
'DOING EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP': CULTIVATING PLURALITY IN A TEACHER 'PUBLIC SPACE'

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the importance of educational leadership in cultivating the conditions for a space for dialogue with teachers, which is linked more to working with teachers, to theorise and critically examine what they do. Such a dialogic teacher 'public space' is linked to teachers acting 'in concert' as respected partners in the educational process, through the courage to exercise judgement, in a space where the views and contributions of each teacher matter. I employ the resources of Bourdieu and Arendt, to provide both conceptual lenses and thinking tools which are helpful for gaining a glimpse of 'an elsewhere, of an otherwise' in educational leadership, at a time when being critical is difficult and conceived of as a form of heresy.

Current leadership models are dominated by business management concepts which obscure the educative character of the work of school principals. The managerial approaches of neo-liberal educational reform have brought with them an assertion of 'technical rationality' in school management where the emphasis is on techniques and procedures and organisational practices. This culture of technical rationality has enabled a new form of administrative evil which has the hallmarks of Arendt's 'dark times'. Arendt's notions of public space, plurality, thinking and judgement, throughout her major works, provide philosophical resources for challenging current views of transformational leadership. Using Arendt's notion of public space, along with her views on thinking and judgement, I propose a more democratic, dialogic view of educational leadership which recognises plurality, and identifies educational leadership in relationships, as acting 'in concert' with teachers to engage the collective responsibility for education of young people in 'renewing a common world'. Arendt identifies the responsibility for judgement, thinking and action in the company of others that accompanies this possibility.

Introduction

In current times, school leadership is generally viewed as being like leadership in any other field. Gunter (2005) argues that the form of 'transformational leadership' which currently permeates

education, has its origins in non-educational settings (p.181), and strengthens the emphasis on the leader 'towards the purpose of serving policy' (Atkinson, 2004 p.111). Current leadership models, are anti-dialogical (Burbules, 1993) and are neither 'pedagogic' nor 'educative' (Evans, 1999), but dominated by business management concepts which obscure the educative character of the work of the school principal (p.xiii). Borrowing from business leadership, the three core tasks of expert school leaders: 'articulating a vision, devising strategies to attain that vision, and empowering followers', is a view of leadership which reduces it to 'something that goes on in the head of the leader'—'something that is done to someone else, whether they like it or not' (Gronn, 1996 p.21). Seen as 'leader of performance' (Gunter, 2005 p.182) and engineer 'of school culture' which can be 'adjusted at will' (Gronn, 1996 p.22), the school principal is expected to adopt the ends of education defined by indicators of performance 'without actually involving children, except as data providers' (Gunter, 2009 p.96). Students are measured for the impact of 'effectiveness', no longer seen as 'actual human beings' (Greene, 1995 p.11) and teachers are seen as problems to be dealt with through management of performance.

From the 'Romance' of Leadership to 'doing' Educational Leadership

In this sense, the term 'leadership' is used as a 'textual practice that denies everyday experiences' (Thomson, 1999, p. p. 58), and in so doing, gives them up to the 'relations of ruling' (Smith, 1990). The *doxa* of the education field (Bourdieu, 1990b) is influenced by research in educational administration, and leadership and management texts, which represent principals' work as an 'heroic' leader with a repertoire of technical skills and knowledge—'images of charismatic figures, subtly guiding, directing and controlling change' (Smyth, 1985). The 'Romance of Leadership' (Meindl, Ehrlich, & Dukerich, 1985 p.79) is a deep-seated faith in the potential, if not the actual efficacy of those who occupy elite positions in formal organisational authority. Of all possible causal explanations, significance is mostly attributed to 'the idea of a 'leader' or 'leadership' as *the* causal entity which renders 'complex problems meaningful and explicable' (Gronn, 1996 p.12). 'Leadership is seen as something performed by superior, better individuals ... rather than by groups, located in *top* positions, and as something done *to* or *for* other inferior, lesser people' (Gronn, 1996 p.12). '[I]n the current rush to embrace the transformational, charismatic and visionary leadership models' insufficient attention is paid to the 'crucial role played by followers' (Gronn, 1996 p.12) in their assent to authority on their behalf, couched in an acceptance of a 'superior-subordinate relationship' (Gronn, 1996 p.15). Thomson (1999) argues that this kind of textual practice (in this case applied to 'leadership') obscures both 'subjects' and agency' and so she adopted the word 'doing' in front of terms like 'justice', 'democracy'—'doing justice', 'doing democracy' (p. 58). In a similar way, I am

