and bureaucrats are not surprising given their role expectations and responsibilities. Perhaps, as principals, we need to at least be aware of the images that film makers and television producers are sending to viewers concerning the work we do in schools. We may then, for instance, counter such images by sharing with others our opposition to autocratic and bureaucratic practices.

Nurturing and Maintaining an Ethic of Caring

Although a more thorough analysis of the consequences that these complimentary images might have on both teachers and principals is intriguing, a more urgent question should be addressed in this last section of the article: What can principals do to reconstruct such negative images? Many proposals have been promulgated to reform school administration, such as abandoning elitist traditional ways of governing by fostering shared decision-making. These and other reforms, although important, fall short of the mark without a more fundamental emphasis. Educational leaders, although responsible for organizational effectiveness, must first and foremost convey a genuine concern for the individual. As Jerrel reminded Rivelle in *Teachers*, "The damn school wasn't built for us Roger...it's built for the kids! They're not here for us, we're here for them." Reconceptualizing the theory and practice of administration based on an "ethic of caring" should be a priority that can potentially influence current practice as well as inform how best to recruit and train our future principals (Beck, 1994).

Our image of a principal is culturally ingrained as a bureaucrat and "supervisor," reinforced, to a large extent, by images portrayed in popular media such as television and cinema. Constrained by a set of historical and political events, as well as social and cultural pressures, individuals assuming administrative positions operate from an hegemonic perspective. Although not all principals act as such, autocracy in school administration and supervision is legitimized and in consonance with bureaucratic school governance. Expectations are established for principals to, first and foremost, maintain organizational stability and adhere to bureaucratic mandates. Authority to carry out their mandates

conferred through hierarchical status. The metaphor for principal-as-bureaucrat and autocrat was established in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. That model, or as Sergiovanni (1991) would call a "mindset" (p. 41), served as the basis for recruiting, hiring, and retaining supervisory personnel. This "mindset" or metaphorical language used to describe the role of a principal, for instance, is inappropriate and has contributed to the negative view of school administrators Beck & Murphy, 1993). Forging a new mindset or paradigm for work in school administration takes on greater urgency.

Recruiting, hiring, and retaining principals who, first and foremost, demonstrate that individual needs supersede organizational requirements and bureaucratic regulations would reframe traditional conceptions of school administration. Fostering and emphasizing an "ethic of caring" among future principals would go far to challenge traditional conceptions of administration based on hierarchical, competitive, and bureaucratic paradigms. Redefining themselves as caring, sensitive people who encourage participation and engender trust but still attend administrative exigencies would reprioritize traditional expectations.

Embracing an ethic of caring goes beyond traditional models that have been identified in school administration. Sergiovanni (1989) identified four models of administration that influence practice. According to Rogiovanni, the rational, mechanistic, organic, and bargaining models are driven, respectively, by scientific management, bureaucratic, collectivist, and political theories of management. Marshall, Patterson, Rogers, and Steele (1996) recently explained that rational/scientific management emphasizes principles of scientific management whereby principals identify objectives, develop plans, determine efficiency, and closely supervise personnel to ensure work is done efficiently. Mechanistic/bureaucratic management practices emphasize organizational strategies such as POSDCORB (Gulick & Lickick, 1937). Planning, organizing, leading, directing, coordinating, ordering, reporting, and budgeting assume priority to ensure adherence to bureaucratic demands.

In contrast, organic/collegial management practices are more people-oriented and emphasize theories of management influenced by the work of Maslow (1970), McGregor (1960), Argyris (1964), Bennis (1989), and Kert (1967). Bureaucratic methods are modified slightly to accommodate individual needs. Bargaining/political management emphasizes organizational politics and the interplay among power, interests, and conflict.

According to Marshall, et al. (1996), several common assumptions derive each of the aforementioned models. To varying degrees, each model stresses the following descriptions: a top-down orientation, fair-

ness accomplished through equal application of law and policy; good leadership is value-neutral and political; effective leaders are impartial, detached, and serious; communications are formalized and hierarchical; organization is predictable; and goals are quantifiable. These models of administration, including organic or humanistic models, never challenged traditional theories of administration and leadership based on bureaucracy.

An Ethic of Caring Leadership Framework

Informed by Noddings's (1984, 1986, 1992) work on the ethic of caring, I think that framing school leadership on a radically different paradigm of "leadership as ethic of caring" that supports the notion that our task as principals is essentially to support and encourage teachers while nurturing children by teaching them to be caring, moral, and productive members of society is a more useful and potentially empowering conception of school administration. As Noddings (1992) posits, "The traditional organization of schooling is intellectually and morally inadequate for contemporary society" (p. 173). Although appropriate at some point in educational history, the traditional model of bureaucratic school organization no longer seems appropriate in postmodern times (Slattery, 1995). Disenchanted with increasing levels of poverty, drug abuse, illiteracy, ethnic violence, alarming ecological destruction, and the persistence of inequalities, injustices, and lack of opportunities for many Americans (Apple, 1985), a postmodernist is imbued with a sense of hope (Starratt, 1993) that we, in schools for instance, may find more supportive and productive ways of relating to each other. Nurturing an "ethic of caring," principals, as do teachers, realize their ultimate motive is to inspire a sense of caring, sensitivity, appreciation, and respect for human dignity of all people despite travails that pervade our society and world. Noddings (1992) makes the point, "We should educate all our children not only for competence but also for caring. Our aim should be to encourage the growth of competent, caring, loving, and lovable people" (p. xiv).

Feminist organizational theory (Blackmore, 1993; Regan, 1990) informs this "ethic of caring" by eschewing traditional conceptions of leadership. Feminist theory questions legitimacy of the hierarchical, patriarchal, bureaucratic school organization. Challenging traditional leadership models, feminist theory encourages community-building, interpersonal relationships, nurturing, and collaboration as of primary interest (Ferguson, 1984). Although much literature in the field suggests that women as educational leaders are more attuned to fostering intimate relationships that accentuate an ethic of caring (Noddings, 1992),

I think that both genders are just as likely to demonstrate that they are concerned with teaching, learning, instruction, curriculum, and people. Some argue that because women "spend more time as teachers and as mothers before they become administrators, they produce more positive interactions with community and staff; they have a more democratic, inclusive, and conflict-reducing style; and they are less concerned with bureaucracy" (Marshall, 1995, p. 488). I am not convinced that the difference lies inherently in gender. I have known some rather officious, domineering women who demonstrate autocratic and bureaucratic tendencies at the same time I have worked with men who are nurturing and caring. Although women in our society and culture are more easily accepted as sensitive, sympathetic administrators and men less so, I think both genders have essentially the same capacity for caring and nurturing that are crucial in engendering a spirit and ethic of caring. Supportive of this feminist view of school organization, Henry (1996) explains how feminist theory opposes bureaucracy:

The feminist approach that I have developed in this study places people before mechanical rules or bureaucratic responses. Feminism stems from a concern not just with humankind, but with all living things and their interdependence in the universe, with a view to redefining male-female and other relations away from a notion of dominance and subordination and toward the ideal of equality and interconnectedness.... All human beings are seen as enriched by a feminist way of seeing and relating to the world. Instead of autonomy, separation, distance, and a mechanistic view of the world, feminism values nurturing, empathy, and a caring perspective. (pp. 19, 20)

Similarly, Noddings (1992) has led a feminist critique challenging traditional conceptions of leadership by advocating an ethic of caring "to enable schools to become caring communities that nurture all children, regardless of their race, class, or gender" (Marshall, et al., 1996, p. 276). Unlike traditional humanistic models of administration, "caring" is inclusionary, non-manipulative, and empowering. Whereas the main objective of bureaucracy is standardization, caring inspires individual responsibility. Caring "is a situation-and person-specific way of performing in the world that requires being fully and sensitively attuned to the needs of the cared for by the person caring. (Caring cannot be transformed into policies mandated from above, but caring can give form and coherence to our schools" (Marshall, et al., 1996, pp. 278-279).

Starrett (1991) also provides support for an ethic of caring in educational administration. According to Starrett, an administrator committed to an ethic of caring will "be grounded in the belief that the integrity of human relationships should be held sacred and that the

school as an organization should hold the good of human beings within it as sacred" (p. 195). (For similar views on caring and ethical behavior see, e.g., Beck, 1994; Calabrese, 1988; Greenfield, 1987).

Although defining "caring" has been difficult (Beck, 1994), scholars who have explored this topic in depth note that caring always involves, to some degree, three activities. They are: (1) receiving the other's perspective; (2) responding appropriately to the awareness that comes from this reception; and (3) remaining committed to others and to the relationship. To a large extent, caring involves a change in thinking patterns, belief systems, and mindsets. Reconceptualizing administration and supervision as caring enterprises rather than as bureaucratic processes requires an entirely different set of definitions, meanings, and purposes. Relying on the "production metaphor" which is an outgrowth of bureaucracy is inadequate to meet the challenges of schools in postmodern times. The "metaphor of caring" is more conducive to collaboration and cooperation, which are essential components of participatory school management.

What do caring principals do? According to Marshall, et al. (1996), they "frequently develop relationships that are the grounds for motivating, cajoling, and inspiring others to excellence. (Generally thoughtful and sensitive, they see nuances in people's efforts at good performance and acknowledge them); they recognize the diverse and individual qualities in people and devise individual standards of expectation, incentives, and rewards" (p. 282). These characteristics are clearly "antithetical to bureaucratic models that require standardization and uniform application of policy" (p. 282). Beck (1994) agrees: "...caring instructional leaders would be considerate and fundamentally noncritical. With teachers, they would assume the roles of professional colleagues, co-learners, supportive counselors, and friends" (p. 93). Caring principals put people first and policy second!