referring to 'doing educational leadership', to focus on what the leaders and teachers (subjects) and the 'doing' (agency) entails. The insistence that 'leadership' is an instrument for attaining outcomes (rather than a focus for processes or transactions (Gronn, 1996 p.8) diverts attention from the realities of organisational life (p. 22). 'Doing' educational leadership involves not only an alternative notion for how 'leaders' and teachers work together, but an ability to understand a critique of current views of leadership. In the next section I undertake the 'doing' of critique. Following that, I engage in 'doing' by thinking differently about leadership.

'Doing' educational leadership as critique

In *habitus*, principals are predisposed to a taken-for-granted 'logic of practice' (Bourdieu, 1990b), which assumes the leader has the vision for the direction of the school and that leadership is the deployment of skills in the interests of mobilising harmony in that direction. The normative view of the staff as a cohesive group provides for greater certainty in 'the struggle for distinction', where what is at stake, for the principal, is 'the right to impose on others a particular view of the world' (Webb, Schirato, & Danaher, 2002, p. 95). The principal's efforts to dominate through the prior management of conflict (Southworth, 1995), produces a 'contrived collegiality' (Hargreaves, 1999) which 'does not recognize legitimate differences in teachers' views (Hayes, Christie, Mills, & Lingard, 2004 pp.523-524). Gunter (2012) argues that we need to see the transformational leadership model for what it is: a benign word for manipulation and influence which limits the degree of agency teachers and leaders have to 'think and do otherwise' (Gunter, 2005, p. 183).

The view of the single leader is tied to a technical rationality where relationships with teachers are seen as one of management, surveillance and control partly fulfilling the needs of managerial logic, but also as a way of defending the vulnerability of the principal in playing 'the game' (Bourdieu, 1990a, 1990b, 2005). Such 'transformational leadership' supports existing power structures (Gunter, 2001 p.73), is structured for domination (Allix, 2000 p.18) and is underpinned by a technical rationality and the inability to think outside of its mandates. It creates the possibility of 'administrative evil' (Adams & Balfour, 2009), through not 'rocking the boat' and doing 'one's duty' (Bauman, 1995 p.260) without question. Rather than valuing teacher and student diversity, current theories of leadership, seek to manage it, homogenizing and attempting to control and predict the behaviour of people within the organization, aiming to strengthen the possibility of intervention and rational governance (Venn, 2006 p.107). The assumption that business leadership can be transferred to an education context unproblematically, means that all the embedded assumptions, such as decontextualising practice, the development of vision, and the treatment of people as interchangeable, have been transferred as well. Within this 'business' view of leadership, teachers

have been portrayed as the problem with staff development designed around teacher deficiencies and re-skilling, within 'how to do it' prescriptions for the presumed defects (Smyth, 1985 p.181). Smyth (1985) argues for the need to re-examine and re-construe school leadership to support teachers to more closely and critically examine what they do and conceive of change 'as a consequence of [teachers] dialoguing, intellectualizing and theorizing about their work' (Smyth, 1985 p.186).