Articulating a "new style of leadership," Raymond Callahan (1996), author of *Education and the Cult of Efficiency*, recently emphasized the need to attract principals who "offer a from tough to caring, from controlling to motivating and communicating, and from overpowering to empowering their employees" approach. Callahan concluded, "I think we could use more of these qualities in our schools" (p. 14).

Implications for Improving Practice

What are the implications for improving practice among principals through an ethic of caring? Although a thorough analysis is beyond the purview of this article, two implications are apparent. First, to what

tent do our preparation programs for principals incorporate models of leadership that are guided by an "ethic of caring"? From my experience, very little, if any, attention is drawn to such a framework. Programs that integrate administrative and supervisory theories and as evidenced in publications and teaching do not reflect an "ethic of caring" framework. Marshall, et al., (1996) concurs:

...recent work, the writing, teaching, and theory of administration are silent about how to incorporate caring with leadership. Few texts incorporate values and ethics, much less an ethic of care. As important, policy, structures, and practice fail to incorporate caring. No mainstream texts on educational administration and no formal recruitment, training, and selection policies validate the caring perspective. In fact, selection and promotion policies frequently reward the antitheses of caring. (p. 289)

Our intention is to dispel images of autocratic and bureaucratic principals, then we need to examine the way we prepare and certify future principals. Without incorporating an ethic of caring framework, we are likely to produce principals who are well acquainted with additional administrative theories but fail to realize that the main goal instructional leadership is not bureaucratic maintenance or adherence to rigid systems of evaluations.

The role of certification and licensing in the "construction" of the "appropriate" principal deserves more attention. Does the factory of socialization, for example, evident in our current preparatory programs shed out just the people who we would want to attract in the principalship? If not, do the images portrayed of principals in pop culture make it possible to recruit the right people? These and similar questions need dressing.

A more specific implication for the work of principals is that allowing for an "ethic of caring" to guide practice would result in a very different way relating to parents, teachers, and students. Mr. Wameke, the prototypical autocrat, for instance, would value shared leadership and collaborative planning over ruling by fiat. Although collegial models of leadership would not even be considered an option for both Mr. Wameke and Mr. Joe Clark, an ethic of caring framework, it seems to me, would provide a more equitable, just, and ultimately, more effective practice.

Similarly, Mr. Rivelle, guided by an "ethic of caring," would never say: "Do you know what this is going to do to the school? Do you know how is it going to look?" Concern and caring for the individual should permeate organizational needs. Administrative and political expediency would not guide actions of principals when an "ethic of caring" is paramount.

Conclusion

No attempt has been made to treat the subject exhaustively. This article is meant only as a thought piece to stimulate discussion about certain images of principals and what we may do to reconceptualize these negative images. The article has highlighted three images of principals: principal-as-autocrat, principal-as-bureaucrat, and principal-as-dolt. These images clearly do not portray principals favorably. Admittedly, a more exhaustive review may indicate positive views of principals. Television shows such as *Room 222* and *The White Shadow*, both appearing in the 1970s, as well as in films such as the recent *Mr. Holland's Opus* have depicted principals more favorably. Yet, these images, in my opinion, are exceptions, given the more popular tendency to portray principals as dimwitted, autocratic, petty-bureaucrats.

Why have such negative images of principals persisted? In this article, I have indicated that the legacy of bureaucracy with its emphasis on hierarchy of authority, prescribed rules, and centralized decision-making has left a stigma on those responsible for school administration and instructional supervision. Some principals have been portrayed as unsympathetic bureaucrats. Despite efforts to remove this stigma, vestiges of bureaucratic governance remain and are reflected in images of principals portrayed in popular culture.

Portrayals of some principals as dimwitted and easily outsmarted by teachers, and especially students, demonstrate that principals need not be taken so seriously. Teachers who are the primary recipients of autocratic and bureaucratic practices of principals have few options to circumvent such practices. Often, a teacher may react to such bureaucratic practices with ambivalence, yet sometimes the only recourse might be to call the principal "a jerk." Realizing the hegemonic relationship between principals and teachers, film makers capitalize on this disproportionate distribution of authority by depicting principals unfavorably.

It has been suggested that promoting an ethic of caring among principals may go a long way towards altering these negative views. Whether or not such an emphasis would alter the teachers', students', and film makers' views of principals is uncertain. What is apparent, however, is that some principals, at times, contribute to their own negative image by what they do or fail to do. Principals need to demonstrate that individual needs are paramount in any effective organization. Although caring can and should be nurtured, recruiting candidates who demonstrate such qualities should be a priority. Stereotypical images of