The view of the 'single minded principal' (Thomson, 2004) is embodied in dispositions which include a tendency to view the school as an entity, with a strong sense of ownership and identification of the principal with its success or otherwise. This makes it more likely that principal *habitus* engenders dispositions to promote harmony through superficial consultation that does not risk opening up conflicting views. Such a view of principal leadership misrecognises 'collective responsibility' (Cole, 2012, p. 9) for the education of students in the school, as 'adopting practices consistent with the school's instructional and behaviour management models' (p. 11), reinforcing '[o]ne dominant idea ...[which] neither requires nor permits exchange or contestation' either silencing dissent or seeing it as obstructive (Wiens, 2000, pp. 272-273). Existing views of leadership identify that what is 'common' about the school as an entity, is the coherence of everyone following a single vision.

'Doing' educational leadership, seen as cultivating plurality

Reflecting on my own leadership, through employing resources not commonly used by principals for understanding educational leadership (Bourdieu and Arendt), enabled me not only to question the accepted views of leadership but to see how this was enacted in practice (Rogers, 2013). In this sense, I adopted Arendt's view that 'understanding an idea required discovering the concrete experiences out of which it arose and to which it referred' (Stern & Yarbrough, 1978 p.373). In doing so, I have positioned myself to think 'outside the box', at a time when 'to do so is conceived of as a form of heresy' (Atkinson, 2004 p.111), but doing so, provides a way of gaining a 'glimpse of an *elsewhere*, of an *otherwise*' (Berger, 2002 p.214). Gunter (2009) points out that using the 'Critical' word is becoming increasingly difficult with 'such people like us... increasingly positioned as a 'hoodie' research gang' (p. p. 94).

Our world, Hannah Arendt repeatedly emphasised, is simply too complex and multifaceted to be captured by a single point of view (Schutz, 2001, p. 140). This is in contrast with the dominant tendency in Western philosophy:

to privilege and valorise unity, harmony, totality and thereby to denigrate, suppress, or marginalize multiplicity, contingency, particularity, singularity. (Clark, Herter, & Moss, 1998, p. 789).

A single view compromises our sense of reality and our common world 'because not one man, but men, inhabit the earth' (Arendt, 1958, p. 234). 'The end of the common world has come when it is seen only under one aspect and is permitted to present itself in only one perspective' (Arendt, 1958, pp. 57-58). Rather than what is 'common' to the human condition being a single view, a single way of seeing the world, Arendt identified that the common world we share exists as a result of the differences we reveal in dialogue.

[T]he words of the prevailing public discourses in education which imply certainty or guarantee outcomes ... either take humanity for granted, or express a huge distaste for, or significant distrust of human potential ... [They] believe that most human beings ... must be coerced or forced into compliance of their own good ... and that there are tried and tested ways to ensure both compliance and the good. (Wiens, 2000, pp. 261-262)

Human plurality, which is so fundamental for Arendt, has the twofold character of equality and distinction (Benhabib, 2003, p. 56): without equality, persons cannot understand one another or plan for a common future; without distinction, there is no need for speech and action. Paradoxically, we get 'commonality' as a result of nurturing difference (Calhoun & McGowan, 1997, p. 22) through dialogue. Arendt discovered in Kant's work, the notion of the common world, 'that lies between human beings, keeping them distinct *and* relating them, a shared world in which they can appear and be recognized as unique beings' (Kohn, 2001c, p. 3). It is through dialogue that we are able to act together 'in concert' (Arendt, 1998), 'concerning things that are of equal concern to each' which for Arendt, is the minimum condition of a common human world (Kohn, 2001a, p. 8).

The idea of the 'common world' enabled Arendt to understand the crisis of the twentieth century, as a crime against humanity, the denial of plurality: 'the refusal of totalitarian regimes to share the world with entire races and classes of human beings' and those who supported those regimes in following orders without question, unable to see what was going on in front of them. Arendt identified the 'thoughtlessness', the 'inability to *think* ... from the standpoint of somebody else' (Arendt, 1963 p.48-49) and from the loss of public space (Arendt, 1968b p.242) as crucial to plurality. When plurality is destroyed, human beings 'cease to be individuals and become a mere mass of identical, interchangeable specimens' (Kohn, 2001b p.7).

Arendt saw the inability to think—the 'banality of evil' (Arendt, 1963), as potentially limitless (Kohn, 2001a p.7). '[D]espite its lack of depth, [it] can at the same time gain power over almost everyone, that is what makes the phenomenon so frightening (Arendt, 2007 p.487). Arendt used the term 'dark

times' (Arendt, 1968a), alerting us to how 'darkness refers to the way these horrors appear in public discourse and yet remain hidden' (Berkowitz, 2010 p.3) through the 'highly efficient talk and double-talk' (Arendt, 1968a p.viii) of bureaucratic officers. Greene (1997 p.1) identifies 'dark times' today with the 'harm being done to children; the eating away of social support systems; the "savage inequalities" in our schools; the spread of violence; the intergroup hatreds; the power of media'. Adams and Balfour (2009) identify a parallel between Arendt's 'dark times' and the conduct of bureaucratic 'administrative evil'. The 'fundamental flaws, inconsistencies, lies and more lies within the neoliberal rationales and narratives' (Gunter, 2009 pp.97-98) are hidden from view in official 'camouflage' (Arendt, 1968a p. viii) and yet in 'plain sight' (Berkowitz, 2010 p.4). Uncovering what is in 'plain sight' might allow teachers who 'may well be among the few in a position to ... illuminate the spaces of discourse and events in which young newcomers have some day to find their ways' (Greene, 1997, p. 7).

Although we are not living in a totalitarian society, the temptation to appeal to 'totalitarian solutions' is still very much with us, through the multiple forms of 'totalitarian' theory (Schutz, 2001 p.140) reflected in bureaucratic rationality. For Arendt, the idea of 'the common world' opened up an understanding of totalitarianism and pointed the way 'to go beyond that crisis by accepting the challenge of restoring a common world' (Kohn, 2001c p.3). As Arendt highlights for us, the majority of evil may not be about evil intent, but a failure to think about and judge the consequences of what we do, 'in a rush to get through whatever [the] business is at hand' (Neiman, 2010 p.311). Employing Arendt's concepts of thinking, judgment and public space, I argue that educational leadership is about cultivating plurality in a dialogic teacher 'public space', resisting the temptation to coerce or force people into agreement through a disposition to control. Such a disposition fractures the public space, through mapping out 'a path secured in all directions' (Arendt, 1958, p. 244). The aim is to glimpse 'an *otherwise*' (Berger, 2002 p.214) for *educational* leadership which is dialogic and respects and trusts educators, allowing 'the space within which to exercise sound professional educational judgements' (Smyth, 2006, p. 317).

In advocating for *educational* leadership, we might see it as working *with* teachers in developing 'a humane pedagogy' (Greene, 1997) and seeing themselves as 'humane practitioners' (Beck, 1999 p.227) with the courage to exercise judgement (Gunter, 2005 p.185), in a space where the views and contributions of each teacher matter. A relational focus for pedagogy can only be supported by teachers 'who are themselves trusted and respected partners in the educational process' which is both 'conceived and implemented in dialogue with teachers' (Hart, Dixon, Drummond, & McIntyre, 2004 p.266). Such an educational view of leadership is educative and pedagogic. 'Doing' educational

leadership is about being educative and pedagogic, involving cultivating a dialogic 'public space and in so doing, negotiating the paradoxes arising from the contradictions which the leaders experience, co-constructing the meaning of educational leadership in a particular setting (Peters & Le Cornu, 2006).

'Doing' educational leadership - co-construction around the idea of 'renewal of a common world'

Peters and LeCornu (2006) argue that stakeholders need to be involved in the process of co-construction of leadership as opposed to one or more stakeholders imposing a particular construction of leadership on the rest (p. 14). The paradoxes or predicaments (Farson, 2002) which are exposed and opened up through dialogue, are 'permanent, inescapable, complicated, paradoxical dilemmas' intrinsic to leadership (p. 6). They can only be 'coped with' through 'interpretive thinking' by putting a larger frame around a situation, whilst remaining alert to unintended consequences which flow from interpretation (p. 6).

It was Arendt's view that the role of education was 'to prepare [children] in advance for the task of renewing a common world' (Arendt, 1961b p.196). The common world, as Arendt saw it, is destined for ruin, unless 'human beings ... intervene ... to create what is new'. We are therefore 'always educating for a world that is becoming out of joint' and which must be 'constantly set right anew' or it faces the possibility of 'becoming as mortal as [its inhabitants]' (p. 192). The collective responsibility for an education which prepares children for 'renewing a common world', requires an extraordinary respect for the past in the task of mediating between the old and the new (p. 193) as well as a respect for different ways of seeing the world, without which the uniqueness of the person each child is in the process of 'becoming' (Young-Bruehl & Kohn, 2001, p. 250) would not be possible:

the free development of characteristic qualities and talents ... the uniqueness that distinguishes every human being from every other, the quality by virtue of which he is not only a stranger in the world but something that has never been here before ... com[ing] to fruition in relation to the world as it is. (Arendt, 1961b p.189)

In gradually introducing the child to the world, educators stand as 'representatives of a world for which they must assume responsibility' (p. 189). Denial of plurality in a group of teachers, narrowing what could be shared, experienced and imagined, would make it impossible to 'represent the world' to children in a way which makes 'a setting-right ... [of the world] actually possible' and risks destroying 'everything if we so try to control the new that we, the old, can dictate how it will look' (p. 192). Rather than Cole's (2012) 'contrived' and limiting view of 'collective responsibility' for educating children, I employ Arendt's (1998) notion of acting and judging 'in concert' with others.

Education leadership as acting 'in concert' in a dialogic space

Participants in a public space have a crucial role - 'the opportunity to listen to and talk with people, uncover how particular interests position themselves around ideas, respond, generate ideas, and develop alternative strategies' (Gunter, 2009, p. 94). Such spaces include unsettling, difference and conflicting perspectives, where the 'uncertainty of risk can be brought into the workplace through how we pose problems and work for solutions together' (p. 100). In such a space we can 'engage with what is settled (we depend on) and what is up for negotiation (what we want to change)' (p. 100). Arendt (1958) identifies 'islands of predictability ... in which certain guideposts of reliability are erected' (p. 244) in the form of agreements or promises for action within a public space. The force that keeps the public space in existence is that of mutual promise between participants which is not 'an identical will ... but ... an agreed purpose for which alone the promises are valid and binding' (p. 245). Since attempts to coerce or force people into agreement through the disposition to control, fractures the public space, the attempts to establish these promises need to resist efforts to control and dominate through the misuse of agreements which:

cover the whole ground of the future and to map out a path secured in all directions, [thereby] ... los[ing] their binding power and the whole enterprise becomes self-defeating. (Arendt, 1958, p. 244)

The creation of a teacher public space for dialogue, creates a place for unique individuals seeking to act together without giving up their distinctiveness. In such a space, is the possibility of an elusive balance between conflicting ways of being and acting with others, with the capacity to relate and bind unique individuals together around common projects but also to separate them (Arendt, 1958, p. 182). Arendt identified the two-in-one dialogue so essential to thinking and how 'enlarged mentality' enables us to look at the world from a number of perspectives, 'visiting' both actual perspectives and others with imagination. This makes us better judges, since one develops the capacity to consider other viewpoints of the same experience and to consider frequently very different and opposing aspects of the same experience. A dialogic public space, which supports the thinking and judgement of teachers, may open beliefs up to deliberative consideration through 'moments of breakdown' (Varela, 1992, p. 18). These moments can occur in the uncertainty of the classroom but also in teacher – teacher dialogue which supports reflection on practice and challenging assumptions, beliefs and prejudices associated with current practice as a result of taking different viewpoints into account through an optimum level of conflict or dissonance (Penlington, 2008, p. 1314). This is consistent with Arendt's view of the unpredictability and irreversibility of action and the importance of dialogue in a public space around a common project which doesn't have certainty.

'Doing' educational leadership - strengthening the 'Storyteller'

Schutz (2001) identifies three 'pedagogical roles' which Arendt takes in her writings (p. 129): the *Storyteller*, the *Theorist*, and the *Political Actor*. Collectively, the three personas grapple with the challenges and conundrums faced by any effort to bridge the gap between lived reality and intellectual understanding (Schutz, 2001). When considered in the context of educational leadership, it is the role of the *Storyteller* (as conceived by Schutz) which is largely absent from how we currently conceive of school leadership. The *Storyteller* models a mode of narrative engagement which responds to the contingent complexity of lived reality through looking at the world from other standpoints. Arendt was concerned that people were thinking along predetermined paths, making experience fit the preconceived categories, rather than thinking and judging from lived experience.

Concepts and theories allow us to interpret lived reality, to 'pre-judge it' based on what has gone on before by detaching us from actual present complexities. By taking prejudgements as unquestioned, what is happening in front of us is 'hidden'—we no longer see 'the outrageous ... the impact of reality and the shock of experience are no longer felt' (Schutz, 2001, p. 150). For Arendt, 'understanding' what is in front of us, means 'the unpremeditated, attentive facing up to, and resisting of, reality - whatever it may be' (Arendt, 1951, p. viii). Arendt develops a form of storytelling which invites others to 'to look upon the same world from another's standpoint, to see the same in very different and frequently opposing aspects' (Arendt, 1961a, p. 51). Since action in a public space, requires an actor to take the opinions of other participants into account, by providing different perspectives, the *Storyteller* gives an opportunity to engage in public judgement. The educational leader as *Storyteller* facilitates the public space of multiple perspectives, where teachers join together around issues that concern them, responding to each others contributions.

The *Theorist* connects concepts to experience, preserving plurality at the same time as generalising, by tracing ideas back to their source, making sure the abstractions remain connected to the stories that give them meaning (Schutz, 2001, p. 135). Despite the dangers of theories in narrowing thinking, Arendt as the *Theorist* argued that the human mind needs concepts with which to think and condense experiences into ideas for guideposts, however limited (p. 134). Unlike stories which seek to embody the myriad complexities of particular situations, theories summarise and encapsulate, precipitating generalisations, however, the activity of the Theorist ultimately remains dependent upon the *Storyteller's* narratives if theories are to connect to experience. The connection to experience means that the *Storyteller* was always working to preserve plurality at the same time as the Theorist collapses it in favour of broadly encompassing generalisations. Abstractions are useful

only to the extent to which they remain connected to the experiences, the stories, that give them meaning (p. 135).

From the Political Actor's viewpoint, it is not just about creating public spaces; one needs to *respond*. At times, instead of exploring various perspectives and possible summarising ideas, the Political Actor declares her opinion, making her perspective known, leaving people to respond, although as Stern and Yarbrough, (1978) and Yarbrough and Stern, (1981) point out, this too was to position her students and readers to think (and act) outside of taken-for-granted expectations in 'an atmosphere of openness'. The *Political Actor* understands the tragic perspective of education. The 'tragic sense gives us a reason to care, to persist in our efforts' (Burbules, 1997, p. 66). Ultimately, both the *Theorist* and the *Political Actor* are dependent on the *Storyteller* who ensures the connection to the diversity and plurality of lived experience. Arendt as the Storyteller, Theorist and Political Actor, argues that reality itself only appears to us 'where things can be seen by many in a variety of aspects'(Arendt, 1958, p. 57). To read notions of multiple perspectives and multiple identities is often to read against the grain of most approaches to difference (Dillabough, 2002) which currently inform educational literatures and practices. The central role of the Storyteller highlights the importance of remaining in a position to think in complexity, which is never captured by a single point of view and only ever disclosed in action, rather than being applied or limiting action (Disch, 1997, p. 151).

The current forms of transformational leadership which permeate education (Gunter, 2005, p. 181) do not encourage the diversity of contributions from staff. What is dominant (Gunter, 2001, 2012) is one interpretation and one solution for education reform which is unquestioned (Wiens, 2000, p. 285) and therefore does not need alternatives:

The first step towards building an alternative world has to be a refusal of the world picture implanted in our minds ... Another space is vitally necessary. (Berger, 2002, p. 214)

To challenge the 'absurdity of the world picture offered us' (Fielding, 2005, p. 61), our capacity to interrogate the present rests on an engagement with the past 'radical heritage' (p. 62) of teaching as connected to educational purposes. Gunter (2005) argues that educational leadership needs to put the 'student and their learning at the centre' positioning them as active learners rather than as 'followers to the action of the adult', paralleling the 'arguments regarding how adults should not automatically be led by a so-called superior adult' (p. 184). Within an educational view of leadership, Fielding (2005) argues for the creation of 'new spaces and new opportunities' where teachers can 'articulate their own stories and weave their own narratives into the fabric of the future' (p. 62). Gunter (2005) describes the need for 'a more authentic and challenging form of education and learning to be put back into leadership theory and practice' (Gunter, 2005, p. 184) through 'enabling

spaces to be protected or opened up' (p. 184) where educational leadership is 'a shared and communal concept' (Foster, 1989, p. 57), inclusive of all (Gunter, 2005, p. 185).

Implications for an 'otherwise' of educational leadership

The implications for the principal of taking up educational leadership as outlined so far, is a significant change to the ways in which principals currently conceive of their role (Gunter, 2005, p. 181) to one of facilitating, with others, dialogue which is open, allows difference and dissonance, respect, friendship and 'intellectual hospitality' (Sellar, 2012), and withdraws from the temptation to drive change through a single principal-driven vision. A 'critical or reflective disposition' (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 16), developed to read and challenge logics of practice, could be possible through dialectical confrontation in conditions different from those in which the habitus was constructed (Bourdieu, 2005 p.46). Such conditions could arise through thinking about practice, with the three 'personas' of *Storyteller*, *Theorist* and *Political Actor* (Schutz, 2001 p.129).

Other conditions which promote different perspectives could be a presence of the principal, in the teacher public space which is 'more humble' and open to critique (Grob, 1984, p. 269) aware of both the possibility of change and the difficulty in doing so. There are limits to changing the logic of 'the game' in the field since change threatens interests and positioning and the right to 'play the game'. However, since in any field there is always negotiation of capitals, and struggle for distinction, the field is not static, and open to some change. Initiative may be focused on the principal in 'democracy creating' (Woods, 2004, p. 8), in building conditions for and encouraging democratic processes and participation. An essential aspect of the resulting 'web of human relationships' (Arendt, 1998, p. 184) is a kind of mutual *respect* (p. 243), a culture more trusting and generative (Giddens, 1994), as well as respectful, inclusive and tolerant, supported by 'reasonable' communication (Fisher, 1989, p. 75) and a sense in which dissensus is crucial to thought (Sellar, 2009, p. 72). Participants are open to change their attitudes, ideas, and/or positions and grow both in the capacity for practical judgment and living together in a context of disagreement (Adams & Balfour, 2009, p. 174) as well as 'caring for the preservation of that diversity' (Bauman, 1995, pp. 284-285). Rather than the 'great leadership of exceptional rulers', crafting ways to manage the political conflict and allow open deliberation, might be more measured (Uhr, 2005, p. 71).

Burbules recommends a pragmatic, contextual view which regards the possibility of dialogue with hope and persistence, but being also prepared for failure or breakdown (p. 160). For Burbules (1993), a 'frank recognition of ... the features of schools, that discourage and inhibit [a democratic polity] ... should counterbalance any ... idealism' (p. 163). Burbules (2000) also argues for a greater

mindfulness and awareness of actual dialogue, to see how swapping new 'prescriptions' and 'procedures' for dialogue for current 'prescriptions' and 'procedures' of communication might be potentially coercive and exclusive. Instead we might:

regard the dialogical model as a measuring stick against which to compare and judge our actual practices; to what extent are we successful or not in approaching its values of mutual respect, interest and concern? (p. 163)

Even when dialogue fails, with a 'healthy modesty' (Burbules, 1990), it can teach us something, and in most cases remind us of the unpredictability and complexity of human affairs, including education. For principals, it means we need to let go 'of our quest for purity, coherence, clarity, harmony and perfection' (Wright, 2012, p. 265), prepared to reverse the way that certainty and risk have been handled through neoliberal educational reform' (Gunter, 2009, p. 99) and to live with the uncertainty, unpredictability and irreversibility of action, thinking and judgement in a public space.

Summary

The primary lesson of the 'banality of evil' (Arendt, 1963) is that:

one does not have to be a monster, a sadist, or a vicious person to commit horrendous, evil deeds. Normal people in their everyday lives, 'decent citizens,' even respectable political leaders, who are convinced by the righteousness of their cause, can commit monstrous deeds. (Bernstein, 2010 p.303)

In education, Arendt's work implies that the spreading of 'evil' on the surface, 'like a fungus' rather than a 'root' (Kohn, 2001a, p. 7), is only possible because of its superficiality, its intent to 'lamine' (Smyth, 2006, p. 301) over deeper educational concerns, witnessed by educators, many of whom are complicit in its growth. Understanding the struggle between good and evil as a simple dichotomy between forces of good and forces of evil intent, 'mystifies and obscures the new face of evil in a post-totalitarian world' (Bernstein, 2010, p. 303). The 'ease with which human beings are made superfluous, the feebleness of the "voice of conscience," the subtle forms of complicity ... are still very much with us' (p. 303) which is why 'the ordinariness of tyranny' (Gunter, 2007) compels us, not only to face difficult questions about the meaning of 'evil' in a contemporary world, but also forces us to acknowledge our greater 'degree of responsibility ... as we draw further away from the man who uses the fatal instrument' (Arendt, 1963, p. 246, Arendt's emphasis).

As Arendt highlights for us, the majority of evil may not be about evil intent, but a failure to think about and judge the consequences of what we do, 'in a rush to get through whatever [the] business is at hand' (Neiman, 2010, p. 311). This has implications for our roles as educators, in preparing young people 'in advance for the task of renewing a common world' (Arendt, 1961b, p. 196), to see

(and speak about) what is 'hidden in plain sight' (Berkowitz, 2010, p. 4). Rather than leadership in school contexts being seen as 'the sterile and manipulative business management canons of directing, commanding, controlling and coordinating' (Smyth, 1985, p. 186), in ways which silence thinking and judgement, leadership might be seen as creating the circumstances in which teachers and leaders are 'dialoguing, intellectualising and theorising about their work' (p. 186) and the consequences of what they do. Smyth (1985) proposes that leadership involves working *with* others, rather than *on* them, to provide the conditions for understanding 'what they are doing and where they are heading' and that this is an activity of enabling 'meanings to be exchanged, talked about ... [and] to be modified and changed' (p. 180). Supporting reflection on practice and challenging assumptions, beliefs and prejudices associated with current practice, relies on trusting relationships where participants are free to question one another so that different viewpoints are taken into account through an optimum level of conflict or dissonance (Penlington, 2008, p. 1314).

If we were to frame teachers' work not as 're-skilling' through 'how to do it' prescriptions, to 'overcome deficiencies' (Smyth, 1985, p. 181), but as dialoguing, intellectualising and theorising about their work, working individually and collectively and 'creating the circumstances in which teachers [collectively] are able to closely and critically examine what they do' (p.186), we cannot rely on existing models of school leadership. Existing models have assumptions about manipulation and coercion by 'leadership' embedded in them, no matter how benevolently, to achieve presumed goals and outcomes, which do not have 'children at the centre' but have the 'performance' of children on narrow measures as proxies for school effectiveness.

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